What Do WAC Directors Need to Know about "Coverage"?

ERIKA SCHEURER

I frequently hear the following comment from faculty colleagues across the disciplines: "I can't possibly add more attention to writing in my course because I already have too much I need to cover. If I do more with writing, I'll have to drop half the nineteenth century" (or number theory or the function of the small intestine). This statement is usually made in a frustrated, even overwhelmed, tone of voice.

They are not the only ones who are frustrated. My goal as a WAC director, after all, is to help faculty members learn to use writing as a *means* of "covering" material, not to view it in opposition to coverage. Yet despite the fact that the idea of "writing as a means of coverage" is indeed covered in our five-day WAC seminar, faculty members often still use the same language of "coverage" to forestall more attention to writing. It is as if their courses are finite vessels that can hold only so much content. Writing is seen as yet more liquid added to the vessel, displacing existing content and causing the whole thing to overflow into a mess.

Over my six years as WAC director at a medium-size private comprehensive university, I have come to realize that whether I like it or not, "coverage" is the language faculty members speak. In order to understand this language better, I conducted research on the concept of coverage based on pedagogical scholarship and on a survey of faculty members conducted in November 2013. What I have learned about faculty attitudes towards coverage has complicated my thinking on the topic and led me to more effective and satisfying conversations with my colleagues across the disciplines.

But First, What about "Uncoverage"?

The idea of "coverage" has certainly not gone without critique. We could reach back to John Dewey's *Experience and Education,* where he rejects the concept that static knowledge of content, rather than its connection to the student's *experience* of that content, serves as the end of education. Later, in a 1965 article, "The Idea of Coverage in the Teaching of Literature," George H. Henry, professor of education at the University of Delaware, scathingly critiques the coverage approach to the teaching of high school literature surveys. Looking at coverage "in light of the present explosion of knowledge," Henry dramatically points out the impossibility of covering increasing amounts of classic literature in the same limited span of time, exclaiming,

> Imagine what another thirty years will bring! How can the method of coverage ever cope with it all? Will we merely compress and speed-up, cut snippets from more works for students to touch with the tip of the tongue to get a taste. Our courses are fast becoming a package of samplers. (476)

Applying cognitive psychology to teaching, Henry advocates for an exploratory, concept-development method for teaching literature to replace "the additive, time-centered, item-strewn method of coverage" (477). He notes, "a concept is best developed slowly and through the progressive development of meaning in time and must be arrived at through discovery" (479). His non-coverage-based literature survey is organized by thematic strands, not chronology, and aims to interrogate key questions. He argues that in doing away with what he calls the "stuffage" method, one third of the literature currently covered in surveys could be dropped "and we would do our task much better" (481). Interestingly, one element of doing the task better includes clearing up room for more attention to student writing.

The essential elements of Henry's critique and solution to the problem of coverage reappear decades later in more current pedagogical scholarship. The concept of "uncoverage"—coined by Grant Wiggins and Jay McTighe (2005)—describes a push to free survey courses of the coverage model, replacing it with thematic and skill-based courses designed to teach students what practitioners in a field value and how they think. Of those applying the concept of "uncoverage" to pedagogy in their fields, E. Shelley Reid (introduction to composition theory and pedagogy) and Lendol Calder (the American history survey) do so most thoroughly.

Both present the problem of having too much information to cover in too little time based on their personal experiences, then point to the larger assumptions about teaching and learning embedded in the idea of coverage: "Everywhere, the mystique of coverage is abating. Teachers no longer believe they can cover everything of importance . . ." (Calder 1359). Calder, like Henry, draws on cognitive psychology in launching his critique of the coverage model, referencing "what Sam Wineburg calls the 'attic theory' of cognition"—that we collect information and store it away for later (1361). This is not how the mind works and, argues Calder, it actually leads to less learning:

> The problem with defenders of traditional surveys, then, is not that they care about facts too much but that they do not care about facts enough to inquire into the nature of how people learn them. Built on wobbly, lay theories of human cognition, coverage-oriented surveys must share the blame for Americans' deplorable ignorance of history. (1362)

