IDENTIFYING FACULTY NEEDS FOR

WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

AT TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

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Abstract: Writing proficiency has become a common student learning outcome at all types of higher education institutions across the United States. However, despite the consistent popularity of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) over the last few decades, most two-year institutions still have no formalized WAC program or training, and programs that are created tend not to last. Faculty resistance to WAC is often recognized as a major impediment to the development and persistence of such programs. To better understand how institutions can mitigate the causes of this resistance, this Delphi study surveyed 18 full-time faculty members from a variety of disciplines at two-year institutions in Oklahoma. The participants came to consensus about the relative importance of 29 policies and practices that could encourage faculty to embrace WAC in their courses, and 16 policies and practices that could help faculty incorporate WAC in their courses. Their responses indicate that faculty want their institutions, divisions, and departments to prioritize writing and writing assessment both as a topic of discussion and as a matter of policy, to make time and space for faculty to develop and share writing assignments and grading rubrics, to be thoughtful of student needs and incentives around writing, and to set and enforce minimal standards for writing competency before students can enter their degree program. Though they desire strong institutional support, they also value faculty-led decisions within each discipline, consistent with a collegial organizational model.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

As part of their general education, most first-year college students are required to take at least one writing course, commonly referred to as "first-year composition" or "first-year writing." These mandatory courses are intended to serve as preparatory courses to ensure students have adequate writing skills for other college classes[1] (Crowley, 1998; Driscoll, 2011; Lewiecki-Wilson & Sommers, 1999). Although some research suggests that first-year composition courses do somewhat prepare students for future classes (Clark & Hernandez, 2011; Fallon et al., 2009; Nelms & Dively, 2007), research also demonstrates that in and of themselves they often do not fully prepare students to write with the proficiency expected of them in later classes (Adler-Kassner et al., 2012; Bergman & Zepernick, 2007; Wardle, 2009). Furthermore, employers have criticized colleges for graduating students who lack appropriate writing skills for the workplace (Association of American Colleges & Universities [AACU], 2015; National Association of Colleges and Employers [NACE], 2017). A promising solution to this problem, and indeed one that has been touted since the 1970s, is Writing Across the

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[1] Crowley (1998) refers to this as composition's "ethic of service." Whether this function of composition courses is fair to students or to composition as a field is a matter of debate (Crowley, 1998; Villanueva, 2013). However, it is likely safe to assume that this perspective will continue to dominate in two-year institutions where no English or composition majors are offered.

Curriculum (WAC) (Malencyzk, 2012). In practice, WAC can take many forms, but the underlying philosophy revolves around integrating writing into all types of courses (WAC Clearinghouse, n.d.). Research has consistently demonstrated that, regardless of the exact form it takes, Writing Across the Curriculum can improve not only students' writing proficiency, but also their content learning and critical thinking (Bartolomeo-Maida, 2016; Cannady & Gallo, 2016; Dana et al., 2011; Harper & Vered, 2017; Hoyt et al., 2010; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Varelas et al., 2015). Despite these findings, the development of formalized WAC programs across institutions in the United States is uneven, and particularly low at two-year institutions (Gardner, 2010; *National Census of Writing*, 2017; Roberts, 2008; Thaiss & Porter, 2010). If any effort to integrate writing in classes outside of composition does happen, the attempt is typically limited to a particular course or program, driven by individual instructors or program directors who are interested in the pedagogical value of writing, concerned about their own students' writing skills, or both (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017).

Some opposition to WAC stems from students themselves, who have been found to dismiss writing as unimportant outside of their composition classes (Bergman & Zepernick, 2007; Fallon et al., 2009; Nelms & Dively, 2007) or to push back against discipline-specific expectations for academic discourse (Adler-Kassner et al., 2012; Clark & Hernandez, 2011; Nelms & Dively, 2007; Williams, 2005). Because they are aware of students' negative reactions to writing, some instructors are simply wary of integrating writing into their courses because they worry it will result in negative student evaluations (Luna et al., 2014; McLaren, 2014). However, much opposition also comes directly from instructors themselves, who believe that they lack the time (Halasz et al., 2006;

Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Nelms & Dively, 2007; Nielsen, 2019; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017) and/or the expertise (Halasz et al., 2006; Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017) to include writing in their courses. Some faculty opposition undoubtedly also connects to the perception that mandatory first-year composition courses should be sufficient to prepare students for all other classes (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017). Nearly all of these reasons for resisting WAC are strongest at two-year institutions, where the preparatory role of composition courses is more entrenched and established writing program administrations who might promote the value of WAC and provide support for it are less likely to exist. These factors may help to explain why two-year institutions seem to struggle more than four-year institutions to develop sustained WAC programs.

However, the research is clear about the potential benefits of WAC, so the question becomes, what can institutions – particularly two-year institutions – do to make WAC a more widespread and sustainable practice? Whether WAC exists as a formal, institution-wide program, or occurs as a piecemeal effort on the part of various instructors and programs, faculty buy-in is key because the burden is on them to assign and assess the writing for their classes. Thus, of particular concern is how institutions can best encourage faculty to embrace WAC and support them in the process of integrating writing into their curricula.

Problem Statement

Since the 1970s, research has demonstrated that WAC is useful for the development of undergraduate students' writing proficiency (Malencyzk, 2012; Townsend, 2002). Indeed, whether WAC is focused entirely on low-stakes writing

assignments to promote student engagement, or involves complex assignments scaffolded

through an entire program's curriculum, student writing improves (Berger, 2015; Dana et

al., 2011; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Johnstone et al., 2002; Varelas et al., 2015).

Considering how employers have criticized colleges for failing to prepare students

adequately for writing in the workplace (AACU, 2015; NACE, 2017), one might expect

WAC to have been widely explored as a response to these concerns. However, two-year

institutions in particular have struggled to develop lasting or widespread WAC programs

(Gardner, 2010; Roberts, 2008). As with any WAC program, resistance to these programs

likely comes from various sources, including students and administration. However, a

major roadblock to implementing WAC is that faculty remain resistant to providing

writing instruction in non-composition courses, whether because they believe they simply

do not have the time (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Nelms & Dively, 2007; Nielsen,

2019; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017) or because they believe mandatory first-year writing

courses should suffice (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Zemlianksy &

Berry, 2017). Perhaps faculty at two-year institutions require certain types of institutional

support to encourage their adoption of WAC and to enable sustained and successful

efforts to incorporate WAC in their classes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this Delphi study is to describe institutional policies and practices

that faculty at public two-year colleges in the state of Oklahoma believe encourage their

adoption of and support their utilization of Writing Across the Curriculum. Such writing

may be formal or informal, planned or unplanned, graded or ungraded, written in any

context for any audience. Examples include smaller journal reflections or discussion

posts as well as larger research papers.

Research Questions

- What current institutional policies and practices encourage Oklahoma two-year

  college faculty to include writing in their courses?

- What current institutional policies and practices support Oklahoma two-year

  college faculty in their endeavors to include writing in their courses?

- What institutional changes do Oklahoma two-year college faculty believe would

  encourage them to include more writing in their courses?

- What institutional changes do Oklahoma two-year college faculty believe would

  support them in their endeavors to include more writing in their courses?

Significance of the Research

Research

Two-year institutions are fairly underrepresented in the WAC research, and the

research rarely even speculates about why WAC programs do not seem to persist at these

institutions, if indeed they are developed at all (Condon & Rutz, 2012; *National Census*

of Writing, 2017; Thaiss & Porter, 2010). A Delphi study will seek the perspectives of

experts – the faculty who would be responsible for actually incorporating writing in their

classes – to shed light on how two-year institutions can better support faculty in the

development and sustained practice of WAC.

Theory

In addition to expanding the literature on WAC at two-year institutions,

understanding WAC as a popular but often short-lived policy at institutions may also

shed light on similar organizational issues in which new practices are encouraged but fail to take root. Organizational change is an important topic in organizational theory, and, as Buller (2015) pointed out, "the type of change that causes the greatest turmoil at colleges and universities is that which originates from the administration or governing board but is resisted by the faculty" (p. 24). Understanding how to manage these types of changes can deepen our theoretical understanding of this type of organizational change, particularly in organizations where the collegial model is typical or at least expected.

Practice

Finally, and most practically, understanding the types of support that help faculty implement writing in their non-writing classes may help institutions provide better support by refining existing WAC programs or implementing new approaches to WAC, as suggested by the findings of the study. As research has shown the value of WAC, institutions have a real need for practical solutions that will expand WAC and ensure its sustainability at two-year institutions.

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Design of the Study

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This Delphi study is grounded in a pragmatic epistemology. Pragmatists focus on how both qualitative and quantitative data can be put to use, which is exactly the point of a Delphi study. The Delphi method involves assembling an "expert panel" and administering iterative rounds of questionnaires to develop consensus (Dalkey, 1969; Keeney et al., 2011). For this study, the expert panel consisted of 18 full-time faculty members in a variety of disciplines, excluding English or composition, from two-year public institutions in the state of Oklahoma.

Data Collection

The data for this study was collected online using Qualtrics in three phases of data collection and analysis. The main focus of the first Delphi phase is asking the experts for a list of statements in response to open-ended questions (Avella, 2016; Keeney et al., 2011). For this study, these questions were:

- What does your institution currently do to encourage you to assign or teach writing in your classes?

- What changes could your institution make that would encourage you to assign or teach writing in your classes?

- What does your institution currently do to support you in teaching writing?

- What kinds of extra support could your institution provide that would help you to teach writing?

After all participants responded in Phase I, their responses to the open-ended questions were compiled, with any redundant answers deleted. The result was two lists of specific institutional policies and practices, one set identified as encouraging faculty to include writing in their classes and one set identified as helping faculty to include writing in their classes. As the literature suggests that sorting the list by topic improves response rates in the second phase (Avella, 2016; Keeney et al., 2011), the list was sorted, with similar topics grouped together before the second phase.

In the second phase of data collection, this sorted and refined list of policies and practices was shared with the expert panel. Each expert was first asked whether their current institution already has that policy or practice in place, with the answer options "Yes," "No," and "Not sure." Each expert was also asked to rate, on a Likert scale, how

important that policy or practice is or would be to them in terms of encouraging or helping them to include writing in their classes. Panelists were also given the option to explain their answers or provide other comments. Thus, if their preferred response was not provided as an option or if they want to clarify why they responded the way they did, they had the ability to do so. Some also used this opportunity to provide suggestions for clarifying any statements they believed were ambiguous or vague (Leary, 2018). After Phase II, the data collected from Qualtrics was entered into SPSS and the mean and interquartile range (IQR) of the Likert ratings for each statement was calculated. The mean rating of statements that reached consensus represented the importance of that policy of practice to the panelists. The IQR was used to determine which statements have reached consensus (that is, the participants roughly agree about the importance of the statement). Consensus is defined as an IQR of 1 or less (von der Gracht, 2012); any statements meeting this definition were removed from the questionnaire, and only the items that had not reached consensus were included in the questionnaire for the third phase.

In this third phase, the experts had an opportunity to re-rate the statements that did not reach consensus in the second phase. Panelists were shown their own previous rating of the statement, the mean rating from the other respondents, and the distribution of ratings from the other respondents. They were also shown any clarifying comments from the other panelists. The panelists were then asked to re-rate the statement on the same Likert scale. Seeing the other panelists' ratings and comments provided them an opportunity to consider whether they still agreed with their initial rating (Dalkey, 1969; Greatorex & Dexter, 2008; Skulmoski et al., 2007), and the revision of statements in

response to feedback in the previous round may also have led them to change their ratings (Leary, 2018).

Data Analysis

After these final questionnaires were completed, the statements were again evaluated for consensus. At this point, all statements were grouped in two sets: those that reached consensus and those that did not. Furthermore, the mean for all statements that reached consensus was calculated to determine the overall rating of each statement (Keeney et al., 2011); those with higher mean ratings were ranked as more important than statements with lower mean ratings. The statements with the highest level of consensus (lowest IQR) and highest mean ratings represent the most important recommendations for institutions that want to develop more faculty engagement with WAC. In contrast, items with high levels of consensus but low ratings could point institutions toward efforts that might represent a waste of resources because few faculty would find them helpful.

The findings from each phase of data collection are presented in Chapter IV, with details about how the data from the first and second phases were interpreted in the creation of the questionnaire for the following phase.

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Limitations and Delimitations

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The restriction of this study to Oklahoma public institutions that primarily offer associate's degrees may have influenced the findings. Faculty in other states or at primarily vocational training schools, for example, may have different concerns or desires than those in Oklahoma. However, these delimitations were necessary to manage the scope of the study and to facilitate participant recruitment. The study also faced limitations outside of my control. For example, participants do not necessarily represent

the perspectives of all faculty in all disciplines, and the emphasis on full-time faculty may have led to an overrepresentation of white male faculty. I must take these potential limitations into consideration when analyzing the data. Furthermore, the Delphi study as a methodology entails some limitations, largely because of the need to define consensus. Although defining consensus as an IQR of 1 or less is supported in the literature (von der Gracht, 2012), other approaches can also be used, and any definition outside of one hundred percent agreement is somewhat arbitrary. Nonetheless, a definition of consensus is necessary, and the IQR approach is the most sensible for this study. Furthermore, the Delphi methodology is the methodology most suited to answering the research questions.

Definitions of Terms

- Academic discourse – Discourse encompasses many meanings, from the broad sense of any language being used to the narrower sense of a particular set of ideologically informed ways of using language that interact to construct meaning (Baker & Ellece, 2011). This study accepts Duff's (2010) definition: "Academic discourse is not just an entity but a social, cognitive, and rhetorical process and an accomplishment, a form of enculturation, social practice, positioning, representation, and stance-taking" (p. 171).
- Composition – the formal academic study of writing.
- Encourage – used in the sense of "to prompt" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-a).
- Faculty – an employee of a higher education institution whose role is designated by that institution as "faculty," whether that employee is in a tenured, tenure-track, or non-tenure track position. Teaching courses is a major component of a faculty member's job duties.

- First-year composition (also called first-year writing) – the introductory writing courses that are required of most undergraduate students, usually consisting of two semester-long courses often called English Composition 1 and English Composition 2. Most first-year composition classes follow the guidance of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (2019), who list the key areas of study as rhetorical knowledge; critical thinking, reading, and composing; composing processes; and knowledge of conventions.

- Institutional policy – used in the sense of "a definite course or method of action . . . to guide and determine present and future decisions" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-b)

- Institutional practice – used in the sense of "the usual way of doing something" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-c). Practice is distinct from policy in that practice may not be explicitly or intentionally defined.

- Non-writing course – any college course that does not typically focus on writing as its primary topic or as a primary method of assessment.

- Opposition – "the inclination to resist" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-d).

- Support – used in the sense of "to assist" or "to help" (Merriam-Webster, n.d.-e.).

- Two-year institution – a postsecondary school that primarily offers associate's degrees. Many two-year institutions also offer certificate programs and/or a small selection of bachelor's degrees.

- Writing – used in the broad sense of composing text, whether by writing on paper or typing. Thus, writing may be formal or informal, planned or unplanned, graded or ungraded, written in any context for any audience.

- Writing Across the Curriculum – a philosophy and practice that "recognizes and supports the use of writing in any and every way and in every and any course offered at a learning institution" (WAC Clearinghouse, n.d.).

- Writing proficiency – ability to tailor a text to various audiences and purposes; to demonstrate critical thinking in writing; to engage in effective research for, planning for, and revision of writing projects; and to adhere to genre conventions for structure, tone, grammar, mechanics, and documentation of sources (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2019). Although this definition may seem straightforward, faculty both within composition and in general do not agree about the relative importance of these skills, meaning that to a certain extent, "proficiency" is in the eye of the beholder (Sullivan, 2006).

Conclusion

Writing Across the Curriculum has the potential to meet student needs and address important concerns about student outcomes at two-year institutions. However, implementing WAC and maintaining a WAC program both require faculty buy-in, which thus far seems to be lacking. This study will identify the specific needs of faculty at two-year institutions so these institutions can approach implementing WAC effectively and sustainably.

The Roadmap

Chapter I provided a brief overview of the purpose and design of the study. The following chapter examines the literature on Writing Across the Curriculum – its history, efficacy, and forms of implementation – as well as faculty and administrative concerns

about and responses to WAC. Chapter III presents the research design in detail. The data

that was collected is presented in Chapter IV and analyzed in depth in Chapter V.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is both a pedagogical and a curricular issue, of interest to scholars who study writing, to administrators who seek to assess student outcomes, and to instructors in various disciplines who want to help students master the conventions of writing in their field. Thus, the literature extends across a wide range of topics; the following chapter reviews the literature on the history of WAC, the various forms WAC may take, the efficacy of these various forms, best practices for WAC implementation, both for individual faculty members and for institutions, and finally, the reasons both faculty and institutions struggle to implement WAC in spite of its promise for meeting their needs.

Organizational Models and Two-Year Institutions

A clear model of how the institution functions is key to understanding how new programs can be developed and supported within an institution, particularly when one is studying higher education. As Manning (2012) explains,

Higher education is a complex enterprise open to a wide range of understandings and interpretations. . . . Those working in higher education can only make sense of this complexity by understanding and using a combination of theoretical perspectives through which to view their work. (p. 1)

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Four common theories to describe educational institutions are the bureaucratic, political, cultural, and collegial models (Bush, 2011; Manning, 2012). Although each of these models can be useful, the collegial model in particular provides helpful insight into what faculty expect of their administrators. Although the collegial model has its origins with Millett (1962), Birnbaum (1988) is often referenced as the first to fully articulate the key components as the model is understood today. According to Birnbaum, collegial organizations tend to be egalitarian and democratic, although more weight is given to the opinions of those with more experience or qualifications. Within higher education, the administration is subordinate to the faculty; they exist to facilitate the teaching and research goals of faculty. Although an organization may be wholly collegial, Manning (2012) notes, "Faculty adhere predominantly to a collegial model while administrators typically operate as a bureaucracy" (p. 36). Thus, the collegial model may be a particularly useful lens for a study that examines faculty preferences and wishes. Beyond that, the features of the collegial model are perhaps more typical at many two-year institutions than at many four-year institutions, particularly larger ones, making the model especially useful for understanding the desires of faculty at two-year institutions.

Two-year institutions tend to have other cultural characteristics that make the collegial model particularly relevant. Birnbaum explains that collegial groups must be small – small enough to maintain a sense of community around shared values and goals and to have a coherent culture. As two-year colleges tend to be smaller than four-years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2021), they are more likely to meet this criterion. Further, although he does not explicitly claim that teaching-focused institutions are more likely to be collegial, the example institution he uses to illustrate the collegial

model is one where "there is no pressure for research or publication. Classroom teaching and student advisement are emphasized" (p. 86). It seems likely that this shared commitment to teaching helps to maintain the cohesive culture at the institution. This kind of teaching-centered environment is more common at two-year institutions, which typically do not require or necessarily even expect faculty to pursue their own research. In institutions where faculty must "publish or perish," faculty often end up vying against each other for research and grant opportunities. At the very least, they are likely focused on their own goals more than on the goals of the institution, which reduces the likelihood of the collegial model persisting. Additionally, Massy and Wilger (1994) identify workload equity and course rotation (so faculty experience teaching a variety of courses) as important factors for maintaining collegiality. At two-year institutions, the distribution of classes is generally more equitable (especially among full-time faculty) because faculty do not receive releases from teaching to do research, and course rotations are necessary simply because there tend to be fewer of the types of classes that many faculty would prefer, such as electives and senior capstone courses. Thus, the small size, teaching focus, and management of faculty workload all contribute to the collegial model being maintained at two-year institutions.

The collegial model has been criticized as idealistic, or at the very least, normative rather than descriptive (Bush, 2011). Brundrett (1998) argues that the model "tends to obscure rather than to portray the reality of school life" (p. 309) because the model more often explains what people wished were true than what is actually the case. Although that criticism is certainly valid in many contexts, the normative nature of the model is not incompatible with understanding faculty wants and needs; in fact, that aspect

may make the model even more appropriate, given the importance of the collegial model to faculty (Manning, 2012). Furthermore, the collegial model is not all utopian, and the weaknesses of the model suggest possible explanations for WAC's failure to take root at two-year institutions. Birnbaum (1988) explains that decision-making is a slow process for collegial organizations, and Manning (2012) adds that, in this model, "Faculty believe that sound decision making requires the exercise of their professional knowledge, their knowledge of institutional traditions, and their opinions about what is best for the institution" (p. 43). Thus, in an institution where the collegial model dominates, a program like WAC is likely to be slow to develop and only successful if the change is led by faculty.

