



Writing Programs

Department of English
Arizona State University Tempe

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In this issue:

As Writing Programs continues to direct its critical focus inward on the values shared by its teachers, it is important to recognize just how outwardly directed those values are. At a time when institutions of higher education are paying increased attention to the varied needs of local communities, Writing Programs teachers continue to demonstrate their commitment to teaching, research, and service that cultivates productive relationships both inside and outside the university, fostering new and more effective opportunities for engagement. This issue of *Writing Notes* highlights the many ways our teachers have forged new partnerships, sustained old ones, and established prolonged and productive engagement with students, faculty, administrations, other departments, and the surrounding community. The articles found herein serve as evidence of our teachers’ desire to share their time and expertise with those around them, as well as their desire to learn from such experiences. Engagement, says Ernest Boyer, is a two-way street, “defined by mutual respect among the partners for what each brings to the table.” This issue of *Writing Notes* is a chance for us as a program to reflect on our many contributions, but also to acknowledge what we have learned in the process and how we can leverage that knowledge to develop even more productive networks in the semesters to come.

Writing Opens Doors

By Dan Bommarito, Assistant Director of Writing Programs

On Saturday, March 3rd, Arizona State University opened its doors to the public for a celebration of arts, humanities, and sciences. ASU’s inaugural Night of the Open Door—the signature event of the statewide Arizona SciTech Festival—showcased the rich and diverse offerings of the university and invited departments within Durham Language and Literature to showcase their own unique brand of academic work. Immediately following the 2012 ASU Composition Conference, the LL Building became a focal point for the festival, and Writing Programs was center stage.



On a large display table in the middle of the LL lobby, representatives of Writing Programs set up shop handing out department t-shirts, stickers, brochures, and custom business cards (see page 10 for an example) to festival participants. Next to the table, projected on a large screen was the work of students in ASU writing courses. Some of this shared work came from Alice Daer’s course on digital ethnography. Informed by Jim Gee’s and Betty Hayes’ concept of affinity spaces, students in Daer’s course conducted online ethnographies of “affinity” groups and presented their findings using Prezi or other online presentation tools.

Other work projected on-screen came from students in Zach Waggoner’s course in video game theory. Waggoner recorded interviews with his students in which he asked them to respond to questions such (**continued on page 11**)

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Keeping Our Values Visible: A Report on the Digital Archive

By Shirley Rose, Professor of English and Director of Writing Programs



How can we demonstrate that we mean what we say when we claim that “we value student writing”? If we value student writing, why don’t we keep it—or digital copies of it—after the end of a writing course? Could we maintain a repository of our students’ writing in our courses without implying a claim of ownership of that work? If we maintain an archive of student writing, how will we access it and who should have access? What are appropriate uses for the archive?

How many gigabytes of memory would be needed to store digital portfolios of coursework produced by all of our students in all of our Writing Programs courses in a single year? How could we store the archive in a way that would make it accessible to us for program assessment purposes and to other researchers interested in how writers learn? If each of our students’ portfolios includes at least one multimedia project that uses images, audio, or video elements that take up huge amounts of digital space, is the “cloud” an appropriate location for a portfolio archive? These are some of the questions that have occupied us this first year of piloting our Writing Programs Archive Project.

As the Spring 2012 semester closed, we completed our second round of collecting student writing for our Writing Program Archive. Many thanks to our teachers and students for the time and energy they have contributed to this effort, especially as the additional work comes at the busiest time of the semester, and special thanks to **Katherine Heenan**, Senior Lecturer, who has led our work on developing the archive this past year.

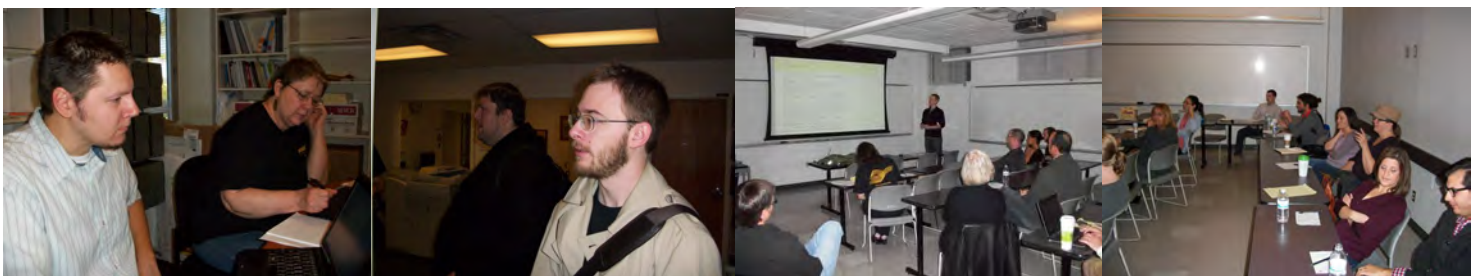
Because we desire to demonstrate that we value student writing and value the teaching of writing, our primary goal in archiving our students’ writing is to systematically collect it and ensure that we can retain access to it after our students have completed their writing courses and moved on in their studies. By archiving students’ work, we demonstrate that student writing has value apart from the coursework for credit that it represents. We also value student writing because the issues and experiences they draw us into as they write and as we read engage our intellects, emotions, and spirits.



A second goal for the archive is to provide us one means (of many we employ) for evaluating our success as a program in reaching our goals for our courses. Our students’ written work is evidence of the outcomes of our work and theirs and therefore can demonstrate some of what they have learned in our courses. The subject matter our students choose to write about and what they have to say also tells us who we are as individuals, as teachers, and as a community of writers. Their work tells us what matters in our local and global communities, which in turn informs our ongoing curriculum development.