Likewise, Reid critiques the pervasive, "default-nature of coverage pedagogy" (16), advocating for an approach similar to that currently employed for first-year writing for graduate composition theory students:

> As we develop and improve courses for teachers of college composition, then, I argue that we need—very deliberately, publicly, and collectively—to focus on *uncoverage,* to emphasize discoveries that lead to long-term learning over immediate competencies. That is, we need to conceive of the pedagogy course at its foundation in the way that we now conceive of first-year writing: as an intellectual engagement rather than an inoculation, as practice in a way of encountering the world rather than mastery of skills or facts, as preparation for a lifetime of *thinking like a teacher."* (16)

Despite their completely different courses and students—Calder teaches the undergraduate history survey as a general requirement course; Reid teaches a graduate-level pedagogy course for future composition teachers—these scholars arrive at similar solutions to the coverage problem. Both replace their traditional surveys with problem- or issue-driven courses aimed at helping students to think and act like practitioners in their fields. Interestingly, with the focus on the exploration of disciplinary problems rather than on facts and solutions, both include a focus on writing to learn pedagogy as well.

What Faculty Members Say

Neither Henry, Reid, nor Calder pretend that switching from a coverage model to "uncoverage" is easy.[1] Indeed, Henry refers to the time that he "traumatically broke with coverage" (481). In order to work with the faculty members at my university, I needed to better understand what professional and emotional connections they feel towards the concept of coverage. What obstacles stand in the way of their adopting more of an "uncoverage" pedagogical approach, presumably one that would allow for more attention to writing?

Also, the scholars I have cited who have published on "uncoverage" are tenured faculty members in the humanities and education. What influence does the faculty member's academic discipline and status within the academy have on views of coverage? Did faculty members who completed our five-day WAC seminar approach coverage differently from faculty members who have not?[2] As I work with hundreds of faculty colleagues in over thirty diverse disciplines, before I could reply to the "coverage" argument for not drawing in more support of writing into courses, I needed to know more about how different subsets of the faculty viewed coverage.

To this end, in the Fall semester of 2013 I developed and administered a campus-wide anonymous survey to which I invited faculty members to respond. The survey included the following questions:

- In connection to your teaching, what does the term "coverage" mean to you?
- Compared to all of your other goals as an instructor, how important is achieving coverage to you in your teaching? (a scale of "extremely important" to "not at all important") Why?
- What primarily influences your approach to coverage in your teaching? Rank the following from 1 to 5, with 1 as most influential: My own teaching goals, Departmental expectations, School/college expectations, Expectations of a larger accrediting body, Other.
- What is your primary means of achieving coverage? Rank the following options with "1" as the means you use the most: Giving lectures in class, Assigning students to view lectures online outside of class, Assigning reading, Assigning Writing, Class discussions, Other.
- Please describe up to three of the most significant challenges to your achieving coverage of course material in your classes.
- Has your attitude about the importance of coverage changed over the course of your teaching career? Yes/No. Please explain.
- Have your methods of achieving coverage changed over the course of your teaching career? Yes/no. Please explain.
- What else would you like to say about coverage that has not been addressed in the above questions?

Of approximately 493 full-time and 383 adjunct faculty members overall, 122 faculty members responded to the survey, with varying response rates for individual questions. The demographic breakdown of the respondents is as follows:

Table 1. Academic discipline.

Arts and Humanities	60 (English: 19; theology: 12)
STEM disciplines	27
Social Sciences	17
College of Business	12
Education	4
Law	1
Not indicated	2

Table 2. Gender.

Female	73
Male	49

Table 3. Faculty status.

Adjunct	23
Limited-term	I
Clinical	5
Tenured	68
Tenure-track	25

Table 4. Participation in five-day WAC seminar.

Yes ("WAC faculty")	60
No	62

Although the percentage of faculty members who took the survey is not high, their diverse makeup and rich qualitative responses have yielded a wellspring of thought-provoking information. My interpretation of both the quantitative and qualitative elements of the survey has led me to the following insights.

Insight #1: Faculty members define coverage differently and, though the majority of faculty members highly value coverage as a course goal, they value it for different reasons. So when one faculty member uses the word "coverage" it may have entirely different valences of meaning from when another faculty member uses the word.