The Origins and Current State of WAC

The origins of WAC must be examined within the larger context of the history of writing as a university requirement. As part of their general education, most first-year college students are required to take at least one writing course; a 2010 survey by the American Council of Trustees and Alumni found that 77% of the nation's major public and private universities included some form of composition requirement in their general education curriculum. Berlin's seminal 1987 book *Rhetoric and Reality* documents the history of this requirement in detail. Although writing and rhetoric had been staples of education earlier, the freshman writing course in a shape somewhat resembling its current form developed at Harvard in the mid-to-late nineteenth century (Berlin, 1987). In fact, Berlin notes that though the teaching of writing previously had been the central focus of English departments, by the turn of the twentieth century, writing had been relegated to a single required two-semester sequence for freshmen and the English department had

developed a focus on the study of literature. Berlin explains that at many state universities, as well as at Harvard and Columbia, the teaching of writing "was designed to provide the new middle-class professionals with the tools to avoid embarrassing themselves in print" (p. 35). This approach was rivaled by attitudes at other Ivy League schools that English departments at the university level should focus on literature, with writing having been already addressed in high school. In contrast, Berlin advocates a third, progressive, approach which also emerged, mainly in the Midwest, emphasizing the importance of writing and rhetoric for civic participation. These three views on first-year writing have continued to co-exist, often in tension, with one or the other gaining or losing popularity, ever since. However, since the 1970s, interest in the study of composition and rhetoric has boomed, first with increased graduate programs and now with undergraduate programs as well (Russell, 2006a).

Although the last fifty years have seen a revived interest in rhetoric and composition and ever greater numbers of four-year institutions offering degrees in writing studies, the role of first-year composition seems to have changed relatively little since its origins in the late nineteenth-century. First-year composition often is seen as a preparatory course (or course sequence) that should prepare students for the challenges of college-level writing. Warner (2018) argued that, "In this view, the course is meant to be a service, not just for students, but other faculty, ridding them of the less pleasant parts of helping acclimate students to writing in college contexts" (para. 8). Crowley (1998) describes this as composition's "ethic of service." Instead of serving as a course in its own right like most other required general education courses, first-year composition is expected to serve the needs of every other college course that requires writing.

Nowhere is the emphasis on composition as preparatory stronger than at community and two-year colleges. Two-year colleges have their own history with first-year composition, although in many ways, their origins echo the perspectives of those who believed writing was too "basic" to teach at the university level. Brint and Karabel (1989) describe how, in the late nineteenth-century, one leading university president after another began to view the first two years of college:

> as an unnecessary part of university-level instruction. . . . These sentiments were part of a general desire to reconstitute the universities as research and training centers for an intellectual elite. (p. 24)

Thus, from the institutional perspective, one of the main aims of the two-year college was to divert less intellectually gifted (or educationally advantaged) students from pursuing university education. Although different communities had their own reasons for supporting the development of junior colleges, and therefore different forms of governance and funding, by the 1920s one commonality among the vast majority of two-year schools was an emphasis on a liberal arts curriculum that would allow students to transfer credits to senior colleges (Brint & Karabel, 1989). That emphasis meant that most two-year institutions followed the traditional pattern of the first two years of university-level education, including those mandatory first-year composition courses – and the view of them as preparatory classes. However, two-year institutions have also had a strong vocational aspect that exists in tension with the model of emulating the first two years of a university education (Brint & Karabel, 1989). From this perspective, the goal of the two-year institution is graduating students into jobs rather than transferring

them into four-year colleges, and thus the role of composition is often even further reduced to a focus on whatever writing skills might be necessary for employment.

Another factor contributing to the position of composition at two-year colleges is that at most two-year colleges, first-year composition classes represent the vast majority, sometimes even the entirety, of all course offerings from the English department. Although the professionalization of composition as a discipline has engendered some debate about just how central first-year writing programs should be to the discipline as a whole (Russell, 2006b), this debate is less relevant at two-year institutions. After all, at colleges that offer majors or minors in composition or writing studies, mandatory first-year composition courses may also serve to introduce students to the basics of the field and perhaps even excite their interest for further study in that area. However, at two-year colleges, where degrees in English or composition studies are not offered, these mandatory courses cannot serve as introductions to a major. Instead, they are solely rationalized as preparatory courses to ensure students have adequate writing skills for other college classes (Crowley, 1998; Driscoll, 2011; Lewiecki-Wilson & Sommers, 1999). This view of composition has led to controversy.

Although some research suggests that first-year writing courses do somewhat effectively prepare students for writing in future classes (Clark & Hernandez, 2011; Fallon et al., 2009; Nelms & Dively, 2007), in and of themselves they often do not fully prepare students to write at the level expected of them through their entire academic career (Adler-Kassner et al., 2012; Bergman & Zepernick, 2007; Wardle, 2009). Indeed, some have criticized composition as a field for apparently failing to develop an adequate pedagogy that meets this need (Harper & Vered, 2011; Lewiecki-Wilson & Sommers,

1999). Composition scholars, on the other hand, point out that developing literacy in academic discourse requires far more practice and experience than students can realistically have in even a two-semester course sequence (Duff, 2010). Furthermore, the many variations in genre and other disciplinary expectations for writing make it nearly impossible for first-year composition to address fully every skill students may need (DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Wolfe, 2011). Many institutions have acknowledged that writing proficiency is a necessary goal of college education and that, therefore, students need more opportunities to write than merely what they encounter in first-year composition courses (Hoyt et al., 2010). WAC is a promising solution to this problem that has been touted for several decades (Malencyzk, 2012).

WAC actually originated (and persists) in the K-12 context (Russell, 2006a). However, Russell (2006b) notes that its effects have been more deeply felt in higher education, perhaps in part because of the greater tendency for faculty to move into administrative positions where they can more easily promote WAC outside of their own classrooms. Initially, WAC focused on the pedagogical value of writing, as proponents argued that incorporating low-stakes, informal writing exercises could promote student engagement with and retention of material (Russell, 2006b). This approach to WAC has been deemed "Writing to Learn," or WTL (WAC Clearinghouse, n.d.). At the same time as this approach to WAC was emerging and in part because of cross-disciplinary conversations spurred by WAC, scholars in composition began to recognize students' struggles to transfer their learning from composition classes into their disciplines (Russell, 2006b). Some scholars began to study how writing was different in different disciplines, leading to the development of another facet of WAC: Writing in the

Disciplines, or WID. Writing in the Disciplines focuses on developing students' facility

with the genres and conventions of their particular disciplines; as such, WID assignments

are more often used in upper-level classes and tend to be larger and more formal writing

projects than the types of assignments used for WTL (WAC Clearinghouse, n.d.). Both

WTL and WID are now considered part of WAC, although different programs or

institutions may emphasize one or the other.

WAC began to be embraced by colleges in the 1980s and has spread mostly

informally, largely through individual interested faculty (Russell, 2006b). The most

recent data suggest that the overall number of WAC programs in higher education has

continued to grow since the initial wave of interest in the 1980s (Thaiss & Porter, 2010),

with about 51% of colleges and universities having identifiable WAC programs (Condon

& Rutz, 2012). Confounding this statistic, however, is a lack of clarity about what

actually constitutes a WAC program. According to Thaiss and Porter (2010), some

survey respondents classified their institutions as having a WAC program solely on the

basis that the institution had a student-learning outcome emphasizing writing proficiency.

As nearly every institution has such an outcome, the actual number of WAC programs

may be considerably lower than that statistic suggests. The funding, organization, and

campus-wide visibility of WAC programs is also highly variable, further making it

difficult to be certain about the accuracy of this count. Nonetheless, assuming that

Condon and Rutz's (2012) survey is at least roughly reflective of reality, about half of all

United States institutions have something resembling a WAC program, but most of these

are at research institutions; as of 2010, only about 33% of community colleges had WAC

programs, a percentage that had not changed much since the first attempt to count such

programs in 1987 (Thaiss & Porter, 2010). In that first attempt, Stout and Magnotto (1987) found that one-third of the surveyed institutions had active WAC programs and another one-third were planning to implement WAC in the near future. In fact, according to the *National Census of Writing* (2017), only 23% of two-year institutions reported having a WAC program, suggesting that if anything, the number is decreasing at two-year institutions. Finally, despite Condon and Rutz (2012) finding an overall increase in the number of WAC programs since the 1980s, a large portion of the programs identified in the survey were either entirely new or revivals of old programs, indicating that many WAC programs had not been consistently sustained across the intervening years (Thaiss & Porter, 2010).

Many factors may have contributed to the dearth of WAC programs at two-year institutions. Some of these factors are particular to the position of first-year composition at two-year colleges. Two-year college English departments, where movements toward WAC often originate (Russell, 2006a), are often more heavily reliant on adjunct faculty than those at four-year institutions are (Flaherty, 2020); adjunct faculty typically lack the institutional connections and security they would need to lead a WAC movement. Furthermore, because English departments are primarily in place to provide first-year composition courses at two-year institutions, implementing WAC could perhaps be perceived as an existential threat, particularly if the English department is not in charge of the program. Other possible contributing factors are characteristics of two-year institutions themselves. The vocational training role of two-year institutions is still influential, and because of that, WID in particular is likely to be considered less relevant outside of specific programs such as nursing. Finally, although funding is difficult nearly

everywhere in higher education, two-year institutions are particularly struggling (Smith, 2019), and WAC is unlikely to be a high priority.

Defining and Describing WAC Programs

WAC is a general concept that broadly refers to any efforts to integrate writing in all types of courses. The WAC Clearinghouse (n.d.) describes it as a philosophy that "recognizes and supports the use of writing in any and every way and in every and any course offered at a learning institution" (para. 1). However, approaches to WAC vary widely, and understanding these variations may be helpful in developing a clearer picture of what WAC looks like at various institutions and in different classrooms.

One key distinction to consider is how different approaches to WAC may be emphasized. Two major approaches are emphasized in the literature: Writing-to-Learn (WTL) and Writing in the Disciplines (WID). Institutions, programs (degree and/or WAC programs), and individual faculty may use both or focus primarily on one or the other. Writing-to-Learn is more in keeping with early conceptions of WAC (Russell, 2006b), where WAC is predicated on the value of writing as a pedagogical tool. Writing-to-Learn involves the incorporation of frequent, low-stakes writing assignments that are intended to help students engage with and remember course material (Odell, 1987; WAC Clearinghouse, n.d.). On the other hand, the rationale behind WID is the recognition that first-year composition courses cannot realistically prepare students for all types of academic writing, at least in part because becoming literate in academic discourses requires students to internalize disciplinary ways of thinking as well as writing (Duff, 2010; Florence & Yore, 2004). A WID approach usually entails explicit instruction in the conventions of writing within a particular discipline, with one or more high-stakes

writing assignments for students to demonstrate their mastery of these conventions. Writing in the Disciplines is often part of a programmatic approach, with instruction in disciplinary writing integrated as part of the vertical curriculum and with student mastery of disciplinary writing used as part of program assessment (Hoyt et al., 2010; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017).

Examining the relative positions of WID and WTL within a given institution's WAC efforts can also indicate the institution's priorities. Some concerns among composition scholars are that WID seems to attract more attention than WTL, and therefore that many people seem to think of WAC and WID as interchangeable, leading to confusion on the part of both instructors and students. For example, Basgier (2014) studied the writing assignments used by an instructor for a museum appreciation course, finding that the instructor and students both developed a clearer understanding of the purpose of writing in the class once the instructor was able to articulate the goals of the non-WID assignments and their relationship to her goals for the course overall. Because the instructor had limited exposure to WTL as a concept, although she saw value in the WTL assignments she had created, she struggled to communicate that value effectively to her students. Another concern composition scholars have raised about WID is that it is often pitched as a means of improving students' employability, leading to the neglect of cultural and civic literacies (Flammia, 2015). This aspect of WID may help to explain why it seems generally more popular than WTL approaches, as WID responds more directly to popular concerns among employers about student writing proficiency (AACU, 2015; NACE, 2017). Nonetheless, although WID may be more popular than WTL, particularly at the institutional and programmatic level, both institutions and individual

faculty members frequently incorporate elements of both WTL and WID. The emphasis

placed on WID, however, can mean that WTL approaches are undervalued and that

faculty have less training in how to use them effectively.

In addition to considering the types of approaches to WAC, another way to

analyze WAC's place at a given institution is its level of institutional coordination. What

an article describes as "Writing Across the Curriculum" could describe an institution-

wide effort involving multiple departments and faculty, or it could simply discuss a single

instructor's efforts to integrate writing in a single course that traditionally does not use

writing assignments. Bunker and Schnieder (2015), for example, wrote about the success

of a human physiology instructor who introduced narrative WTL assignments in an effort

to help students make connections between the course material and real-life situations. A

number of examples in the literature explore similar scenarios in which a single instructor

was motivated to introduce writing into a particular course (Bartolomeo-Maida, 2016;

Cannady & Gallo, 2014; Grimm, 2014). In cases like these, although faculty members

interested in WAC often collaborate with writing and/or curriculum design experts, there

is no coordination of WAC efforts across an entire program, let alone throughout the

institution as a whole. Perhaps the most common variation is the program-level

implementation of WAC. Migliaccio and Carrigan (2017) have reported on a typical

example; in this case, students in a sociology program were found to be lacking sufficient

writing skills at graduation, so the program created a writing assessment and redesigned

curriculum to provide students with more writing practice and feedback. In these

implementations of WAC, collaboration within a program is essential, and programs may

reach out to writing experts on campus, but again, the literature suggests that there is

limited coordination of WAC efforts at the institutional level (Dana et al., 2011; Hall &

Birch, 2018; Hawks et al., 2015; Horton & Diaz, 2011; Hoyt et al., 2010; Luna et al.,

2014; Luthy et al, 2009; McLaren, 2014; Minnich et al., 2018; Saulnier, 2016). At the

highest level of coordination is an institution-wide program, where all faculty are at least

encouraged, if not required, to participate. There may be some overlap here with the

previous category, as at a nursing college where the entire institution is also focused on a

single discipline (Berger, 2015). In some instances, the institution promotes WAC only

through the adoption of a campus-wide student learning outcome regarding writing

proficiency (Defazio et al., 2010; Harper & Vered, 2016). In these cases, the actual

implementation of WAC is more likely to resemble one of the previous levels of

engagement because the mechanics of actually meeting that outcome are left to program

directors and instructors to manage. However, some institutions have actual institution-

wide programs in which faculty development workshops and other types of training or

support are provided (Hampson, 2009; Varelas et al., 2015; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017).

These institutions go beyond identifying writing proficiency as a student learning

outcome and organize training in WAC to help faculty achieve that outcome.

A final consideration in describing institutional approaches to WAC is how fully

developed the program is. Condon and Rutz (2012) describe a taxonomy of writing

programs, identifying four types of program – foundational, established, integrated, and

institutional change agent – based on the program's goals, funding, structure, and level of

integration with the institution. According to their definitions, a foundational WAC

program is one in the early stages of responding to a perceived need for WAC, "its

activities dependent on a few key players, its efforts not yet reflected in the curriculum,

but rather in the practices of a growing number of faculty" (p. 366). Many of the examples cited above of individual faculty pursuing WAC in their own classes suggest programs at this stage of development. In contrast, in what Condon and Rutz (2012) label an established program, although efforts to "spread the good word" and bring faculty on board are still needed (p. 367), the institution funds faculty development for WAC and officially assigns someone to oversee the WAC program. Based on the survey results from Thaiss and Porter (2010), very few two-year institutions have even reached this level, let alone the integrated or institutional change agent levels. At the integrated level, as defined by Condon and Rutz (2012), the institution recognizes the WAC program's active value instead of merely seeing it as a necessary response to a perceived deficiency, and once a program reaches the institutional change agent level, faculty take their collaborative relationship with the program almost for granted.

These three interrelated facets – type of implementation, extent of faculty participation, and degree of development – lead to numerous possibilities for what a specific WAC program may look like. One "program" may not actually be a program at all, rather reflecting diffuse efforts across an institution, with individual faculty drawing on various resources and their own initiative to develop a combination of WTL and WID assignments that they think best serve their students' needs, while another WAC program may be tightly controlled within a specific degree program and its course sequences. Variations on WAC programs are not necessarily a sign of a poor prognosis for those programs, as different institutions and degree programs understandably need to create WAC efforts that make sense for their organizational culture and goals. However, some

specific features are associated with longer lasting programs, suggesting that not all

variations have an equal chance of success.

<div align="center">**WAC Best Practices**</div>

Institutional

Although WAC programs are quite variable, the literature suggests several

characteristics that appear to be key features of successful and sustainable WAC

programs. The following section describes these features and the various forms they may

take.

Sustained Faculty Development

Perhaps unsurprisingly, organized faculty development programs appear to be

common across lasting WAC programs (Berger, 2015; Kolb, 2013; Luthy et al., 2009;

Nielsen, 2019; Thaiss & Porter, 2010; Varelas & Wolfe, 2015). Berger (2015) further

notes that one-time training is insufficient for a successful program because faculty need

support as they encounter new problems and expand their vision of WAC in their classes.

Kolb (2012) describes several options that can provide appropriate support for faculty

with differing needs, including a year-long program with regular meetings for faculty

who want accountability and feedback, a multi-day summer or intersession workshop to

get faculty started, and various intensive single-day workshops on special topics offered

throughout the academic year. Another means of faculty development is a newsletter that

can serve as a means of distributing new ideas, sharing faculty success stories, and

directing faculty to additional resources (Berger, 2015). Successful programs not only

offer faculty training, but they also encourage collaboration among faculty within those

faculty development programs (Hampson, 2009; Luna et al., 2014; Minnich et al., 2018;

Zemliansky & Berry, 2017). According to Hampson (2009), faculty report this collaboration as a key positive experience and an important motivation for their continued efforts.

Financial Investment

Successful programs may provide some kind of financial incentive, such as a stipend, to encourage faculty to participate (Hampson et al., 2009; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017). This method is likely to at least generate some initial faculty buy-in, although both Hampson et al. (2009) and Zemlianksy and Berry (2017) report difficulties gaining participants, even with a stipend. In fact, Hampson et al. (2009) only reached 50% participation (from the entire institution, over two years) with a $500 stipend for every faculty member who completed the program, whereas McLaren et al. (2014) reported 41% participation (from one department, in the first semester of implementation) with no such stipend and entirely voluntary participation. Thus, a stipend may not make that great of a difference in how many faculty members choose to participate. Furthermore, a one-time stipend does little to ensure that faculty will continue to use what they have learned. A more reliable form of financial investment would take the form of course releases for faculty members who are leading the program, and/or the creation of actual staff positions with responsibility for oversight (Thaiss & Porter, 2010). By supporting WAC in this way, the institution can encourage a more lasting participation.

Collaboration across Academic Boundaries

WAC efforts are more successful when faculty who are attempting to integrate writing in their courses make use of resources such as writing centers and libraries (Berger, 2015; Hall & Birch, 2018; Hutchison, 2018; Luna et al., 2014; Thaiss & Porter,

2010). Thus, it is important for institutions to ensure strong communication to faculty about how to access these resources and what, exactly, they can offer. For example, Torrell (2020) explains the valuable role librarians can play in helping students navigate what can feel like contradictory expectations for research from different professors. Writing centers can both provide resources for instructors and serve as resources for students who are engaging with WAC assignments (Berger, 2015; Hall & Birch, 2018; Hampson, 2009). Another invaluable resource can be the composition experts on campus – that is, faculty who already teach writing. Berger (2015), for example, describes relying on English faculty to assist with grade norming, training faculty in rhetoric and the writing process, and guiding faculty in providing effective formative feedback instead of just "correcting" students' writing for them. Collaboration across academic boundaries also results in a proliferation of writing-intensive courses taught within specific disciplines by professors of that department or program (Thaiss & Porter, 2010). These courses may encourage more sustainable programs because they give faculty within the discipline ownership over teaching writing to their students, while outside resources such as English faculty and writing centers serve a supporting role.

Lasting Leadership

WAC programs tend to last when they are led by tenured faculty or otherwise have limited turnover in leadership (Thaiss & Porter, 2010). Condon and Rutz (2012) describe programs that depend solely on a faculty development model as "ephemeral." This type of WAC program is not even really a program, exactly, but instead a reflection of one person or small group's interest in WAC. These WAC missionaries may lead

faculty training sessions or even apply for grants, along with merely spreading the word about WAC, but without a dedicated leader in place, these early efforts may lose steam.

Reporting Outside a Single Department

Thaiss and Porter (2010) note that the longest-lasting WAC programs were not housed within English departments. McLeod (2008) similarly argues that the success of WAC depends on the programs not being delegated to English or composition departments. The reasons for this may relate somewhat to the need for faculty ownership over the writing requirements; perhaps if faculty think that teaching writing is a responsibility of their own program and that they are not required to report to a peer, they feel more invested in the program. Another possibility is simply, as McLeod (2008) speculates, that English departments are going to focus first on their own departmental needs and may end up giving short shrift to WAC when resources are scarce.

Assessment

A key feature of firmly established WAC programs is assessment (Condon & Rutz, 2012; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017). McLeod (2008) argues that quantitative assessment is necessary for programs to appeal to legislators and administrators. Certainly over the last few decades, the pressure on higher education to report on outcomes has increased (Eaton, 2010; McLendon et al., 2010). Those institutions that have limited their WAC "program" to a campus-wide learning outcome of writing proficiency will be expected to do much more assessment of that outcome. Assessment is not only important for funding, but also as a means of ensuring the WAC program grows and continues to meet the needs of both students and faculty (Berger, 2015).

