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Affective Matters: Effective Measures for Transforming Basic Writing Programs and Instruction

BASIC WRITING IS AN EMOTIONAL UNDERTAKING for students that begins during the placement process when they discover, possibly for the first time, that the institution they plan to enter has deemed them less than prepared to take regular college English and, therefore, a number of other courses for which that class is a prerequisite. At that moment, basic writing becomes a high-stakes course, and students are marginalized as conditional members of the larger college community. They carry the "if I do not, I cannot" weight that comes with the message of remediation; if they do not successfully complete their remediation classes, they will not be able to move forward as college students or obtain a degree. While those of us who willingly work with basic writers may be committed to following the charge of Mina Shaughnessy that we connect supposed deficiencies to systemic realities rather than to students themselves (403-404), we also understand that feel-good messages about how students end up in remediation are insufficient by themselves to address students' angst, attitudes, and other negative perceptions about having to take basic writing courses. These affective issues associated with simply being placed in basic writing are sometimes compounded by students' lives outside of the academy, especially at institutions where a significant number of students do not live on campus.

Everyday demands and crises associated with work, family, and life in general pull at students' abilities to complete and/or commit to completing assignments or to simply attend classes about which they already have conflicted emotions. In other words, all of these factors combine as affective issues that basic writers face, and they become the elephants in the room. We can ignore them, but they will not go away. If we are to be successful in our efforts to transform remediation with the goal of helping more students progress through the academy toward graduation, we must find ways to account for our students' affective matters. For as Sally Chandler claims, "effective pedagogies teach to students' affective as well as their cognitive positions" (66).

Our investigation of the importance of affect to transformation efforts occurs in the context of several statewide initiatives which have led to a reconsideration and reconfiguration of the basic writing program and practices at our open-access institution where a significant number of students test into basic writing. Even at our own institution, we recognize that there cannot be a "one-size fits all" approach to the goal of successfully promoting student movement through basic

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writing in new, or perhaps just restructured, ways. However, our analysis shows that the success of transformation efforts often depends on how the affective issues of basic writers are addressed when decisions are made at the programmatic level that will impact what takes place day-to-day in the basic writing classroom. In particular, we begin by examining how policy issues lead to programmatic decisions that translate into transformative classroom models and practices. We propose an affective pedagogical stance as an essential component of any transformative classroom, regardless of the model chosen; such a stance creates a context and includes specific strategies to draw out and ameliorate, when possible, the affective issues that can impede students' success. We conclude by addressing how attention to affect can be factored into programmatic and pedagogical decisions tied to transformation efforts and basic writing instruction in general.

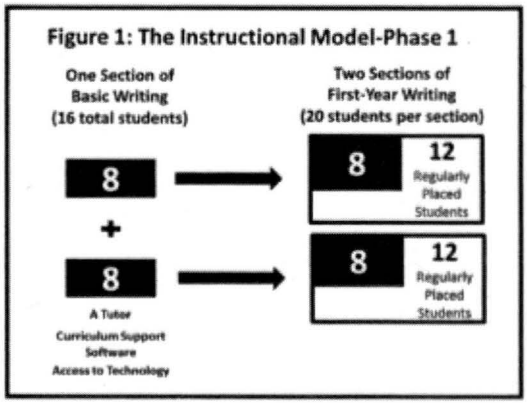
Our Transformation Efforts as Driven By State Initiatives

Our efforts to transform remediation, to change what take places in the basic writing classroom, are tied to a Complete College America grant that coincides with a state-wide mandate to collapse all developmental writing instruction into one course beginning Fall 2012. For Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC), our two-tier basic writing sequence became one course; prior to the change, students with the lowest placement scores were required to complete two basic writing courses before taking first-year writing. Of the two driving reasons for change, the Complete College American grant is the overarching impetus. Complete College America is "a national nonprofit working to increase the number of Americans with a college degree or credential of value and to close attainment gaps for traditionally underrepresented populations" (United States 21). GGC is one of only two four-year colleges among the four institutions in Georgia working on this transformation initiative. State transformation goals and developmental education are central to the mission of GGC because it is a relatively young open-access, four-year public liberal arts college committed to educating the whole student.

Located outside of Atlanta, Georgia, GGC opened in 2006 with 118 students, grew to 8,000 in fall of 2011, and enrolled just over 9,000 students in fall of 2012. The institution's rapid growth and student demographics can be attributed to the fast-growing county in which it is situated. Our student population mirrors that of Gwinnett County; the U.S. Census Bureau (2012) reports a county population that is roughly about 50% white, 20% African-American, 20% Hispanic and Latino/a, and 10% Asian. Within the institution's ethnically and economically diverse population, a high percentage of students are first-generation. Based on incoming student academic and demographic information, nearly 50% of incoming students test into at least one developmental course (basic writing, math and/or reading), and of this percentage, 50% report heavy family responsibilities, 27% work more than 20 hours per week, and 38% work 11-19 hours per week.

Committed to the charge of the Complete College America grant and the needs of our student population, we implemented the first phase of our efforts to transform our basic writing offerings in the Spring 2012 semester, one term before we would also have only a one-course basic

writing offering. We chose a co-requisite model, sometimes referred to as concurrent enrollment, that draws from the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) developed by Peter Adams at the Community College of Baltimore County (Adams et al.). According to Complete College America, "co-requisite developmental education enrolls students in remedial and college-level courses in the same subject at the same time" ("Transform" 2). Our team teaches a special co-requisite model that consists of a tripod of linked courses: two sections of college-level, first-year writing tied to one companion section of basic writing. Per Figure 1, the students in our basic writing sections are mainstreamed and accelerated through their same-semester/same-instructor enrollment in the first-year writing sections.



We select basic writing students whose placement test scores indicate that, even though they are not quite ready for first-year writing courses without some support, they are likely prepared to handle the rigor of taking two English courses in one semester as long as one of the courses acts as a support to the for-credit, first-year course. The data from the Spring 2012 semester indicate that the co-requisite enrollment model proved successful for such students in that their pass rate (86%) was higher than the aggregate for students taking the same course throughout the college (55%). Based on our success in the Spring 2012 term and as part of the second phase of our transformation efforts, we expanded the number of co-requisite-enrollment sections of basic writing from six to eleven for Fall 2012, and midterm data reflect that we can expect similar student success/completion rates.