Our students’ writing is not the only evidence we have of what they have learned, and certainly not everything they have learned about writing can be demonstrated in a portfolio of their writing, even if it includes their own reflections on the work and what they have learned. However, portfolios including a variety of kinds of writing for different purposes, accompanied by students’ own reflections on their processes of producing the writing contained therein and what they have learned from that process can help us to evaluate whether or not we are achieving our goals for our courses. If we were collecting student writing only for the purpose of program assessment, we could merely determine our sampling design in advance and collect from only a fraction of our students, although doing so obviously would not give us much flexibility in the kinds of queries we could make once we had collected the sample. For example, we would want to construct a sample suitable for evaluating our placement practices for English 101 vs. English 105 quite differently from the way we would construct a sample suitable for comparing the work of students from internet-based classes with that of students from in-person classes

As one can imagine, maintaining an archive of this size is an undertaking of enormous scope, given the sheer size of our writing program, which enrolls over 18,000 students every year. The digital memory capacity required to store 18,000 portfolios each year and to continue to accumulate the same number every year is difficult for many of us to imagine, (**continued on page 3**)



Rose, cont. from p. 2



let alone calculate accurately. In this first year of collecting for the archive, we have piloted two processes, our Maroon Archive Pilot (MAP) and our Gold Archive Pilot (GAP). All portfolios collected for the MAP were submitted to a Drupal site, which stored them in a database that allowed us to sort by section number and by course number; portfolios collected for the GAP were submitted as email attachments to Fall 2011 and Spring 2012 Gmail accounts. For collection in the MAP we chose work from sections of our first-year composition courses that were conducting curriculum initiatives such as the School of Life Sciences cluster sections, Affinity Group sections, Writing About Writing sections, and Place-based Pedagogy Sections (see our Fall 2011 issue of *Writing Notes* for a brief description of these pilots of innovative curriculum designs) and supplemented these with an equal number of other sections, including sections that were taught in-person, in hybrid format, or entirely internet-based.

We devoted much of the Fall semester to investigating several portfolio collecting processes at other institutions around the country and evaluating them in terms of our own needs. Many existing portfolio processes are well-suited to much smaller writing programs or for short-term semester-by-semester collections that are not archived for longer than a year or two. We have not yet found one that suits our needs.

"You are helping us to demonstrate that we value student writing and that we think it's worth keeping."

We have already begun one assessment project using the archive collected from Fall 2011. In March, twelve Writing Programs teachers met to spend a Saturday reviewing a sampling of portfolios from the Maroon Archive Pilot collection, scoring them using a rubric based on the WPA Outcomes Statement, which is the basis for our Writing Programs learning outcomes. We will analyze the scores from that session over the summer and report results at our Fall 2012 Writing Programs Convocation in August.

Now that we have had a year to develop our basic procedures for our archive and determine what features are most important to us, our next step will be to evaluate available portfolio collecting and archiving processes for the longer term.

We're excited about the potential uses of our archive of student writing as we develop it over the next few years. We believe it will be a valuable source of data for our own program-based research on writing curricula and instructional delivery models; and, given the diversity of our very large group of student writers, we believe this large corpus of student writing may also prove a valuable source of data for outside researchers. For example, writing program researchers from other types of higher education institutions would be able to do comparative studies of student writing in urban and rural institutions, public and private institutions, research universities and two-year colleges. We encourage you to design and develop inquiry projects of your own that draw on the archive as a resource.

We thank all of the Writing Programs teachers who have worked with students to ensure that their portfolios have been properly submitted to the MAP and GAP this past year; and, of course, we are very grateful to those students who have given their consent for their archived writing to be used for pedagogical research. You are helping us to demonstrate that we value student writing and that we think it's worth keeping. We welcome your suggestions for ways to make our archive project more visible to our students and other program stakeholders around in the university and the communities it serves.



Community Engagement: Putting Working Theories to the Test

By Elenore Long, Associate Professor of English

One purpose of contemporary rhetorical education is to structure opportunities where we, as learners and citizens, have the tools and proclivity to work with others to put our working theories to the test of experience. The Trayvon Martin case is a tragic reminder of the often too tenuous connections among our perception of reality, the lived experiences of those with whom we share our neighborhoods, and the theories that inform our actions.

“[A]t their best,” writes Charles Bazerman, “[t]heories [...] help us manage the manifold and inchoate realities we move among. They give shape to our experiences and desires; they allow us to project our actions into to a universe to which we have attributed some order.” Linda Flower refers to those theories that most directly shape how we write and read the world as *working* theories. Working theories are dynamic accounts of not only what causes a given problem and the conditions that create it, but also who the players are and how to respond to the problem. The foil against which both Bazerman and Flower commend theory is the reductive—rather than generative—interpretative frame of the *pet theory*—that vague abstraction or sound byte that circulates so pervasively that it tends to assume the status of fact—life “as it is” or “needs to be”—but bears little or no resemblance to rich complexity of the world around us.

Readers familiar teaching the ENG 102 curriculum here at ASU know firsthand that many of the assignments for this class are designed to help first-year students cultivate the rhetorical capabilities of articulating and testing their working theories with readers. This work positions students to use writing to engage somehow with the larger community—whether the larger campus community or surrounding area. Proposal assignments are one such tack. Here, instructors assign students to identify local problems, to research their histories, and in light of those more nuanced understandings to propose solutions to an audience positioned to evaluate and possibly implement the plans. Definitional assignments are another way of asking students to reflect explicitly on their reasoning—specifically their reasoning about the category to which something belongs.

In the section of ENG 102 that Jen Clifton and I are co-teaching this term, even the problem statement is proving a rich genre for cultivating such rhetorical acuity. In crafting problem statements to introduce their work to community members in order to pursue critical-incident interviews with them, students often struggle to cast frames that invite joint inquiry into shared concerns, rather than that assert students’ preconceived pet theories. Upon reflecting on their initial drafts, students themselves are noting that their initial versions of these problem statements often belie some attitude or arrogance that would close down rather than invite genuine joint inquiry. Some of the public concerns that students have chosen to research with community members this term are water quality on and near campus, educational access, youth health, ASU’s student life, and the impact of religious discourse that circulates outside the Memorial Union. We are finding that problem-solving tools and encounters with real readers shift the playing field. In the end, the assignment isn’t about dictating “you should” (e.g., “you should listen” or “you should care”) but rather framing rhetorical practices that say, *When I write to learn like this, I pose open questions that acknowledge that reasonable people may well disagree; I ask for “the story behind the story”; I ask others to help me imagine and consider rivals; and I test how a given plan would play out in real life for those most affected by such a change in policy or practice.*





Practicing “Awesome” in the Backchannel

By Brent Chappelow, Assistant Directors of Writing Programs

In her keynote speech at the 2012 ASU Composition Conference, Assistant Professor Alice Daer discussed connections between Twitter and the writing process. She recounted how she struggled to learn the “rules” of Twitter in its early days and how those attempts were often undermined as people broke and changed the rules of Twitter. Daer discovered that there was no quick way to be “cool” in the Twitter world, but rather, “awesome takes practice.”