Of 92 comments in which faculty members define coverage, 59 do so strictly in terms of material conveyed to students. For some, the concept is fairly straightforward: "It means covering the period 1600 to 1877 in U.S. History." This corresponds with the definition of coverage critiqued in the "uncoverage" literature. Others feel more conflicted about this definition of coverage:

> To explicitly address or assign a genre or time period or terminology or particular texts that students would be expected to know as an outcome of the course. That is, that I would feel remiss or irresponsible in their not knowing. When I use the word "coverage," though, I'm usually thinking in a reactive way—that I must "cover" X or Y for students to move up a level or because my colleagues would be appalled if my course didn't include X. Coverage feels broad and thin rather than deep. (Still, it exerts a real pressure.)

A number of faculty members—33 of the 92—define coverage in broader ways that include skills as well as material covered:

> For me, coverage is not limited to the disseminating of knowledge/content. It also must include skill development and appreciation of dispositions appropriate to the discipline. Facts are important, but with today's explosion of knowledge and technology, I think it is more important to learn how to appropriate this knowledge in meaningful and productive ways.

And

> I think it's also possible to think of "coverage" not as a set list of texts or movements (e.g.[,] "we have to cover Twain!") but as a range of APPROACHES to texts (and to writing about texts).

Thus, while some faculty members think of coverage in the traditional sense of conveying information to students, others employ more of an "uncoverage" approach or see coverage as including skills and dispositions as well as informational content.

No matter how they define coverage, faculty members overwhelmingly value it as a course goal. Compared to their other goals as instructors, 30 faculty members surveyed identify achieving coverage as "extremely important;" 50 as "very important;" 19 as "neither important nor unimportant"; 2 as "very unimportant;" and zero chose "not at all important." WAC faculty members valued coverage as a course goal equally as much as other faculty members, with 80% finding it either extremely or very important.

The reasons faculty members value coverage vary, however. For some, the students' need for information is the primary reason they value coverage. For example, a faculty member from philosophy notes that students need the information covered "to live a meaningful life." Other faculty members, mostly in the humanities, cite departmental expectations of what needs to be covered in certain courses (especially core general requirement courses). They mention the scaffolding of knowledge in curricula: when courses serve as prerequisites for higher-level courses, they must cover certain material.

Faculty members also cite student expectations for what is covered (a "contract" with students) and refer to a sense of responsibility, conscience, moral obligation, and the integrity of the discipline. Finally, particularly in disciplines such as business, social work, STEM, and education, faculty members mention the requirements of states, accrediting bodies, and licensure boards. Other significant outside influences are employers and the expectations students will face in the workplace. Of students who will become engineers, one faculty member comments that "People can die" if information is not covered.

When we work with faculty members, then, it is important for us to recognize that, while most highly value coverage as a course goal, they define coverage differently and value it for different reasons. While not necessarily surprising, the fact that that faculty members, not only across disciplines but also within them, may hold vastly diverging ideas about coverage serves to remind WAC directors that one of our first questions when working with faculty members should be, "What do you mean by coverage?" Establishing this baseline is essential before we can move forward in the conversation. These differing reasons for valuing coverage are connected to the constraints and pressures they feel regarding coverage.

Insight #2: Most faculty members cite time and students as significant factors that hinder their ability to cover material. Not all faculty members are free to decide what they do and do not cover, however. Depending on their academic discipline and status, they feel varying constraints and stresses concerning coverage.

Common Constraints

Unsurprisingly, "time" is the single most often-cited challenge to achieving coverage cited by faculty members; after all, lack of time is essentially what makes coverage a "problem." Even back in 1965, Henry bemoans the tyranny of time in a coverage-centered model of education. Discussing an experiment in addressing the concept of "nature" through student engagement in writing and discussion rather than faculty lecture, he mentions a teacher who refused to participate "because she thought it was a waste of time": "'I can teach nature in three days.' Certainly, I can teach it in thirty minutes, too! Notice how time always dominates the concept of 'coverage' in a syllabus" (478).

Asked to list three challenges to achieving coverage, faculty members made 55 references to lack of time (a few faculty members listed "time" for all three):

> TIME! It really challenges: 1, 2, and 3.