Grade Norming

Faculty often think that they lack the necessary expertise to grade student writing (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017). Grade norming is a common practice that can ameliorate those concerns. Grade norming typically involves asking all faculty members to grade the same assignment and compare their conclusions to ensure that everyone who will be assigning grades is applying similar standards. Grade norming helps faculty feel confident assigning grades and providing feedback (Berger, 2015; Luna et al., 2015; Minnich et al., 2018) and ensures that students are receiving consistent assessment across a program (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Minnich et al., 2018). One important method of grade norming is checking for interrater reliability when multiple faculty members are grading with the same rubric (Minnich et al., 2018). This process can also result in refinements to the rubric that will help faculty feel confident using it, and perhaps also better convey expectations to students.

In the Classroom

Establishing the institutional features of strong WAC programs is essential, but success also depends on developing good practices for integrating writing within a given course. These practices are those that contribute most effectively to student improvement in writing, and also those practices that faculty find most valuable in their courses. Melzer (2014) found that faculty who were most successful at integrating writing in their courses learned these practices from their participation in WAC initiatives at their institutions. The following section will list the characteristics of successful implementation of writing in a non-writing course, based on what has been established thus far in the literature; however, it should be noted that not all types of courses are

equally represented in the literature. Little, if any, research has been done on integrating writing in college-level math courses, and overall there is a much greater representation of social sciences and nursing than any other type of course.

Formative Feedback and Opportunities to Revise

Formative feedback is perhaps the most strongly-supported teaching strategy for improving student writing; students improve when they are told what they need to work on and given the opportunity to do so (Defazio et al., 2010; Hoyt et al., 2010; Luna et al., 2014; McLaren, 2014). Moreover, providing formative feedback on writing helps the faculty members who are grading as well. Luthy et al. (2009) find that breaking writing assignments down into discrete steps and providing formative feedback throughout the writing process reduces instructors' perceived time spent on grading writing. Because time spent grading is one of faculty members' main objections to teaching writing, encouraging (through training) the use of formative feedback can keep faculty from feeling overly burdened by WAC, thus making them more likely to persist in their efforts.

Student Self-Assessment

Nielsen (2019) compares the effects of self-assessment and peer review on student writing scores, and finds that self-assessment is the more effective practice for students. Importantly, they also find that self-assessment is easier for instructors to implement (although both peer review and self-assessment required instructor training in best practices). Defazio et al. (2010) also find that requiring students to participate in self-reflection exercises is a valuable component of how the four professors they studied integrated WAC into their curricula.

Variety of Types of Writing Assignments

The literature suggests that faculty should be open to incorporating a variety of types of writing and not limit themselves to high-stakes, long research papers. Kolb (2013) notes that low-stakes, informal writing assignments are often dismissed by faculty as unimportant, but these types of assignments are valuable for students. They can also increase instructors' enjoyment in the class by reducing the grading load and promoting high quality interactions with students (Hampson, 2009). Hoyt et al. (2010) also find that an emphasis on formal writing led students to greater mastery of grammatical and documentation conventions, but does little to help them engage critically with the course content. Thus, when designing writing assignments, faculty must remember that not all WAC has to be WID, and encouraging some creativity and freedom with WTL may help WAC be more sustainable.

Efficacy of WAC

One current weakness of much of the WAC research is the dearth of published assessment; much of the literature represents student or faculty perceptions of its success, with relatively little research actually comparing student writing before and after the implementation of WAC. Considering WAC's struggles to take root at two-year institutions, it may be tempting to believe WAC just is not that useful or effective. In fact, both WTL and WID approaches to WAC have support in the literature in terms of improving student outcomes. WTL approaches have been shown to improve students' content learning, critical thinking, and even just their general enjoyment of a course. For example, Bartolomeo-Maida (2016) and Saulnier (2016) find that WTL assignments connected to assigned reading not only improve how often students actually complete

their reading assignments, but also increase their level of engagement with and critical thinking about the reading. Similarly, students in both Cannady and Gallo's (2016) study and Grimm's (2015) study report that they thought they learned more course content from completing WTL assignments. Both Bunker and Schnieder (2015) and Kolb (2013) find that the use of low-stakes creative writing assignments instead of just disciplinary genres enhances students' enjoyment of the course, and students also believe the assignments help them to understand course content. Although WTL is primarily about helping students engage with and retain course content, WTL assignments do also contribute to the development of writing proficiency. For example, Johnstone et al. (2002) find that general writing practice (as opposed to WID) is particularly valuable for first- and second-year college students; similarly, Varelas et al. (2015) find that low-stakes assignments are helpful for underprepared and beginning college students to develop both critical thinking and writing skills. Overall, the literature on WTL suggests that these types of assignments are especially valuable for students who are early in their academic careers and/or underprepared for college-level writing.

The literature on WID is also quite positive, regardless of how extensively the program is developed. Berger (2015), for example, reports improvements in student writing skills after the development of an intensive WID-focused WAC program at a nursing college. Dana et al. (2011) also find significant improvement in student writing from first year to a capstone course following the integration of writing assignments throughout the curriculum in a business program, Migliaccio and Carrigan (2017) illustrate similar results from integrating WID throughout a sociology program, and most recently, Andrews et al. (2021) report improvement in students' writing after integrating

technical writing in an engineering program. WID can be implemented across disciplines, instead of vertically, as described by Davis et al. (2021), who developed a collaborative research and writing project for psychology and education students to pursue together. They report that the project improved students' writing proficiency and content knowledge, and gave students an opportunity to draw connections across disciplines. However, WID does not have to involve multiple courses or disciplines at all; Horton and Diaz (2011) and Luna et al. (2014) note positive faculty and student feedback about student writing after the incorporation of a single WID course in a program. Yet smaller changes can still improve student outcomes. Writing in the Disciplines does not necessarily just mean adding writing assignments to classes that did not previously have them; it can also mean incorporating additional training and practice to help students be more successful at a particular WID task. For example, Defazio et al. (2010) report that students' final written projects improve after the introduction of additional WID practice and more explicit WID instruction.

Writing Across the Curriculum – and particularly WTL – also demonstrates potential to meet the needs of underprepared students. Best practice was once thought to entail mandatory supplemental instruction for students identified as "underprepared" for college-level work (Roueche & Roueche, 1996), and there remains widespread agreement that significant percentages of entering college students are underprepared. For example, in Oklahoma, about 17% of first-year students are deemed to need remediation in writing (*Oklahoma High School Indicators Project*, 2017), a percentage that is doubtless higher at open-enrollment institutions. However, in recent years, requiring supplementary instruction has been criticized for contributing to declining retention and graduation rates.

In response, Oklahoma, along with many other states, has mandated the reform of remediation (Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education, n.d.). A popular new approach is having students enroll in two courses simultaneously: the credit-bearing introductory course and a co-requisite, non-credit support course. In theory, having students take both courses in the same semester instead of sequentially will encourage persistence because they will be gaining college credit right away. However, this solution still typically requires students to enroll in and pay for non-credit-bearing courses, and often increases their time to graduation, because they can only take so many courses each semester. The requirement also sometimes discourages students from enrolling at all, either because they do not want to pay for a non-credit class or because the requirement makes them believe that perhaps they are just not cut out for college (Handel & Williams, 2011). Writing Across the Curriculum on the other hand, and particularly WTL, improves the writing skills of underprepared students (Johnstone et al., 2002; Roberts, 2008; Varelas et al., 2015) and does not require students to enroll in extra courses for no credit, so a strong WAC program may be part of the solution to the perceived problems with required remediation.

The literature suggests that WAC could be quite valuable at two-year institutions, helping students and meeting institutional needs as well. So why do so few two-year colleges have developed WAC programs? Both faculty and institutions have strong reasons for resisting efforts to implement WAC.

Faculty Responses to WAC

Some resistance to WAC stems from students themselves, who have been found to dismiss writing in non-writing classes as unimportant (Bergman & Zepernick, 2007;

Fallon et al., 2009; Nelms & Dively, 2007) or to push back against discipline-specific genres and expectations (Adler-Kassner et al., 2012; Clark & Hernandez, 2011; McCarthy, 1987; Nelms & Dively, 2007; Williams, 2005). However, much resistance comes from instructors, who believe that they lack the time (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Nelms & Dively, 2007) and/or the expertise (Cannady & Gallo, 2017; Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017) to include writing in their courses. Faculty may also be conscious that students may respond negatively to increased writing requirements and worry, with good reason, that such negativity will harm their teaching evaluations (Luna et al., 2014; McLaren, 2014). Luna et al. (2014) find, however, that although student evaluations initially dipped when WAC was implemented, once students adjusted to being expected to write through the program, the evaluations returned to normal.

Some faculty resistance undoubtedly also connects to the perception that mandatory first-year composition courses should be sufficient to prepare students for all other classes (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017). Many faculty believe that "teaching writing is not my job" and therefore put little effort into doing so; Migliaccio and Carrigan (2017) note that faculty often think that teaching writing should be left to English departments, and Hall and Birch (2018) further explain that "faculty often take for granted that the knowledge, skills, and habits of mind that students have developed as writers and speakers in prior coursework will easily and automatically transfer into their work inside new contexts, including new disciplinary contexts" (p. 3). In other words, many faculty believe that if the first-year composition courses are doing their job, students should need no further instruction and should be fully prepared to dive

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into disciplinary writing. Even WTL assignments may be dismissed as irrelevant or insufficiently serious for college-level work (McGrath & Spear, 1991).

Faculty in composition may also resist the implementation of WAC, particularly if they are not included in the process. Villanueva (2013) explains that composition faculty are often more attuned to the issues of power that inhere in teaching "correct" writing than are faculty in other disciplines. Thus, composition faculty can be hesitant about "letting" other faculty teach writing, especially with students classified as basic writers, who are more often from marginalized groups. Villanueva (2013) argues that this conflict can be overcome by educating faculty in other disciplines about these issues, noting, "We have our expertise - literacy and its pedagogy - but they have theirs. And as often, they too recognize the politics, just not necessarily the politics in believing writing is simply writing, in believing that the codes are agreed upon, a given" (p. 101). Thus, a successful WAC program may require both composition faculty and faculty from other disciplines to learn more about each discipline's writing culture and to find ways to navigate conflicting beliefs about what it means to teach "good" writing.

Administrative Concerns about WAC

Many institutions identify writing proficiency as an institutional learning outcome (ILO) (*Student Learning Outcomes*, n.d.), yet employers continue to describe graduates' writing as deficient. In one study, only 41.6% of employers considered graduates proficient in both written and oral communication (NACE, 2017), and in another, only 27% of employers rated graduates as proficient in writing (AACU, 2015). Despite some movement toward holding institutions accountable for student learning outcomes, accreditation still relies mainly on self-reported data and further does not typically require

institutions to provide evidence that students are meeting any institutional learning outcomes (Suskie, 2015). Thus, it falls to the institution itself to develop a system to ensure that all programs are working toward those ILOs, but it seems that many institutions do not prioritize this (LaCount & Jackson, 2019; Shupe, 2007). In the current situation, even if a class or program is supposed to incorporate writing, there is little risk of negative consequence for not doing so or for only doing the bare minimum. However, policy analysts have noted a growing interest in holding colleges accountable for these outcomes (Eaton, 2010; McLendon et al., 2010), and furthermore, these employer complaints about deficiencies in graduates' writing abilities contribute to the perception that pursuing a degree is "an increasingly and unreasonably costly investment in time and money" (Eaton, 2010, p. 593). WAC has the potential to help institutions reach their stated goal of graduating students who are proficient in writing, thus countering this perception.

Nonetheless, despite all that institutions have to gain from implementing WAC, doing so requires overcoming significant hurdles. First, WAC can demand additional resources, particularly if departments want to pursue a WID approach, which often entails either the creation of a new class specifically designed to teach writing in that discipline or the integration of extensive formal writing assignments in courses that may previously have had little or none. Kolb et al. (2013) explain that writing-intensive courses usually have much lower enrollment caps, which can increase the overall number of classes offered and the demand for faculty to teach these classes. Departments that are not in a position to hire more faculty and where both full-time and adjunct faculty are already carrying heavy course loads may lack the resources to pursue their vision of WAC, or

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simply not believe WAC is worth the investment of these additional resources. The other major hurdle is determining the organizational structure of the program. Because first-year composition is the central focus of English departments at two-year institutions, creating a WAC program without their involvement would almost certainly be seen as an affront. Doing so also fails to take advantage of the knowledge and experience of those who have spent many years teaching writing. However, given that the most successful programs are housed outside of a single department, institutions would probably be wise to consider developing WAC as a separate program of its own, or housed in a Writing Center, with English faculty collaborating rather than entirely responsible for it. Regardless of the structure, plans for funding and assessment must be made, and undoubtedly these plans require an investment of time and money, both of which are in short supply. Perhaps all of these difficulties help to explain why, at some institutions, what passes for WAC is merely a student learning outcome for writing proficiency.

Conclusion

This chapter explored the history of WAC, its forms of implementation, best practices for both institutions and faculty in implementing WAC, and the concerns that both faculty and institutions may raise when tasked with doing so. Despite its fifty years of history and despite its promise for meeting the needs of both students and institutions, WAC has not yet managed to thrive at two-year institutions. Many of the difficulties are organizational, and most of these could be addressed with greater faculty investment in a WAC program. The literature shows that WAC programs often grow from just a few faculty who see WAC's promise and work to help other faculty see it too. However, without strong institutional support, these efforts die on the vine. The following chapter

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presents the methodology for a study that will identify, from faculty perspectives, the

types of institutional support that would help WAC flourish at two-year institutions. The

results of this study are presented in Chapter IV and analyzing in Chapter V.

CHAPTER III

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this chapter is to explain the research methodology for this Delphi study that investigated faculty needs for institutional support for Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) at two-year institutions. The Delphi methodology provides the judgments of experts – that is, faculty at two-year institutions – about how those institutions can best support them in the development of a sustainable approach to WAC in their courses. This chapter will present the research procedure, including the details of Delphi methodology, participants and recruitment, data collection, and data analysis, as well as ethical considerations for the study.

Problem Statement

Since the 1970s, research has demonstrated that WAC is useful for the development of undergraduate students' writing proficiency (Malencyzk, 2012; Townsend, 2002). Indeed, whether WAC is focused entirely on low-stakes writing assignments to promote student engagement, or involves complex assignments scaffolded through an entire program's curriculum, student writing improves (Berger, 2015; Dana et al., 2011; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Johnstone et al., 2002; Varelas et al., 2015). Considering how employers have criticized colleges for failing to prepare students adequately for writing in the workplace (AACU, 2015; NACE, 2017), one might expect

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WAC to have been widely explored as a response to these concerns. However, two-year institutions in particular have struggled to develop lasting or widespread WAC programs (Gardner, 2010; Roberts, 2008). As with any WAC program, resistance to these programs likely comes from various sources, including students and administration. However, a major roadblock to implementing WAC is that faculty remain resistant to providing writing instruction in non-composition courses, whether because they believe they simply do not have the time (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Nelms & Dively, 2007; Nielsen, 2019; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017) or because they believe mandatory first-year writing courses should suffice (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Zemlianksy & Berry, 2017). Perhaps faculty at two-year institutions require certain types of institutional support to encourage their adoption of WAC and to enable sustained and successful efforts to incorporate WAC in their classes.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this Delphi study is to describe institutional policies and practices that faculty at public two-year colleges in the state of Oklahoma believe encourage their adoption of and support their utilization of Writing Across the Curriculum. Such writing may be formal or informal, planned or unplanned, graded or ungraded, written in any context for any audience. Examples include smaller journal reflections or discussion posts as well as larger research papers.

Research Questions

- What current institutional policies and practices encourage Oklahoma two-year college faculty to include writing in their courses?

- What current institutional policies and practices support Oklahoma two-year college faculty in their endeavors to include writing in their courses?

- What institutional changes do Oklahoma two-year college faculty believe would encourage them to include more writing in their courses?

- What institutional changes do Oklahoma two-year college faculty believe would support them in their endeavors to include more writing in their courses?

Design of the Study

Epistemology

This Delphi study is grounded in a pragmatic epistemology. Rather than committing to a single epistemology, pragmatists believe that researchers should choose the methods that best suit their purpose (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Pragmatism does not recognize "a duality between reality independent of the mind or within the mind" (Creswell & Creswell, 2018, p. 11), but instead sees truth as both external and internal. Delphi studies are often considered to be mixed methods, and pragmatism is often associated with mixed methods research. Indeed, part of the rationale behind the development of mixed methods research in the 1980s is described by Creswell and Creswell (2018) as "the idea that all methods had bias and weaknesses, and the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data neutralized the weaknesses of each form of data" (p. 14). Thus, mixed methods research is often rooted in a pragmatic epistemology. Further, pragmatism is particularly salient for Delphi research because a core tenet of pragmatism is the value of "shared inquiry directed at resolving social and political problems or indeterminacies," with a focus on practical solutions to problems (Legg & Hookway, 2020, section 4.2). Rather than argue about the relative value of different types

of knowledge, pragmatists focus on how both qualitative and quantitative data can be put to use, which is exactly the point of a conventional Delphi study.

Research Approach

Delphi "is a method in which the experiences, knowledge, and presumptions of expert panelists on an issue or development process under study are collected in an interactive process, normally by interview or survey" (Lilja et al., 2011, p. 1). Delphi studies have been described as both a form of quantitative research and as a form of qualitative research (Avella, 2016; Brady, 2015; Lilja et al., 2011; Sekayi & Kennedy, 2017). The use of statistical measures to define consensus is a quantitative approach that has led some scholars to argue that the Delphi technique is aligned with postpositivism (Hanafin, 2004; Monti & Tingen, 1999). On the other hand, others have argued that Delphi's process of seeking consensus through iterative feedback is inherently qualitative and aligned with constructivism (Brady, 2015; Stewart, 2001). Some variations of the technique even dispense with quantitative measures altogether (Avella, 2016), whereas other modified Delphi studies may not collect any qualitative data (Keeney et al., 2011), so the precise classification of Delphi can vary depending on the researcher's approach. This study will use the conventional Delphi that collects both qualitative and quantitative data, and although the technique originated prior to the field of mixed methods research by that name (Creswell & Creswell, 2018), certain features suggest that mixed methods is the most suitable categorization. This classification makes sense not only because the Delphi technique uses both types of measures, but more importantly, because the rationale behind the conventional Delphi technique is that combining qualitative and quantitative is the best way to answer the research question. Furthermore, the precise

mixture of quantitative and qualitative techniques is to be determined based on what would best suit the researcher's purpose (Avella, 2016). These characteristics echo those of mixed methods research. Others note that the Delphi methodology has a "hybrid epistemological status," finding value in both qualitative and quantitative research (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 19) and therefore consider it to be a form of mixed methods research.

Delphi studies originated in the 1950s and 1960s with several RAND researchers, primarily Olaf Helmer, T. J. Gordon, and Norman C. Dalkey (Keeney et al., 2011). Dalkey (1969) explains, "The rationale for the procedure is primarily the age-old adage, 'Two heads are better than one,' when the issue is one where exact knowledge is not available" (p. *v*). The Delphi method involves assembling an "expert panel" and administering iterative rounds of questionnaires to develop consensus (Dalkey, 1969; Keeney et al., 2011). The goal of a Delphi study is to understand the informed judgments of experts on a specific issue (Dalkey, 1969; Lilja et al., 2011). In addition to use for issues for which exact knowledge does not exist, the approach is appropriate when the research problem "does not lend itself to precise analytical techniques but can benefit from subjective judgements" (Keeney et al., 2011, p. 43). The Delphi method has been used to predict future outcomes (Garson, 2014; Keeney et al., 2011), for developing constructs and models (Garson, 2014; Skulmoski et al., 2007), and for policy recommendations and evaluations (Adler & Ziglio, 1996; Veenhoven et al., 2020).

Participant Sampling and Recruiting

Developing clear and reasonable criteria for defining expertise prior to assembling the panel is essential (Avella, 2016; Brady, 2016; Keeney et al., 2011; Lilja et al., 2011).

What constitutes an expert depends on the research questions driving the study. Experts may indeed be experts in a particular discipline, but they may also be stakeholders or people with a certain type of experience that provides them insight into the research questions. For this study, experts in what faculty at two-year institutions want and need are best defined as faculty at two-year institutions because those are the people most likely to have relevant experience that can inform their answers to the research questions. Keeney et al. (2011) note that the use of experts can be a methodological weakness in Delphi studies, and researchers must always keep in mind that the study can only identify expert opinion, which may or may not be fact. For this study, the expert panelists may believe that certain policies or practices either do or would encourage or support them in teaching writing, but their beliefs do not guarantee success if their suggestions were implemented. Nonetheless, the expert suggestions would be a reasonable place for institutions to start. Once institutions have made the changes the faculty believe would best promote Writing Across the Curriculum, the institutions will be in a better position to evaluate what exactly seems to be working, or not working, in their specific contexts.