While Daer assured conference attendees that we need not necessarily bring social media into the classroom, the value of learning how to tweet is similar to the value of learning to write: it takes time; it takes practice; we fail sometimes, but we can learn from that failure. Although Twitter presents a new technology for writing, the process of learning to participate in the conversation is similar to our own students’ attempts to enter into the discourse of the university.

Daer also discussed backchannel discussions via Twitter in which people can share and critique events or talks as they happen and effectively “talk back” via this technology. Taking advantage of backchannel conversation, conference attendees started tweeting about the Composition Conference and using the Twitter hashtag, #ASUComp. With this social media tool, people could learn what was going on in sessions throughout the Conference and share knowledge with readers in other sessions and those not attending the conference.

As I was sitting in a session on professional writing, I was reading tweets about issues of using new technologies in the classroom and feedback on Daer’s keynote speech. Meanwhile, I was sending tweets about professionalizing students. By following the hashtag via Twitter, the ASU Composition Conference became a source of knowledge that extended beyond the sessions I was able to attend. The backchannel became a way to share all the awesome that was the 2012 Composition Conference. #winning.

Teaching Foundations Project: Engaging Teachers and Learners

By Laura Turchi, Clinical Professor

At Arizona State University, as at many IHEs, elementary teachers are prepared as generalists: they complete content-area requirements through introductory survey courses in many subjects. Elementary teachers are then expected to transform a broad array of academic ideas and experiences into classroom instruction that is coherent and creative. To address this challenge, Arizona State University used Federal grant funding to create *The Teaching Foundations Project*, a cross-institutional effort to significantly enhance the preparation of teachers in the arts, English Language Arts, math, science, and social studies. Laura Turchi, English Department Clinical Professor, is the Project Director.

In some semesters more than 40% of the students admitted to ASU’s Mary Lou Fulton Teachers College come from community colleges. As a result, the Teaching Foundations Project is a partnership, combining faculties in the arts and sciences to create and pilot 40 courses for lower division and community college undergraduates.

Each course represents a commitment to quality that overcomes the stereotypes of classes designed “just” for teachers. A rubric informed instructional design across the disciplines and includes higher-order thinking skills, communication-intensive strategies, and integrated technological tools.

Two of the courses are English Composition 101 and 102 – University requirements for all students. A team of ASU and Chandler-Gilbert Community College faculty created a version of this fundamental course – a syllabus and a wealth of supporting materials – around an “educational studies” theme. They included (as many community colleges do) a service-learning requirement. The composition course is certainly not about *teaching* writing; it is not a methods course at all. But The Teaching Foundations Project believes that attending to metacognitive processing (Why do processes for writing matter? What is evidence? What am I supposed to be learning?) is an important step toward the questions a good teacher should (eventually) ask and answer.

Pioneering instructors are now in the second semester of testing out the new materials at ASU campuses and in community colleges across the state. Piloting next fall will include the Education Academic Support Clusters, and an adaptation of the curriculum for a studio model, delivering the courses using a hybrid approach. Instructors interested in learning more, please contact Laura Turchi Laura.Turchi@asu.edu.



Writing Programs and the W. P. Carey School of Business:

Partnering to Foster Capable Business Professionals

By **Shavawn M. Berry, Instructor**

When I joined the faculty at Arizona State in the fall of 2004, I was one of just five brand new instructors tasked with the opportunity of creating a professional writing course specifically for the W. P. Carey School of Business. Stakeholders in Phoenix's business community had expressed concern that students at ASU were finishing up their business degrees still unable to write well. Up until then, the college of business kept their professional writing courses in house. But they realized they needed our help, and partnered with the English department to create a course to better serve their students. As we got down to business that year, we set about working to provide them with a course that addressed their needs and the needs of the students they serve.



Initially, as instructors, we brainstormed to get ideas about how to best serve this new population in terms of goals and objectives, curriculum, and teaching methods. That fall, we met several times with a number of the professors and the Associate Undergraduate Dean of the Business School, Kay Faris, to outline our ideas and solicit their input and feedback. We stipulated that our sections of English 302 – Business Writing be reserved for *business majors only*. We presented evidence pulled from CCCC's reports on the maximum number of students that could be effectively taught writing and got them to agree to cap the courses at 20 students per section. We also discussed the findings of a 2004 report compiled by **The National Commission on Writing for America's Families, Schools, and Colleges** ([Writing: A Ticket to Work or a Ticket Out – A Survey of Business Leaders](#)). It indicated that more than *3 billion dollars* was being spent every year by businesses to retrain employees in effective communication skills, simply to allow them to do their jobs correctly. In that same report, communication skills (verbal and written) were among the most highly valued skills sought by employers. Clearly, the business school was on the right track in targeting these students for additional training. They asked us to teach certain assignments (team projects, short and long reports, correspondence, presentations) to assist their students in meeting the goals of the business school's upper division courses which demanded strong writing and collaborative skills. English 302 was born from this creative exchange of ideas, goals and objectives.

When we started teaching business writing, there were just twenty sections taught as *business only* sections of English 301 – Writing for the Professions. Since then, the number of sections has more than doubled, as have the number of instructors teaching it. It is a core required course in the business school. Sections of it fill up as quickly as they are offered. Two years after we first designed the course, English 302 – Business Writing was officially added as an English course at Arizona State in the College of Liberal Arts and Sciences.

