

# CONTENTS

*Acknowledgments ix*

Writing Program Architecture: An Introduction with  
Alternative Tables of Contents

*Jamie White-Farnham and Bryna Siegel Finer 3*

## **PART 1: MAJORS AND MINORS, UNDERGRADUATE AND GRADUATE WRITING CURRICULUMS**

- 1 Miami University Major in Professional Writing  
*Heidi A. McKee 27*
- 2 Oakland University Writing and Rhetoric Major  
*Greg A. Giberson, Lori Ostergaard, and Marshall Kitchens 42*
- 3 Purdue University Graduate Program in Rhetoric  
and Composition  
*Patricia Sullivan 58*
- 4 Rowan University Major in Writing Arts  
*Sanford Tweedie 72*
- 5 University of Rhode Island Writing and Rhetoric Major  
*Nedra Reynolds and Joannah Portman-Daley 89*
- 6 University of Wyoming Professional Writing Minor  
*Michael Knievel and Meg Van Baalen-Wood 101*

## **PART 2: WRITING AND COMMUNICATION ACROSS THE CURRICULUM**

- 7 Louisiana State University Communication across the Curriculum  
*Sarah Liggett 121*
- 8 Monmouth College Communication across the Curriculum  
*Bridget Draxler 132*

- 9 Old Dominion University Quality Enhancement Plan (QEP)  
*Remica L. Bingham-Risher 144*
- 10 University of Missouri Campus Writing Program  
*Bonnie Selting and Amy Lannin 155*
- PART 3: FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION AND  
INTRODUCTORY COLLEGE LITERACY**
- 11 Arizona State University Writers' Studio Online  
*Angela Clark-Oates 173*
- 12 John Jay College of Criminal Justice First-Year Writing Program  
*Tim McCormack and Mark McBeth 184*
- 13 Onondaga Community College Writing Program  
*Malkiel Choseed 202*
- 14 Our Lady of the Lake University QUEST First-Year  
Writing Program  
*Candace Zepeda 216*
- 15 St. Louis Community College ESL Program  
*Lisa Wilkinson and Heather McKay 225*
- 16 University of Notre Dame University Writing Program  
*Patrick Clauss 239*
- 17 University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire University Writing Program  
*Shevaun E. Watson 254*
- 18 University of Wisconsin–Superior Basic Writing  
*John McCormick, Heather McGrew, and Jamie White-Farnham 266*
- 19 Utah Valley University Department of Literacies and Composition  
*Jacqueline Preston and Deborah Marrott 281*
- PART 4: WRITING CENTERS AND WRITING SUPPORT**
- 20 Duquesne University Writing Center  
*James P. Purdy 303*

- 21 Indiana University of Pennsylvania Kathleen Jones White  
Writing Center  
*Leigh Ann Dunning and Ben Rafoth 319*
- 22 University of Connecticut Writing Center  
*Thomas Deans and Kathleen Tonry 334*
- 23 Shepherd University Academic Support Center  
*Christy I. Wenger 348*
- 24 Wallace Community College Center for Writing and  
Writing Instruction  
*Emily W. Cosgrove 359*
- 25 Westminster College Writing Center  
*Christopher LeCluyse 373*
- PART 5: INTEGRATED PROGRAMS**
- 26 Arizona State University Writing Programs in the  
Department of English  
*Shirley K. Rose, Susan Naomi Bernstein, and Brent Chappelow 387*
- 27 Colby College Writing Program and Farnham Writers' Center  
*Stacey Sheriff and Paula Harrington 402*
- 28 Drew University Vertical Writing Program  
*Sandra Jamieson 416*
- 29 New Mexico Tech Writing Program and Writing Center  
*Maggie Griffin Taylor, Julianne Newmark, and Steve Simpson 434*
- 30 Pomona College WAC-Based First-Year Writing Seminar  
and Writing Center  
*Dara Regaignon 451*
- About the Authors 465*
- Index 473*