We are excited about the continuing success of our co-requisite sections, but as we faced the Fall 2012 term, we knew that the data from those sections alone would be insufficient to carry the weight of our overall goal. Each semester, GGC offers about 30 basic writing sections, which means the 11 co-requisite sections are only a portion of the total. Yet, as part of our participation with the state of Georgia on the Complete College America grant, we committed to transforming *all* of our basic writing sections. Thus, the larger part of the second phase of transformation efforts, and possibly the most daunting, was to ensure that we were going to "do things differently" in a college with a relatively brief institutional history and in a course in which the student population was about to go through a fundamental change.

As stated previously, our transformation efforts coincided with a state mandate that we could no longer offer two basic writing classes, which meant that all Fall 2012 sections of basic writing would include a student population with a wider range of writing competencies. Given this expanded student population in one level of basic writing, coupled with a need to demonstrate "doing things differently" as part of the transformation efforts tied to the Complete College

America grant, we spent the months leading up to the Fall 2012 semester grappling with two driving questions: 1.) What would constitute "doing things differently" in the one basic writing course? and 2) What had we learned from the successful co-requisite course that might support improved basic writing instruction in general? In our approach to answer the first question, we conducted a context-specific analysis of GGC and its student population and concluded that a one-size fits all solution was not viable. As Sallyanne Fitzgerald so aptly states, "we need to serve the students who come to us with curriculum appropriate to our context—our students, our faculty, our institution" (224). When we stepped back from the data collected during the Spring 2012 implementation of the co-requisite model to assess the take-aways, we discovered one overarching focus.

Affect was a common thread across our different sections and equated to more than just an acknowledgement that our basic writing students brought affective issues with them into the classroom. We had adopted, and have subsequently trained others to adopt, a pedagogical stance that: 1) created a context in which students could engage with the affective issues that might impede their success as college students and writers and 2) employed specific strategies designed to draw out those affective issues that could be addressed within the scope of our writing classrooms. We do recognize that there are issues in students' lives that we cannot and ethically should not tackle because they are beyond the realm of our influence or expertise. For those, we support pointing students toward resources that can help them, such as on-campus counselors, financial aid, etc. Yet, the presence of such issues does not negate the need to focus on the affective matters that we can address in the process of creating successful classrooms and students. To define what we mean when we say "affective matters" and to frame the affective stance that we advocate, we integrate claims from the intersection of educational psychology and neuroscience with those of composition studies.

Framing Affective Matters

Our broadly defined definition of affective matters—as including but encompassing more than emotions—is borrowed from educational psychology and reflects the cross-disciplinary nature of our initiative. Four of us have concentrations in rhetoric and composition, but one of our team members, Amanda, is an educational psychologist with a background in writing instruction. Her participation in the construction of our transformation initiative was invaluable in helping us see the ways in which theories in educational psychology could inform our efforts. In particular, claims in educational psychology support a holistic view of learning as a complex undertaking that resists the separation of cognitive and affective issues.

Affect as linked to whole-body theories of learning is rooted in the 1956 work of Benjamin Bloom, an educational psychologist who developed three key taxonomies of learning that included the interconnected areas of cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains, also referred to as knowledge, skills, and attitude. Bloom describes affective behaviors as "changes in interest, attitudes, and values, and the development of appreciations and adequate adjustment" (7). A further

explication of how learning is linked to affective behaviors occurs in Bloom's 1964 collaboration with David Krathwohl and Bertram Masia (Kathwohl, Bloom and Masia). According to Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia, the affective domain differs from the cognitive domain in that one emphasizes what students can do (cognitive) while the other is concerned about whether they will do it (affective), which we rephrase somewhat as whether students are willing, or motivated, to use what they have learned or whether students are willing to do the hard work of acquiring the skills to complete particular tasks (60).

The claims of Bloom and his colleagues about how learning occurs through affect have been corroborated more recently in the work of Mary Helen Immordino-Yang, an affective neuroscientist and education development psychologist, and Antonio Damasio, a neuroscientist. In their 2007 article, "We Feel, Therefore We Learn: The Relevance of Affective and Social Neuroscience to Education," Immordino-Yang and Damasio begin with the claim that "[a]ny competent teacher recognizes that emotions and feelings affect students' performance and learning" (3). Thus, "[t]he more educators come to understand the nature of the relationship between emotion and cognition, the better they may be able to leverage this relationship in the design of learning environments" (Immordino-Yang and Damasio 9). They make clear the deep connections between emotion and learning and the ways in which real or imagined emotional triggers (what we refer to as affective matters) can impact the learning process. It is from such scholarship—Immodino-Yang and Damasio as building upon the work of Bloom and others— that we construct our definition of affective matters as considering, but not stopping at, emotions. In the basic writing classroom, we accept that emotions often factor into students' responses to being told that they are not quite ready for first-year writing, "which proceeds from assumptions about what they cannot do" (Adler-Kassner and Harrington 6). However, we are more interested in how their emotional responses, or the things that trigger emotional responses, result in behaviors that might interfere with their success as writers.

Several scholars in composition studies acknowledge the need for a holistic approach to teaching writing, one that does not separate students' cognitive learning from affective responses and behaviors (Alcorn; Chandler; Crawford; Elbow; hooks; Micciche; Reynolds; Worsham; to name just a few). We turned to educational psychology and neuroscience first in constructing our definition of affective matters because much of the work by compositionists focuses more limitedly on affect described as emotion. As we look at how compositionists address emotion in ways that pertain to our work with basic writers and as we move to explore claims related to how emotions drive actions and are tied to contexts, we acknowledge that discussions of emotions are closely tied to feminist scholarship.