After teaching English 302 with many different assignments/texts/slants over the past eight years, I've had plenty of time to reflect on its growth and its challenges. Admittedly, the first few years were rocky because many students did not like having another writing course added to their required course load. We dealt with students who felt the course was too rigorous. We also handled complaints that the course was "pointless." To this day, we struggle with how to handle the needs of international and L2 students. Dr. Faris did not want them taught separately, but it is often a real hardship for them to manage a three-hundred level writing course, while they learn the nuances of professional English. I've used grammar diagnostics and practice exams for the past four years to help assist those students in particular. Those diagnostics also help standard students brush up on skills they've often forgotten.

English 302 serves a particular population with a particular set of needs: business students. We aim to help these students master not only professional writing skills, but also critical and analytical thinking about real business scenarios, plans and case studies. I've taught the course using a sustainability theme in the past, encouraging students to create environmentally conscious businesses or pitch "green" business ideas and products. I constantly hone and update the technological aspect of the course, to teach newer

(continued on page 11)



Sparrows: Learning by Teaching at The Justa Center

By Debra A. Schwartz, Instructor

All year long we've heard, "Writing takes place." What does that mean? Sounded like a catchy advertising slogan to me; not much more than a meme. Then a lesson from the street helped me land the concept in my English 101 and 102 classes.

My teachers were extraordinary people hidden in plain sight who, when I asked, "Would you like to come play with me today?" said, "Okay." We met at the Justa Center in Phoenix, a resource center for homeless seniors. They are among the approximately 44 learners who have come through the Friday morning writing workshop I started there in May 2011. Several have master's degrees. We write in the chapel.

Although I lead the 45-minute to hour and a half sessions, I am really *their* student. Every week I have at least one new teacher among the average of four who accept my offer. The teachers come and go, depending on when they find shelter and where they are in their lives. Unexpectedly, a symbiotic relationship formed between my work at Arizona State University and the writing workshop. That is, what I do at the Justa Center today informs what I do at ASU, and vice versa.

"This made me feel like I opened up. Mentally and emotionally this was helpful because I want to open up about [the relationship I wrote about] to as many people as I can so I can form answers based on how many things I hear about from people," said Randy after his first writing workshop experience.

One day while my English 101 students were developing a project defining a concept, only one teacher surfaced that morning at the Justa Center: Alan. I suggested we try the assignment and my teacher agreed. It was October and football season. I generated the word: homecoming.

"Homecoming," he said, "is also the idea of coming home." We wrote for a bit, read to each other what we put on paper in seven or so minutes, then discussed. Home is a place, and a place is as much a state of mind as a location. Poets and authors have written about that forever. Dickens. Nash. Thurber. Henry Miller.

At ASU that afternoon my students took up the same challenge, their definitions mostly relating to football, alumni coming back to campus and soldiers returning home. I inverted the phrase, challenging the students to think further, writing their responses

on the board, considering what defines the concept and what inverting words does to a definition, likening it to turning a painting upside-down for consideration. I projected Alan's thoughts on a screen. Minds opened.

Some of Alan's thoughts were: "*Homecoming* conjures up images of comfort food, a place where you return to see old friends and family and enjoy the best of cooking. It means a place which has to take you back after your travels, a place for the prodigal to return. Homecoming is the thought which remains in your heart wherever you are," Alan said.

"It is a search for identity, a ferreting out of one's roots, a judgment about what might be true or not. [It is] intertwined with the eternal question of what love is and how, when we love, we give up home and find home. [It] helps us grow in understanding of who we are. It is the celebration of a family history, sense of family, community, pride and unity could be strengthened and carried forward for future generations.

"[It] shapes also how we seek to determine our own destiny through active participation, [and it] shapes our own positive self-concept as people and to perpetuate our heritage and identity for our children's sake."

It happened again the same way in January during English 102. This time the ASU project pivoted on writing an extended definition. At the Justa Center, I suggested we give that a try, too. We bantered about what to define, and decided on the word shelter, deciding we could also change it to the word "sheltered" if we wanted. First we defined both words, and talked about our definitions before writing longer on one of the two words.

Steve wrote his longer work about living under the on-ramp to I-10 at 19th Avenue in Phoenix. "The cops know I'm there, as well as the highway department, who leave me a fresh garbage bag every Monday (*early*, before *sunrise!*).

"...Bleach, straight from the jug, helps with...*odors!* I'm *very* comfortable! ...I'm relatively safe from predators. They're out there! It's as always, better to walk half an hour, one way, than to worry who's *about!* There are few bugs. The chain-link fence I sleep beside, provides a means to adjust my environment. As far as *light* goes, there's plenty. I can read at night if I wish!"



How Student Agency Informs Placement Decisions: A Study

By Tanita Saenkhum, Assistant Director of Second Language Writing

It gives me great pleasure to share my dissertation with writing teachers in the ASU Writing Programs, which was a site of my research inquiry. This project examines how multilingual undergraduate writers—including international visa students and U.S. permanent residents or citizens who are non-native English speakers—exercise agency in their first-year composition placement decisions. I define agency as the capacity to act or not to act contingent upon various conditions. To explore the role of agency in students' placement decisions, I conducted a series of four in-depth interviews with eleven multilingual writers between Fall 2010 and Spring 2011. To triangulate these placement decisions, I interviewed some of the multilingual student participants' academic advisors and writing teachers as well as writing program administrators. My goal is to demonstrate how student agency can inform the overall programmatic placement decisions, which can lead to more effective placement practices for multilingual writers.