The expert panel for this study was limited to full-time faculty, excluding English or composition instructors, at two-year public institutions in the state of Oklahoma. English and composition instructors could be excluded because they are already required to assign writing in their classes, so WAC does not really apply to them. The reason for selecting only full-time faculty is to limit the participants to those who have some control over their course curricula; many adjunct instructors do not. To manage the scale of the study, the population was limited to public two-year Oklahoma institutions that primarily offer associate's degrees, although some of these institutions also offer a small selection

of four-year programs. These institutions include only those two-year schools that fall under the purview of the Oklahoma State Regents for Higher Education; CareerTech schools, which can be postsecondary, are not included. The National Center for Education Statistic's (n.d.) *Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System* identifies 15 institutions that meet the following criteria:

- Oklahoma

- Public

- Degree-granting, not primarily baccalaureate or above

- Degree-granting, associate's and certificates

These institutions' public faculty directories were used to identify potential participants and access their e-mail addresses. Once IRB approval was received, I used Qualtrics to send a recruitment email to all publicly-listed email addresses for full-time faculty at these 15 institutions. Qualtrics allows the researcher the option to track responses from individual email addresses, which was necessary to allow me to follow up with panelists if questions arose about their responses. Thus, I was able to match panelist identities to their responses, but panelists' identities were not known to anyone else.

The more diverse the experts are, the larger the sample size needed (Keeney et al., 2011) but, beyond this general prescription, the literature on Delphi methodology offers little guidance for how to determine the exact number of panelists needed. Lilja et al. (2011) explain that "the interactivity and recursivity, which are essential features of the process, might suffer if the group grows too much" (p. 2). Thus, the goal was to ensure that the entire range of opinion on the issue is represented, but to keep the size small enough that the responses and processes are realistically manageable (Lilja et al., 2011).

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Delphi panels typically range from 10-100 members (Avella, 2016; Lilja et al., 2011) and the most common recommendation is for somewhere between 10 and 50 panelists (Brady, 2016; Keeney et al., 2011), although some have argued that having more than 30 panelists does little to improve the results of the study, primarily because of greater rates of attrition (Clayton, 1997; De Villiers et al., 2005). The experts for this study are defined fairly homogeneously with regard to factors that seem likely to influence their responses (they are all full-time faculty and all at two-year Oklahoma institutions). The other factors that seem to have the greatest potential to influence their responses are the disciplines in which they teach, their lengths of experience as full-time faculty, and their specific institutional contexts. The expert panel thus needed to represent faculty at various institutions, from various disciplines, and with various levels of experience. Additionally, the panel needed to represent faculty who use writing to various extents in their classes. Therefore, the panel was required to meet the following criteria:

- Representation of at least four institutions

- Representation of at least five different disciplines

- Representation of a range of faculty experience, including at least three panelists with five or fewer years faculty experience, three panelists with 5-10 years, and three panelists with more than 10 years

- Representation of a range of current uses of writing, including at least three panelists who require little or no writing in at least one of their classes, three panelists who require a moderate amount of writing in at least one of their classes, and at least three panelists who require a lot of writing in at least one of their classes

To meet this requirement and to allow for attrition, while still avoiding the problems created by having too large a number of panelists, this study aimed to recruit 30 participants. However, a Delphi study can provide reliable results with as few as 13 participants (Eck et al., 2019; Lilja et al., 2011).

Recruitment for the study began on March 25, 2021, and ended on April 29, 2021. To manage the selection of panelists and ensure the previously mentioned criteria were met, the recruitment email directed those who were interested in participating to a Qualtrics survey to confirm their full-time faculty status and obtain their informed consent for participation. After providing their informed consent, they were directed to a new page in Qualtrics with a preliminary set of survey questions to collect the information needed to ensure that the criteria for panel diversity were met. (See Appendix A for a complete list of the preliminary survey questions.) Within a week after the first recruitment email was sent, 29 panelists had consented to participate and completed the preliminary survey. When no more responses were forthcoming within the following two weeks, I sent another recruitment email, which resulted in an additional six responses. However, because the study had set a maximum of 30 participants, I assessed whether the criteria had been met with just the first 30 responses. They had been, so recruitment closed and the extra five participants were not asked to be panelists in the study. Avella (2016) notes that, to reduce attrition, researchers should select panelists who express a real interest in the topic and make them aware of the time commitment required. By emphasizing the commitment required of panelists in the recruitment process, this study aimed to ensure that all panelists were truly interested in the topic and that they would not be taken by surprise by the repeated rounds of surveys. (See the recruitment email in

Appendix B.) However, even these precautions could not guarantee participation in all phases, and only 18 participants of the original 30 completed all three rounds. Fortunately, the panel was large enough to allow for this attrition without compromising the validity of the results (Eck et al., 2019; Lilja et al., 2011).

All panelists were entered in a drawing for a $50 digital Visa gift card (purchased from egiftcards.com) after each phase of the study they completed, for a total of three separate drawings. Each participant who had completed that phase was assigned a number from 1 through the total number of participants, and the website random.org's Sequence Generator was used to randomize the list of numbers. The first number in the new random sequence was the number of the winning participant. The same process was used for every drawing. All of the procedures for the drawings were recorded. The winner of the first phase drawing was unreachable; a search of her institution's website suggested that she no longer worked there, and I was unable to locate alternative contact information. A second drawing was completed for the first phase gift card, and that recipient was available to claim the prize. In a surprising turn, that recipient also won the drawing and claimed the gift card for the second phase. The winner for the third phase was someone else, who also immediately claimed the gift card.

Data Collection and Analysis

Originally, the Delphi process took place by postal mail (Keeney et al., 2011), but technology now allows for a more streamlined online collection process. Collecting online data allows for a much faster turnaround time between phases and is more convenient for participants, while still allowing the researcher to preserve participants' anonymity from each other. The data for this study was collected using Qualtrics, an

online survey platform. The data collection and analysis of a Delphi study involves

multiple phases, the exact number of which may vary depending on the goal of the study;

however, most commonly, Delphi involves three phases of data collection and analysis

(Keeney et al., 2011), as this study did.

Phase I

The focus of the first phase in a conventional Delphi study is asking the experts

for a list of statements in response to open-ended questions (Avella, 2016; Keeney et al.,

2011). For this study, the initial questions were:

- What does your institution currently do to encourage you to assign writing in

  your classes?

- What changes could your institution make that would encourage you to assign

  writing in your classes?

- What does your institution currently do to help you include writing in your

  classes?

- What kinds of support could your institution provide that would help you to

  include writing in your classes?

As recommended by Keeney et al. (2011), these questions were pilot tested with five of

my peers, including faculty from various disciplines, who were recruited from the pool of

graduate students in my college and from among my colleagues. These peers were

presented the questions as they would appear on the Qualtrics survey and asked to

provide what they thought would be appropriate answers to the questions, as well as any

feedback they had about the clarity of the questions. The pilot group had no difficulty

answering any of the questions and did not make any recommendations for changes to the

wording, so the Phase I questions were not revised before being presented to the participants in the study. Keeney et al. (2011) recommend allowing for a maximum of ten statements for each open-ended question; the design of the survey in Qualtrics thus provided ten blank lines for panelists to answer each question. Participants were instructed to list as many as ten answers, and, to make it clear to me that an answer had not been mistakenly left unanswered, to write "Nothing" in the first blank if they had no answers for a particular question.

Data collection for Phase I began on April 5, 2021, and ended on May 23, 2021. After 22 participants responded in Phase I and several attempts had been made to elicit responses from the remaining eight panelists with no result, I determined that it would be wiser to proceed with the 22 who had already responded rather than risk losing them by making them wait any longer for the next stage of the process. The responses of those 22 panelists were compiled and sorted, and any redundant answers were deleted, leaving me with two lists of various institutional policies and practices: one of policies and practices that do or could encourage faculty to include writing in their classes, and one of policies and practices that do or could help faculty to include writing in their classes. The open-ended questions can result in huge quantities of data, and respondents typically find the second phase easier if the statements are also grouped by topic (Avella, 2016; Keeney et al., 2011). To that end, I coded the responses using descriptive coding and grouped the statements by code. Descriptive coding involves summarizing the topic of a piece of qualitative data with a single word or short noun phrase (Saldaña, 2016). I tried to determine the general topic of each policy or practice, and ultimately identified seven descriptive codes: institutional goals; institutional, divisional, or departmental culture;

institutional, divisional, or departmental policies; training opportunities; incentives; workload; and resources. Multiple statements with the same code were then grouped together in the re-organization of the statements. At the end of this process, I had two lists of institutional policies and practices, with subgroups in each list based on topic or category. The list of policies and practices that faculty identified as encouraging them to include writing in their classes included items from all seven categories. The list of policies and practices that faculty identified as helping them to include writing in their classes included five of the seven categories; institutional goals and institutional, divisional, or departmental culture were not represented.

Phase II

The data collection for Phase II began on June 1, 2021, and ended on June 9, 2021. In the second phase, the sorted and refined lists of statements developed from the Phase I data were shared with the experts, using the seven identified categories to divide them. First, each expert was asked whether their current institution already had each policy or practice in place, with the answer options "Yes," "No," and "Not sure." Both lists were consolidated in this part of the survey, as the distinction between "encouraging" and "helping" was not relevant. See Figure 1 for an example of how this part of the survey appeared.

Figure 1

Example of Phase II Survey, Part I

Please indicate to the best of your knowledge whether each policy or practice listed below is present at your institution, division, and/or department.

	Yes	No	Not Sure
Institutional Goals			
Proficiency in written communication is explicitly provided as a student learning outcome.	○	○	○
Proficiency in written communication is implicitly included in the institution's learning outcomes and/or mission statement.	○	○	○
Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Culture			
Writing proficiency and/or Writing Across the Curriculum is discussed at faculty meetings.	○	○	○
Leadership regularly reminds faculty about importance of writing.	○	○	○

Next, the panelists were presented with the list of policies or practices that were identified in Phase I as encouraging faculty to include writing in their courses. These statements were grouped by category, with each category appearing on its own page in

Qualtrics. The participants were asked to rate how important each policy or practice is for

encouraging them to include writing in their courses. At the bottom of each page, they

were also given the option to explain their answers or provide any other feedback they

may have on the items in that category. Thus, if their preferred response was not provided

as an option, or if they wanted to clarify why they responded the way they did, they had

the ability to do so. See Figure 2 for an illustration of how this part of the Phase II survey

appeared.

Figure 2

Example of Phase II Survey, Part II

Finally, panelists were presented with the list of policies or practices that were identified in Phase I as helping faculty to include writing in their classes. This section was formatted exactly like the previous list, only participants will be asked to rate how important each policy or practice would be in helping them to include writing in their classes. See Figure 3 for an illustration of how this part of the survey appeared.

Figure 3

Example of Phase II Survey, Part III

Please indicate how helpful each policy or practice is or would be in helping you to include writing in your courses.

	Extremely important - 5	Very important - 4	Moderately important - 3	Slightly important - 2	Not at all important - 1
Training Opportunities					
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment	○	○	○	○	○
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses	○	○	○	○	○
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)	○	○	○	○	○

Optional: Please provide any explanation or clarification of your answers that you believe would be helpful.

The Consensus Conundrum. After the Phase II data collection, the respondents' Likert ratings were analyzed for consensus. Consensus can be measured in various ways (von der Gracht, 2012). Many possible statistical measures of consensus only count identical responses as representing agreement (Meijering et al., 2013). Thus, one respondent rating an item as "Extremely Important" and another rating the same item as "Important" are considered just as much in disagreement as respondents who rate an item as "Extremely Important" and "Not at All Important" respectively. These approaches, therefore, are not appropriate for the type of Likert scale this study used (Meijering et al., 2013). Although consensus can mean that everyone exactly agrees, most Delphi studies instead use a broader understanding of consensus in which the majority of the group generally agrees (von der Gracht, 2012). Thus, most quantitative approaches to consensus focus on some version of "majority rule" consensus, although the percentage of agreement required typically ranges from 70-80% instead of 51% (Diamond et al., 2014; Keeney et al., 2011; Kleynen, 2014; Suris & Akre, 2015; von der Gracht, 2012). Other studies set a standard of 100% agreement, particularly when the scale used does not allow respondents to take a neutral position; these studies usually count similar responses (such as "Agree" and "Strongly Agree") together (Eck et al., 2019; Lange et al., 2020). Another approach is to examine the standard deviation of the responses; the lower the standard deviation, the higher the level of agreement (Greatorex & Dexter, 2008; Holey et al., 2007; Veenhoven et al., 2020). However, the precise cut-off for what standard deviation is considered low enough to count as "consensus" is not clear. Veenhoven et al. (2020) base their interpretation of agreement levels on the quartiles of the standard deviation. This method makes sense for their study because they did not eliminate items that reached high levels

of agreement from their questionnaire, instead opting to retain all items and simply report their levels of agreement. However, this method does not work well for actually defining consensus because it only considers the standard deviations relative to each other and not to the actual rating scale. Furthermore, counting the quarter of items with the lowest standard deviation as "consensus" inherently sets a minimum and maximum on the number of items that may reach consensus.

A final option for consideration, and the one most pertinent for this study, is to look at the interquartile range (IQR) of the responses to each item; the smaller the range, the greater the level of agreement on that item (Diamond et al., 2014; von der Gracht, 2012). The exact threshold for consensus depends on the number of points on the scale used. According to von der Gracht (2012), "an IQR of 1 or less is usually found to be a suitable consensus indicator for 4- or 5-unit scales" (p. 1531). This method made the most sense for this study because it allows for similar ratings to be considered as representing a level of agreement between respondents, instead of counting only identical responses, and does not artificially or arbitrarily limit how many statements may or may not be determined to have reached consensus.

After Phase II, the data collected from Qualtrics was entered into IBM SPSS Statistics 24, and the IQR for each statement was calculated. Any statements with an IQR of 1 or less was removed from the questionnaire, and only the items that had not reached consensus were included in the questionnaire for the third phase. The panelists' comments were also important in determining if and how statements may need to be modified for the next phase. Leary (2018) describes a scenario in which respondents took issue with the exact wording of a statement and noted that they would have rated it

differently if the wording were adjusted. Thus, the panelists' suggestions were taken into consideration for the next phase of data collection and the wording of two statements were changed to reflect the participants' feedback. The item "Recognizing faculty with awards for innovative teaching, including use of writing projects" was revised to read, "Recognizing faculty with awards for innovative teaching, including but not limited to use of writing projects" because one panelist suggested the original wording implied that only writing projects would be considered. Additionally, one panelist noted that she would not agree with having an embedded writing specialist for each degree program, but would support having one for every division. That item was revised to read, "Having an embedded writing specialist in each division, department, or degree program."

Phase III

Because consensus was not reached on every statement in the second phase, a third round of data collection was necessary. Data collection for this phase began on June 22, 2021, and continued through July 8, 2021. In this third phase, the experts were given the opportunity to re-rate the statements that did not reach consensus in the second phase. Each statement appeared on its own page in this survey. On the page, panelists were shown their own previous rating of the statement, the mean rating from the other respondents, and the distribution of ratings from the other respondents. Qualtrics does not have a simple method for displaying respondents' previous responses to them, so this piece of the survey had to be manually entered for each respondent using the "Display Logic" tool. I used this feature to display a statement of "Your Previous Response" that was individualized for each participant, so each participant could see only his or her own information. See Figure 4 for an illustration. Respondents were also shown any clarifying

comments from the other panelists. The panelists were then asked to re-rate the statement on the same Likert scale. See Figure 5 for an example of how each item on the Phase III survey looked; missing from Figure 5 is the "Your Previous Response" line, which would only appear on actual panelists' surveys and cannot be previewed in Qualtrics. Seeing the other panelists' ratings and comments provides them an opportunity to consider whether they still agree with their initial rating (Dalkey, 1969; Greatorex & Dexter, 2008; Skulmoski et al., 2007), and the revision of statements in response to feedback in the previous round could also lead them to change their ratings (Leary, 2018).

Figure 4

Display Logic Tool in Qualtrics
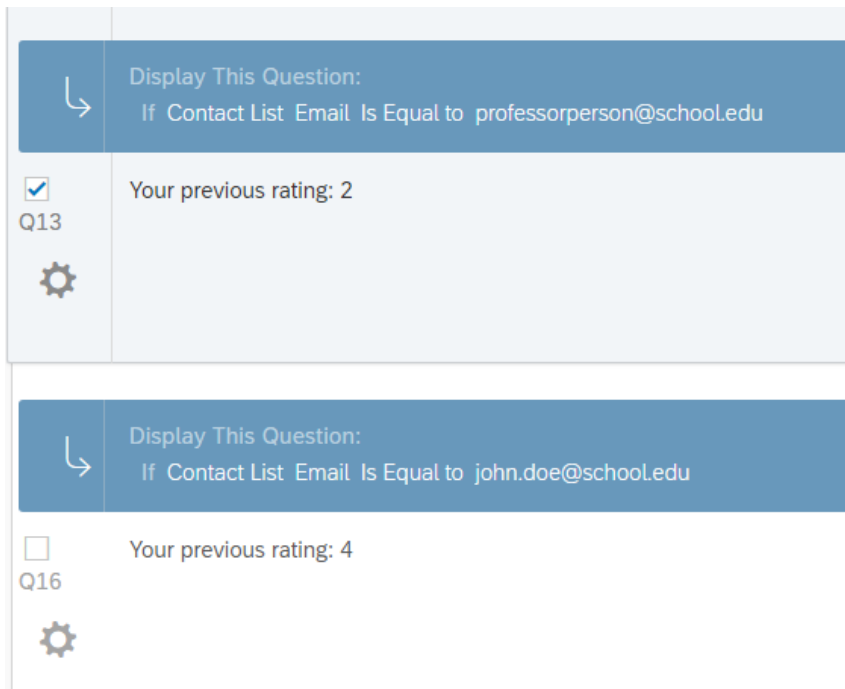
Figure 5

Example Item from Phase III Survey

Considering the responses and comments from other panelists shown below, please re-rate how important the policy or practice would be in ENCOURAGING you to include writing in your classes. You may use the same answer as you did in your previous response.

	Extremely important - 5	Very important - 4	Moderately important - 3	Slightly important - 2	Not at all important - 1
Evaluating faculty in part based on whether their courses improved student writing	○	○	○	○	○

Mean rating from all respondents: 3.44

Distribution of Ratings
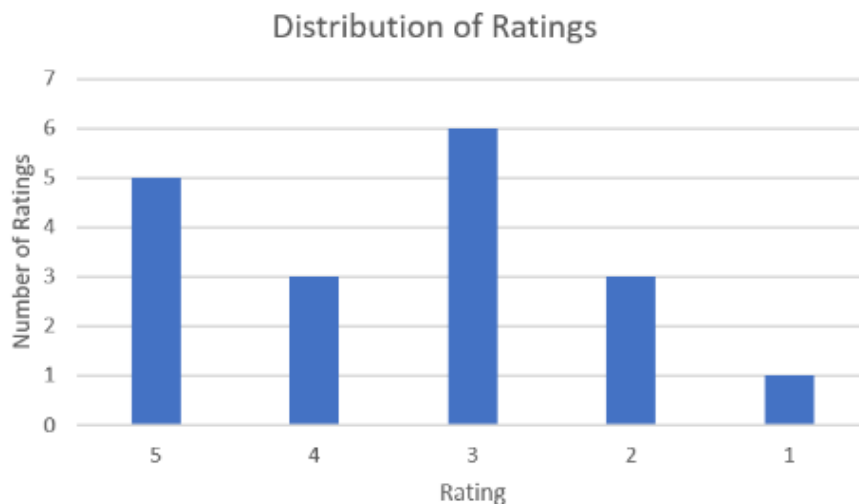
Comments from respondents:

- The rest of the faculty should be evaluated on student success in their area of expertise. We are teaching too much to also add teaching writing to our list. I refer them to tutors.
- Not all classes need to improve students writing skills. I'm often just happy if they panic less about it when they are done with me.

After these questionnaires were completed, the statements were again evaluated for consensus using the same process previously described. In the earliest form of Delphi, the phases would continue either until consensus was reached on all statements or the results from the current round were no different from the previous round (Dalkey, 1969; Garson, 2014). However, in many cases, three rounds are sufficient to reach this point, and any apparent increase in consensus after a third phrase is often actually a result of attrition (van Zolingen & Klaassen, 2003), so many Delphi studies now stop at three rounds (Keeney et al., 2011). Considering these arguments, I determined to end this study at three rounds, regardless of whether consensus had been reached on all items. At this point, all statements were grouped in two sets: those that reached consensus and those that did not. Furthermore, the mean for all statements that reached consensus was calculated to determine the ranking of each statement (Keeney et al., 2011); it was important not to seriously consider the ranking of any statements that did not reach consensus because of the strong effect of outliers on the mean. However, for statements that did reach consensus, those with higher mean ratings were identified as more important than statements with lower mean ratings.

