

THREE

Faculty Workshops

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Writing across the curriculum is realized through changes in faculty and student assumptions about writing. Faculty workshops are an excellent medium for such changes because they integrate theory and practice in an experiential environment. WAC workshop participants learn to use multiple drafts, to share their writing, and to respond to each other's writing. They discover that the WAC movement is grounded in scholarship and research. They reexamine pedagogies in light of WAC values: writing as a means of learning; the interdependence of composing processes and written products; the merits of different kinds of writing; respect for the ideas of every writer; and an appreciation of writing as socially, cognitively, and rhetorically complex.

Many faculty come to WAC workshops thinking of school writing as primarily research papers, essay exams, and laboratory reports because these were the assignments they wrote as students. Some faculty are not sensitive to the convolutions of people's writing processes and the courage it takes to share a piece of writing. In a workshop setting, faculty try different kinds of writing and read one another's efforts, learning firsthand that assignments must be carefully designed with purposes clear to both faculty and students. They are reminded that sharing writing can be threatening even with supportive readers. They learn methods that make the task of responding to writing less difficult. Those who participate in WAC workshops return to the classroom with a fuller sense of the multiple roles that writing plays in teaching and learning.

Furthermore, in a workshop context, a spirit of collegiality develops into a powerful force for sustaining WAC. Faculty talk about the discourses of different disciplines with colleagues outside their department, with colleagues whose offices are across campus, and with colleagues who also struggle with writing assignments. As Barbara Walvoord makes clear in Chapter 2, such collegial dialogue is a cornerstone of strong WAC programs.

Because the workshop dynamic models WAC values, encourages reflexive pedagogy, and fosters faculty dialogue, we believe it is a powerful stimulus for changing faculty assumptions about writing. And while we know that not all WAC programs call for faculty workshops, we contend that some form of faculty development (whether for tenured professors or teaching assistants, whether through workshops, speakers, symposia, or conferences) is a critical ingredient in WAC programs. For those of you who are working on faculty development, we

hope this chapter will help you with workshop planning, funding, and evaluation, and with making workshops an integral part of your WAC program.

PLANNING WAC WORKSHOPS

Before you and your fellow WAC advocates plan even a first workshop for your faculty, we suggest sketching out a preliminary design for the WAC program as a whole (see Figure 2.1 in Chapter Two). That means considering questions such as the following: What do you [want WAC to achieve at your institution during the next three years? the next five years? Are you aiming for changes in individual classrooms? curricular change? programmatic change? a combination of the above? You may find that this kind of planning takes a semester or year to complete, but it is critical to the long-term success of WAC and well worth the effort (as the directors of the various programs described in this book will attest).

Program Goals and Workshop Format. Workshops are a vehicle for changing faculty perceptions about writing and learning and thus changing classroom practices and curricula, but change takes time. We recommend selecting the length and format of the initial WAC workshop in light of your broad program goals and with the expectation that you will plan additional and ongoing workshops.

One popular format for a first workshop is an introductory program for faculty who need information about WAC before they elect to participate in longer, more intensive sessions. This scenario often includes an outside consultant/presenter who delivers a morning address to all faculty and then leads a hands-on session for those who want to know more. Longer workshops or a series of workshops are planned as follow-up. In this model, the first workshop generates interest in WAC and introduces participants to basic WAC concepts.

If there are already initiatives similar to WAC on your campus (such as critical literacy or computers across the curriculum), the first workshop can be an intensive one (four days or more) for 15 or 20 faculty. The goal might be that each participant redesign a syllabus to integrate writing into one of his or her courses. Follow up meetings provide opportunities for participants to discuss how the changes are progressing. Another way to begin is with a series of half-day workshops spread over an academic year. Participants form a working group to learn about writing across the curriculum and to discuss their experiments with writing assignments. Members of the working group become excellent candidates for college-wide writing council or WAC committee.

Fortunately, WAC workshops now have a track record proven means of faculty development, and information on models is available in several of the sources listed at the end of this chapter (see especially Fulwiler and Young; Stanley and Ambron; Peterson).

The Planning Group. An early decision in planning the first workshop is the makeup of the planning group. If your school has a WAC committee or writing council in place, they are a natural choice. If not, a cross-disciplinary group that is representative of the audience for the workshop often works well. A small group with a designated leader who has released time may function more efficiently than a larger group working on the consensus model. On the other hand, spending a semester or a year planning the first workshop allows group members to educate themselves about WAC and even to develop into potential workshop presenters.