Findings showed that when conditions for agency were appropriate, the multilingual student participants were able to negotiate placement, choose to accept or deny their original placement, self-assess their proficiency level as deciding to choose a writing course, plan on their placement, question about placement, and finally make decisions about a writing course they wanted to

take. In the context of this study, conditions for agency include the freedom to choose writing courses and information about placement that is distributed by the following sources: advisors' recommendations, other students' past experience in taking first-year composition, the new student orientation, and other sources that provide placement related information such as an online freshman orientation and a major map. Other findings suggested that the academic advisor participants did not provide the multilingual students with complete placement information; and this affected the way the multilingual students chose which section of first-year composition to enroll in. Meanwhile, there was no formal communication about placement options and placement procedures between the Writing Programs and writing teachers. Building on these findings, I argue for improving conditions for agency by providing placement options, making placement information more readily available, and communicating placement information and options with academic advisors, writing teachers, and multilingual students. In an attempt to improve placement communication, I am in the process of creating first-year composition placement handouts and brochures in consultation with Director of Writing Programs and Director of Second Language Writing. These documents will be later distributed to academic advisors, writing teachers, and multilingual students, and I hope for a positive outcome.

Book Review: Trapping the Incoming Freshman Scholar

By Debra Schwartz, Instructor

Raise your hands: How many of you would like your students – especially freshmen students – to stop trying to write like a scholar?

How divine to receive a paper written plainly and clearly, with deep consideration of the subject and better style than the windy, vague and almost automatically evasive writing George Orwell (1968) called “inflated style,” Richard Lanham (1999) labeled “official style,” and author and Washington College business management professor Michael Harvey just calls “pompous style.”

“Of course, not all grand and ornate writing is deceptive or unclear,” Harvey writes in a delight-filled slim volume hailed as “a worthy successor to Strunk and White,” titled, *The Nuts and Bolts of College Writing*.

Although not the latest thinking about composition pedagogy, this 2003, 103-page offering from Hackett Publishing Company in Indianapolis aims to guide students in how to write in lively, concise style.

“The pompous style muffles and depersonalizes action,” he writes to his audience, who are undergraduate college students. “Pompous” style, he writes, “cloaks itself in the language of science, hoping to take on a sense of scientific objectivity and credibility. No police officer, for instance, would ever report, ‘I put him in a headlock.’ Instead he would say, ‘The suspect was restrained.’”

Discussing how first-year composition students often find themselves on a slippery slope making claims they don't know how to support, Harvey offers examples showing how a statement is

“not a lie but a practiced use of generalities and abstractions intended to lead the listener's mind away from the specific and concrete.”

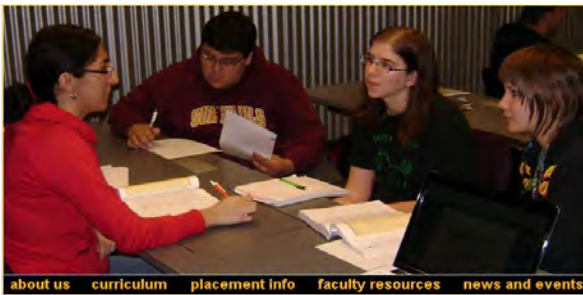
In that respect, Harvey's composition pedagogy is aligned with Orwell's, who more than 50 years ago noted movement in prose away from concreteness and toward abstraction. Speaking to composition and rhetoric teachers in higher education, he recognizes that the college essay aims to “encourage a student's self-directed development,” then opens up gently to undergraduate readers with, “Writing essays in which you say what you think and why is crucial to that development...but requires more than technique; in a college essay, the personal qualities of its author, passionate as well as rational, take center stage.

“An essay, like a personality, hangs together through a delicate balance of forces...A good essay is a small piece of one's better self. ...To essay originally meant to attempt to put to the test. ...The writer of an essay is a kind of intellectual entrepreneur, taking a risk to say something new. But college essays are written in an environment in many ways ill-suited to risk taking. The solemn trapping of college culture – degrees, grades, academic titles – can make it seem that formality is the most important...aim.”

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Department of English

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ASU Writing Programs serves more than 10,000 students annually. Our writing takes place in myriad spaces, including in face-to-face, online, and hybrid courses. Writing Programs' outcomes focus on student individuality, and writing classes are small, promoting individual feedback and fostering community building. We attempt to utilize students' pre-existing literacies to aid development of their critical reading, thinking, and writing skills. ASU Writing Programs also functions as a site of inquiry and research.

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Digital Makeover: Updating Writing Programs' Online Presence

By Dan Bommarito, Assistant Director of Writing Programs

Throughout the Spring semester, you have likely noticed some changes in the ways Writing Programs interacts with teachers online. For example, you may have been encouraged by the image of a Writing Programs teacher to wear your black t-shirt on Tuesday of each week. Or you may have received a Facebook notification requesting that you share information about your writing practices on a given day. You may have seen writing-related information and links from @ASU_Writing shoot through your Twitter feed. Or you may have also noted that navigating the Writing Programs website has become quite a bit smoother. If any of this is familiar, you're feeling the effects of Writing Programs' comprehensive overhaul of its online presence.

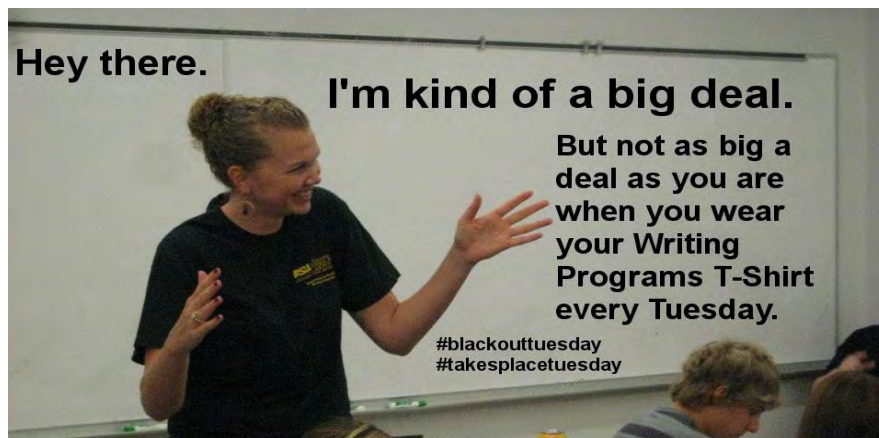
The directors of Writing Programs, with the help of many Writing Programs teachers, have begun the task of reshaping our program's online identity as a way to engage with teachers and the broader public. We have attempted to integrate Writing Programs into a variety of social media, paying careful attention to the different discourses and affordances unique to each. Here are three ways you can stay connected with Writing Programs during this identity (re)construction (while also boosting Writing Programs' Klout score in the process!):

Join us in a broad discussion about writing: Using the handle @ASU_Writing, Writing Programs has shared articles from

The Chronicle, *Inside Higher Education*, and many other publications that relate directly to writing, from the research paper to the effective tweet. Furthermore, Writing Programs has connected with numerous departments and organizations across the university and beyond. Follow @ASU_Writing and participate in wide-ranging discussions of writing and rhetoric in the Twittersphere.