The statements with the highest level of consensus (lowest IQR and/or lowest standard deviations) and highest mean ratings represent the most important recommendations for institutions that want to develop more faculty engagement with WAC. In contrast, items with high levels of consensus but low ratings could point institutions toward efforts that might represent a waste of resources because few faculty would take advantage of them or find them meaningful. Examining the means and standard deviations in relationship to the themes identified in Phase I will also be helpful,

as it may indicate particular categories of policy or practice that are more or less important than others. Identifying these patterns will be useful in understanding faculty's priorities. Finally, analyzing the statements that did not reach consensus will also be valuable, particularly if the data reveal a pattern that may be illuminating (Keeney et al., 2011), such as a particular policy or practice about which faculty are strongly divided.

Reliability and Validity

Reliability refers to the consistency of results (Leavy, 2017), meaning whether the replication of the study would have the same findings (van Zolingen & Klaassen, 2003). In the context of a Delphi study, reliability is complicated because the expectation is that respondents will change their answers and move toward consensus, and because the questionnaire itself is created and modified based on respondent feedback (van Zolingen & Klaassen, 2003). Kastein et al. (1993) point out that the Delphi technique varies so widely that the reliability of each application needs to be assessed rather than considering the method as a whole. Jillson (1975) recommends assessing a Delphi study's reliability based on whether it provides strong justification for the applicability of the approach, the criteria for selecting experts, the strategies for creating the questionnaire, and the types of analysis used. Similarly, Lilja et al. (2011) argue that understanding reliability for a Delphi study requires understanding its difference from a traditional survey, and that a reliable Delphi study requires suitable criteria for the selection of experts, an appropriately sized panel, and a strong method for setting up and refining the questions and determining consensus. This study met these criteria by setting up clear requirements for the selection of experts, adhering to a clear minimum number of experts for the study

to proceed, and establishing appropriate methods for the initial questions and for identifying consensus.

Validity refers to the question of whether the study measures what it purports to measure (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The first concern regarding validity occurs with the Phase I data analysis, when the researcher sorts responses, deletes duplicates, and groups the responses by theme. Deleting duplicate responses requires making judgment calls about what actually counts as duplicate, since respondents wrote in their own answers and were unlikely to use identical wording, even when referring to identical concepts. Thus, there was a risk here that the researcher could misinterpret a response and delete it as redundant when it was actually not. However, one advantage of my knowing panelists' identities was the ability to contact them and ask for clarification about any ambiguous statements. In this case, perhaps as a result of having highly educated panelists and/or because I, as a faculty member at a two-year institution, share a common language and institutional culture with the panelists, none of the open-ended responses was ambiguous or confusing.

Another concern for validity is whether the study is accurately identifying the panelists' opinions. Delphi studies are designed to avoid some of the common problems of focus groups, such as pressure toward conformity and domination by strong individual personalities (Dalkey, 1969). Although their responses are shared with each other after each phase, their initial reactions are independent from each other. Furthermore, only tI knew the panelists' identities, so panelists should not have been swayed by any knowledge of who gave specific responses. Keeney et al. (2011) offer an important caution about anonymity. Depending on how expertise is defined, some panelists likely

know each other, and the researcher cannot prevent them from discussing the study and perhaps influencing each other's responses. First, however, it is partly the purpose of a Delphi study for participants to influence each other, and second, because participants have no way of identifying other participants' responses, undue pressure to respond in a particular way could not be brought to bear. Another argument against the validity of Delphi studies is that the movement toward consensus may represent responses to peer pressure rather than genuine reconsideration (Keeney et al., 2011). However, Dalkey (1969) finds that the respondents who were more likely to be "holdouts" who would not change their opinion, even when confronted with disagreement, are those with particular expertise or experience with that facet of the issue; he notes that, in a Delphi study used for expert predictions, these holdouts were later found to be more accurate than those who were willing to change their answers, and that those who changed their answers moved into closer agreement with the holdouts, thus making the overall results stronger than they would have been otherwise. This finding suggests that those who change their ratings are indeed making the outcome more accurate, whether they change their ratings because of simple peer pressure or because they have actually been persuaded by the other panelists.

Researcher reflexivity is also a necessary consideration in the qualitative analysis. Guillemin and Gillem (2004) explain,

> Reflexivity involves critical reflection of how the researcher constructs
> knowledge from the research process—what sorts of factors influence the
> researcher's construction of knowledge and how these influences are revealed in
> the planning, conduct, and writing up of the research. (p. 275)

As a composition instructor at two-year institution (adjunct for seven years and full-time faculty for seven), I have had many discussions with other faculty about student writing. This project was largely inspired by the confluence of two observations; first, how often it seemed that WAC was discussed informally but never really developed at two-year institutions, and second, how often faculty say they would have students write more if only they had the time, or the training, or some other resource or support they lacked. I started wondering what institutions could do to meet these needs, especially because students undoubtedly need much more practice with writing than they currently receive. One of the advantages of researching faculty is that we were unlikely to have some of the complicated power relationships between researcher and participant that can develop. However, I was conscious of the discomfort that some faculty may feel about a doctoral student from a four-year research institution studying their work; although I am myself faculty at a two-year institution, my role as researcher represented the institution where I study, not the institution where I teach. In a culture where faculty at two-year institutions are often considered inferior and where many of them do not have doctoral degrees, I risked being perceived as an interloper who has come to judge them, a perception that could have influenced their responses. I was also conscious of my own reactions to the responses, whether I saw faculty asking for support I think should be unnecessary, or when nobody suggested something that I would suggest. However, my years of experience at a two-year institution also provided insights that a researcher less familiar with the realities of teaching at two-year institutions may not have recognized. For example, I am familiar with a tension between preparing students for workplace writing and preparing students for academic writing that has been much more prevalent in my

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years at a two-year institution than when I have taught at four-year institutions. This tension was evident in some of the comments in Phase II, as some faculty were more concerned about students' future writing needs for the workplace than about writing as an academic skill.

My faculty role also led me to seek generous interpretations of faculty responses that may have initially seemed purely self-interested. I do not believe my interpretations were unreasonable, though; in my own work and in my conversations with colleagues, I have generally found that faculty may be overworked and frustrated by what can feel like ever-increasing demands on their time and energy, but most of them nonetheless care deeply about their students and truly want what is best for them. Indeed, I think most of us who remain at two-year colleges for long do so because we love teaching and appreciate being able to focus on that instead of being pressured to publish.

Ethical Considerations

Respect for participants is first demonstrated by obtaining their informed consent and ensuring that their participation is entirely voluntary. Part of the informed consent includes disclosure of potential risks and benefits to the participants. Regarding benefits, participants in this study were made aware that, whatever the results of the study may be, they are only suggestions for two-year institutions in general. There is no guarantee that any institution will follow the recommendations. The primary benefit to participants, beyond the possibility of receiving a gift card, was the opportunity to make their opinions known. The primary risk to participants was loss of confidentiality. First, the panelists were not anonymous to me, so I had to be cautious to protect that knowledge by removing any potentially identifying information from responses that were shared with

the group. Qualtrics' "Display Logic" tool was invaluable for this process, allowing me to display each panelist's previous answers only to that panelist. Second, as previously noted, participants may have known each other and could have self-disclosed their participation, whether intentionally or unintentionally. However, even if panelists knew other panelists' identities, they could not have known which participants provided specific responses, so the responses remained confidential unless the panelists themselves chose to disclose their opinions.

Another ethical concern involves the selection of experts. By excluding adjuncts, the study has intentionally excluded the opinions of legitimate stakeholders in the issue. Adjunct faculty are already often given little institutional consideration (Levin et al., 2006; Meixner et al., 2010), and they are likely to be asked to teach many of the classes that would be integrating WAC, especially at two-year institutions (Bowers, 2013). Unfortunately, adjunct faculty are often not listed in public faculty directories, so they were difficult to include in this study simply for practical reasons. Further, they also usually have little to no control over curriculum decisions, and are likely therefore to lack the experience needed to be considered "expert" panelists when considering whether and how to use WAC. Another potential problem with the selection of experts is that, because women and people of color are underrepresented among full-time faculty (Finkelstein et al., 2016; McChesney, 2018), limiting the panelists to full-time faculty risks excluding their voices. The limitation was necessary for the aforementioned reasons, but I collected demographic data on the panelists for the sake of transparency on this issue.

<center>**Significance of the Research**</center>

Research

Two-year institutions are fairly underrepresented in the WAC research, and the research rarely even speculates about why WAC programs do not seem to persist at these institutions, if indeed they are developed at all. A Delphi study will seek the perspectives of experts – the faculty who would be responsible for actually incorporating writing in their classes – to shed light on how two-year institutions can better support faculty in the development and sustained practice of WAC.

Theory

In addition to expanding the literature on WAC at two-year institutions, understanding WAC as a popular but often short-lived policy at institutions may also shed light on similar organizational issues in which new practices are encouraged but fail to take root. Organizational change is an important topic in organizational theory, and, as Buller (2015) pointed out, "the type of change that causes the greatest turmoil at colleges and universities is that which originates from the administration or governing board but is resisted by the faculty" (p. 24). Understanding how to manage these types of changes can deepen our theoretical understanding of this type of organizational change, particularly in organizations where the collegial model is typical or at least expected.

Practice

Finally, and most practically, understanding the types of support that help faculty implement writing in their non-writing classes may help institutions provide better support by refining existing WAC programs or implementing new approaches to WAC, as suggested by the findings of the study. As research has shown the value of WAC,

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institutions have a real need for practical solutions that will expand WAC and ensure its

sustainability at two-year institutions.

Conclusion

Although institutions recognize a need for greater attention to student writing

proficiency and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) shows promise for meeting that

need, many two-year institutions struggle to develop a meaningful and lasting approach

to WAC, largely because faculty are particularly resistant to incorporating additional

writing in their classes. The preceding chapter described a Delphi study to solicit the

opinions of faculty about how two-year institutions could better engage and support

faculty in incorporating Writing Across the Curriculum in their classes. The following

chapter presents the data that was collected in the study; these results are then analyzed in

Chapter V.

CHAPTER IV

FINDINGS

This study sought the opinions of a panel of two-year college faculty regarding what their institutions do or could do to encourage and help faculty to include writing in their courses. The Delphi method used in this study involved three rounds, or phases, of data collection. The following chapter first describes the panel participants and then summarizes the results from each phase of the study. The first phase generated two lists of policies and practices that the participants believe encourage and/or help faculty to include writing their classes. The results of the second and third phases indicate the policies and practices about which the panelists reached consensus regarding their level of importance.

In Phase I, panelists responded to open-ended questions about policies and practices that both encourage and help them to include writing in their courses. These responses were then sorted by category and any similar responses consolidated. In Phase II, panelists first identified whether, to their knowledge, each listed policy or practice was already present at their institution. Next, using a 5-point Likert scale, they rated the importance of each policy or practice for either encouraging them or helping them to include writing in their courses. Panelists also had the opportunity to comment on the items if they wanted to clarify their rating. The Likert responses were analyzed for

consensus – that is, whether panelists generally agreed on how important the policy or practice was – based on their interquartile range, with any items having an IQR of 1 or less considered to have reached consensus. All items that achieved consensus were set aside, and in Phase III, panelists were asked to review the items that did not achieve consensus and re-rate them after seeing the other panelists' ratings, along with any relevant comments. These responses were again analyzed for consensus. The mean of all consensus items after the final phase indicates the panelists' generally agreed-upon importance of each item for either encouraging or helping faculty to include writing in their classes. When items did not reach consensus, panelists could not agree on their importance, meaning some panelists valued them significantly more highly than other panelists did.

Description of Panelists

Eighteen panelists completed all three phases of the survey. These panelists represented faculty from 11 two-year institutions in Oklahoma, and came from a wide variety of disciplines and with a wide variety of years of college teaching experience. Figure 1 illustrates the representation of disciplinary areas, and figure 2 illustrates the range of teaching experience.

Figure 6

Number of Panelists in Each Disciplinary Area
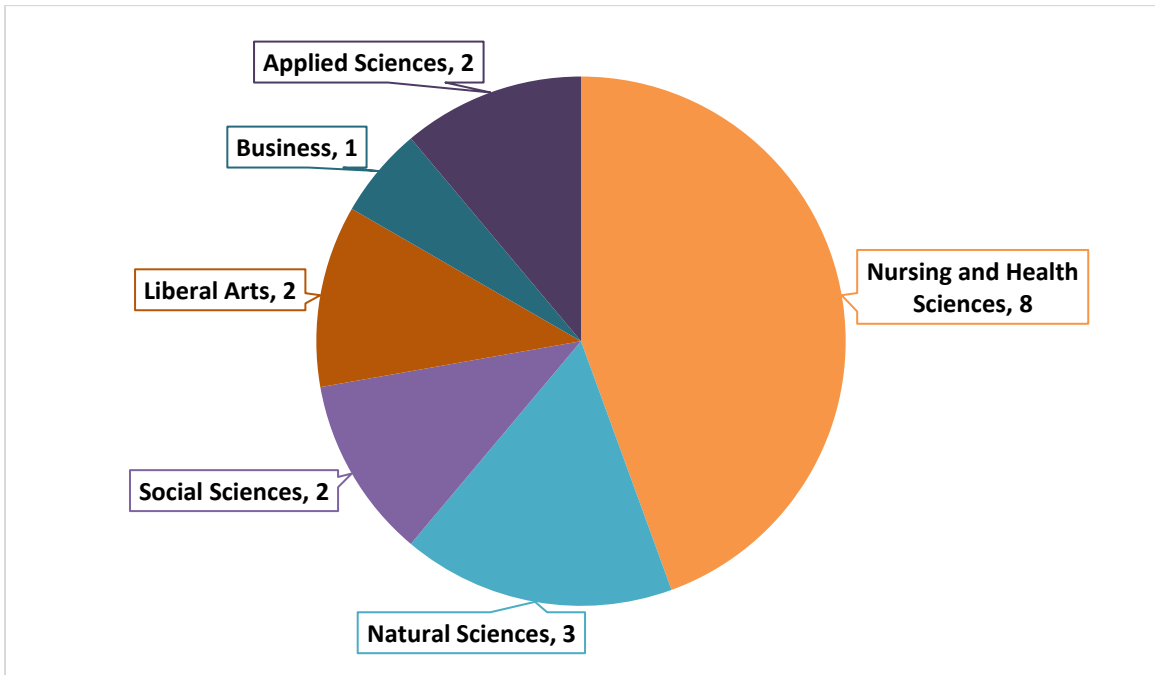
Figure 7

Panelists' Years of College Teaching Experience
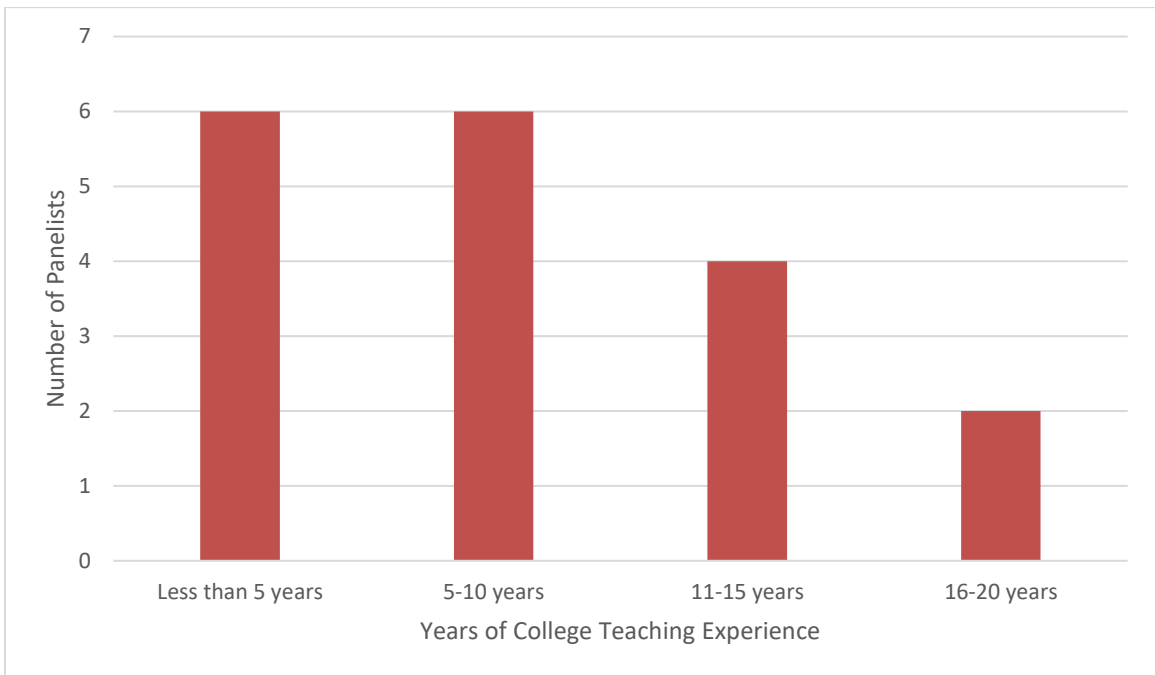
Ten panelists identified as female, seven as male, and one as non-binary/third gender. Ten panelists were between the ages of 30-49, and the remaining eight panelists were between the ages of 50-64. Fifteen panelists were White, one was Black, one was American Indian/Alaskan Native, and one was both White and American Indian/Alaskan Native.

Phase I Results

The first phase ran from April 5, 2021 through May 23, 2021. This survey consisted of four open-ended questions, and panelists were asked to list up to ten answers for each question. The questions were:

- What does your institution currently do to encourage you to assign writing in your classes?

- What changes could your institution make that would encourage you to assign writing in your classes?

- What does your institution currently do to help you include writing in your classes?

- What changes could your institution make that would help you to assign writing in your classes?

In total, 22 panelists responded to the Phase I survey. Their answers generated two separate lists: A list of policies and practices that *encourage* faculty to include writing in their classes – that is, make them more likely to want to include writing in their classes – and a list of policies or practices that *help* faculty to include writing in their classes – that is, make it easier for them to include writing in their classes. Unsurprisingly, there was considerable overlap between these lists. The lists were compiled, with duplicate or very

similar answers consolidated into a single item. For example, seven respondents noted, using various phrasing, that writing proficiency is a campus-wide student learning outcome at their institution. Next, the items on both lists were sorted based on their areas of focus. Across both lists, the items that panelists listed were divided into the following seven categories:

1. Institutional goals (hereafter, referred to as "Goals")

2. Institutional, divisional, or departmental culture (hereafter, referred to as "Culture")

3. Institutional, divisional, or departmental policies (hereafter, referred to as "Policies")

4. Training opportunities (hereafter, referred to as "Training")

5. Incentives

6. Workload

7. Resources

Policies or Practices That Encourage Faculty to Include Writing

With duplicate or similar responses consolidated, the panelists provided 36 particular policies or practices that they believed do or would encourage them to include writing in their classes. All seven categories were represented in this list; the complete list of policies and practices is presented, divided by category, in Table 1.

Table 1

All Policies and Practices Listed for Encouraging Faculty to Include Writing

Policy or practice
Institutional Goals
Explicitly listing proficiency in written communication as a student learning outcome
Implicitly including proficiency in written communication in the institution's learning outcomes and/or mission statement
Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Culture
Discussing writing proficiency and/or Writing Across the Curriculum at faculty meetings
Leadership regularly reminding faculty about importance of writing
Leadership encouraging faculty to use writing for assessment
Leadership encouraging faculty to mentor students in non-required writing projects for honors credit, scholarships, etc.
Leadership emphasizing connection between writing and critical thinking
Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies
Requiring faculty to include writing assignments in some or all classes
Requiring faculty to describe writing expectations in syllabus
Requiring faculty to provide writing resources such as Purdue OWL in syllabus or within LMS
Requiring faculty to mentor students through a capstone project that requires writing
Requiring faculty to participate in assessment of student learning outcomes, which include writing proficiency
Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program
Training Opportunities
Including in-service sessions about Writing Across the Curriculum
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)

Policy or practice

Incentives

Recognizing faculty with awards for innovative teaching, including use of writing projects

Holding writing contests that allow students to earn college credit or win scholarships

Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing

Evaluating faculty in part based on whether their courses improved student writing

Workload

Allowing faculty to have work-study students as teaching assistants

Allowing faculty to have teaching assistants who are not work-study students

Reducing the required course load for faculty who teach writing-intensive classes

Reducing the class size of writing-intensive classes

Providing faculty with dedicated time to develop writing projects for their classes

Resources

Library providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online tutorials and guides

Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly

Providing students access to computer labs

Providing faculty with pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes

Providing students with a depository of excellent student writing to use as models and/or inspiration

Providing students access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus

Providing faculty clear assessment goals for student writing

Providing faculty clear assessment processes for student writing

Ensuring that there is one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee

Policies and Practices That Help Faculty to Include Writing

Once duplicate and similar responses were consolidated, the panelists provided a

list of 19 particular policies or practices that they believed do or would help them to

include writing in their classes. Five of the seven categories that emerged from policies

and practices that encouraged faculty to include writing were included in this list:

institutional, divisional, or departmental policies; training opportunities; incentives;

workload; and resources. Institutional goals and institutional, divisional, or departmental

culture were not represented. The complete list of policies and practices is presented,

divided by category, in Table 2.