# WRITING PROGRAM ARCHITECTURE

## *An Introduction with Alternative Tables of Contents*

Jamie White-Farnham and Bryna Siegel Finer

*Dear Jamie and Bryna,*

*I have to say that I submit this [chapter revision] with a vexed conscience. I was able to achieve a great deal in the first-year writing program here, and I wanted to share that with other WPAs in our field. But now with the draconian cuts to the [University of Wisconsin] system in the governor's budget, the Blugold Seminar will inevitably be undone. Enrollment caps will increase back to their old levels, the new staffing model (longer term contracts, etc.) will be reversed, our tenure track search has been cancelled and the line probably revoked, even the curriculum will roll back because it is "too hard." Plus, I will no longer be associated with this program. I have accepted a new WPA position at a different university. So revising this has entailed a very heavy heart. I think there is valuable information in what I was able to accomplish here, but it was fleeting and will go out as quickly as it came in. Surely, that cannot be the "lesson" here, which is why I don't know if I want this included in the final publication.*

*All best, Shevaun Watson*

Toward the end of this book's editing process, we received the above email from Shevaun Watson (2015), a dedicated writing program administrator who developed the Blugold Seminar at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. The governor of Wisconsin had recently proposed a shocking \$125 million cut to all public higher education institutions, as was reported nationally, and every campus in the system began to shed untenured faculty and cut programs. Our initial impulse was simply to assure Shevaun that we thought her work was outstanding and wish her good luck. Upon further reflection, the situation in which Shevaun (and Jamie, the co-editor of this collection, and the WPA at the University of Wisconsin–Superior) found herself merited greater attention—there was a connection between the dismantling of her program and the purpose of this book.

Though it is disheartening, the situation Shevaun describes is in fact the type of situation in which the guiding metaphor of writing programs this book offers—writing program architecture—is most useful. Writing program architecture highlights the material, logistical, and rhetorical elements of a writing program, be it a first-year curriculum, a writing center, a WAC program, a writing major, or something else. Such elements include funding sources, reporting lines, WPA jurisdiction, and other practical pieces. The metaphor of architecture allows us to imagine these constituent parts of a writing program as its foundation, beams, posts, scaffolding—the institutional structures that, alongside its people, anchor a program to the ground and keep it standing. Articulating these elements allows a WPA to disentangle their role from the program itself, something that, we know, is quite difficult to do. Many programs, as the reader will see in this collection, are literally supported by a single person's line—on a teaching release or some other contractual arrangement. That person *is* the Writing Program.

While people are of course very important to the ecology of writing programs, as explained by Reiff et al. (2015) in their recent book, *Ecologies of Writing*, we contend that additional consideration of the material, logistical, and rhetorical elements that make up a program allows WPAs to strengthen their positions in times of turmoil or in the face of dismantling. As Shevaun's email suggests, any decision made within a program is built on a structure of such elements as contracts, funding lines, and curriculum. It is these elements teased out and explained in and of themselves that constitute the architecture of writing programs in this book. We believe these explanations of writing programs are necessary because of the situations in which Shevaun and other WPAs are finding themselves. Drastic budget cuts, legislators with little regard for public higher education, and decreasing enrollment: this is the context of Writing Studies at present in the United States.

Therefore, what readers will find in this collection are case studies written by WPAs from thirty institutions across the United States. These cases detail the architecture—the underlying structures—of their writing programs. Such programs include writing centers, first-year writing curricula, WAC programs, writing majors, and others—the largest print collection of program information to date. These thirty cases are meant to inform, inspire, and otherwise help new and experienced WPAs build new programs and sustain existing ones. The cases are presented within the guiding metaphor of architecture, which we rely on both as a way to understand writing programs and as an organizational feature of the book.

We suggest that exposing the architecture of writing programs has three purposes: first, it foregrounds elements of a program that are oftentimes treated as mundane background information. In accounts of writing programs, the institutional contexts are typically (and perfunctorily) discussed ahead of the “real” project or argument. Yet, we suggest that this information deserves some attention of its own. Ask any WPA about their current project and inevitably, they will most likely begin the answer with some explanation of the structure of the unit or program in order to situate the work. For instance, a director of a WAC program might have to describe his current professional development program by first explaining that he reports partly to the dean and partly to the English Department, which puts him in a difficult position when he must convince his own colleagues in English to consider some institutional mandate from the administration. Since explanations of structure often precede argument, method, and solution, structure itself is important to highlight.