Join us in a local discussion about writing at ASU: Writing Programs has maintained a page on Facebook that has continued to grow in popularity. This has been a space for Writing Programs teachers to connect in a more "closed" environment relative to Twitter. Head to the ASU Writing Programs Facebook page and "Like" us. You'll be privy to local discussions of writing, teaching, and Writing Programs memes.

Play on the website: As you may have noticed, Writing Programs' website has changed dramatically. First, you'll notice that the English Department website features Writing Programs at the highest level of organization in the left-hand panel. Second, there are only five sub-links below Writing Programs, which contain all of the information that teachers, students, and external viewers might need. Third, the graphics feature a flash animation and more images of our teachers at work. We encourage you to poke around the website, to put it through some usability testing, and to see if the current design and organization meets your needs. If you run into any issues while navigating, please do let us know—we would love to hear your feedback!



Milestones



Instructors **Virginia (Ginny) Simmon** (top) and **Sally Woelfel** (bottom) will retire at the end of the semester. A celebration in their honor was held Monday, April 23 in Has-sayampa Academic Village. Writing Programs would like to thank both Ginny and Sally for their many years of service and wish them the very best in the years to come!



Teaching Associates **Katherine Dailey** (top), **Meredith Moss** (bottom), **Michael Noschka** (not pictured), and **Heather Ackerman** (not pictured) are this year's recipients of the Graduate and Professional Student Association Teaching Excellence Award. Writing Programs would like to commend Kat, Meredith, Michael, and Heather for their excellent work!



follow the tweets.
(keep in touch).

night open door

Writing Programs
in the Department of English

Twitter: @asu_writing
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english.clas.asu.edu/writingprograms

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New Appointments: Meghan Bacino, Kathleen Hicks, Ellen Johnson, Thomas Skeen, Dana Tait, and Cornelia Wells, all former Instructors, have accepted new appointments as Lecturers for ASU Writing Programs.

Spring 2012 PhD Defenses: Bryan Vanginhoven, Subrata Bhowmik, Judy Holiday, Jeffry Bergin, William Bolton, Sarah Dean, Johanna Wagner, Elizabeth Lowry, Hui Ling Yang, Anita Chaudhuri, Tanita Saenkhum, Nicole Khoury, Fatma Haidari

Spring 2012 MFA Defenses: Rachel Andoga, Laura Ashworth, Dexter Booth, Branden Boyer-White, Adrienne Celt, Kent Corbin, Eman Hassan, Shane Lake, Hugh Martin, Lyndsey Reese

Kudos! Compiled by Egyirba High, Instructor

Akua Duku Anokye presented "Forging New Gateways: The Womanist Leadership of St. Louis's Marian Oldham," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Meghan Bacino has been promoted from Instructor to Lecturer, beginning Fall, 2012.

Subrata Bhowmik, a doctoral student in the English department received a GPSA travel grant to participate in the TESOL annual convention held in March 28-31, 2012 in Philadelphia, PA. Subrata gave a poster presentation in the convention's Doctoral Forum.

John-Michael Bloomquist published one poem in *Third Coast*, two poems in *The Superstition Review*, and another in *The Lindenwood Review*.

Tom Bonfiglio's short story "Fresh Bread" appeared in *Fringe Magazine* on January 9, 2012. His story "Separation" is in the current issue of *Bull: Men's Fiction*.

Andrew Bourelle presented, "Why Should Rural Montanans Care What Happens in the Gulf of Mexico?" When English Students Read, Write, and Try to Do Something About the BP Oil Spill From 2,000 Miles Away," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Tiffany Bourelle presented "They're Not Your Students and They're Not Mine—They're Ours: Collaborative Teaching in an Online Environment," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Dan Bommarito and **Brent Chappelow** presented their research, "Comparing Students' Attitudes in WAW and Non-WAW Courses" at the 2012 Conference on College Composition and Communication.

Dan Bommarito, **Brent Chappelow**, **Emily Cooney**, **Emily Hooper**, **Ryan Shepherd**, and **Alison Sutherland** presented "Writing Programs as a Site of Inquiry: A Seminar of Research Initiatives at ASU" at the 2012 ASU Composition Conference.

Karen Ching Carter was a recipient of the "Scholar for the Dream" award at 4 C's this year. The presentation which got her the award was "Alternative Gateways: Public Sphere Theory, Theater and the Reconstitution of an Ethnic Image".

Brent Chappelow received the WPA-GO Travel Grant Runner-Up Award at the 2012 Conference on College Composition and Communication WPA Breakfast.

(Continued on page 12)

Bommarito, cont. from p. 1

as “how has writing ‘opened doors’ for you?”; “what connections do you see between writing video games?”; and “what does ‘writing takes place’ mean to you?” Recordings of the students’ compelling replies were placed into a Prezi by Brent Chappelow and shown throughout the Open Door event. (For access to any of the digital files mentioned, please contact dan.bommarito@asu.edu.)

The primary activity at the Writing Programs display was a digital “write-in,” much like those we have held on the Cady Mall in celebration of the National Day on Writing. For this event, though, given its focus on science and technology, we felt it was important to emphasize Writing Programs’ wide range of courses which utilize or explicitly study emerging digital technologies, demonstrating how our program views writing as dynamic, taking place across a variety of media, and necessarily embedded in the technology with which it is created. Plus, we wanted to show that we knew how to tweet.