Table 2

All Policies and Practices Listed for Helping Faculty to Include Writing

Policy or practice
Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies
Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program
Requiring students to take a writing course specific to their degree program
Training Opportunities
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)
Incentives
Holding writing contests that allow students to earn college credit or win scholarships
Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing

Policy or practice

Workload

Allowing faculty to have work-study students as teaching assistants

Allowing faculty to have teaching assistants who are not work-study students

Reducing the required course load for faculty who teach writing-intensive classes

Reducing the class size of writing-intensive classes

Resources

Library providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online tutorials and guides

Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly

Providing students access to writing labs and workshops

Providing faculty with pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes

Providing students access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus

Ensuring that there is one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee

Having an embedded writing specialist in each degree program

Ensuring that the campus LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) provides helpful technology for assigning, collecting, and/or giving feedback on writing assignments

Phase II Results

　　The second phase of the study ran from June 1, 2021, through June 9, 2021; in total, 19 of the original 30 panelists completed the second survey. In the second survey, panelists were first asked to identify whether each policy or practice already existed on their campus. Although the two lists together comprised 55 items total, because several items were included on both lists, the panelists only worked with 40 items that were

present or not present at their institutions. Policies and practices related to institutional goals, institutional, divisional, or departmental culture, and resources were the most common. On the other hand, policies and practices related to training opportunities and workload were the least common. Appendix C includes tables showing the complete responses for all items; however, some items were particularly notable in light of the responses in the latter phases of the study.

More than half of the respondents identified the following policies or practices as existing at their institution:

- Library provides student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials.

- The institution provides faculty access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly.

- The institution provides students with access to computer labs.

- Students have access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus.

- The campus LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) provides helpful technology for assigning, collecting, and/or giving feedback on writing assignment.

More than half of the respondents identified the following as not present at their institutions:

- Faculty are required to mentor students through a capstone project that requires writing.

- Regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment are held.

- Faculty are provided pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes.

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- There is one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the
  Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a
  dedicated WAC committee.

Finally, more than half of the respondents were unsure if the following were present at
their institution:

- Excellent student writing is recognized and publicized.

- Faculty who teach writing-intensive classes are permitted to teach fewer classes.

- Writing-intensive classes have reduced class sizes.

- Faculty are provided dedicated time to develop writing projects for their classes.

Each of these responses takes on greater significance in light of the latter consensus

results about what faculty rate as important or not important in terms of encouraging or

helping them to include writing in their courses.

In the second part of the Phase II survey, the panelists were asked to rate how

important each item listed under "encouraging" is or would be in terms of encouraging

them to include writing in their own classes. A 5-point Likert response scale was used,

where 5="Extremely important", 4="Very important", 3="Moderately important",

2="Slightly important", and 1="Not at all important". The interquartile range of these

ratings was calculated using SPSS to determine which items reached consensus, as

defined by an IQR of 1 or less. In SPSS, the IQR is determined by subtracting the 25th

percentile (Q1) from the 75th percentile (Q3), with the quartiles determined by Tukey's

hinges. Tukey's hinges are a method of approximating the quartiles without interpolating

the values. The mean rating for each item that did reach consensus was also noted, as the

mean rating indicates the importance of the item. Excluding items that did not reach

consensus, the highest rated items, indicating more importance, at this stage tended to be

issues of institutional culture and policy, whereas training and resources fell relatively

low on the list. Interestingly, however, the highest mean ratings were still only

"moderately important" according to the scale. Excluding the items that did not reach

consensus, these items were ranked from most important to least important as depicted in

Table 3.

Table 3

Phase II Consensus Results for "Encouraging"

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Leadership encouraging faculty to mentor students in non- required writing projects for honors credit, scholarships, etc.	2.94 (1.056)	*Culture*
Requiring faculty to include writing assignments in some or all classes	2.61 (1.092)	*Policies*
Requiring faculty to mentor students through a capstone project that requires writing	2.61 (1.092)	*Policies*
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment	2.61 (1.195)	*Training*
Requiring faculty to describe writing expectations in syllabus	2.50 (0.786)	*Policies*
Requiring faculty to participate in assessment of student learning outcomes, which include writing proficiency	2.50 (1.098)	*Policies*
Leadership regularly reminding faculty about importance of writing	2.44 (0.705)	*Culture*
Discussing writing proficiency and/or Writing Across the Curriculum at faculty meetings	2.28 (0.826)	*Culture*
Leadership encouraging faculty to use writing for assessment	2.28 (0.826)	*Culture*

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Holding writing contests that allow students to earn college credit or win scholarships	2.28 (0.958)	*Incentives*
Requiring faculty to provide writing resources such as Purdue OWL in syllabus or within LMS.	2.22 (1.060)	*Policies*
Providing faculty information about students' writing abilities and needs	2.22 (0.878)	*Resources*
Including in-service sessions about Writing Across the Curriculum.	2.06 (1.259)	*Training*
Providing students with a depository of excellent student writing to use as models and/or inspiration.	2.06 (0.725)	*Resources*
Implicitly including proficiency in written communication in the institution's learning outcomes and/or mission statement.	2.00 (0.686)	*Goals*
Providing faculty clear assessment processes for student writing	1.83 (1.098)	*Resources*
Explicitly listing proficiency in written communication as a student learning outcome	1.78 (0.647)	*Goals*
Leadership emphasizing connection between writing and critical thinking	1.78 (0.732)	*Culture*
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)	1.72 (0.826)	*Training*
Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing	1.72 (0.669)	*Incentives*
Ensuring that there is one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee	1.67 (1.188)	*Resources*
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses	1.61 (0.608)	*Training*
Library providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online tutorials and guides	1.39 (0.608)	*Resources*

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Providing students access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus	1.39 (0.502)	*Resources*
Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly.	1.33 (0.594)	*Resources*
Providing students access to computer labs	1.28 (0.575)	*Resources*

After rating each set of items within a category, the participants also had the opportunity to leave comments to explain or clarify their responses. For the most part, the participants who left comments used them to add some detail about their opinions or experiences at their institutions. Appendix D and Appendix E contain the complete lists of comments, but the following are illustrative of the typical types and content of the comments. One panelist stated:

> I would require and expect these proficiencies of my students regardless of whether they were explicitly stated or not. Composition I proficiency is required before the students can take the science courses I teach and (especially in Labs) I require them to become proficient at writing lab reports, as well as explaining certain scientific information using their own words.

Similarly, another panelist remarked that "For the nursing student, written communication skills are necessary to develop while in school for collaboration with fellow nurses, patients, and other members of the healthcare team to deliver safe nursing care." Some panelists took the opportunity to explicitly state what their institutions should do to encourage or help, such as the panelist who wrote, "It's not a serious commitment/concern of admin if they don't give me and students tools to succeed. If

admin shows marginal concern for standards, there isn't much I can accomplish" or the panelist who noted:

> We have academic freedom to teach curriculum the way we chose to at my institution so reminding professors to re-analyze their lesson planning to focus on encouraging writing proficiency would be helpful. Having no TAs or assistance with grading writing assignments discourages assigning these items so Leadership providing those assistants might be the best way to encourage this.

Occasionally, a panelist would suggest some adjustment to the item itself for clarification, as with the panelist comment, "First question is poorly constructed. Teaching innovations should be celebrated by leadership...but should not be limited to writing (but that is how the question reads to me)." In response to this final comment, for the third phase of the study, that item was revised from "Recognizing faculty with awards for innovative teaching, including use of writing projects" to "Recognizing faculty with awards for innovative teaching, including but not limited to use of writing projects."

In the final part of the Phase II survey, the panelists were asked to rate how important each item listed under "helping" would be in terms of helping them to include writing in their own classes. Again, the interquartile range of these ratings was calculated to determine which items reached consensus, as defined by an IQR of 1 or less. The mean rating for each item that did reach consensus was also noted, as the mean rating indicates the importance of the item. As with the previous section, consensus seemed largely around what was not important rather than what was. Excluding the items that did not reach consensus, these items were ranked from most important to least important as follows in Table 4.

Table 4

Phase II Consensus Results for "Helping"

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Holding writing contests that offer college credit or scholarships	2.78 (1.114)	*Incentives*
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment	2.56 (1.149)	*Training*
Requiring students to take a writing course specific to their degree program	1.83 (0.924)	*Policies*
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)	1.78 (1.114)	*Training*
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses	1.72 (1.074)	*Training*
Giving faculty one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee	1.67 (0.840)	*Resources*
Providing student access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus	1.56 (0.856)	*Resources*
Providing student access to writing labs and workshops	1.50 (0.786)	*Resources*
Providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials through the library	1.44 (0.784)	*Resources*
Ensuring that the campus LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) provides helpful technology for assigning, collecting, and giving feedback on writing assignments	1.44 (0.616)	*Resources*
Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly	1.39 (0.608)	*Resources*

As in the second part of the survey, the panelists had the option to provide comments to clarify or explain their responses at the end of each category of items. Overall, the

panelists left far fewer remarks on this section than on the previous section, perhaps as a result of respondent fatigue. Two comments, however, stand out as particularly important. One panelist argued:

> Core courses such as writing and oral communication courses should have significantly reduced student loads for faculty, and should NOT employ student aids. Anyone working in a "TA" or "work-study" or "lab assistant" position should have at least a BA in the specific discipline (oral communication graduates should not be teaching writing; written communication graduates should not be teaching oral communication).

Another panelist remarked, "The embedded writing specialist....we need one in in each division, maybe, not every program." In response to this final comment, that item was revised for the third phase of the study from "Having an embedded writing specialist in each degree program" to "Having an embedded writing specialist in each division, department, or degree program."

Phase III Results

The third phase of the study took place from June 22, 2021 through July 8, 2021. Eighteen panelists completed the third phase. In this phase, the participants were asked to review the items on which consensus was not reached in Phase II. They were shown the mean rating and distribution of ratings from all participants, any comments left by participants regarding that particular item, and their previous rating, and asked to re-rate the item. After this phase, the IQR for each item was again calculated to determine which items reached consensus. Eight additional items reached consensus, three in the

"encouraging" category and five in the "helping" category. To the list of items that would

encourage faculty to include writing in their classes, the following items are added:

- reducing the required course load for faculty who teach writing-intensive classes

- providing faculty with dedicated time to develop writing projects for their classes

- providing faculty with pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes

These items rated relatively highly compared to the items that previously reached

consensus, although no item was rated as "very important" or "extremely important."

Table 5 depicts the complete list of all consensus items, including Phase II and Phase III,

from the "encouraging" category.

Table 5

Phase II and III Consensus Results for "Encouraging"

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
NEW: Providing faculty with pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes	3.39 (1.037)	*Resources*
Leadership encouraging faculty to mentor students in non-required writing projects for honors credit, scholarships, etc.	2.94 (1.056)	*Culture*
NEW: Providing faculty with dedicated time to develop writing projects for their classes	2.72 (1.074)	*Workload*
Requiring faculty to include writing assignments in some or all classes	2.61 (1.092)	*Policies*
Requiring faculty to mentor students through a capstone project that requires writing	2.61 (1.092)	*Policies*
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment	2.61 (1.195)	*Training*
Requiring faculty to describe writing expectations in syllabus	2.50 (0.786)	*Policies*

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Requiring faculty to participate in assessment of student learning outcomes, which include writing proficiency	2.50 (1.098)	*Policies*
NEW: Reducing the required course load for faculty who teach writing-intensive classes	2.50 (0.924)	*Workload*
Leadership regularly reminding faculty about importance of writing	2.44 (0.705)	*Culture*
Discussing writing proficiency and/or Writing Across the Curriculum at faculty meetings	2.28 (0.826)	*Culture*
Leadership encouraging faculty to use writing for assessment	2.28 (0.826)	*Culture*
Holding writing contests that allow students to earn college credit or win scholarships	2.28 (0.958)	*Incentives*
Requiring faculty to provide writing resources such as Purdue OWL in syllabus or within LMS	2.22 (1.060)	*Policies*
Providing faculty information about students' writing abilities and needs	2.22 (0.878)	*Resources*
Including in-service sessions about Writing Across the Curriculum	2.06 (1.259)	*Training*
Providing students with a depository of excellent student writing to use as models and/or inspiration	2.06 (0.725)	*Resources*
Implicitly including proficiency in written communication in the institution's learning outcomes and/or mission statement.	2.00 (0.686)	*Goals*
Providing faculty clear assessment processes for student writing	1.83 (1.098)	*Resources*
Explicitly listing proficiency in written communication as a student learning outcome	1.78 (0.647)	*Goals*
Leadership emphasizing connection between writing and critical thinking	1.78 (0.647)	*Culture*
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)	1.72 (0.826)	*Training*
Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing	1.72 (0.669)	*Incentives*

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Ensuring that there is one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee	1.67 (1.188)	*Resources*
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses	1.61 (0.608)	*Training*
Library providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online tutorials and guides	1.39 (0.608)	*Resources*
Providing students access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus	1.39 (0.502)	*Resources*
Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly.	1.33 (0.594)	*Resources*
Providing students access to computer labs	1.28 (0.575)	*Resources*

In the "helping" category, more items reached consensus, with five new items:

- requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program

- recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing

- reducing the number of classes faculty must teach

- reducing class sizes of writing-intensive classes

- providing faculty with pre-made assignments and rubrics

As with the "encouraging" category, the new items all rated relatively highly in importance. One item - requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program – received a "very important" rating. Table 6 shows the complete consensus results, including both Phase II and Phase III, for the "helping" category.

Table 6

Phase II and III Consensus Results for "Helping"

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
NEW: Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program	3.50 (0.924)	*Policies*
NEW: Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing	3.39 (0.979)	*Incentives*
Holding writing contests that offer college credit or scholarships	2.78 (1.114)	*Incentives*
NEW: Providing faculty with pre-made assignments and rubrics	2.72 (1.127)	*Resources*
NEW: Reducing class sizes of writing-intensive classes	2.72 (1.127)	*Workload*
NEW: Reducing the number of classes faculty must teach	2.71 (0.772)	*Workload*
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment	2.56 (1.149)	*Training*
Requiring students to take a writing course specific to their degree program	1.83 (0.924)	*Policies*
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)	1.78 (1.114)	*Training*
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses	1.72 (1.074)	*Training*
Giving faculty one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee	1.67 (0.840)	*Resources*
Providing student access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus	1.56 (0.856)	*Resources*
Providing student access to writing labs and workshops	1.50 (0.786)	*Resources*
Providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials through the library	1.44 (0.784)	*Resources*

Policy or practice	Mean rating (SD)	Category
Ensuring that the campus LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) provides helpful technology for assigning, collecting, and giving feedback on writing assignments	1.44 (0.616)	*Resources*
Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly	1.39 (0.608)	*Resources*

In addition to the data from the Phase III survey itself, shortly after the survey was sent out to participants, I received the following email from one panelist:

> I am appalled that a college or university professor would suggest that students do not need writing, speaking, or critical thinking skills to succeed at the college level. These are the core of all learning, and necessary for every course they take, and every profession they enter.
>
> God help us - a nursing faculty, apparently, thinks that writing is not important (based on the prompts in the survey).

It seems that this email was in response to this panelist comment on the item "Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program":

> There are some degrees we offer that don't NEED writing or don't need to be great at it at this level. Nurses need writing to advance faster (my sister works at the VA) but she doesn't need writing to do the job, support herself, have a good life, etc. At this level, don't make writing a barrier to finishing if you don't use it on the job.

Consensus Items in Both Categories

A few items were included on both lists, and many of these also reached consensus on both lists. Although they are not always ranked as equally important for encouraging and helping, in general their importance was similar. Two items were rated as moderately important for both encouraging and helping: providing faculty with pre-made assignments and rubrics and holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assessment. Three items were somewhat important for both encouraging and helping: offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.); giving faculty one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee; and offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses. Finally, two items were rated as not at all important for either encouraging or helping: providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials through the library and providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly. Table 7 indicates all items that were included in both the "encouraging" and "helping" lists and reached consensus on either.

Table 7

Consensus Items for Both "Encouraging" and "Helping"

Item	Category	Rating for "encouraging" (SD)	Rating for "helping" (SD)
Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program	*Policies*	---	3.50 (0.924)
Reducing the class size of writing-intensive classes	*Workload*	---	2.72 (1.127)
Providing faculty with pre-made assignments & rubrics	*Resources*	3.39 (1.037)	2.72 (1.127)
Reducing the number of classes faculty must teach	*Workload*	2.50 (0.924)	2.71 (0.772)
Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment	*Training*	2.61 (1.195)	2.56 (1.149)
Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing	*Incentives*	1.72 (0.669)	3.39 (0.979)
Holding writing contests that offer college credit or scholarships	*Incentives*	2.28 (0.958)	2.78 (1.114)
Offering workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.)	*Training*	1.72 (0.826)	1.78 (1.114)
Giving faculty one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee	*Resources*	1.67 (1.188)	1.67 (0.840)
Offering professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses	*Training*	1.61 (0.608)	1.72 (1.074)

Item	Category	Rating for "encouraging" (SD)	Rating for "helping" (SD)
Providing student access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus	*Resources*	1.39 (0.502)	1.56 (0.856)
Providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials through the library	*Resources*	1.39 (0.608)	1.44 (0.784)
Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly	*Resources*	1.33 (0.594)	1.39 (0.608)

Items Rejected for Not Reaching Consensus

Several items did not reach consensus. Interestingly, items with higher mean ratings seemed to not reach consensus more so than items with lower mean ratings, suggesting that a few faculty rated them very highly, driving up the mean. The results suggest more agreement among faculty about what is not important than what is. However, none of the non-consensus items reached "very important" or higher status. In addition, the practice of allowing faculty to have work-study students as teaching assistants appeared on both lists with a very high IQR as compared to other items. Therefore, faculty were very much in disagreement about the value of this practice for encouraging or helping them to incorporate writing. This disagreement is also evident in the comments about work-study students as assistants. Table 8 depicts the items that did not reach consensus, their mean rating, and their IQR.

Table 8

All Items Rejected for Not Reaching Consensus

Policy or practice	Category	Mean rating (SD)	IQR
Encouraging			
Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program	*Policies*	3.33 (1.138)	2
Recognizing faculty with awards for innovative teaching, including use of writing projects	*Incentives*	3.35 (1.222)	2
Allowing faculty to have work-study students as teaching assistants	*Workload*	3.22 (1.555)	4
Evaluating faculty in part based on whether their courses improved student writing	*Policies*	2.94 (1.311)	2
Allowing faculty to have teaching assistants who are not work-study students	*Workload*	2.88 (1.111)	2
Reducing the class size of writing-intensive classes	*Workload*	2.83 (1.339)	2
Providing faculty clear assessment goals for student writing	*Resources*	3.12 (1.166)	2
Helping			
Allowing faculty to have work-study students as teaching assistants	*Workload*	3.44 (1.423)	3
Allowing faculty to have teaching assistants who are not work-study students	*Workload*	3.00 (1.283)	2
Having an embedded writing specialist in each degree program	*Resources*	3.11 (1.278)	3

Summary

This study collected data from 18 faculty members at two-year institutions in

Oklahoma, representing a range of disciplines, years of teaching experience, and current

approaches to using writing in their classes. These panelists identified practices and

policies that both encourage and help faculty at two-year institutions to include writing in

their classes, identified which policies and practices were already present at their

institutions, and then came to consensus about the relative usefulness of 29 such items for

encouraging faculty to include writing and 16 such items for helping faculty to include

writing. In Chapter V, I discuss the findings and presents conclusions and

recommendations based on the analysis of the data presented in this chapter.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSION

The previous chapter described the results of the study in detail. The following

chapter reviews the research problem, the methodology, and the key findings of the

study, and then explores the results in depth by identifying the major themes in the

consensus results, connecting the results to previously identified best practices for

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), and finally examining the implications of the

results for theory, practice, and research.

Problem Statement

Since the 1970s, research has demonstrated that WAC is useful for the

development of undergraduate students' writing proficiency (Malencyzk, 2012;

Townsend, 2002). Indeed, whether WAC is focused entirely on low-stakes writing

assignments to promote student engagement, or involves complex assignments scaffolded

through an entire program's curriculum, student writing improves (Berger, 2015; Dana et

al., 2011; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Johnstone et al., 2002; Varelas et al., 2015).

Considering how employers have criticized colleges for failing to prepare students

adequately for writing in the workplace (AACU, 2015; NACE, 2017), one might expect

WAC to have been widely explored as a response to these concerns. However, two-year

institutions in particular have struggled to develop lasting or widespread WAC programs (Gardner, 2010; Roberts, 2008). As with any WAC program, resistance to these programs likely comes from various sources, including students and administration. However, a major roadblock to implementing WAC is that faculty remain resistant to providing writing instruction in non-composition courses, whether because they believe they simply do not have the time (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Nelms & Dively, 2007; Nielsen, 2019; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017) or because they believe mandatory first-year writing courses should suffice (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017; Zemlianksy & Berry, 2017). Perhaps faculty at two-year institutions require certain types of institutional support to encourage their adoption of WAC and to enable sustained and successful efforts to incorporate WAC in their classes.