> Too much material. The longer I am in the field the more I know and the more I think is important.

> Balancing the pace of the course (recognizing that it takes both time and work for students to "get" something, and doesn't serve anyone well if we move on to the next thing before that happens).

Another challenge presented by students to the faculty's ability to achieve coverage was lack of student motivation and engagement (29 citations):

1. Students who have not completed the reading assignments before coming to class 2. Students who are reluctant to participate in class discussions 3. Students who do not attend class regularly.

Student motivation and time spent on the course outside of class. If students do not spend enough time outside of class working through problems and understanding concepts, then we must spend more time in class before we can move on.

Like lack of time, lack of student engagement is not a particularly new problem. We work hard to engage students, but ultimate control of student engagement remains elusive—ask anyone who has ever taught two sections of the exact same course back to back, one with engaged students and the other with indifferent students. Understandably, faculty members find the constraint on coverage presented by lack of student motivation extremely frustrating.

Discipline- and Status-Specific Constraints

While time and student engagement are perceived as challenges to achieving coverage across the board, other challenges appear to be more specific to certain disciplines or levels of faculty status. For example, 33 faculty members listed lack of student preparation as inhibiting their ability to achieve coverage. Because students did not know information or were not able to perform a certain skill, faculty members were not able to cover what they intended.

While student lack of preparation is cited across the disciplines, it is mentioned more frequently by faculty members in the STEM disciplines in which knowledge is carefully scaffolded. Eleven of 27 of STEM faculty members (41%) cite lack of student preparation vs. 13 of 60 (22%) of those in the humanities faculty. Lack of student preparation can set back faculty learning objectives considerably:

Students who tell me "we never saw that before. . . ." when I try to build on material they should have had.

Inadequate student preparation before Physics classes (math and problem solving skills).

In addition to lack of student engagement and preparation, some faculty members perceive a conflict between student and faculty expectations about coverage. For faculty members working to achieve tenure, the connection between what they cover and student ratings is a source of concern.[3]

From my experience, students think they learn more when there's more coverage—i.e.[,] they can "see" all the "things they've learned" (facts, knowledge,

etc.), which may influence faculty [members] in providing more coverage/ breadth. However, my personal philosophy is that students actually learn more (and become better learners) when there's more depth (and thus less breadth/coverage), even though they don't necessarily realize it. This gets at that nebulous "critical thinking" goal—students don't always realize how much their thinking is improved, [sic] but can fairly easily determine how much their factual knowledge has increased by the end of the course. I think this pressures faculty [members] into focusing more on coverage at the expense of depth, which in my opinion does a disservice to the students, the professors, and the profession. (Now how to combat this . . . that's the real question!)

. . . [G]iven the heavy emphasis on IDEA scores as a measure of faculty teaching, coverage also must address student satisfaction. Students feel like they've learned something if they memorize long lists of terms and understand what happened when. So in my teaching, I also must cover a clear chronology that covers the time period and geographical area of the course description, and give students the impression that nothing is left out and they know everything they need to know.

Yet, the pressures of student evaluations can work in the opposite direction as well:

I cover less now because of student resistance [to fact-based instruction].

As if the power exerted by time and students over what faculty members can and cannot cover were not enough, the actual learning objectives—what needs to be covered—are not always a matter of faculty choice. In fields such as business, social work, education, and pre-medicine, faculty members mention outside expectations such as those for accreditation, licensure, preparation for the MCAT, etc. Another significant challenge for faculty members in achieving coverage are the expectations—or sometimes, lack of clarity about expectations—of their departments or fields.

Lack of consensus in my department and in my field generally as to the importance of the actual knowledge base of the field (as opposed to skills and practices).

In our department intro class[,] coverage is determined by department decision, and is very strict and exacting, and encompasses a lot of material. It is a strain to maintain coverage in that class.