So, as students, parents, high schoolers, teachers, and interested community members strolled by, we invited them to tweet a response to the prompt “How has writing opened doors for you?” The tweets were tremendous. For some, writing opened doors to jobs and professional success; for others, writing opened doors to a richer inner life; for still others, to larger social circles, both in person and online. The tweets were aggregated in real-time and projected on the screen for all to see.

What became clear throughout the night was that there is a multitude of views and opinions about writing in its many forms. Open Door was a chance for Writing Programs to engage with those views directly and to describe the many facets of writing available to students at ASU. The event also served as a way to make Writing Programs a more visible presence on campus, an indication of just how important writing courses are to the department and the university.

We are happy to have been able to participate in the event, to spread some more Writing Programs shirts around Tempe, and to pry open the doors to the Twittersphere with local community members.

Berry, cont. from p. 6

topics such as “Building an Online Brand,” to help students navigate the burgeoning field of social media. For several years I used Daniel Pink’s book, “A Whole New Mind,” as a means to get the students thinking about the world they would enter after graduation. Now I use the concepts of empathy, purpose, autonomy, and mastery to teach students about how to build intrinsic motivation and how to find a career that fuels their passion.

About a week ago a student stayed after class to finish up a reflective metacognitive he was writing. When he finished, he looked up at me and said, “I just want to thank you for teaching this course, Ms. Berry. Every day when I come to class, I am surprised or inspired or stretched. I learn something new *every day*.”

Eight years ago, a small group of English instructors set out to build a course that was both meaningful and practical. We wanted the community hiring our students to recognize that ASU had prepared them to enter the workforce ready to apply their skills. Our partnership with the school of business has had a profound effect on not only the university but also on the surrounding community. We are sending entrepreneurs and thinkers and motivators and change agents out into the world. Truly, we are providing a course that makes a difference. I see that difference on my students’ faces every single day.

Schwartz, cont. from p. 7

Don wrote, “Post-traumatic stress victims more than likely are prime candidates for three forms of shelter. ‘Shelter’ means to protect mentally, to protect spiritually as well. Physical shelter would be like a form of dwelling that protects one from outside elements.” Don’s take on the word “sheltered” was as the past tense of “shelter.”

B.D. Faninio, who opened her new Toshiba laptop to write, took up the task with, “I have been sheltered all my life – By God first, before birth, then my mother’s Christian older sister at six months old. I have been in the hospital for 6 mos. During that time My daughter and first grand daughter stoled from me leaving me in need of shelter. Being sheltered all my life was very confusing to me. ...Living in a world of constant conflict.”

Bob, also known as Erwin, was teaching himself how to write the alphabet and words when we met. His goal: to be able to write a letter to his brother. We worked one-on-one, and he begrudgingly attended a few workshops. It was frustrating for him – trying to write the assignments. He could not.

Instead, while the others wrote at the table in the chapel where we meet, Bob and I sat to the side where I had him dictate to me his response to the prompt. We presented that as his writing. Three months later he was writing his own paragraphs.

At first I led by controlling everything we did in the workshop. After six months a participant came who was so strong a leader, and insightful, that I let go and let my teachers guide me. It is the kind of moment I live for in the classroom, what I hope for. When students lead, it’s a grand sense of accomplishment for both teacher and student.

The question that remains from all this is what are the keys to creating that symbiotic relationship?

Meeting students where they are and holding up a lamp for them to work under is one key. Collaboration is another. Fun is another. Do grades undermine the relationship? Do pass-fail writing classes serve students better than graded ones by focusing on feedback and improvement rather than wad-ja-get?

(Kudos! continued)

Angela Christie has been accepted for membership in the competitive Laboratoire Babel, a research lab dedicated to the Humanities at the Université du Sud (France). She recently published in the academic journal *Revue Babel* an article entitled "A Beloved Performance: Reading between the Lines," an analysis of the cinematic version of Toni Morrison's novel *Beloved* (1987). Her article entitled "Sexual Violence: Crisis in Indian Country" will also appear in the spring edition of *Les Cahiers Européens des Sciences Sociales*, a French academic journal for the Human and Social Sciences.

Jennifer Clifton presented, "Unsustainable: Owning Our Best, Short-Lived Efforts at Community Work," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Valerie Bandura Finn's forthcoming collection of poems, *Freak Show*, is slated for publication by Black Lawrence press in May 2013. Her recent poems have appeared and will appear in *Ploughshares*, *Cimarron Review*, *Alaska Quarterly Review*, and *The Minnesota Review*. She has also taught two workshops during the 2012 Desert Nights, Rising Stars Writer's Conference.

Maureen Goggin has several upcoming conferences. *Suturing Adversity in Estranged Spaces: Kairos and Meaning Making in Women's Needlework Sampler*. International Conference on Multiculturalism and/or Transculturalism. Bucharest, Romania. 7 June 2012, and *Women Coping with and Suturing Adversity in Samplers*. Croatian International Conference on Rhetoric. Island of Brac, Croatia, 22 April 2012. Additionally, there is *The Role of Turn of the Nineteenth-Century Memorial Samplers in Gendering Sentiment and Mourning Practices*. Rhetoric Society of America. Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, 25 May 2012, and *Reinventing Inventio: A Post-Human Perspective on Rhetorical Invention*. Conference on College Composition and Communication. St. Louis, Missouri, 22 March 2012.

Peter Goggin published "Argumentation on Sustainability in Small Island Communities," in F. H. van Eemeren, & A. F. Snoeck Henkemans (Eds.), *Proceedings of the Seventh Conference of the International Society for the Study of Argumentation* Amsterdam: Sic Sat International Center for the Study of Argumentation, (2011):615-627. He also gave a presentation, "Ecological Literacy: Writing the Future," at the College Composition and Communication Conference. St. Louis, MO. March, 2012. Additionally, he was Director/Chair at the 15th Annual Western States Rhetoric and Literacy Conference, *Place* (October 26-27, 2011 at Arizona State University).