Review of the Methodology

The study conducted used the Delphi methodology to seek the consensus opinions of full-time faculty at two-year institutions in Oklahoma regarding how their institutions could best encourage and support them in the development of WAC in their courses. The Delphi study proceeded through three iterative rounds of questioning. In the first phase of questioning, participants responded to four open-ended questions, listing up to 10 answers for each. These questions were:

- What does your institution currently do to encourage you to assign writing in your classes?

- What changes could your institution make that would encourage you to assign writing in your classes?

- What does your institution currently do to help you include writing in your classes?

- What kinds of support could your institution provide that would help you to include writing in your classes?

After all participants responded to these questions, their responses were collated into two lists, with duplicate answers deleted and items organized by topical category. One list included all policies or practices identified as "encouraging" faculty to assign writing in their classes, and one list included all policies or practices identified as "helping" faculty to assign writing in their classes.

In the second phase of the study, participants were first asked to identify whether each policy or practice was, to their knowledge, present on their campus. Next, they were asked to rate each policy or practice's importance for encouraging them or helping them to include writing in their courses. The ratings used a Likert scale from 1 ("not at all important") to 5 ("extremely important"). Panelists were also given the opportunity to provide comments to explain or clarify their ratings. Their responses to the rating questions were then assessed for consensus, defined as an interquartile range of 1 or less, as determined by identifying Tukey's hinges and subtracting Q1 from Q3. All items that reached consensus were set aside, and in the final phase of the survey, panelists were presented with a list of only those items that did not reach consensus in the second phase. For each of these items, panelists were shown their previous rating, the mean rating and distribution of ratings from all participants, and any comments from other participants about the item. They were then asked to re-rate the item, repeating their original rating if they had not changed their minds. Once again, the ratings were assessed for consensus.

Summary of the Results

Eighteen panelists completed all three phases of the study. The panelists generated an initial list of 36 policies or practices that encourage faculty to include writing in their classes. These items were divided into the categories Institutional Goals; Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Culture; Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies; Training Opportunities; Incentives; Workload; and Resources. The panelists generated an initial list of 19 policies or practices that help faculty to include writing in their classes. These items were divided into the categories Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies; Training Opportunities; Incentives; Workload; and Resources. After the second and third phases of the survey, the panelists had come to consensus on the importance (or lack thereof) of 29 of the 36 "encouraging" items and 16 of the 19 "helping" items. Additionally, 15 items appeared on both the "encouraging" and the "helping" list; panelists came to consensus on 10 of those items.

The highest-rated policies or practices rated for encouraging faculty to include writing in their classes only reached a mean rating of "moderately important." These included:

- Providing faculty with pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes
- Leadership encouraging faculty to mentor students in non-required writing projects for honors credit, scholarships, etc.
- Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment
- Providing faculty with dedicated time to develop writing projects for their classes

- Discussing writing proficiency and/or Writing Across the Curriculum at faculty meetings

- Requiring faculty to include writing assignments in some or all classes

- Requiring faculty to mentor students through a capstone project that requires writing

- Requiring faculty to describe writing expectations in syllabus

- Requiring faculty to participate in assessment of student learning outcomes, which include writing proficiency

- Reducing the required course load for faculty who teach writing-intensive classes

The category most represented in this list is Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies, although Workload, Training Opportunities, and Resources are also present.

Only one item, a policy, was rated very important for helping faculty to incorporate writing their courses: Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general education into a degree program. An additional six items were rated as moderately important:

- Recognizing and publicizing excellent student writing

- Holding writing contests that offer college credit or scholarships

- Providing faculty with pre-made assignments and rubrics

- Reducing class sizes of writing-intensive classes

- Reducing the number of classes faculty must teach

- Holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment

In the "helping" group, the categories of Incentives and Workload are equally represented in the highest rated items, with the remaining items' categories split evenly between Policies, Resources, and Training.

The items identified as not at all important were very similar for both the encouraging list and the helping list. In both cases, all of the items are from the Resources category. They include:

- Providing student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials through the library (both lists)

- Providing institutional access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly (both lists)

- Ensuring that the campus LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) provides helpful technology for assigning, collecting, and giving feedback on writing assignments (helping list)

- Providing students access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus (encouraging list, although this item only barely made it to "somewhat important" on the helping list)

- Providing students access to computer labs (encouraging list)

It should also be noted that the participants generally came to consensus more quickly about which policies and practices were not important than about those that were. Many of the more highly rated items only reached consensus in the third phase of the study.

Discussion of the Results

The following sections explore the results of the study from several perspectives. First, the consensus results are examined to interpret the message from faculty to

institutions about which policies or practices would be most useful for developing

Writing Across the Curriculum at their institutions. Second, the results are examined in

the context of the WAC best practices that have already been identified in the literature.

Last, the implications of the results for theory, research, and practice are discussed.

What Faculty Need from Institutions

Despite some areas of disagreement, the consensus results reveal a clear faculty

voice that is telling institutions what they can do to encourage and aid in developing

efforts at incorporating Writing Across the Curriculum. These responses can be

synthesized into four general requests from faculty to their institutions; each of the

following sections identifies and explains one of these requests. Together, the section

headings provide a list of important priorities for two-year institutions if they aim to

develop WAC more effectively and sustainably.

Prioritize Writing in Practice

Although every participant was aware that writing proficiency was a student

learning outcome at their institution, they wanted more from their institutions than this

gesture. The panelists asked for writing and writing assessment to be a regular topic of

discussion in faculty meetings and for institutional leadership to encourage faculty

mentorship of student writing projects. They also noted that policies requiring faculty to

include writing in their courses and/or requiring faculty to mentor students in capstone

writing projects would be important in encouraging them to include writing. In short, the

panelists wanted their institutions to show, and not just say, that they value student

writing.

It may be tempting to read the demand for *requirements* in the form of new policies as a response that boils down to "I will do what I am told I must do," and that may indeed be a factor in these responses. However, the panelists' comments and the high ratings of cultural changes suggest a more complex interpretation. As one panelist explained, regarding the inclusion of writing proficiency in institutional student learning outcomes, "It's not a serious commitment/concern of admin if they don't give me and students tools to succeed. If admin shows marginal concern for standards, there isn't much I can accomplish." Policies that require certain standards show that the institutional leaders do actually care about student writing proficiency; they are not merely including it as a student learning outcome because it has become a trend or is a box they need to check. In other words, demanding policy change does not mean that faculty want to be forced to incorporate writing in their classes; instead, they are calling for their institutions to demonstrate commitment to the institution's own stated goals.

Give Us the Tools to Succeed

Faculty quickly agreed about which tools are not that important to them: library research guides and handbooks, institutional access to tools like Grammarly or TurnItIn, an LMS that has good tools for leaving feedback on writing, campus computer labs and writing tutors. None of these made the cut as even somewhat important, and ironically, these are the most common resources across the panelists' institutions. One could argue that the panelists simply do not recognize the value of what they already have, and perhaps panelists are taking these resources for granted to a degree. However, these tools also all simply make the easiest parts – the technical pieces – of managing writing assignments easier; they do not address the more fundamentally difficult parts of teaching

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writing. Further, these tools are relatively easy and cheap for institutions to provide,

especially in comparison to the more systemic changes that actually seem to be needed

for WAC to be sustainable. What faculty have identified that would actually help – and

what is consistent with the literature – would be guidance in developing appropriate

writing assignments and grading rubrics or providing already tested assignments and

rubrics that faculty could easily use in their own classes. As Minnich et al. (2018) found,

having agreed-upon assignments and rubrics within a department not only makes

assigning writing easier, it helps faculty gain confidence that they can grade effectively

and fairly. Other tools that panelists agreed could be important in making assigning

writing easier – although these were less important – are allowing faculty to teach smaller

and/or fewer classes. Faculty know that effective writing assignments take time to teach

and to grade. However, the fact that these items rated relatively low in comparison to the

other moderately important items suggests that workload, in itself, is not the main

obstacle faculty are facing when it comes to assigning writing.

Help Us Help Students

Faculty expressed concern for students and their needs. One concern of faculty

was whether writing would become a barrier to student success. Both the non-consensus

items and the comments reveal disagreement about whether writing is necessary or

valuable in all classes. The policy item that suggested "evaluating faculty in part based on

whether their courses improved student writing" was controversial, and the comments

suggest that the controversy was not merely about faculty not wanting to be held

accountable for student writing, though of course that feeling may have played a role.

Nonetheless, there was also controversy about whether expecting all classes to improve

student writing might hinder students' success. Two nursing faculty commented on the importance of written communication in their discipline, but another argued that although writing proficiency is helpful, it is not necessary for success in nursing and that requiring it can be a barrier to students. Similarly, some faculty from natural sciences noted that requiring writing in their classes "may not be as necessary or as conducive to the student outcomes." One panelist commented frequently about whether writing should be emphasized or if oral communication is more or at least equally important for success today, and another panelist pointed out that writing can be particularly challenging for students with certain learning disabilities, and that they may benefit from having other options. All of this discussion and debate indicates that faculty want to be sure that they are doing what is best for students.

Further, panelists prioritized incentives and rewards for students. In the context of the documented negative effect of writing assignments on course evaluations (Luna et al., 2014; McLaren, 2014), such a request may have some self-interested motivation. By providing incentives for students to write, institutions can perhaps prevent some of the blowback faculty would face in their evaluations. However, the panelists' desire to reward students for their efforts can also be interpreted as just that: a desire for students to reap some concrete and relatively immediate rewards for the hard work of writing. In light of the other concerns the panelists expressed about student welfare, such an interpretation seems equally reasonable.

Set Clear Standards

Only one item in the entire survey reached "very important" status: Requiring a certain level of student writing proficiency before they can progress from general

education into a degree program was rated as very important in helping faculty to include writing in their classes. Only 4 of the 19 panelists identified this as an extant policy at their institution. (This policy also appeared on the "encouraging" list, but did not reach consensus there. However, it was fairly highly rated, with a mean score of 3.33.) Considering that passing English Composition I is a mandatory prerequisite for many courses, the value panelists placed on this item echoes what has already been found – that required composition courses are not enough to fully prepare students for all of the academic writing tasks they will face through their college careers (Adler-Kassner et al., 2012; Bergman & Zepernick, 2007; DePalma & Ringer, 2011; Duff, 2010; Wardle, 2009; Wolfe, 2011) and that faculty outside of composition simply do not want to take on the task of teaching writing (Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017) or of helping students transfer the skills they have learned in composition classes into their disciplinary courses (Hall & Birch, 2018). Some of the comments further reflect this perspective. For example, one panelist wrote, "Institutions of higher learning are nothing but shams and degree mills if competency in written AND oral communication skills are not required ('C' or better!) for all students *by the first 30 hours of course work* [emphasis mine] at the university." For this panelist, at least, there seems to be an implicit expectation that first-year composition (and perhaps other first-year courses) will suffice to develop student competency in writing.

This result suggests that institutions and departments need to discuss what they would consider minimal competency and how students can demonstrate that competency. Although all institutions have some requirements for first-year composition classes, clearly these classes are not always sufficient to develop the competencies demanded by

other instructors. One panelist recognized this issue and distinguished between the type of competency developed in Composition I versus the writing competency necessary for success in her course, stating, "Composition I proficiency is required before the students can take the science courses I teach and (especially in Labs) I require them to become proficient at writing lab reports, as well as explaining certain scientific information using their own words." Better communication to develop some consensus among faculty about what proficiencies are prerequisites for their courses versus what proficiencies their courses can develop would help to resolve the frustration faculty currently feel when students enter their classes without the skills faculty believe they should already have.

Connection to Best Practices

The previous section illuminates a few coherent patterns in the panelists' responses, but the question of how these panelists' opinions align with the characteristics of strong WAC programs remains. The following section examines how the results reflect or contradict each of the best practices for WAC as identified in the literature. Overall, the panelists seemed to concur with the literature regarding best practices at the institutional level. Understandably, the best practices for WAC at the classroom level are less relevant here; thus, the following section focuses solely on the best practices at the institutional level.

Sustained Development

One of the key features of lasting WAC programs is sustained faculty development (Berger, 2015; Kolb, 2013; Luthy et al., 2009; Nielsen, 2019; Thaiss & Porter, 2010; Varelas & Wolfe, 2015). Although increased training opportunities were relatively low on the list of the panelists' priorities, they did want writing to become a

regular point of discussion in faculty meetings, suggesting that sustained development

may not even need to be organized as formal training sessions for faculty to find it useful.

Although the panelists did not specify how such discussion would be focused, their

interest in developing assignments and rubrics indicates that perhaps discussion devoted

specifically to that goal would be useful. Also, given the high level of concern panelists

had for developing clear proficiency standards that students should meet, faculty

discussions could also be devoted to identifying key writing proficiencies needed for

specific disciplines and articulating where in the general education curriculum those

proficiencies might be taught. Furthermore, the panelists recognized the need for

regularity and consistency, not just a one-time training or even series of training sessions.

As one panelist commented, "If you had given this survey 5 years ago, we would have

had a lot more workshops on teaching and grading writing and assessment. And it is all

much worse with covid. I guess, I'd say that having HAD a good level of support doesn't

mean it can't go away." Unless and until writing is treated as part and parcel of the

institution's goals – as long as it remains a special, discrete topic of its own – the

tendency will be for WAC to be forgotten as new priorities and concerns emerge.

Financial Investment

The literature about the significance of financial investment is ambiguous, with

some sources suggesting that a faculty stipend for participation in a new WAC program

can be effective (Hampson et al., 2009; Zemliansky & Berry, 2017) and others implying

that stipends are not necessarily helpful (McLaren et al., 2014). Thaiss and Porter (2010),

by contrast, suggest that financial investment should come in the form of course releases

for WAC leaders or the creation of full-time staff positions to lead WAC. The panelists,

however, did not express particular interest in any of these approaches; rather, they

wanted that money to go to *students* in the form of scholarships or other recognitions for

writing excellence. This finding is surprising because it does not appear to have been

examined in the previous WAC literature.

Collaboration across Academic Boundaries

The literature suggests that sustainable WAC programs encourage collaboration

across academic boundaries, including not only various disciplines but also other campus

resources such as library staff and campus writing labs (Berger, 2015; Hall & Birch,

2018; Hutchison, 2018; Luna et al., 2014; Thaiss & Porter, 2010). Panelists, however,

placed little value on the resources currently provided through libraries and writing

tutors. Rather than reflecting an actual lack of value, this perception may be skewed by

panelists simply not recognizing that libraries and writing centers can do more than

provide research guides or individual tutoring, respectively. In fact, this interpretation is

consistent with the literature, which suggests that faculty often are unaware of what

libraries and writing centers can offer (Berger, 2015; Hall & Birch, 2018; Hampson,

2009; Torrell, 2020).

Lasting Leadership

Another key element of sustainable WAC programs identified in the literature is

lasting leadership (Thaiss & Porter, 2010), and although panelists did not explicitly

demand this from their institutions, lasting leadership has a clear connection to sustained

faculty development. When WAC efforts are led by individual faculty members who, for

whatever reason, have developed an interest in WAC, those efforts are destined to fade

when those faculty members move on to new positions, develop new interests, retire, or

simply burn out (Condon & Rutz, 2012). Thus, although lasting leadership for WAC programs was not a specific item the panelists identified as important to them, the need for it is implied by their desire for ongoing, regular discussions of writing in faculty meetings, as well as by the one panelist's comment regarding the loss of WAC support after a brief period of WAC being a priority on campus.

Reporting Outside a Single Department

Both McLeod (2008) and Thaiss and Porter (2010) found that lasting WAC programs should be housed outside of English departments. Although panelists did not explicitly express a desire for WAC to be separate from English, they did rate the most relevant item, "Ensuring that there is one clear place to go with questions about WAC" as only slightly important for both encouraging and helping them to include writing in their courses. Other responses suggested that the panelists prioritized a more discipline-specific approach to writing. For example, pre-made assignments and rubrics could not realistically be developed at the institutional level; these would almost certainly have to be designed within specific departments. Similarly, panelists valued the idea of having dedicated time to develop their own writing projects for their classes.

Assessment

Lasting WAC programs engage in assessment (Condon & Rutz, 2012; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017), and the panelists echoed the value of assessment in their relative high ratings for requiring faculty to participate in assessment and holding regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assessment, particularly with a focus on developing and standardizing rubrics that could be used within departments. Considering the importance the panelists placed on institutions showing they actually value writing, this emphasis on

assessment makes sense. Institutions assess what matters to them. If they list writing

proficiency as a goal but never bother to assess their efficacy at achieving that goal,

clearly writing proficiency is not a priority.

Grade Norming

The literature suggests that grade norming and collaboration on rubrics can help

faculty overcome their fears about grading writing (Berger, 2015; Luna et al., 2015;

Minnich et al., 2018). Given this finding, it is unsurprising that the single most important

request from panelists was pre-made assignments and rubrics they could use in their

classes. Although one could interpret this finding as a desire to avoid the work of creating

assignments, when read in the context of the literature, it seems more likely connected to

the lack of confidence faculty have in their own ability to grade writing adequately and

objectively (Hall & Birch, 2018; Migliaccio & Carrigan, 2017). Certainly, the advantage

of saving time and effort is likely relevant here as well.

Implications

The previous section examined the findings in light of the previously identified

best practices for sustainable WAC programs, with the general sense that the panelists

tended to agree with the literature in most respects. The following section discusses the

implications of these results when read in the context of organizational theory, the

implications for institutional practice, and the implications for further research.

Implications for Theory

Much organizational theory about colleges has more than a whiff of cynicism

about it, describing institutions of higher education as anarchic, hopelessly bureaucratic,

or largely driven by political machinations (Manning, 2012). In contrast, the collegial

model, which describes institutions as participatory, democratic, and driven by consensus, has been criticized as idealistic, rather than reflective of reality (Bush, 2011; Manning, 2012). However, these data demonstrate that many aspects of the collegial model are alive and well, at least at two-year institutions. One key feature of the collegial model is that members of the organization are presumed to agree on the goals of the organization (Bush, 2011). Based on the panelists' responses, faculty at two-year institutions do indeed value the goals of the institutions and are genuinely interested in what is best for their students – even when they do not always agree about what that is. They also expect their institutions to support them in concrete ways that will help them achieve those goals, which is consistent with the normative aspect of the collegial model. If the institution states writing proficiency as a goal, faculty expect the institution to demonstrate their commitment to that goal through regular discussion and assessment.

Panelists also demonstrated their respect for the authority of expertise, both subtly by more highly rating policies and practices that can maintain the locus of control within individual departments and more explicitly in several of the comments. For example, one panelist noted, "Writing assignment assessment is much different for a lab report and a English composition paper. This means that the required assignments would need to be highly specific for each department. . . ." Other comments similarly suggested the importance of expertise, with one panelist commenting that anyone working as a teaching assistant to grade writing should have at least a B.A. in the discipline, another that a committee comprising people from each division would be useful, and another that training from someone with more expertise would help them design better writing assignments. In each of these cases, the message is clear: We value the input of experts.

The collegial model's emphasis on lateral structure and distributed leadership is also somewhat evident in the panelists' responses, again because of their prioritization of policies and practices that keep the locus on control within the discipline. One slight seeming difference is the panelists' desire for top-down policies that *require* them to include writing or participate in writing assessment. However, their desire for their institutions to demonstrate commitment to their own stated goals – goals which the panelists themselves also value – is actually perfectly consistent with the collegial model. The panelists do believe that writing is important, and therefore want their institutions to invest in that goal more meaningfully and back up their stated aims with real action.

The collegial model is sometimes depicted as at odds with current trends emphasizing the role of external forces, particularly with the increasing demands for accountability from colleges regarding their student learning outcomes. For example, Bush writes, "The desire to maintain staff participation in decision-making is increasingly in conflict with external demands for accountability" (p. 77). Bush seems to suggest here that external demands for accountability crowd out possibilities for shared governance, which is a key aspect of the collegial model. In contrast, these panelists suggested that, as far as writing assessment is concerned, they would welcome demands for accountability. In fact, the panelists on the whole seemed to believe that writing proficiency was valuable *despite* the low value their institutions seemed to place on it based on the limited time spent discussing it or working toward assessment. Perhaps the complaints about graduates' writing proficiency simply have not yet been translated into clear demands for accountability on this issue, and thus institutions are prioritizing other concerns. If, however, those external demands for writing proficiency became a more prominent focus

of institutions, it seems that faculty would not find them contradictory to their own values and goals for teaching. Thus, external demands for accountability are not inherently in conflict with collegiality.