While for all faculty members surveyed, "my own teaching goals" ranked as by far the primary influence on the approach to coverage (43 faculty members) with

departmental expectations a distant second (22 faculty members), for adjunct and limited-term faculty members, departmental expectations are the primary influence (8) with individual goals a close second (7). This finding may correlate to the adjunct faculty's overall higher rating of the importance of coverage as a course goal: compared to 80% of all those surveyed, 95% of adjunct faculty members (17 of 18 who responded to the question) see achieving coverage as either extremely or very important. Although the number of adjunct faculty members responding to this question is not substantial, it certainly follows that if one's continued employment is dependent upon satisfactorily meeting coverage goals set out by one's employer (the department), achieving those goals would be a top priority.

It is not surprising, then, that for 13 of the 18 adjunct faculty members, lecturing was the chief means of achieving coverage. As the extensive study described by Carol Rutz *et. al.* in "Faculty Professional Development and Student Learning: What is the Relationship?" demonstrates, adjunct faculty members may participate in faculty development opportunities at an even higher rate than tenured faculty members; however, they are far less likely to try new pedagogical approaches in the classroom based on what they have learned because of fear that student ratings will go down (44). Because this study reveals that "More faculty development focused directly on improving teaching and learning directly results in higher performances from students," the significance of faculty status becomes clear: "faculty status matters, not so much because of qualifications but because of job security," with students performing worse in courses taught by faculty members who do not feel free to experiment (44). It is not surprising, then, that the following survey comment critiquing the sense of control lecturing provides was made by a securely tenured faculty member at my university:

> Lecturing, being the sage-on-the-stage imparting knowledge to students, is the most ineffective teaching method for coverage; and yet teachers persist because it gives them a sense of control over the material. Letting students be different in how they approach coverage, through more experiential learning (writing, discussion, peer collaboration), is not as controllable, but it gives students ownership of learning.

What we take from this complex web of influential factors and constraints bearing down on faculty members' ability to cover course material and their choice of what to cover is, again, the importance of teasing out the *reasons* that coverage presents a problem for individual faculty members. While an adjunct in art history and a full professor of physics will share some similar outlooks—based on the survey (not to mention my years of experience as a WAC director), both are primarily concerned

with student learning—their perspectives on the importance of coverage and various influences and constraints on how they achieve it will likely be quite different.

In our attempts to open up our colleagues to the potential of writing as a means of coverage, how we respond as WAC directors will depend on the nature of the perceived influences and constraints. Of course, we cannot expect faculty members not to take into account the expectations of accrediting bodies. And given their tenuous status, it would be foolish for contingent faculty members not to honor the course objectives of the departments hiring them. Whereas most faculty members feel a great deal of autonomy over what they do and do not cover (and how), we must honor the realities of those who do not. However, when department policies lead to faculty members feeling unable to work in writing because of the need to cover required material, this might occasion a conversation with the department as a whole (or a sub-set) about learning goals and how they may be achieved. At the very least, the process of reflecting on and discussing constraints to coverage of course material may help faculty members to be more strategic in their thinking about coverage as a course goal. These conversations may illuminate for us the pressure-points about which we might have broader conversations with academic units, ultimately leading to larger-scale change in perspective about coverage. After all, it is only when systemic change takes hold that contingent faculty members will feel freer to diversify pedagogically. Valuing pedagogical experimentation as much as student ratings when evaluating adjunct faculty members—and convincing faculty members that this value is real—is a necessary precursor to their adopting the pedagogical changes that Rutz *et. al.* show lead to higher student performance.

Insight #3: While lecture is the primary means faculty members identify for achieving coverage of course material in their teaching, a majority of faculty members do report changing their means of achieving coverage over time and WAC may have an impact on that.

When asked to rank five means of achieving coverage from most-frequently to least-frequently employed, faculty members ranked them as follows:

1. Lecture
2. Reading
3. Discussion
4. Writing
5. Online

There was some variation among respondent sub-groups, though lecture always holds the #1 spot, even if it is shared with another means of coverage. For example, for WAC faculty members, lecture and reading are listed in equal numbers as the chief means

of achieving coverage. Discussion and reading share the #2 spot, writing and reading share the #3 spot, writing is fourth, and online means of content delivery is fifth. For the WAC faculty, then, the importance of writing as a means of achieving coverage is only slightly higher than it is for the faculty respondents as a whole.