Second, we see this book as serving a research function. As a collection of case studies, the volume provides jumping off points to address and inspire myriad research questions. For instance, one might notice and believe that writing centers, so important to the support of writing education and culture on a campus, are often precarious in structure, wedged between departments and comprising fractions of a person’s job. For the benefit of a project seeking to improve such conditions, this book provides evidence and documentation for support and corroboration. Each chapter is a site of research, a place where WPAs and other scholars in writing studies can look to invent, support, and challenge their assumptions and arguments.

Finally, the third purpose of this book is to model a method for WPAs to consider and articulate their own programs’ architecture. For one thing, they might consider their program in a material, logistical way outside of their own performance within it. As we noted above, writing programs are often conflated with the WPA themselves. Often this is because the only funding source or institutional support that exists is that person’s salary. For another, WPAs might improve their own ability at focusing others’ attention on the parts of the program they wish to expand, improve, or promote. Rather than rattling off what a program isn’t—distinguishing the first-year writing from WAC from writing fellows, say—program architecture within the writing programs featured here exemplifies the many elements within these structures *and* models how to articulate one’s own.

### INSPIRATION FOR THE PROJECT

Writing programs are, as Reiff et al. (2015) describe them in *Ecologies of Writing*, interconnected, fluid, complex, and emergent (4). In some ways, this means a writing program can be unstable and even untenable without a clear sense of its underpinnings. For instance, writing programs can be multiply-funded or exist on paper only. They can rely on a person to have dual and split roles across units in the institution; for instance, a WPA might have one foot in English as a tenure-line faculty member or full-time lecturer, one foot in the writing center (under the dean), and might be expected to give faculty workshops as part (or not) of both of those. The work of Dara Regaignon, a contributor to this volume, and Jill Gladstein in *Writing Program Administration at Small Liberal Arts Colleges* (Gladstein and Regaignon 2012), highlights in particular the complexity of structure and overlapping of entities in writing program administration in their titular context.

The complexity, cultures, and “baggage” of writing programs in various institutions often obscure and even preclude accurate descriptions of what a WPA does. Although the Council of Writing Program Administrators has developed statements to help us with these challenges such as the white paper, “Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration” (Council of Writing Program Administrators 1998), confusing situations had us, as new WPAs, asking questions that didn’t have to do with our roles as WPAs. That is an aspect of the work that has been well-defined for us in our graduate education and in WPA council statements.

Instead, the questions centered on the workings of the programs themselves: how to get a program off the ground, fund it, market it, staff it, how to develop a research agenda, how to know if the program is working and develop an assessment plan, how to use technology in productive ways, the planning and sustaining of day-to-day operations, and how to innovate pedagogically and administratively. In addition, we were in need of models of primary documents, such as budget proposals, teacher evaluations, and annual reports, all hard to find or non-existent publically. Of course, the reason why they are not publically shared is because they are rote, bureaucratic necessities not meant for a wide audience. Still, we suspected such documents would afford us insights and ideas as we approached new hurdles in our institutions.

At our institutions, we each found ourselves in situations in which there were structural oddities that limited or precluded momentum: Bryna was hired to begin a WAC program and serve as the director of that “program,” which only existed as a description that she wrote and then

posted to the university website. Now, as director, Bryna holds faculty workshops and promotes WAC through grassroots efforts to build individual relationships with faculty who already have interest in the teaching of writing in their disciplinary courses. Meanwhile, a system of writing-intensive courses exists and is overseen by an entirely other program.