Several compositionists, such as Mary Hiatt, bell hooks, Susan Jarratt, Eileen Schell, and Lynn Worsham, address how emotion in the classroom is sometimes classified and embodied as feminine. While we acknowledge how feminist scholarship contributes to a holistic approach to teaching students as putting aside the mind/body split, we argue that our efforts are not wholly

feminist. Or maybe we are in ways adopting Jarrett's claim that "feminism is for men as well as women" (117). We are women working on a transformation initiative that will teach men and be taught by men. At GGC, all faculty are required to teach basic writing and our efforts, or takeaways as tied to affective matters, will filter into all training we offer as we continue to work on the college's transformation efforts and champion an affective pedagogical stance—one that we view as essential given the student population at our open-access institution where about half of all students take at least one developmental English, math, or reading course upon entering college. Our emphasis is not on taking a gendered perspective regarding the need to grapple with the emotions of basic writers. Instead, as stated in the introduction to this article, we are merely presenting ways to address the elephant in the room, the affective matters that are often difficult to overlook because they underlie students' presence and actions in our classrooms.

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Worsham's seminal article, "Going Postal: Pedagogic Violence and the Schooling of Emotion," is at the heart of many contemporary discussions in the field regarding the importance of emotion and writing instruction. Worsham problematizes emotion as it relates to dominant versus liberatory pedagogies, insisting that liberatory pedagogies not reify subjectivities that silence emotion, particularly for certain subordinate groups. According to Worsham:

> Their increased emotionality does not need reasons; it is simply given and justified by the structure of subordination. Cognitivism nevertheless capitalizes on the fact that those in subordinate positions can and must be taught, especially in school and workplace, that emotional responses (such as anger, rage, or bitterness) are always inappropriate and unjustified personal responses—forms of emotional stupidity, so to speak, if not psychopathology—rather than suppressed social responses to the objective conditions of humiliation wrought by structures of subordination and exploitation. In general, the dominant pedagogy of emotion refuses the expression of anger by subordinates. (224-25)

Worsham's claim, that those who are subordinated are schooled not to express or address their emotions, is relevant to our assertion that the affective issues of basic writers matter in the classroom and in programmatic decisions that impact classroom practices.

Those in the field who explore emotion as linked to something students do in their writing or as related to particular contexts include work by such individuals as Christa Albrecht-Crane, Sally

Chandler, Jennifer Edbauer, Laura Micciche, and T.R. Johnson. Micciche, in particular, focuses on the importance of emotion to teaching and learning. She joins Worsham in arguing against perceptions of emotion as inconsequential and feminine. Micciche "challenges longstanding views of emotion as unreasonable, as a mark of feminine excess, and as exclusively personal. . . . For too long emotion has stood for subjugated knowledge, by functioning as analog to women, opinion, the personal, and the body" ("Doing" 6-7). In Micciche's work we hear a nod toward the emotions-drive-actions claims in educational psychology ("Doing" 105). However, her focus on awareness of emotion primarily as a rhetorical concept that revitalizes theory and practice is a bit short of our more pragmatic assertion about actively addressing the affective matters of basic writing students in ways that will aid in their success ("Doing" 6; "Emotion" 177).

In her work, Chandler conducts an analysis of how emotions manifest in students' writing. She "suggests that writing assignments that press young adults toward critical thinking and identity shifts can evoke stressful emotions that, in turn, evoke discursive patterns inappropriate for the demands of critical analytic writing" (54). Chandler's following claim about emotions in contexts makes her work important to our definition of affect: "By creating learning contexts to address learners' emotions, and thereby lessening defense, instructors can help students make conscious and therefore more powerful composing choices" (67). Albrecht-Crane also addresses the fact that, because emotions are "ubiquitous," existing in the texts students write as well as inside and outside of the writing classroom, they should be addressed. Albrecht-Crane charges educators to "think through and with affect because something valuable, critical, something *political*, happens when we relate affectively to each other across the spaces of the classroom" (563).

From the intersections of educational psychology, neuroscience, and composition studies we claim that effective instruction necessitates close attention to the fact that learning and emotion are intertwined. There is no split between body and mind. How students feel about a subject, a classroom, and even a writing task should not be overlooked in the process of helping them become better writers. This claim is especially relevant for basic writers in particular because simply being in the course can be an emotionally loaded experience, which is sometimes exacerbated by the fact that students are also entering the unfamiliar terrain of the academy. Such emotional triggers can adversely impact students' motivation and elicit certain unproductive behaviors. Thus, we actively seek to address these affective matters along the continuum of emotions to actions. Considering students' affective matters is just the first step. The goal is to address them in ways that ameliorate unproductive behaviors and reinforce positive ones. Regarding negative behaviors that might interfere with students' success, sometimes a conversation of the almost obvious might do; other times, it requires strategies, planned activities or processes. The combination of careful consideration of students' affective matters coupled with related practices designed to address them fall under the umbrella of what we call an affective pedagogical stance. This stance facilitates an environment in which affective matters are dealt with as a matter of course.

The following section includes three representative examples of what did, and can, take place

when an affective stance is adopted; we conclude this section with a video bridge that adds students' voices to the stories we tell. We then discuss the implications of adopting an affective stance as it relates to programmatic changes amidst a climate of change, offering suggestions for how to think about affective matters along with specific strategies for how to address them.

Representing an Affective Pedagogical Stance

The three representative examples in this section—told as classroom stories—reflect key affective matters that we focus on as central to our pedagogical stance: motivation, emotions and writing, and an overall holistic pedagogy. They reflect our conscious decisions as framed by the pedagogical stance. As an implementation team we met regularly, sometimes twice a week, to discuss the transformation initiative in general and to think through what to do and how to be in the basic writing portion of our co-requisite model, where students were concurrently enrolled in basic writing and first-year writing at the same time with the same professor. Regarding what to do, we opted for pedagogical freedom. We agreed that the curriculum of the first-year writing class would drive that of the companion basic writing class since the overarching goal was students' successful completion of first-year writing. In basic writing, we employed scaffolding by creating assignments that fed into, or honed skills for, ones that students had to complete for first-year writing. Deciding how to be is where the affective pedagogical stance informed our actions in the representative examples we share as particular classroom stories.