Audience. Gathering information about what the prospective audience wants and needs from a WAC workshop is an important responsibility of the planning group. How much do faculty on your campus know about current writing theory and research? How much do they know about collaborative learning, critical thinking, writing to learn, responding to student texts? Are they especially receptive to empirical research, to theory, to pedagogical applications? What are the power relationships among those in the potential workshop audience (i.e., will it include tenured and untenured faculty, full-time and adjunct faculty, administrators and staff as well as faculty)? Will you invite the entire faculty or only those from one discipline? Considering the audience early in the planning process allows you to coordinate its goals with those of the WAC program.

Topics. Topics at writing workshops develop naturally from two interrelated sources: the need for faculty to understand writing more fully and the concerns faculty have about using writing in their courses. Because both issues must be addressed to establish a sound and continuing WAC program, it is fortunate that they automatically give rise to subjects that are well suited to a workshop treatment. From the need for a better understanding of the complexities of writing come sessions about:

- Research in composition and rhetoric
- Writing to learn through informal assignments
- Learning to write through sequenced, formal assignments
- Understanding one's own writing processes
- Writing and authority
- Faculty writing groups
- Computers and writing
- Reading and writing
- Thinking and writing
- The rhetoric of specific disciplines
- Local research projects

From faculty concerns about assigning and responding to writing come sessions on:

- Planning, presenting, and sequencing assignments
- Expanding the assignment repertoire
- Responding to student writing
- Handling the paper load: quick methods, checklists, holistic grading, primary-trait scoring
- Using computers for editing, revising, networking, electronic mail (E-mail) journals
- Establishing "standards": grammar, spelling, formats
- Using writing with nonnative speakers
- Coordinating with the English composition program

- Coordinating with the writing center
- Connecting reading, thinking, speaking and writing

These lists are not complete, and many of these topics are difficult to deal with quickly, yet they are inherent in the expanded use of writing that is the real meaning of writing across the curriculum. You will find additional ideas for topics in Tables 3.1 and 3.2, which contain sample agendas of two-day and five-day workshops.

TABLE 3.1. Sample Workshop Syllabus for a 1 1/2-Day Workshop:
Assignments That Teach Disciplines

Day 1	
8:30-9:00	Coffee and pastries
9:00-10:20	General Session: Why WAC is needed and how it evolved over the years
10:30-11:45	Select one of the following sessions:
	A. Writing as a method of developing thinking and improving learning skills
	B. The question of precision in writing: Structural and grammatical precision as well as correctness in punctuation and spelling
12:00-1:30	Lunch
1:30-2:45	Sessions A and B above will be repeated
3:00-4:15	Select one of the following sessions:
	C. Matters of evaluation and grading
	D. WAC resources; articles, books, software
Day 2	
8:30-9:00	Coffee and pastries
9:00-10:15	Select one of the following sessions:
	E. Assignments that teach the Arts and Humanities
	F. Assignments that teach the Sciences
10:30-11:45	Divisional meetings assisted by the presenters
12:00-1:00	Closing Session: directions for the future; curriculum reform; applications of WAC elsewhere

NOTE: Designed by faculty at Monroe College, Rochester

Presenters. Obviously the person who leads a workshop major factor in its success. A first consideration is whether an outside consultant should be invited, whether an inside presenter would be better received, or whether a combination would be most effective. For whatever reasons, outside consultants are often assumed to have more expertise. Generally, their experience at several campuses prepares them to handle such glitches as participants who want to assign blame (to the English department, to students, to the writing center) and participants who want to control the workshop. You may wish to hire an outside consultant for your first few workshops and then, as more faculty become knowledgeable, use internal talent. Some institutions hire an outside consultant to give a keynote speech at a full-day or several-day program, and ask their own faculty to lead breakout sessions.

Table 3.2. Workshop Syllabus for a Five-Day Workshop

Day 1 (Wednesday)

1. Writing across the curriculum: the concept, the history
2. The goals of the workshop (design at least two assignments, plan for implementation, evaluation)
3. How we use writing in our lives
4. The problems of student writers
5. Present use of writing in your classes: what do you want to change?
6. Informal writing

Day 2 (Thursday)

1. Informal writing (continued): Journal writing
2. Tailoring assignments to course objectives
3. Defining conceptual tasks

Day 3 (Friday)

1. Informal writing assignment due: 11 copies
2. Writing for different purposes and audiences
3. Sequencing assignments

Day 4 (Tuesday)

1. Formal assignment due: 11 copies
2. Implementing assignments
 - a. Staging assignments to facilitate the writing process
 - b. Peer review
 - c. The writing fellows program

Day 5 (Wednesday)

1. Evaluating and responding to student papers
 2. The role of the library
 3. Revisions of assignments due
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NOTE: Designed for faculty at La Salle University, Philadelphia

A second consideration is the credibility a consultant or presenter will have at your institution. Research universities, four-year colleges, and community colleges have special characteristics that affect their writing across the curriculum programs. A presenter from the same type of institution will be more knowledgeable about mission, faculty loads, admission policies, and publication pressures than a presenter from a different sort of institution. Presenters also have different styles. Some tend to begin with the history and principles of WAC; others start by asking participants to write first and then reflect on the experience. You might compare

Anne Herrington's article, "Writing to Learn" with Toby Fulwiler's "Showing Not Telling" for descriptions of different approaches. Of course, the best presenters use a combination of approaches and are sensitive to the audience's needs at different times during the workshop. Two good ways to select a presenter who will be credible on your campus are to attend workshops he or she leads on other campuses and to ask for recommendations from other WAC directors.