At her public liberal arts college, Jamie is the coordinator of the Writing Program, which offers first-year and basic writing courses, a business writing course that serves two other departments, creative writing gen eds, and a writing major/minor. In essence, this writing program offers several curricula with different (yet overlapping) staff, each of which could be called “writing programs” themselves (the basic writing program is described in a chapter in this collection). This is distinct yet from a WAC program, which houses the Writing Center and faculty development efforts, overseen by another faculty in the Writing Program.

Our various projects and problems (for Bryna, how to grow and establish credibility; for Jamie, how to explain that the Writing Program is not the same thing as Writing across the Curriculum) led us to ask questions of our mentors and senior colleagues, read and re-read relevant scholarship in our field, and ask questions on the WPA listserv, which is almost always a fast, helpful resource. We were trained in WPA work as graduate students together at the University of Rhode Island, each serving time as an assistant director of the Writing Center (Bryna) and of the Writing and Rhetoric Department (Jamie). Jamie attended the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) workshop in 2011, and Bryna attended its boot camp and conference in 2014. These are all excellent learning opportunities in terms of the theoretical, historical, and political aspects of our field. CWPA in particular affords new WPAs the chance to engage in some practical problem-solving at its events. Yet, the contexts and constructions of the programs in which we landed in had us looking and asking for other types of information.

One resource in particular, the CompPile writing programs document archive, inspired the type of nuts-and-bolts explanation of programs-as-architecture we sought to make public. The archive houses the types of documents programs use to get work done. According to its home page, the archive is “a (prototype) site for an archive of writing program documents. The archive will be used by WPAs to help graduate students learn to read / interpret the various documents that shape the environments in which they will teach” (Home Page 2007, par. 2).

Having not been updated since its inception in 2006, the database is somewhat sparse. Glen Blalock, one of the database curators, explained

to us that this project stalled before it got off the ground because of “what has been/continues to be an ongoing issue in our discipline (writing studies and particularly WPA): we don’t respond well to calls for sharing, for contributing, for participating in these kinds of long-term projects” (Blalock 2014). He noted the WPA census data collection as one recent success, but overall, he feels that many attempts to collect shared documents and information have petered out before getting off the ground. Of course, a lot of that has to do with the time and effort it takes to maintain such a project. As Blalock (2014) notes, “the diverse array of ‘writing programs’ and the diverse definitions of a program ‘administrator’ probably makes these kinds of efforts especially challenging.” He asks, “how many institutions have formal programs, with designated WPAs? How many WPAs serve more than a rotation in and out of the position? How many programs have administrative infrastructure that would enable the regular updating of ‘our’ documents in the WPA document archive?”

To begin to address such questions about administrative infrastructure, we consulted the extant scholarship and other WPAs. Common elements that underpin the curriculum, pedagogy, rhetorical constructs, and practices in programs across the country began to emerge. What was most important to us were the sometimes-invisible structures of writing programs that we were unable to easily learn about through reading or in conversations. These elements seem to us to address our questions about writing programs outside of the purview of most WPA scholarship, focused as it has been on defining the position of the WPA less often than the variety of contexts in which s/he works.

For instance, while it might be easy to locate a list of courses or a program’s mission statement, it is ostensibly more difficult to find information on a program’s budget and how it uses its funding to operate. Information like this is invaluable to a WPA on the ground, for instance, who has no predecessors. Contributor Christy Wenger writes in this collection about the Shepherd University Writing Center; she, like many WPAs, is learning to work within very limited means, both materially and in terms of writing studies colleagues with whom to collaborate. Elements such as budget and operations, unavailable on a program’s website or in their public documents, are arguably some of the most important parts of the program structure.

The common elements that emerged, listed below, began to shape our metaphor of writing program architecture. We liked the idea of compiling elements common to writing programs—whether large or small, whether a tight slate of first-year writing courses or a rangy WAC program—that

would offer WPA/scholars models to consider, a template to inspire, and case studies to refer to when undertaking their own projects. The elements that comprise writing program architecture, then, include:

- WPA's Profile
- Program Conception
- Population Served
- Funding
- Operations
- Assessment
- Marketing/PR
- Technology
- Role of Research
- Pedagogical and/or Administration Highlights
- WPA's Voice
- Primary Document(s)

Of course, every program has its unique features and innovations. And, we want to be clear that we don't believe there is a formula or simple list of duties that substitute for the well-theorized and scholarly discipline that WPA work has become. A fuller scholarly definition of our work and field exists and continues to evolve. We do not wish to diminish its importance, nor would we make a case that the purpose of this volume is similar to those that offer theorized arguments about program-building and other concerns of our discipline.