1. Addressing Student Motivation

We focus on students' motivation as central to an affective pedagogical stance in our reliance upon educational psychology and the claim that the affective domain impacts what students are willing to do (Bloom; Immodino-Yang and Damasio; Krathwohl, Bloom, and Masia). According to M. Kay Alderman, when students are motivated, they are more likely to develop to their potential, and it is the responsibility of educators to help students find their personal sources of motivation that can assist students in developing goals for success and plans to deal with the obstacles that might get in their way of success (11-15). One way instructors can help basic writing students become motivated to succeed is by integrating self-regulatory practices within their writing process pedagogy through the implementation of a well-planned system of goal-setting and self-monitoring activities. In academic situations, the term "self-regulation" is defined as, "the self-directive process through which learners transform their mental abilities into academic skills" (Zimmerman, "Developing" 2). According to Barry J. Zimmerman, self-regulation is a cyclical procedure involving personal, behavioral, and environmental processes. Self-regulatory practices involve using feedback from previous tasks to adjust behaviors required to perform a current task ("Attaining" 13-39). This feedback for basic writers leads to concrete points of reference that assist students in deciding what actions must be taken to fulfill their writing and academic goals, despite the myriad of affective issues that might interfere with their motivation to succeed.

SUZANNE'S STORY

In my spring 2012 co-requisite sections, I had two single mothers who juggled responsibilities and seemingly conflicting demands in their lives. One woman, Sheila,[1] is in her thirties. The other woman, Rhonda, is in her forties. Both women were more than ready to achieve the dream of a college education. They each entered college with this goal; however, they were both immediately taken aback when they tested into basic writing. They both saw it as a defeat and as a large roadblock to achieving their long-term goals. Sheila also placed into basic math, furthering her feelings of frustration.

As part of my quest to instill self-monitoring and self-regulating skills in my students, I implement a system of goal-setting and self-monitoring activities. Such activities may seem out of place in the writing classroom, but I address them because they have a direct impact on students' success. At the beginning of the Spring 2012 semester, I asked students to think and write about their long-term goals—about what brought them to college in the first place—about the goals they had as students that semester, and finally, about the goals they had for basic writing and first-year writing. Next, students were asked to narrow their lists of semester/writing course goals into one list of five specific goals. Because most of the students had affective issues beyond their classes, I allowed them to create their list of goals focusing on any combination of their goals for improving their writing and their "life issues."

After deciding on a list of five targeted goals for the semester, and after extensive class discussion, students were asked to think and write about any obstacles, intrinsic and extrinsic, that might get in the way of them accomplishing their goals. They were then asked to think and write about plans for how they might alleviate and/or lessen the obstacles they had identified. In order to have a better chance of achieving their goals, students must also set proximal goals to help keep them motivated, to help them manage their time, and to guide their progress. In a well-planned system of goal-setting, frequently set proximal goals are advantageous because they provide continuous sources for self-monitoring throughout the process; therefore, in my basic writing course, students were asked to complete proximal goal sheets for each of their first year composition essay assignments. Students were asked to evaluate their performance, analyze why they did or did not meet their short-term goals for the assignment, and then to set goals for the next assignment. At the end of the semester, students were asked to write a self-assessment essay as part of their final portfolio for the first-year writing course.

Even though both Sheila and Rhonda received fairly high grades throughout the semester, they both also struggled with self-efficacy due to their obligations outside of school. Their personal lives were in a constant battle with their academic lives. Both women had several challenges

1. All names of students in this article are pseudonyms. References to their work are made with their permission.

outside of the classroom throughout the semester that greatly affected their motivation and confidence for succeeding in college. In spite of this, both women credited the goal-setting, self-monitoring, and self-regulating activities for helping them get through the semester.

In her final portfolio self-assessment essay that she titled "Student Triumphs," Sheila wrote:

> Insecurity in my own academic capabilities has been one of my most formidable intrinsic blocks. This performance anxiety has had a major effect on me. And while I anticipated this before I started classes, I did not understand exactly how much this anxiety would affect my work . . . I have learned to approach each obstacle individually, the way I do my assignments, which has allowed me to keep from becoming overwhelmed and dropping out of school completely. . . Additionally, extrinsic factors such as my responsibilities as a parent, a daughter, a sister, and a grand-daughter are a severe strain on my time and finances. Even with all these obstacles, I am somewhat confident that I can accomplish my goals next semester. Though I still struggle with my own academic insecurities, I plan to face this intrinsic roadblock . . . I will need to focus more on my own success so that I can support the people I care about . . . My motivation for accomplishing these goals is knowing that in a few years I will walk across a stage. . .

In her final portfolio self-assessment essay, Rhonda wrote:

> Initially, I had set my standards too high. I wanted to start my first semester off, by taking on 12 credit hours. . . . My goal was to prove to the College that I can do the required assignments with no problem . . . every time I received an unwanted grade, I would start questioning myself as to why was I putting myself through this . . . When I tend to stress, the stressing brings along self-doubt, and lowers my confidence . . . The biggest fear of all was making a choice of going back to school after thirty years of being away from any form of education, and I have proved to myself that I can do this if I just stick to my plan. . .

Because Sheila and Rhonda scored below the cut off score on the entrance grammar-type exam, they were both subjected to an exit version of the same exam. When they were informed of this well into the semester, it temporarily set both women back a little in terms of their confidence and motivation. I had to intervene by holding individual conferences with both of them. The conferences were focused on discussion and confidence-building and not on reviewing test material because both women already possessed strong academic writing skills. They needed supportive discussion, not grammar drills. Once the women felt ready, they took the exit exam, and I am happy to report that both Sheila and Rhonda successfully passed all exit requirements and earned an A in both basic writing and first-year writing.

Because I was able to help both Sheila and Rhonda rebuild their confidence, they were motivated to take the required exit exam. Students' motivation to succeed in school can be directly linked to their beliefs about intelligence, ability, and effort. An affective pedagogical stance helps

students interrogate their own belief systems as affective matters that can interfere with their motivation to succeed.