Implications for Practice

One benefit of this Delphi study is the immediacy with which results can be put into practice. If institutions want to meet their outcomes for writing proficiency, they now have a list of policies and practices to try. However, given how low the overall ratings were, it seems likely that there is no simple solution. It could be that some solutions are more effective for different disciplines or even faculty with different personality types, or it could be that teaching writing is just so difficult and so complex that nothing will be enough to bring all faculty on board. However, based on the items that reached consensus and were rated highly, one useful first step would be scheduling some regular faculty meetings to discuss writing proficiency needs in their disciplines and some meetings specifically devoted to the generation of appropriate assignments and rubrics that can be used in particular classes. Another consideration might be setting up a student writing contest for which students can have their work recognized and receive scholarship money or even college credits. Perhaps this contest could even be linked to the assignments generated by faculty, to facilitate the role of faculty as mentors for writing.

Policy changes might be more difficult and require more discussion. Requiring faculty to include more writing in their courses, when paired with training in the role WTL assignments can play, might be more feasible than a blanket injunction to "include writing" that could be interpreted as a requirement that students must write formal essays in every class. With the many, perfectly reasonable objections that faculty have about

incorporating such assignments, institutions would do well to consider only decreeing writing requirements for all classes with specific examples of what that writing may be and how it could be assessed.

The trickiest item to address is the requirement that students reach a certain level of writing proficiency before progressing into a degree program. First, given the existence of mandatory composition classes, this *should* already be true. Second, who decides what proficiency means and how to measure it? This particular facet of the results gets at the heart of the origins of mandatory English Composition and all of the controversy that history entails. Just as Villanueva (2013) suggests, more communication across disciplines about composition, about what writing proficiency is and is not, and about the often unseen political aspects of "good" writing might be necessary to help faculty in disciplines outside of composition have clearer expectations of their students.

For a final note about implications for practice, the classroom best practices, which were not at all represented in the study given its emphasis on institutional policies and practices, conceivably demonstrate the panelists' lack of knowledge about teaching writing. As Melzer (2014) found, faculty who are aware of these practices and use them typically have learned them from WAC initiatives at their institutions. In fact, many of the classroom best practices make WAC less onerous and therefore could mitigate the demand for some of these other solutions. In particular, training on how to break writing assignments down into discrete steps and provide effective formative feedback at each stage of the process may be helpful in reducing the perceived workload for grading writing (Luthy et al., 2009), but faculty may not realize such an option even exists. Similarly, faculty may not realize the many benefits of WTL assignments, some of which

include increased faculty and student enjoyment of the class; however, without training in what WTL is, how would faculty even know to pursue those options? Therefore, despite the relatively low ratings for the importance of training, institutions may wish to consider how training in the classroom best practices could help WAC be more sustainable.

Implications for Research

One of the downsides of asking people what they think would encourage or help them to do something is that people are notoriously bad judges of their own future behaviors (Poon et al., 2014). A very important task for future research, then, would be to investigate whether these changes actually result in faculty using more writing in their classes, and if so, how long that change persists. Unfortunately, because of the complexity of institutions, a controlled experiment isolating just one change, or even examining all of these changes, would be impossible. However, action research could investigate the effects of implementing any or all of these suggestions at a two-year institution.

Another interesting direction for research would be specifically analyzing the effect of student writing contests or other student-focused incentives on faculty's use of Writing Across the Curriculum. This finding was the only one not at least somewhat evident in the prior literature on WAC programs, yet faculty rated writing contests fairly highly for both encouraging them and helping them to include writing in their courses. Further research could explore not only the effect of these writing contests, but drill down into faculty motivations for supporting these contests. Are they mainly interested in rewarding students for their efforts? Are they hoping to use these contests to motivate their students to write? Are they hoping that such contests will mitigate students'

negative reactions to being asked to write? Any combination of these explanations currently seems plausible, leaving alone the following questions about whether writing contests actually achieve any of these aims.

Conclusion

This Delphi study explored faculty beliefs about what institutions can do to encourage them and help them to include writing in their courses. Their opinions were mostly consistent with previous literature on what features make WAC sustainable at institutions, boiling down to a few key requests from their institutions. Faculty want their institutions to *show* that they value student writing proficiency, not just say so. They want their institutions to provide meaningful support for them and for their students. Last, they want their institutions to help them identify and set clear standards for what writing proficiency is. The findings further suggest that the collegial theory of organizations is an appropriate model for understanding the relationship between faculty and their institutions, at least regarding WAC, and therefore that faculty would likely respond positively to collaborative WAC efforts at their institutions.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

IRB Approval Letter

Oklahoma State University Institutional Review Board

Date: 03/16/2021
Application Number: IRB-21-144
Proposal Title: Identifying Faculty Needs for Writing across the
                                    Curriculum at Two-YearColleges

Principal Investigator: Alissa Nephew
Co-Investigator(s):
Faculty Adviser: Steve Wanger
Project Coordinator:
Research Assistant(s):

Processed as: Exempt
Exempt Category:

Status Recommended by Reviewer(s): Approved

The IRB application referenced above has been approved. It is the judgment of the
reviewers that the rights and welfare of individuals who may be asked to participate in this
study will be respected, and that the research will be conducted in a manner consistent with
the IRB requirements as outlined in 45CFR46.

**This study meets criteria in the Revised Common Rule, as well as, one or
more of the circumstances for which <u>continuing review is not required.</u> As
Principal Investigator of thisresearch, you will be required to submit a status
report to the IRB triennially.**

The final versions of any recruitment, consent and assent documents bearing the IRB approval
stamp areavailable for download from IRBManager. These are the versions that must be used
during the study.

As Principal Investigator, it is your responsibility to do the following:
1. Conduct this study exactly as it has been approved. Any modifications to the research protocol must be approved by the IRB. Protocol modifications requiring approval may include changes tothe title, PI, adviser, other research personnel, funding status or sponsor, subject population composition or size, recruitment, inclusion/exclusion criteria, research site, research procedures and consent/assent process or forms.
2. Submit a request for continuation if the study extends beyond the approval period. Thiscontinuation must receive IRB review and approval before the research can continue.
3. Report any unanticipated and/or adverse events to the IRB Office promptly.
4. Notify the IRB office when your research project is complete or when you are no longer affiliatedwith Oklahoma State University.

Please note that approved protocols are subject to monitoring by the IRB and that the IRB office has the authority to inspect research records associated with this protocol at any time. If you have questions aboutthe IRB procedures or need any assistance from the Board, please contact the IRB Office at 405-744- 3377 or irb@okstate.edu.

Sincerely,

Oklahoma State University IRB

APPENDIX B

Preliminary Survey Questions

1. How many unique courses do you regularly teach?

2. For each unique course you regularly teach, how would you describe the amount of writing you assign? Keep in mind that assigned writing may be formal or informal, graded or ungraded, planned or unplanned. Please estimate the approximate number of pages of writing students produce, in total, for assignments in each course.
  a. Course #1
    Little or no writing (2 pages or less)
    Some writing (3-9 pages)
    A lot of writing (10 or more pages)
  b. Course #2
    Little or no writing (2 pages or less)
    Some writing (3-9 pages)
    A lot of writing (10 or more pages)
  c. Course #3
    Little or no writing (2 pages or less)
    Some writing (3-9 pages)
    A lot of writing (10 or more pages)
  d. Course #4
    Little or no writing (2 pages or less)
    Some writing (3-9 pages)
    A lot of writing (10 or more pages)

3. Remember that writing can be formal or informal, graded or ungraded, planned or unplanned. With that definition in mind, which types of writing do you ask students to complete in your classes? Check all that apply. If an assignment involves more than one type of writing, check all applicable types.
  ☐ Formal research papers, 5 pages or fewer
  ☐ Formal research papers, 6-10 pages
  ☐ Formal research papers, longer than 10 pages
  ☐ Short essay responses to exam questions (1-2 paragraphs)
  ☐ Long essay responses to exam questions (3+ paragraphs)
  ☐ Personal essays
  ☐ Journal entries

- ☐ Discussion boards
- ☐ Reflection
- ☐ Narrative/chronology
- ☐ Summaries
- ☐ Source analysis or evaluation
- ☐ Other evaluations or reviews
- ☐ Freewriting
- ☐ Brainstorming/listing
- ☐ Clusters/idea maps
- ☐ Outlines
- ☐ Description
- ☐ Procedural/"how-to"
- ☐ Letters
- ☐ Lab reports
- ☐ Argument/persuasive writing
- ☐ Creative writing
- ☐ Other (please explain): _____

4. How long have you been teaching at the college level?
    a. Less than 5 years
    b. 5-10 years
    c. 11-15 years
    d. 16-20 years
    e. More than 20 years
    f. Prefer not to answer

5. How long have you been at your current institution?
    a. Less than 5 years
    b. 5-10 years
    c. 11-15 years
    d. 16-20 years
    e. More than 20 years
    f. Prefer not to answer

6. In which disciplinary areas do you teach? Check all that apply.
- ☐ Accounting
- ☐ Addictions Counseling
- ☐ Anatomy/Physiology
- ☐ Anthropology
- ☐ Architectural Technology
- ☐ ASL Interpreter Training
- ☐ Biology
- ☐ Business Administration
- ☐ Chemistry
- ☐ Child Development
- ☐ Computer Information Systems

- ☐ Construction Technology
- ☐ Crime Scene Investigation
- ☐ Crime Victim/Survivor Services
- ☐ Diagnostic Sonography
- ☐ Electronics Engineering
- ☐ Economics
- ☐ Education
- ☐ Fire Protection
- ☐ General Engineering
- ☐ Geography
- ☐ Health Care Administration
- ☐ History
- ☐ Horticulture
- ☐ Humanities/Art
- ☐ Information Technology
- ☐ Journalism
- ☐ Management
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Music
- ☐ Nurse Science
- ☐ Nutrition
- ☐ Occupational Health
- ☐ Paramedicine
- ☐ Physics
- ☐ Police Science
- ☐ Political Science
- ☐ Power Transmission and Distribution
- ☐ Psychology
- ☐ Public Safety Management
- ☐ Public Service
- ☐ Radiologic Technology
- ☐ Sociology
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Speech/Communication
- ☐ Surveying
- ☐ Veterinary Technology
- ☐ Other (please specify) _____

7. What gender do you identify as?
   a. Female
   b. Male
   c. Non-binary
   d. Other, please specify:
   e. Prefer not to answer

8. What is your age?
    a. Under 30
    b. 30-49
    c. 50-64
    d. 65 or over
    e. Prefer not to answer

9. What is your ethnicity? Check all that apply.
    ☐ Caucasian/White
    ☐ African-American/Black
    ☐ Latino or Hispanic
    ☐ Asian
    ☐ Native American
    ☐ Native Hawaiian or Pacific Islander
    ☐ Other/Unknown
    ☐ Prefer not to answer

APPENDIX C

Recruitment Email

Dear [FacultyName],

I am researching two-year college faculty's perspective on Writing Across the Curriculum. For the purposes of this study, "Writing Across the Curriculum" involves any classroom or homework activity in which students are asked to compose text – be it formal or informal, handwritten or typed, graded or ungraded.
I need feedback from faculty in all disciplines, including faculty who do and do not assign any kind of writing in their classes. Even if you believe writing assignments are wholly inapplicable to your classes, I would like to hear from you!
If you would like to participate, I am asking you to participate three online surveys. Each survey will take approximately 30-45 minutes to complete, and there will be several weeks between each survey. It is very important for the quality of the study that you are willing to participate in all three surveys. If you choose to participate, you will be entered in a drawing for a $50 Visa gift card for *each* survey you complete.
If you would like to participate, please click here [Qualtrics link to preliminary survey] to provide some preliminary information. I will be accepting the first 30 respondents who allow my panel to meet the following criteria:

- Representation of at least four different Oklahoma two-year institutions
- Representation of at least five different disciplines
- Representation of a range of years of teaching experience
- Representation of faculty who use writing in classes to various extents

If you have any questions, please contact me via email at alissa.nephew@okstate.edu or by phone at 405-945-3226. Thank you very much for your time and consideration!

Alissa Nephew
Associate Professor of English, OSU-OKC
LRC 339
405-945-3226

APPENDIX D

All Responses Identifying Whether Each Policy or Practice Is Present at Panelists'

Institutions

Policy or practice	Yes	No	Not sure
Institutional Goals			
Proficiency in written communication is explicitly provided as a student learning outcome	16	3	0
Proficiency in written communication is implicitly included in the institution's learning outcomes and/or mission statement	16	2	1
Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Culture			
Writing proficiency and/or Writing Across the Curriculum is discussed at faculty meetings	14	5	0
Leadership regularly reminds faculty about importance of writing	11	6	2
Leadership encourages faculty to use writing for assessment	12	7	0
Leadership encourages faculty to mentor students in non-required writing projects for honors credit, scholarships, etc.	5	8	6
Leadership emphasizes connection between writing and critical thinking.	14	5	0
Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies			
Faculty are required to include writing assignments in some or all classes.	11	8	0
Faculty are required to describe writing expectations in syllabus.	11	8	0

Policy or practice	Yes	No	Not sure
Faculty are required to provide writing resources such as Purdue OWL in syllabus or within LMS.	6	10	3
Faculty are required to mentor students through a capstone project that requires writing.	4	10	5
Faculty are required to participate in assessment of student learning outcomes, which include writing proficiency.	12	6	1
Student writing proficiency is evaluated before they can progress from general education into a degree program.	4	8	7
Some or all degree programs offer their own required writing courses	9	7	3
Training Opportunities			
In-service includes sessions about Writing Across the Curriculum.	2	11	6
Regular faculty meetings to discuss writing assignments and/or writing assessment are held.	6	11	2
Professional development opportunities specifically to educate faculty on how to make writing applicable to their courses are offered.	7	9	3
Workshops with practical advice about teaching writing (how to motivate students, design assignments, grade effectively, etc.) are offered.	4	10	5
Incentives			
Faculty may win awards for innovative teaching, including use of writing projects.	6	9	4
Writing contests that offer college credit or scholarships are held.	7	6	6
Excellent student writing is recognized and publicized.	6	4	9
Faculty are evaluated in part based on whether their courses improved student writing.	2	9	8

Policy or practice	Yes	No	Not sure
Workload			
Faculty may have work-study students as teaching assistants.	1	11	7
Faculty may have teaching assistants who are not work-study students.	2	10	7
Faculty who teach writing-intensive classes are permitted to teach fewer classes.	0	7	12
Writing-intensive classes have reduced class sizes.	6	3	10
Faculty are provided dedicated time to develop writing projects for their classes.	2	8	9
Resources			
Library provides student access to writing handbooks, research support, and/or online guides and tutorials.	17	0	1
The institution provides faculty access to external resources such as TurnItIn, SafeAssign, or Grammarly.	19	0	0
The institution provides students with access to computer labs.	19	0	0
Faculty are provided pre-made rubrics and/or assignments to use in their classes.	7	10	2
Faculty are provided information about students' writing abilities and needs.	8	7	4
Students are provided a depository of excellent student writing to use as models and/or inspiration.	3	7	9
Students have access to knowledgeable writing tutors on campus.	18	0	1
Students have access to writing labs and workshops.	14	2	3
Faculty are provided clear assessment goals for student writing.	4	9	6
Faculty are provided clear assessment processes for student writing.	4	9	6

Policy or practice	Yes	No	Not sure
There is one clear place to go with questions about Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC), whether that is the English department, the library, or a dedicated WAC committee.	4	9	6
The campus LMS (Canvas, Blackboard, etc.) provides helpful technology for assigning, collecting, and/or giving feedback on writing assignments.	18	0	1
Some or all degree programs have their own embedded writing specialists.	0	9	10

APPENDIX E

All Comments Left on "Encouraging" Items in Phase II of the Survey

Institutional Goals

- I would require and expect these proficiencies of my students regardless of whether they were explicitly stated or not. Composition I proficiency is required before the students can take the science courses I teach and (especially in Labs) I require them to become proficient at writing lab reports, as well as explaining certain scientific information using their own words.

- If you had given this survey 5 years ago, we would have had a lot more workshops on teaching and grading writing and assessment. And it is all much worse with covid. I guess, I'd say that having HAD a good level of support doesn't mean it can't go away.

- For the nursing student, written communication skills are necessary to develop while in school for collaboration with fellow nurses, patients, and other members of the healthcare team to deliver safe nursing care.

- I teach in a workforce development program (Nursing) so our expectations of communication include both written and oral communication skills in the workplace.

- In our department, chemistry, physics, and engineering, we are providing writing assignments as part of the laboratory and as separate assignments in the course work. It is encouraged and instructor led as it is dependent upon the discipline.

- Most of my class load is hands on lab classes with only brief short answer question exams.

- In our department, students are expected to be able to write essays using the approved writing style, APA.

- We (quite properly) include oral communication and written communication in a single institutional outcome.

- There are some students due to learning disabilities or challenges would be better at oral presentation as opposed to written.

Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Culture

- I believe these things to be essential and specifically focusing on them is a great idea but I would strive to teach my students writing proficiency no matter what Leadership said. We have academic freedom to teach curriculum the way we chose to at my institution so reminding professors to re-analyze their lesson planning to focus on encouraging writing proficiency would be helpful. Having no TAs or assistance with grading writing assignments discourages assigning these items so Leadership providing those assistants might be the best way to encourage this.

- I think we generally believe it is important. We need less 'encouragement' and more skill-building and peer interaction.

- We currently do not have an honors credit program.

- There is an awkward over-reliance on written communication at too many institutions, given that oral communication (including mediated communication)

has eroded the reliance upon written communication in higher education. To not address both in tandem, at the least, is quite short-sighted.

- It's not a serious commitment/concern of admin if they don't give me and students tools to succeed. If admin shows marginal concern for standards, there isn't much I can accomplish.

Institutional, Divisional, or Departmental Policies

- In STEM courses that I teach assigning writing assignments is nearly impossible on a regular basis due to not having a TA or assistant and having a large number of students in each class. If Faculty were required to give writing assignments and assess those assignments they would likely give little to no feedback due to time constraints. Writing assignment assessment is much different for a lab report and a English composition paper. This means that the required assignments would need to be highly specific for each department which is not very feasible at a 2 year college or smaller schools.

- There are some degrees we offer that don't NEED writing or don't need to be great at it at this level. Nurses need writing to advance faster (my sister works at the VA) but she doesn't need writing to do the job, support herself, have a good life, etc. At this level, don't make writing a barrier to finishing if you don't use it on the job.

- We are in the physical sciences, so some of the "requiring" may not be as necessary or as conducive to the student outcomes. Although, we do require writing assignments in the laboratory and as part of some course work.

Training Opportunities

- "Encouraging" btw would only make me happier about it, it would not make me do more of it. It may be useful for you to know I'm way redoing Social Problems to stress critical thinking which means it is going to be much more writing intensive.

- I believe I would have a better grasp of providing well-developed requirements for specific writing assignments with more training.

- Again, emphasis on training of writing (or any of these) should occur in lock-step with similar/identical expectations for oral communication.

- These are tangible and useful indicators that admin is dedicated to WAC.

Incentives

- The rest of the faculty should be evaluated on student success in their area of expertise. We are teaching too much to also add teaching writing to our list. I refer them to tutors.

- Not all classes need to improve students writing skills. I'm often just happy if they panic less about it when they are done with me.

- First question is poorly constructed. Teaching innovations should be celebrated by leadership...but should not be limited to writing (but that is how the question reads to me).

Workload

- At our level, work studies are not very helpful to faculty.

Resources

- I think we need a committee: English, Library, somebody from each division

- Technical writing is different - so some WAC may not be as applicable in some cases.

APPENDIX F

All Comments Left on "Helping" Items in Phase II of the Survey

Policies

- It depends on the degree program.

- Writing classes are incredibly important early in the Gen Eds. No student should exit their Gen Eds without competency in writing AND oral communication skills. Period. Institutions of higher learning are nothing but shams and degree mills if competency in written AND oral communication skills are not required ("C" or better!) for all students by the first 30 hours of course work at the university.

Workload

- Core courses such as writing and oral communication courses should have significantly reduced student loads for faculty, and should NOT employ student aids. Anyone working in a "TA" or "work-study" or "lab assistant" position should have at least a BA in the specific discipline (oral communication graduates should not be teaching writing; written communication graduates should not be teaching oral communication).

Resources

- The embedded writing specialist….we need one in each division, maybe, not every program.

VITA

Alissa Nephew

Candidate for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

Dissertation: IDENTIFYING FACULTY NEEDS FOR WRITING ACROSS THE
                 CURRICULUM AT TWO-YEAR COLLEGES

Major Field: Educational Policy and Leadership Studies

Biographical:

        Education:

        Completed the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy in Educational Policy
        and Leadership Studies at Oklahoma State University, Stillwater, Oklahoma in
        May, 2022.

        Completed the requirements for the Master of Arts in English at University of
        Oklahoma, Norman, Oklahoma in 2007.

        Completed the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in English at Oklahoma
        Christian University, Edmond, Oklahoma in 2004.

        Experience:

        2008-present   Oklahoma State University-Oklahoma City. 2021-present,
                            Associate Professor/English Department Head; 2017-2021,
                            Assistant Professor; 2015-2017, Instructor; 2008-2014,
                            Adjunct Instructor

        2009-2013   Oklahoma Christian University, Adjunct Instructor

        Professional Memberships:

        2011-present   National Council of Teachers of English