Still, across the many specialties in the discipline of writing studies, scholars' definitions and descriptions of writing programs reflect an urge to tame the sheer diversity of approaches devoted to the unified goals of literacy education. A Writing Program can be first-year writing, writing centers, WAC/WID, basic writing, and more recently, writing majors. It is often a combination of these curricula and pedagogies. This diversity, of course, exemplifies the growth and richness of a decades-old global discipline. While we teachers of critical thinking, reason, and style appreciate the flexibility, changes, and revisions that are hallmarks of writing studies, we also tease out similarities and compare differences. We anthologize, taxonomize, categorize, define, and create metaphors. We do this to make sense of work that takes so many shapes. It must give the range of contexts in which teachers of writing, rhetoric, and literacy find themselves: the urban, the rural, the huge, the tiny, the underfunded, the unstable, the contingent-labor reliant.

The urge to tame is especially apparent in this type of book: compendia of writing programs. Such work includes *Ecologies of Writing Programs*

(Reiff et al. 2015), *Writing Majors: Eighteen Program Profiles* (Giberson, Nugent, and Ostergaard 2015), *Writing Programs Worldwide* (Thais et al. 2012), the program profiles section of *Composition Forum*, and an originator of these taxonomic efforts regarding the growth of WAC, Fulwiler and Young's (1990) book *Programs That Work*. These compendia have been mainly organized by curricula or pedagogy. For example, Fulwiler and Young (1990) report on early Writing across the Curriculum pedagogical efforts. Most recently, *Writing Majors: Eighteen Program Profiles* (Giberson, Nugent, and Ostergaard 2015) describes hard-won curricular growth in our field. We have gained greatly in our understanding of the types of writing programs operating in the United States from this scholarship.

By focusing attention to the structure of a program, we are also not trying to dismiss attention to the personal, ethical, and political dimensions of WPA work. In particular, as female untenured, junior WPAs, or jWPAs, each of us mothers of young children, we have benefited from the many accounts of identity politics in *WPA: Writing Program Administration* and in volumes such as *Kitchen Cooks, Plate Twirlers, and Troubadors* (George 1999) and *GenAdmin* (Charlton et al. 2011). Jonikka Charlton and Shirley Rose (2009) describe the role as “not just a job title, but a way of being. A WPA's work is not defined only by the official or formal responsibilities of the role but also by how those responsibilities are carried out” (115). The profession, as are we, is concerned not only with the work itself but with the ethical way it is performed.

In particular, the conversation about writing program administration and identity politics often goes hand in hand with arguments about the importance of narrative in this work. Jeanne Marie Rose (2005) has written: “the storytelling that Stephen North has termed *lore* has become a viable mode of knowledge production for writing program administrators, whose scholarship frequently explores WPA work in light of personal experiences. As Diana George explains, storytelling “is necessary if we are to pass on more than theory and pedagogical or administrative tactics to those who have come after us” (George 1999, xii; quoted in Rose 2005, 73).

Narrative plays a similar role in accounts of program-building. For instance, in the forward of *Writing Majors*, Sandra Jamieson (2015) describes the book's profiles as, “narratives that provide a historical archive of sorts and in the descriptions of programs, courses, and institutional politics” (vii). And, in terms of WPA training, Sura et al. (2009), in their description of “Praxis and Allies: The WPA Board Game,” focus their attention on the role that narrative plays in learning to be a WPA: “it is through narrative that WPAs are best able to share with a larger

audience what they do and why, how their work is intellectual” (80). Storytelling is a valuable mode of accounting for, theorizing, passing on, and—maybe most important—changing WPA work.