2. Not Overlooking Students' Emotions

Affective matters, although not wholly emotional, are tied to emotions because emotions drive actions. An affective pedagogical stance sees feelings as central to learning (Immodino-Yang and Damasio) and intersects with claims in composition studies (Chandler) that affective matters can be seen as something students do in their writing. Chandler argues that writing instructors need to think of "writing not as a product, or even a process, but rather a complex intersection of discourses—including emotional discourses—that orchestrate what and how we will compose within a given context" (67). In so doing, Chandler's goal is to suggest ways for writing instructors to allow students to address and overcome emotions that function as obstacles to writing. Once students have addressed their emotions, she suggests instructors "orchestrate interactive reflections to help students examine changes in their writing patterns in light of the relationships between discourse and emotion," and in order to provide students opportunities to move from personal to public discourse (66). The benefit is that students who recognize the emotional aspects of their writing can gain perspective and overcome negative emotional responses to writing and the writing process. Chandler's metaemotional approach complements metacognitive approaches to writing instruction intended to help students develop a more holistic understanding of and more control over their writing. Although Chandler's article focuses on sophomore student writing associated with a service learning course she taught, we find much of what she argues applies to basic writing students.

CARA'S STORY

In recognition of the problem anxiety can create for my basic writing students, I provide an opportunity for students to discuss their anxiety in an assigned literacy narrative, the first paper of the semester. The assignment specifically asks students to use the paper as a way to introduce themselves as writers and to include discussions of their successes, hindrances, confidence levels, and goals for their own writing. We begin this paper by freewriting about the subject on the first day of class and students work through drafts and revisions over the course of one month.

One pattern I have noticed in responses to the assignment is that students often choose to discuss a specific, traumatic event that shaped their writing. I also noticed that there tends to be marked differences in the way they discuss their emotions between the first freewrite and their final revision. To demonstrate the importance of addressing student emotion, my focus will be on one student named Julie. She admitted she felt "dumb" because she was required to take our basic writing course. Her literacy narrative addresses and rethinks some of the emotional responses she has had when writing for school. It is my belief that it is because she dealt with her emotional responses to writing that her post-course survey indicates improved self-efficacy.

Julie's central anecdote is about a writing contest at her school when she was in fifth grade.

She reports:

> I was determined to win. In fact, I was almost certain I would win [the contest]. This was the point in my life when I began to have a different outlook on writing. This experience changed how I felt about writing. I ended up not winning. I didn't even make it to the final three. I started to doubt myself, more so my writing. I took this defeat to the heart. In my mind, this meant that I couldn't write, which in fact, I still believe to this day. At this point, I swore never to embarrass myself like that ever again, which resulted in my shying away from writing, but not completely. I still kept a journal, but I knew no one would ever read it or judge me as a bad writer. (Julie's first draft).

Julie's narrative identifies the particular place and time when she began to feel anxious about her writing. In fact, although students situated their anecdotes differently, nine of my thirteen students expressed they felt nervous or anxious about writing. Like Julie, who reports having felt humiliated, when discussing the reasons for their anxiety or lack of confidence the majority of students point to teacher criticism and to a fear of being judged by peers, both of which made them feel "stupid" or "dumb."

Over the course of one month, our class peer reviewed papers, revised, met with our class tutor, and revised again. Below is Julie's revision:

> At that time I had a passion for writing and was willing to do anything for an opportunity to show off my work, but little did I know the contest would shift my love of writing to fear that would prevent me from writing for a public audience for a long time. . . . Prior to the contest, I enjoyed writing a lot. As matter of fact I loved writing. . . . There was something fascinating about writing. Sometimes I would hear a still small voice inside of me that just wouldn't give me peace until I wrote in my journal and that calmed the voice.
>
> Losing the contest was by far the worst thing that could have happened to me as a self-proclaimed "writer" in grade five. I really took the defeat to heart. I began doubting my writing ability. Rather than viewing the loss as a learning experience or a stepping stone, I took it as a slap in the face. Fear took over. Fear of not being able to write good enough for a public audience, especially in school whether it was teachers, principals, heck even my peers fell in that category. For that very reason I didn't write again publicly with pleasure for a long time. I hated it, well at least on the surface it seemed; but deep down inside I secretly wanted to learn how to write in a way that would appeal to everyone and anyone whether they were young or old. . . . Most of all, I wanted another chance to prove to myself that I could write but that was far too dangerous. The thought of feeling humiliated if people once again responded negatively to my writing was far too dreadful.

> I was torn between two different emotions. I simply imagined I would someday be able to write freely and beautiful as I did in my journal but heartbreakingly, fear led me to close up any part of me that was willing to write for a public audience, but now that I am in college I feel more stress free concerning my writing ability. Writing to an audience no longer intimidates me and to my surprise I have gained a different view. The audience now serves a guide to writing. Their response (negative or positive) only helps me in improving my writing. Whatever feedback I get from them, I either take it and put it to good use or leave it and try to write better the next time instead of shutting down completely like I previously did.
>
> Being given the opportunity to take both English 99 and 1101 at the same time has made a tremendous impact on me and has given me the encouragement I needed to enjoy writing once more. The English 99 class alone has helped me in becoming more open to writing on so many different levels. I no longer feel pressure when I write as if I am writing to compete. I have learned not to overthink the whole writing process and just let my writing flow as thoughts flood my mind. Even though it may seem I am learning how to write all again, at least now I am writing to let my audience know that I too have opinions and why they matter . . . It has been a really long journey for me and to see how far I have come motivates me more and more to break out of my shell and practice writing in order to improve my skills. I'm not saying this is the end of all difficulties that accompanies writing but now I know to tackle the challenges slowly one step at a time. I can finally say I feel free from the fear that has hindered my ability to learn how to write for so many years especially a public audience. (Julie's final draft)

Excerpts from Julie's papers illustrate how she used the assignment as an opportunity to process and rethink her emotional response to her writing experiences. Each draft allowed her to gain more distance about what her experience meant. The result is that she reclaims her love of writing more emphatically in the last draft, as evidenced by "[a]t that time I had a passion for writing and was willing to do anything for an opportunity to show off my work," and "I enjoyed writing a lot." She also is able to reflect to the point where she recognizes that she had time to grow since her fifth-grade experience and did not have to feel badly about writing anymore; "I can finally say I feel free from the fear that has hindered my ability to learn how to write for so many years especially a public audience." Julie is able to do this because, in part, she acknowledges that she didn't actually know much about writing in the fifth grade: "I may not have fully grasped the true meaning of writing at that time." Most importantly, Julie is able to understand that her response to her fifth-grade writing contest was an emotional one; "fear led me to close up any part of me that was willing to write for a public audience," that no longer defines her as a writer. She has grown to become a writer who can think through and manage her purposes with the needs of an audience; "I am writing to let my audience know that I too have opinions and why they matter." Rather than seeing an audience as an entity she must please, she recognizes that she can depend on it to help her

make her writing clearer: "[t]he audience now serves a guide to writing. Their response (negative or positive) only helps me in improving my writing capability. Whatever feedback I get from them, I either take it and put it to good use or leave it and try to write better the next time instead of shutting down completely like I previously did." Processing her emotional response allows Julie to understand herself differently in writing situations.