If you plan to present a workshop yourself, you will find useful advice in Toby Fulwiler's article, "Writing Workshops and the Mechanics of Change" and in Roy Fox's "A Saga of Unsung Symbols: Writing Assignments Across the Disciplines." These articles discuss how to design and lead a workshop that is filled with opportunities to write and reflect on writing. One of the best workshop writing prompts we know of is used by Susan McLeod who asks participants the following question: "What makes a good teacher in your discipline?" And a fine account of how to pace a workshop can be found in Weiss and Peich's article "Faculty Attitude Change in a Cross-Disciplinary Writing Workshop."

Funding. Workshop expenses may include some or all of the following: consultants' fees and travel allowances, stipends for participants, room rental, refreshments, publicity, mailing, administrative and secretarial support, photocopying, and incidentals. Having participated in a range of workshops from brown-bag lunches with volunteer, in-house presenters to summer institutes with lodging, meals, and honoraria, we know workshops can be effective regardless of budget. Nevertheless, our advice is to work hard for funding from all possible sources (grants of all types, or provost funds, professional development budgets, departmental budgets, alumni or college foundation monies, corporate or business resources). Once funding levels are set, look at the workshop budget from several angles. Can you schedule a well-financed, initial workshop if you follow it up with inexpensive sessions? Can you finance a nationally known consultant if he or she presents on your campus rather than at an off-campus site? Can professional development credits for a weekly WAC seminar replace a stipend or released time? Can the culinary department provide refreshments at cost?

Consultants' fees will be a major portion of the workshop budget. Experienced presenters typically charge between \$500 and \$1,500 (plus travel expenses) for a one-day workshop. If the fees particular consultant exceed your budget, ask that person to recommend other consultants who live in your geographical area (to reduce travel expenses). The National Writing Project site in your state, neighboring schools with established WAC programs, and regional consortia are good sources for names of local presenters. Nearby institutions might try co-sponsoring a workshop or scheduling workshops in the same week to share consulting fees.

The cost for an internal presenter can vary as well—from an honorarium to a letter of commendation to a notice in an evaluation to all of the above. The main point is to select a person who will be an effective workshop facilitator and then make every effort to stretch resources to finance his or her fees.

Stipends for faculty participants are another budget item. WAC programs provide money; others released time. Some provide meals and overnight accommodations if the workshop is off-campus. Some give participants faculty guidebooks such as Moss and Holder's *Improving Student Writing*, Walvoord's *Helping Students Write Well*, or Tchudi's *Teaching Writing in the Content Area*. A contrasting approach is occasionally used. Some institutions charge a registration fee to offset expenses (or in certain cases, to guarantee attendance). The guiding

wisdom here is either to pay people (whether a stipend or a lunch) or to charge them as an incentive to attend.

Costs for room rental, refreshments, publicity, photocopying, administrative and secretarial support, and incidentals will vary; but should be included in your funding estimates. Robert Simerly's recent book *Planning and Marketing Conferences and Workshops* contains a useful chapter on developing accurate and realistic workshop budgets. Simerly includes sample spreadsheets, budget forms, and a budget checklist (80-101). Another important source on WAC funding is Keith Tandy's chapter in *Strengthening Programs for Writing Across the Curriculum*.

Scheduling. In most cases, the academic calendar dictates the dates for WAC workshops. Perhaps the best times are the days just prior to or just following the semester or quarter. Summer institutes are popular if the budget includes faculty stipends. Be sure to coordinate scheduling with the professional development committee on your campus. This committee can work with you on funding and publicity as well.

Publicity. Accurate, appealing, and extensive publicity plays a major role in workshop success. We advocate the rule of three--publicizing workshops a *minimum* of three times. For example you might distribute a flyer to all faculty, write an article for the faculty newsletter, and have WAC committee members make announcements at department meetings. Phone calls and personal notes to colleagues are always worth the effort. We recommend designing a WAC logo and displaying it prominently on WAC notices. Use the expertise of the marketing, art, or graphics professors on your planning committee. Include the name of a contact person and a phone number on all publicity.