Therefore, narrative plays a role in the case studies within this volume. Because practitioners and scholars in our field are attuned to and respect the contextual nature of writing program administration, even a large data set such as this—rife with demographics, statistics, and quantitative information—must necessarily reflect the perspectives and even biases of its contributors. For instance, New Mexico Tech’s (NMT) changing demographics of its student enrollment are factual: collaboration with Yangtze University has resulted in a sharp increase in international undergraduates in the past few years. However, the perspective of Maggie Griffin Taylor, Julianne Newmark, and Steve Simpson will influence how the WPA audience will synthesize their report of the situation at NMT with their own writing program architecture, problem to solve, or research questions.

To that end, each chapter is mixed rhetorically—that is, rhetorical modes such as narration and description contextualize and explain content that Aristotle might have labeled the “inartistic proofs”: the laws, facts, and contracts that precede argument (Aristotle 2007, 103). While our contributors don’t necessarily present arguments here (though they do highlight and focus the audience’s attention on certain challenges and achievements), they share with us narrative and descriptive explanations of “laws, facts, and contracts” in twenty-first century academia—the foundational agreements, processes, and arrangements within programs that concern WPAs.

#### EXPLANATION OF THE ELEMENTS

Similar to an encyclopedia, each chapter offers information in a guided way. This configuration is similarly used in *Writing Majors: Eighteen Program Profiles*, the afterword of which describes the book as a “heuristic offering” (Giberson et al. 2015, 242). Greg Giberson explains that such a format is an “effort to help those interested in developing programs or in the process of doing so to be more intentional and prospective in their program building” (242). In this case, the heuristic refers to the constituent elements of program architecture.

For each element, we provided a few questions or prompts to help guide contributors as they wrote each section, listed below. Then, we tested the template by asking two contributors (one writing center director and one chair of a department with a writing major) to

complete the template. Their responses allowed us to fine-tune the prompts that we then provided to all of the contributors. In the end, each of the thirty chapters/institutions explain their programs within the following template:

*WPA's Profile*

We asked contributors to tell us how they came to be WPAs, including their education, teaching experience, and other work experience. As we know, many WPAs do not come to the job of WPA via a traditional path. In this section, readers will learn about WPAs like Bridget Draxler, the director of the Communication across the Curriculum Program at Monmouth College, who like many WPAs before her began her career as a graduate student in literature and found that her experience as a student in the liberal arts trained her for a career in writing studies that she hadn't expected. While some WPAs in this collection have taken a traditional path through a PhD program in rhetoric and composition with training in WPA work, others began in an unusual or unexpected way. Stories like these uncover the often-invisible history of WPAs' knowledge bases and also their often-conflicting biases and allegiances. Despite the professionalization of the WPA role, almost all tell their story of coming to a WPA position as if they didn't expect to be there.

*Program Conception*

Contributors were asked to write about how they started a program or to discuss what they knew about a program's beginnings from its documented history. We asked them to describe conflicts, challenges, and the overall reception of their program in their department and university. Conception prompted contributors to tell origin stories. Often, they stretch back to the institution's year of founding, such as Arizona State Writing Programs in 1887. Others' beginnings reflect the growth of the field in the mid- to late-twentieth century, such as Colby College's Farnham Writers' Center's founding in 1984. A handful have existed for only a few years, begun with grant funding or shaped out of suggestions by an accrediting body. While in many cases, writers were not present at the founding of their programs, documentation of the past exists in their archived materials and in some cases, publications, such as the University of Rhode Island major in writing and rhetoric. Had a WPA not conceived of the usefulness of knowing the facts of a program's origins, this element suggests that ethos is gained in doing so.

### *Population Served*

Maybe more than any other element, population served varies across institutions in the most material ways: geography, material means, race and ethnicity, religion, educational attainment and goals. On first glance, one might assume that institution size and type is the best bet for gleaning useful information from this element; yet, readers should consider geography and program type when researching this element. Of interest to readers at any open access institution is the number of students who are placed in remedial courses whom our colleagues serve.