Julie's new knowledge makes her understand she has developed strategies to succeed: "I know to tackle the challenges slowly one step at a time." Finally, recognizing how much she has grown motivates Julie "to break out of my shell and practice writing in order to improve my skills." Julie's writing demonstrates research that recognizes a pattern of student writing that includes "a narrative structure that move[s] from an emotional to a more reasoned stance, [comes] to closure, and allow[s] the author to gain increased distance from upsetting events" (Chandler 61).

Understanding the emotional aspect of their writing process can give students more control of their writing and allow them to rethink what their responses mean. Julie's post-course survey is telling. She initially reported that she could never adjust her writing to the needs of any audience, that she could sometimes motivate herself to write papers about topics that did not interest her, and that she never shared her writing to others for feedback. Julie's post-course survey indicated that she could sometimes adjust her writing to the needs of any audience, that she could always motivate herself to write papers about topics that did not interest her, and that she sometimes shared her writing with others for feedback.

I chose to have students complete literacy narratives as part of my adoption of an affective pedagogical stance. They help provide ways for students to engage in emotional discourse to process important metacognitive and metaemotional issues; through this processing, students come to understand and recognize their own skills and become self-directed.

3. Creating a Context for Affect

Our overarching goal of adopting an affective pedagogical stance represents a holistic approach; in doing so, it eschews the mind/body split that is challenged in both educational psychology and composition. A holistic stance demonstrates the premise in the work of Bloom and others that what students will do as part of their learning process is encapsulated in how they feel. In composition studies, in particular, the work of Worsham is most helpful for advocating a holistic approach to teaching writing. Basic writers in many ways are members of the subjugated groups that Worsham refers to, individuals who in dominant pedagogies are schooled away from addressing their affective matters: "In particular, [such] pedagogy provides and limits a vocabulary of emotion and, especially to those in subordinate positions, it teaches an inability to adequately apprehend, name, and interpret their affective lives" (223). Instead, we advocated, and through thoughtful intention, created contexts in which the affective matters of basic writers could be named, understood, and addressed, when possible, in ways that reconfigure the subordinate positions of our students. We were deliberate in sharing with them that they had entered a space in

which they and their perceptions of, or feelings about, writing and the writing process, along with college in general, mattered.

AMANDA'S STORY

My classrooms are open and relaxed. I spend a great deal of time getting to know each one of my students so that I can better apply the affective pedagogical stance as a holistic teaching approach. This takes time but is especially important for the basic writing student. I need to know how each student approaches writing so that I can offer better feedback and instruction. I also typically know where my students grew up, a little about their families, what they enjoy doing in their spare time, and other personal information that surfaces during conversations, writing, and conferences. Our conversations lead me to the knowledge I need to effectively apply a holistic teaching model for individual students. As a result, students more willingly open up about struggles with depression and anxiety, any disabilities they may have, and how their personal lives impact their school work. I have also found that this process works best when I also openly share my life, experiences, and struggles as well. My students know a great deal about me as a professor and person; we discuss my experiences in school and as an only child. They know I grew up in a small southern town, that I struggled as a first-generation college student, and that I like unicorns and hate goat cheese. This shared knowledge makes it possible for me to instruct students more effectively; if I want to motivate a student and really holistically "reach" a student, I have to know more about the individual than just his or her writing habits.

I have to know more about the individual than just his or her writing habits.

In my co-requisite classes, the essays combine personal or reflective experiences along with analysis. My approach exposes students to the idea of discourse communities, and I also borrow from Min-Zhan Lu's notion of creating contact zones (Lu constructs her approach based on Mary Louise Pratt's work in her noted article "Arts of the Contact Zone"). Students begin the class with a narrative where they consider how their home, family, and experiences growing up have affected their writing and language. We then discuss the home and local community as the first discourse community and transition into the second essay, where students choose to analyze a discourse community to which they belong. My classes also do a presentation where students choose a discourse community they are passionate about to share with classmates. Every semester I have live music performances, original poetry readings, dance, crafting, painting, and many more unique ideas from students. I then push students to see how behavior, language, and values shift in each of our communities. To me, it combines every element of a holistic model because students engage their bodies, cognitive, and socio-emotional selves with the work.

The following excerpt comes from a student's narrative in which I asked students to reflect on their history with writing and their process:

> I was very shy growing up; I was always nervous talking to others and making new friends. I never really knew how to interact with others and I just always felt weird when I was engaged in a conversation with people my age. I only had three friends when I was a child but I always got along better with adults and was more comfortable around them and to this day most of friends are a few years older then me. Since I was shy and kept to myself I usually would draw little cartoons and eventually began to write stories to go with them. That was always my favorite activity in school when my teachers would tell us to write a story about whatever we wanted and to be creative. I would write about make believe adventures I would go on with my friends, or dreams I had and even about what I would be like as an adult. I could just be creative and in my stories and be whatever I wanted; I could think of anything and wrote it down and just went from there and that's what writing is to me. Being able to put any of your thoughts or dreams down.