However, some faculty members—as illustrated earlier in the comment about how "being the sage-on-the-stage" offers a sense of control—critique lecture as a means of coverage.

> If students do not understand what is "covered" in lecture, it doesn't matter whether it was covered.

> I lecture a little less than I used to—it turns out I'm not so fascinating that I need to be the only one talking for an hour at a time.

While faculty members who had completed the WAC seminar did not rank writing as a means of coverage much more highly than the faculty as a whole, they were most likely to say their methods of achieving coverage had changed over time. Overall, 72 faculty members (77%) report that their methods of achieving coverage have changed over time while 22 (23%) report that they have not. Those most likely to report that their methods have changed include tenure track faculty members and WAC faculty members (both with 86% "yes") and faculty members with 20–30-plus years of teaching experience (83%). Those most likely to report that their means of achieving coverage have not changed are, first, faculty members who have not participated in the WAC seminar (35%) and second, faculty members with 1–6 years of teaching experience (29%).

While it makes sense that faculty members who have been teaching for many years have had more opportunities to change their methods of achieving coverage than those at the start of their teaching careers, it is interesting that whether faculty members have participated in the WAC seminar is the main quality distinguishing those who have changed their strategies for achieving coverage. Of course, it also may be true that faculty members who choose to participate in the WAC seminar are naturally more open to new pedagogies and that participation in the seminar itself did not create this effect. Either way, we do know one thing: WAC faculty members are far more likely to favor "pedagogical diversification" in achieving coverage than non-WAC faculty members and this is something we as WAC directors may leverage, encouraging faculty members to share the various means they use to achieve coverage among themselves and with other faculty members.

Also, as the survey confirmed, faculty members cannot cover material alone. The expectations of students play a significant part in the faculty's ability to achieve coverage of course material. WAC already encourages faculty members to put learning goals first, communicating them clearly to students and scaffolding assignments to support

them. We can encourage faculty members to use the language of coverage as they lay out learning goals, communicating clearly with their students about what they expect to cover in a course (and why) and what methods they will use to achieve that coverage. Thus, as the culture of writing spreads across campus, students will repeatedly hear from faculty members that they are going to cover material not only through lecture but also by having students *do* things (including writing). If students hear this more, they too may gain a broader view of coverage, leading to less resistance.

Finally, despite high participation in faculty development, including the WAC seminar at my university, adjunct faculty members feel far less control than tenured faculty members over what course content they cover and how they cover it. Given the increasing numbers of courses taught by adjunct faculty members and given the clear connection between experimentation in teaching and high student performance, addressing issues of coverage beyond the individual faculty-member level is essential if we truly aim to change our institutions' pedagogical cultures. Initiating departmental discussions about what is covered, why, and how may lead to a loosening of both explicitly stated and implicitly assumed constrictions on pedagogical experimentation. The results of these discussions—to which adjuncts, ideally, actively contribute—may free contingent faculty members to act on what they have learned through WAC and other faculty development offerings. I have generated a list of questions to guide such discussions (Appendix).

The next step in this project, for me, will be to begin a series of personal interviews with faculty members who have successfully used writing as a means of achieving coverage, including faculty members across varying disciplines, ranks, and status levels. I will look deeply into their histories with coverage of course content, asking questions such as the following:

- Before they used writing as a means of coverage, what were their learning goals in a typical course and how did they "cover" those goals?
- What influenced their choosing this means of coverage? For example, if they primarily lectured, was it because they had been taught to teach that way? Or had they, as students, learned that way?
- What specifically motivated them to turn to writing as a means of coverage? E.g., did they feel other methods were not working? If so, how did they know? If they completed the WAC seminar, were there elements that were particularly persuasive? Had the change in perspective been coming on for a period of time or was it more of a sudden revelation? What obstacles, both internal and external, did they face?
- How exactly do they use writing assignments to cover course material? How do they know if they have succeeded or not? How are they defining success?