### *Funding*

As we've mentioned, funding information is difficult to find (as is funding). Contributors tell us about their funding sources, which are often complicated and split across units. Some literally have no money; the entire "program" is their salary or what is represented by their release time. Even those who have a large budget, such as those few endowed programs, have little or no real connection or control of the funding line. One realization readers might share with us is that few WPAs have much authority over their budgets; they have a lot of responsibility to see that the program runs effectively yet little power over the purse strings.

### *Operations*

In this section, WPAs describe their roles and responsibilities, their staff, and how their programs run on a day-to-day basis. Originally, this section began as two: "Staff," which asked contributors to discuss their own role and the people who work with and for them; and "Operations," which asked writers to explain their daily duties and responsibilities. Contributors had trouble distinguishing between these two, helping us to realize that there is often no staff besides the WPA or that daily operations and the people who "operate" are inseparable; thus, the sections are now combined. What is notable about "Operations" is the debunking of a fear or perception that WPAs often do their jobs in a vacuum. While of course WPAs' job descriptions (and actual jobs) are comprised of an overwhelming number of sometimes thankless tasks, not a single WPA in this volume goes it alone. There is a chair, a student worker, a department support staff person, a supportive dean, a graduate assistant—someone who helps, makes suggestions, make the copies, or just listens. We found this section to be very

empowering, not only by providing the type of staffing information helpful when proposing a new hire, for instance, but also by reminding us who *does* support us, even when we feel, as many WPAs honestly describe, beleaguered.

#### *Marketing/PR*

Contributors were asked “How do you get the word out about your program? How do you make sure your targeted population uses your program? What challenges arise in making sure your program is taken advantage of?” Some WPAs, in particular those that serve first-year writers, admit that they never thought they’d have to worry about marketing, but they do, even if their course is required, such as Patrick Clauss at University of Notre Dame. He admits having asked before becoming a WPA, “What is there to market? Don’t students just sign up for required classes, and that’s about it?” although now he spends considerable effort marketing the mission of the University Writing Program to faculty and administrators across the institution. Some contributors discuss more familiar marketing efforts such as promotional videos, websites, and brochures, while others discuss efforts that are more tactical in nature. For instance, in this section, Tim McCormack and Mark McBeth from John Jay College describe marketing English to faculty outside of the department so that those faculty understand how writing is taught and what they can expect from students as writers when they get to their classrooms.

#### *Role of Research*

WPAs see their obligation to scholarship in different ways, depending on the type of institution. We asked contributors to tell readers about the sorts of research that has been published on their program and how important it is that the program engages in research or has a research agenda. Because we are trained in traditional scholarship ourselves, we had a narrow definition of scholarship in our minds when we first proposed this section. Reading the contributions to this section caused us to learn about the different types of and approaches to research that WPAs are carrying out, such as teacher action-research, data collection for internal uses, collaborations with students on their projects, and capital R research for publication, mostly for the purpose of tenure and promotion, although the results of that research can often benefit the program.

*Assessment*

This element may be among the most telling of difference among institution and program types in this book. From “no formal assessments” to highly elaborate portfolio processes on a multi-site campus, WPAs report various ways they document that their programs are effective. We found that the specific assessment protocol shared among this element were of use in reflecting on our own practices and inspiring us to think about changes we could make to our own programs. For large-scale direct assessments that include student portfolio sampling, readers might turn to contributions from many of the large and mid-sized research universities represented in the collection, such as Miami University or University of Rhode Island. For other types of assessment such as surveys and self-assessment, readers might find of interest those described by contributors from Purdue University, University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, Westminster College, and Pomona College. Readers looking to learn about new assessments and pilots might turn to this section from the University of Missouri, University of Notre Dame, Wallace Community College, and Arizona State University.