The passage reflects the type of work I receive from students on the topic. Here the student openly shares her struggles with making friends her own age and how this leads her to drawing and writing. In almost every instance, students in co-requisite classes find, through this assignment, that something in their past has indelibly shaped who they are as writers; sometimes the death of a grandfather prompted their first song lyrics and other times a cute boy in the third grade inspired tentative love notes. Students share such first experiences as failing to spell the word "between" correctly in a spelling bee and the scary teacher who forced them to write the word "chew" on the board 100 times because of the way they pronounced "you." After I read these essays, I know something very personal about my students, and I reciprocate by sharing some personal aspect of my life that I see as relating. The exchanges help generate a bond between my students and me.

The open and ongoing exchanges I have with my students create a holistic context in which they and their affective issues matter. The bond I create with them allows me to actively position myself as a resource to help them process and address affective issues that might impede their success in and outside of my classroom. My affective pedagogical stance manifests in students' comments and behaviors as they become increasingly willing to do the hard work of college writing.

A Video Bridge: Adding Students' Voices to Our Stories

The following short video includes the voices of some of Amanda's students who, in their own words, communicate how the pedagogical stance she adopted motivated them to succeed: http://podcasting.gcsu.edu/4DCGI/Podcasting/GGC/Episodes/30564/458791841.mov. The video ends with a brief commentary by Cara and, in less than two minutes, does what we cannot adequately express in the many words we included (and excluded) from this article. What makes the video such a rich example of our commitment to adopt an affective pedagogical stance is the fact that it was not created to exemplify the claims we forward regarding the stance.

In a serendipitous moment at the end of the Spring 2012 term, we had an epiphany in a team meeting. We wanted to record some of our students, but we were headed into the period between classes and exams. Amanda's class was the only one that had not ended for the term. Because she had one more class session on the day of our meeting, she offered to talk to her students to see if they would be willing to come back for the videotaping. That the students actually agreed to meet with us for the taping after their class ended for the term underscores her claims about the type of student-teacher relationship she worked to build during the term.

The entire video process, from conception and execution, took place over a three-day window. We had the epiphany to create the video on Tuesday. Two of us (Amanda and Kim) tested available technology on Wednesday, which is when we decided it would be great to also interview any available team members. With the help of our technical department, we recorded everyone on Thursday. There were no rehearsals for Cara or any of the students.

In the video, the students use the term "Segue" or "Segue Model," which is the name we selected internally for the co-requisite model in which the students were concurrently enrolled in basic writing and first-year writing during the same term, with the same instructor. In their own words, the students provide a testament to our commitment to a holistic pedagogical stance that promotes motivation, makes rooms for students' emotional responses, and creates a context where their affective issues matter.

Implications for Pedagogies of Transformation

As Wendy Olson claims in "On the Institutionalization of Basic Writing as Political Economy," basic writing—which is "at once a program, a classroom, a pedagogy, a practice, a certain kind of student—not to mention programs, classrooms, pedagogies, practices, and students" is *"always"* in crisis (55). Within the current crisis characterized by calls for transformation shaped by public outcries regarding costs and college completion, we share our stories and students' voices not as a charge for "this is how it must be done" but as suggestions and related strategies that reflect careful attention to students and contexts when participating in, and responding to, calls for change.

Since public discussions about the need to transform remedial education rarely focus on students, they are even less likely to include a focus on how students' affective issues should be factored into the restructuring of programs and curriculum. Instead, public reports on basic writing tend to oversimplify or render invisible the population in need of basic writing instruction; they consist of reductive arguments that focus on costs or the relationship between basic writing instruction and the college completion agenda. Shannon Carter draws attention to one such discussion that challenges the viability and cost of basic writing instruction in the academy at large. According to Carter:

> More recently, we have begun to hear echoes of the same rhetoric of exclusion, most clearly in response to the Secretary of Education's "commission on the Future of Educa-

tion" (2005). In the "Issue Paper" . . . Charles Miller and Cheryl Oldham "set the context" for this "National Dialogue" by declaring the very existence of basic writing as a major reason for the American postsecondary education's "diminished capacity" (2006). As they explain, "[s]everal institutions of higher education are admitting students who lack adequate preparation for college-level work, thus expending precious resources in remediation." (7)

While reports of basic writing instruction and the college completion agenda are somewhat less dire, who students are seems tangential to the focus on data-driven results and costs. The U.S. Department of Education published a *College Completion Toolkit* in March 2011 that includes this focus on the data and costs associated with college completion and developmental education. The report begins with a focus on how much revenue a college-educated populace can contribute to a state's tax base (1). It goes on to make the following cost-benefit claims regarding remedial education in general:

> Bypassing developmental or remedial education increases the likelihood of course and degree completion. More precisely tailored assessments and placement policies combined with individualized instruction thus can increase student achievement and decrease the student- and state-borne costs associated with semester-long remedial courses. (19)

The goals of degree completion and transformation to promote achievement are laudable; however, reductive statements such as those stated above need to be coupled with what takes place in the basic writing classroom and students' stories to provide a balanced picture of what must be done to effect change.

As we join institutional and public conversations about the transformation—and we should join them—a key question we need to ask is, How do we adapt our institutional practices so that we foster change that aligns with our actual students and their affective positions? We offer two broad suggestions and specific strategies as ways to address this question:

1. *Work to understand specific student populations and their needs when developing, implementing, and/or revising programs and curricular models.*

That context matters is not a new concept in conversations about basic writing and transformation initiatives. Editors Gerri McNenny and Sallyanne H. Fitzgerald connect these two areas in their 2001 edited collection, *Mainstreaming Basic Writing: Politics and Pedagogies of Access*. McNenny's introduction provides the context for the long-standing nature of transformation conversations; she explains how "[t]he call to examine the role of basic writing programs was sounded quite competently [as far back] as 1992 . . . by numerous audiences—by politicians, boards of trustees, university administrators and the public alike" (1). Fitzgerald sums up the underlying theme of the book based on the work of its authors: "The best approach depends on the context of the college or university" (221). This claim, like the transformation debate itself, is somewhat timeless. We of-

fer the following suggestions and strategies for context-based transformation efforts:

- Incorporate individuated program structures and delivery modes to address different types of students and the range of students' needs. Flexibility in program structures is especially important for nontraditional students who have the motivation to get it done but whose life commitments can become obstacles in the pathway to successful course completion. At GGC, we did not adopt a one-size fits all approach to transforming our basic writing program. Instead, we added an accelerated, early-exit model to the co-requisite model as a way to "do things differently" as part of our transformation efforts. Students can complete their basic writing course a few weeks earlier (at weeks 11 and 13 versus week 16) if their work in the term and submitted writing portfolio indicate that they are ready to handle the rigor of the first-year writing course they will have to take in a subsequent semester. The early-exit model has already been adopted by other Georgia institutions participating in the state's transformation efforts. This model works particularly well for students who may only need basic writing as a refresher course but whose lived realities makes the co-requisite model impractical. The students are able to complete their writing course early enough in the term so that they have the remaining weeks to focus on their other courses and outside commitments. However, for students who need a bit more time to hone their writing skills, such a model is also effective since most of the core writing instruction takes place in the first 10 weeks of the term. Students then can spend the last several weeks getting the individuated instruction and support they need to help them improve their writing and polish their portfolios.
- Explore holistic curriculum models that allow students to address their lived realities, like identity formation, career goals, and the impact of their emotions on their writing, the writing process, and their long-term success in the institution. Basic writers, especially, need instruction that moves them from the margins to engaged, participatory members in their institutions. This is less likely to occur without holistic approaches that consider the many factors such students struggle with inside and outside of the classroom.
- Provide information and training for faculty and other internal and external audiences that adequately profiles the basic writing students impacted by transformation initiatives. A lack of understanding of who the students are in a particular context can lead to less-than-effective basic writing programs and methods. At GGC, we provide extensive training for basic writing faculty that includes discussions about state and national transformation initiatives, research about best practices related to basic writing instruction, and strategies that exemplify an affective pedagogical stance.

2. Recognize that in all strategies and programs, affect matters.

Any efforts to transform remediation or rethink practices associated basic writing instruction should include more than an assent to the role affective matters play in student success. If "learning, in the complex sense in which it happens in school or the real world, is not a rational or disembodied process" (Immordino-Yang and Damasio 4), affective matters are central to thinking about, talking about, and implementing any effective change. Below are programmatic strategies that can be employed to support attention to affective matters:

- Develop institutional-wide collaborations that help faculty and administrators outside of basic writing understand the role affect plays in learning and student success. At GGC, we have implemented block schedules that link reading, math, and other general education courses taken by developmental students. These blocks of faculty cohorts are trained to understand how important affect matters are to the students' success.
- Create cross-disciplinary programs designed to enhance pedagogy across the institution. While it is important for basic writing teachers to assume an affective pedagogical stance in the classroom, faculty across campus have much to learn from them, particularly at institutions like GGC where a large population of students take developmental courses upon entering college. Recently, Cara created a best practices teaching certificate titled "Writing as a Tool for Learning," which includes a series of workshops that help promote an affective pedagogy. Our team members teach several of the workshops, which are based on a common read, Mike Rose's *Lives on the Boundaries*.

We are actively working to create an institutional culture that addresses the affective matters of basic writing students. How they feel about writing, the writing process, the institution, themselves, and even the realities of their lives that act as stimuli for emotional responses within the classroom should not be marginalized in ways that are reminiscent of how the students are sometimes marginalized in the institution. Affective matters are myriad and complex, but we have learned that not doing the hard work of considering and addressing them is not doing the complete work associated with initiatives to transform basic writing programs and instruction.

Top-down initiatives meant to transform basic writing instruction need to be carefully developed to assist instructors in addressing affective issues. However, in order for students to succeed and to reach national graduation goals, an affective pedagogical stance is vital in the classroom. An affective pedagogical stance:

- Resists the separation of cognitive and affective matters by understanding the complex relationship between emotion and cognition that impacts learning and writing. In other words, it enacts a pedagogy that is holistic by accepting emotional responses as part of the learning process.
- Allows instructors to recognize that one pedagogical stance will not succeed for all stu-

dents or for any one student all of the time. Instructors need time to get to know each individual student and the student's needs to create a bond that situates the instructor as a useful resource and guide. In other words, learning to see students as individuals with specific needs allows instructors to assess students' learning and suggest or collaborate with them to develop specific strategies for overcoming affective issues that hinder student progress. One strategy to get to know students is via the individual conference. Another strategy is for instructors cultivate the practice of overtly encouraging students on a one-on-one basis to view them as resources for writing instruction and college success in general.

- Creates a context in which students have opportunities to engage with their own affective issues. Instructors should include assignments and activities meant to draw out affective issues so they may be discussed and addressed. Assignments may include goal-setting and self-monitoring activities that teach students how to be self-directed learners or writing assignments in which students discuss, process, and rethink emotional responses to past writing assignments, such as literacy narratives.

Most importantly, instructor intervention needs to be flexible and appropriately responsive to the needs of individual students. Lastly, program development and classroom praxis need to recognize the complex relationship between cognition, emotion, and student learning for improved success rates of students through basic writing on to graduation.

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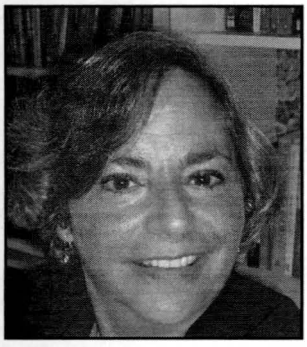

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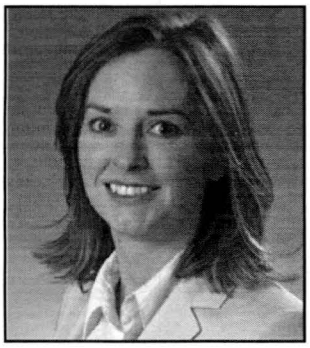

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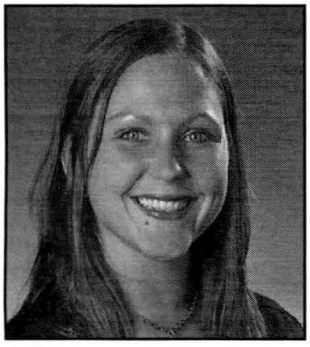

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