As one faculty member expressed, "Time, time, and time! . . . I feel as if I am running a Marathon!" My survey revealed how emotionally charged the topic of coverage can be for many faculty members. I hope that presenting the stories of colleagues who have struggled with coverage and then developed successful ways of using writing as one means of achieving it will serve as a pressure valve of sorts: naming and providing new perspectives and strategies to address a ubiquitous, but not often discussed, problem. In the end, raising and unpacking ideas about coverage with our faculty colleagues may become a crucial step in achieving the ultimate goal of WAC: to instill and maintain cultures of writing at our colleges and universities.

Notes

1. Other scholars have built upon Calder's "uncoverage" model for history pedagogy. See Hall and Scott, Vickery, and Taillon.

2. In order to be qualified to teach WAC courses at the university (it is a four-course core requirement), faculty members complete a five-day seminar. The seminar addresses the following questions: What does it mean to approach writing as a process as well as a product? What is the relationship of writing to thinking? How can writing be used as a tool for learning subject matter and for critical thinking? What are effective ways to plan, present, sequence, and assess both formal and informal writing assignments? What are helpful and efficient ways to respond to student writing?

3. Approximately 50% (depending on school or college) of faculty evaluation of teaching at my university is based upon student ratings from IDEA surveys. IDEA provides twelve learning objectives and faculty members are evaluated based on the objectives they choose as "essential" or "important" for each course. These objectives range from traditionally coverage-oriented goals such as Objective #1: "Gaining Factual Knowledge (terminology, classifications, methods, trends)" and Objective #2: "Learning fundamental principles, generalizations, and theories" to goals regarding skill acquisition, application of knowledge, and development of dispositions.

Interestingly, faculty members across the disciplines choose objectives 1 and 2—the most content coverage-oriented goals—most frequently. According to an IDEA report ("Disciplinary Selection of Learning Objectives"), for 20 of 28 diverse academic disciplines, the percentage of classes for which instructors selected objectives 1 and/or 2 as essential or important was higher than for any other objective and/or over 80%. Therefore, since faculty members choose these goals, it makes sense that they are concerned about student perceptions of coverage in their courses.

Works Cited

Calder, Lendol. "Uncoverage: Toward a Signature Pedagogy for the History Survey." *The Journal of American History* 92.4. (2006): 1358–70. Print.

Dewey, John. *Experience and Education.* New York: Collier, 1938. Print.

"Disciplinary Selection of Learning Objectives." IDEA website. August 2008. Web. January 2014. <http://ideaedu.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/DisciplinaryLearningObjectives.pdf>.

Hall, Timothy D. and Renay Scott. "Closing the Gap Between Professors and Teachers: 'Uncoverage' as a Model of Professional Development for History Teachers." *The History Teacher* 40.2 (2007): 257–63. Print.

Henry, George H. "The Idea of Coverage in the Teaching of Literature." *The English Journal* 54.6.(1965): 475–82. Print.

Reid, E. Shelley. "Uncoverage in Composition Pedagogy." *Composition Studies* 32.1 (2004): 15–34. Print.

Rutz, Carol, et. al. "Faculty Professional Development and Student Learning: What is the Relationship?" *Change: The Magazine of Higher Learning* 44.3 (2012): 40–47. Print.

Taillon, Paul. "'Coverage' and 'Uncoverage': Teaching the U.S. History Survey in New Zealand in Twelve Weeks." *Australian Journal of American Studies* 28.1 (2009): 124–34. Print.

Vickery, Peter. "Progressive Pedagogy in the U. S. History Survey." *Radical Teacher* 83 (2008): 10–13. Print.

Wiggins, Grant, and Jay McTighe. *Understanding by Design.* 2nd ed. Alexandria, VA: ASCD, 2006. Print.

Appendix: A Guide for Departmental Discussions Regarding Coverage of Course Content

1. As a department, what are your common learning goals for this course or set of courses? Are these goals explicitly stated?

2. Where do these goals come from? Departmental consensus and/or outside entities (accreditation or licensure requirements)?

3. What are the primary ways faculty members currently "cover" these goals? (In-class lecture, online lecture, reading, writing, class discussion, other).

4. Regarding *how* faculty members cover the learning goals, how much is your pedagogical choice and how much is determined by implicit or explicit departmental norms? If the latter, how are those norms communicated to faculty members (including adjuncts)?

5. Would the department be open to learning about ways to diversify how learning goals are met?