Emily Hooper presented "Passionate Affinity Groups in the FYC Classroom," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Ellen Kennedy Johnson published "The Contradictory Rhetoric of Needlework in Jane Austen's Novels and Letters," in *The Female Spectator Spring*, 2012, Vol. 15, No. 4. Ellen was also recently promoted to Lecturer.

Nicole Khoury presented "When Silence Speaks: A "Local" Composition Course Reader," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Kacie Kiser presented in a panel, "Redesigning the Gate: Theoretical Perspectives on Writing Program Design for Multilingual Writers," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012. She also was a co-leader for a workshop, "Making Translingual Pedagogies a Reality: Redesigning Syllabi, Assignments, Feedback, and Program Mission Statements" at the conference. Additionally, Kacie participated in the 2012 Doctoral Forum at the TESOL Convention in Philadelphia, PA.

Elenore Long presented "Unsustainable: Owning Our Best, Short-Lived Efforts at Community Work," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Paul Kei Matsuda presented on a panel, "Access: A Happening," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012. He also was a respondent on "The Politics of Language," at the same conference.

Keith Miller wrote *Martin Luther King's Biblical Epic: His Great, Final Speech*, published in 2012 by University Press of Mississippi. His essay "Malcolm X's Apocalyptic Rhetoric: Esteeming the Disparaged Tragic Frame" appeared in the selected proceedings of RSA Conference of 2010, titled *Rhetoric: Concord and Controversy*, ed. Antonio de Velasco and Melanie Lehn, published by Wave-land. He did an interview for Ohio Public Radio in Jan. 2012, gave a talk about his book at Changing Hands in Jan. 2012, spoke about Malcolm X at the Peace Studies Faculty Circle of ASU, teamed with Aaron Baker to speak about Jackie Robinson and baseball for the Faculty Crosstalk Series in the Dept. of English at ASU, and gave a talk called "My Journey to Nonviolence" at the Franciscan Renewal Center of Phoenix. He chaired a session at the ASU Composition Conference in 2012. He is scheduled to speak at RSA in 2012 where he will deliver a paper on Barack Obama's identity critics. Finally, Keith presented "Moving beyond the WPA Outcomes Statement to Outcomes for Writing Majors" at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Meredith Moss received a Rocky Mountain Modern Language Association Graduate Research Travel Grant and a GPSA Jump Start Graduate Research Grant. She also received a National Science Foundation grant to attend the Sociolinguistic Archival Preparation workshop at the Linguistic Society of America's annual meeting in January 2012. She received the GPSA Continued Excellence in Teaching Award as well as the Faculty Women's Association Distinguished Graduate Student Award. Additionally, she won the GPSA Student Service Award and the Jacobs Research Funds Individual Grant for anthropological and linguistic research working with Native American peoples.

(Kudos! continued)

Lynette D. Myles has published a chapter, "Sapphire's Push: Locating Safe Sites for Writing and Personal Transformation," in *Sapphire's Literary Breakthrough: Erotic Literacies, Feminist Pedagogies, Environmental Justice Perspectives*, co-edited with Elizabeth McNeil, Neal A. Lester, and DoVeanna Fulton Minor. This work is forthcoming from Palgrave Macmillan and is Lynette's second book. Her first book, *Female Subjectivity in African American Women's Narratives of Enslavement*, was published in 2009 with Palgrave Macmillan.

Ersula Ore presented "Visualizing the Citizen: Lynching Photography and the Construction of Civic Personhood," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Nicole Pfannenstiel presented, "Using Internet Technologies in the Classroom as New Entryways to Composition," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012.

Duane Roen presented "The Importance of Building Research Capacity for the Future of Writing Program Administration," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012. Additionally, he presented, "Collaboratively Redesigning First-Year Composition."

Shirley Rose presented "Showing Up and Showing Off: Leadership as Visibility Work," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012. Additionally, she presented "Lessons from History: What WPAs Can Learn from Writing Program Archival Work."

Tanita Saenkhum co-led a workshop, "Making Translingua | Pedagogies a Reality: Redesigning Syllabi, Assignments, Feedback, and Program Mission Statements," at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, St. Louis, Missouri, March, 2012. Tanita has also accepted a tenure-track Assistant Professor position in the English Department at the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. She will be teaching in the Rhetoric, Writing and Linguistics program.

Debra Schwartz has been invited to lead four writing workshops as a Fulbright Specialist in gorgeous, snow-capped mountain Kayseri, Turkey, which is near Istanbul. They are: "Writing Skills" for teachers at the Preparatory School, the number of which is about 120; "Science Journalism" for the faculty and / or students in the Department of Communication; "Writing Skills" for fourth-year students and / or teachers in the English Language and Literature Department; and "Speaking Practice" for the top management of Erciyes University. The initial arrangements were for six weeks between late May and June of this year. However, the paperwork could not be completed in time. So, she will go next summer. If you enjoy armchair traveling, check out the school's web site here: <http://www.erciyes.edu.tr/en/>.

Dana Tait was promoted to Lecturer and received the Writing Programs Composition Conference Teaching Award.

Ivan Wolfe published "The Curious Case of the Controversial Canon," in *Sherlock Holmes and Philosophy*. Ed. Josef Steiff. Chicago: Open Court, 2011. 103 – 113. (Volume 61 in the "Popular Culture and Philosophy" series).

Call for Submissions: *Writing Notes* Fall Issue

Writing Notes again seeks contributors for the next issue. We invite **book reviews** of approximately 500 words on pedagogical texts of interests to the Writing Programs. We also welcome Writing Programs "meme" submissions similar to those created during this past semester. Finally, we ask for 150-word submissions on "**Classroom Strategies that Work**," a continuing segment devoted to sharing the practices we employ in our own classrooms with other Writing Programs teachers. Have any article submissions or suggestions? Please share them with us. And don't forget to submit your **Kudos** during the next semester.

Want to discuss what you've read in this issue? Visit any of our media outlets, including the Writing Programs Blackboard site, to provide your feedback and commentary.

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