Workshop Evaluations. Changes in pedagogical beliefs or in classroom attitudes are not easy to measure, yet workshop evaluations are vital for ongoing WAC programs. Consider using an evaluation that will serve as a planning tool for the next workshop—perhaps a set of open-ended questions, a listing of pluses and minuses, or a freewrite about classroom applications that the participant expects to try after the workshop. Margot Soven from La Salle University has used the following evaluation prompt with good results:

Dear Colleagues:

We appreciate your participation in our workshop. Please comment on the overall value of the workshop, and if possible, on the program for each day. Thank you for taking the time to share your impressions with us.

An alternative is a series of questions such as the following:

1. What were some strengths of the workshop?
2. What were some weaknesses?
3. Was the workshop what you had expected? Please explain.
4. Please comment on the ideas presented at the workshop.
5. Please comment on the presenters.
6. Would you recommend a similar workshop to a colleague? Why?

day of the workshop, the planning group can welcome participants and make introductions. Someone should be responsible for last-minute errands such as photocopying. Someone keep the presenters aware of the time so that the workshop n at a good pace and includes an adequate number of breaks' *to Organize and Lead a Faculty Development Workshop* by Wells, Daston, and Keesing contains generic checklists that cover advanced planning and the workshop itself.

Other considerations are a written agenda, name tags, evaluation forms, paper, pencils, overhead projector, transparencies, chalk, and eraser. A display table with handouts, books, and bibliographies on writing is a fine idea. After WAC is established, this table provides space for contributions from participants—successful assignments, student papers, faculty writing. You might also coordinate a book display with the bookstore or library.

Follow-Up. Because WAC workshops are components of larger programs and because they are not one-time events, the group has important follow-up responsibilities. Thank-you notes (and checks) go to presenters. Faculty participants and those who provided funding or other resources should be thanked (and you can enclose a recent article on WAC or a flyer announcing the next session with your note). A brief report with a summary of evaluation comments will keep the faculty senate and the administration informed. A longer report with suggestions for the next workshop can be presented to the writing council or committee. Articles in the WAC newsletter and in other publications smooth the way for future workshops.

SUSTAINING THE WORKSHOP COMPONENT

Once the initial WAC workshop has been evaluated and the WAC Committee has decided to make workshops an ongoing part of the program, there are a few things to keep in mind. The mechanics of workshop planning remain the same, but the audience will now include veterans as well as newcomers to WAC. Some schools such as Oakton Community College in Illinois and La Salle in Philadelphia offer a multi-strand approach for these audiences—repeating the introductory workshop and inviting veterans of that series to advanced workshops. Oakton's publication, *The Critical Literacy*

Project, contains syllabi from their first-, second-, and third-generation workshops. Other schools such as Weber State in Ogden, Utah, invite uninitiated faculty to the first part of a workshop and have veterans join newcomers during the last part of the session. At Prince George's Community College and at Montgomery College, where one-day workshops are often topic specific, we welcome veterans and newcomers alike on the assumption that each will contribute to and take from the workshop what he or she wants.

Some Friendly Advice. Whether planning a first or fifth workshop, here are some things to keep in mind:

- Workshop attendance should be voluntary. As Melissa Kort reminds us, faculty are “for better or worse, adult learners,” accustomed to autonomy (21). If you require advanced registration or a fee, it's a good idea to be flexible about last-minute additions as long as space is available.
- Don't assume that faculty will understand writing to learn or will redesign their assignments after one or two short workshops. Attending a workshop is easy; actually changing assignments or classroom dynamics is hard. Extensive workshop time and

follow-up resources are critical for faculty trying to integrate writing into their courses. Support may take many forms such as one-on-one consulting (see Kuriloff, this volume), a WAC newsletter, a faculty writing group (McLeod and Emery), and a cross-disciplinary writing center for students (see Harris, this volume).

- Avoid planning too much for one workshop or too many workshops for one semester.
- Don't give up if one workshop bombs. An unsuccessful workshop is a learning experience, not the end of a program.

CONCLUSION

WAC workshops are not one-time events. If faculty development is an integral part of your WAC program, you will find that workshops become integral as well. Over several semesters, you may offer sessions for different constituencies: faculty, teaching assistants, administrators, students. Workshop cycles can be repeated or can be incremental. Workshops provide time for participants to study writing theory, write for themselves and others, collaborate with colleagues, redesign their classes and assignments, and reflect on language and learning. Workshops build interdisciplinary connections and lead to additional program components: curricular changes, peer-tutoring, writing centers, classroom research, and collaborative teaching. Workshops that foster faculty dialogue, model WAC values, encourage reflexive pedagogy, and demonstrate the connections between research, theory, and classroom practice are invaluable components of WAC programs.

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