*Technology*

Technology responses surprised us somewhat, perhaps because our experiences with technologies that aid writing programs are what we would consider typical and not that adventurous. We find that most contributors mentioned program websites and learning management systems, technology uses that one might expect. In fact, this caused us to question whether we should include the technology section at all. We considered, though, that a “common” or “typical” way of using technology might be helpful to readers; it signaled to us that we are perhaps doing as well as we can with technology or that a limit exists in regards to the technological needs of a writing program (as opposed to classroom teaching). For instance, knowing that Colby College, Duquesne University, University of Connecticut, and Westminster College, are all using WOnline to book writing center appointments and collect data indicated to us that this may be more than a trend but rather a best practice. Similarly, while they all use different software, Monmouth College, Old Dominion, Arizona State Online, Drew University, Westminster College, and Arizona State Writing Programs all collect ePortfolios, again signaling not repetitive information, but an important practice that is perhaps worth observing across different institutions in considering taking up at one’s own.

*Pedagogical and/or Administrative Highlights*

We understand that programs do not want to report their similarities as much as they want to report their unique differences. We therefore asked, What makes your program special, unique, or interesting? About what aspects of your program would you like to “spread the word”? What new ideas does your program have in store? What will you be unveiling, or what are you currently working toward? This section also reveals that what is new to one program may be old hat or completely aspirational to another program.

Only a few of the I-want-to-steal-those highlights readers will find include:

- the University of Rhode Island production lab dedicated for writing majors, complete with high-end computers and multimedia software, scanners, laminator and comb binder, as well as iPads and video and voice recorders available for check-out
- the Louisiana State University Distinguished Communicators certificate, which provides students with support to build digital portfolios as well as faculty advisors and mentoring
- the Old Dominion University Faculty Writing Studio, a space for faculty to research, write, and collaborate, as well as receive feedback on their own writing
- the University of Missouri Win Horner Award, which awards \$1,000 to a faculty member who has demonstrated exemplary commitment to the teaching writing-intensive courses across disciplines
- the John Jay College of Criminal Justice’s EARLYstart and JUMPstart programs, two different models of first-year transition programs, both evidencing remarkable success with students whose test scores indicate they may struggle in first-year writing

*Primary Document(s)*

Lastly, we asked contributors to include a primary document(s) that has been of major importance to the development or sustainability of the program, something that readers wouldn’t typically find available on the program’s website. These documents are organized by document type and include self-studies, curriculum proposals, professional development booklets, promotional materials, and more. They are included in an online companion to this collection, which can be accessed at <https://writingprogramarchitecture.com>, and through the Utah State UP website. There readers will find invaluable resources unavailable anywhere else, including Arizona State Writing Programs’ fifty-one-page self-study, the full proposal for the Oakland University major and minor

in writing and rhetoric, and a grant proposal for Drew University's Writing Fellows program that resulted in \$25,000 of funding. All of these materials, some on which these programs built their foundations, and some on which they are depending for their sustainability, were generously made available by the WPAs in this collection to serve readers as they build their own programs.

### *Your Voice*

This is a more of a social element of a program that we know is important to WPAs and that elicited the broadest responses from contributors. We asked, What should new WPAs know about your program or WPA work in general that might help them develop new programs, improve existing ones, and create sustainable programs and relationships with university administration, students, and faculty? As the reader will see, WPAs offer less advice about practicalities and more advice about relationship-building, time management, and managing expectations. We believe these are useful "soft skills" that balance well the emphasis on "hard" structures in this volume.

### **WAYS INTO THE BOOK**

The breadth of this reference book affords the reader several ways in. Besides linear progress, we suggest three ways of reading this large volume: (1) by program type, (2) by institution type and size, and (3) by element.

The first way into the book is to read by program type. The main Table of Contents has been organized by program types including writing majors, writing minors, graduate writing programs, Writing and Communication across the Curriculum, first-year writing (including ESL and basic writing), writing centers and support centers, and integrated programs (those programs that include more than one entity, such as a joint writing center and WAC venture). The merit of this organization is the ease with which the reader can distinguish among such a diversity of program types. A writing center director will easily find a section containing studies that detail the structure of six writing centers at various types and sizes of universities. In particular, "Part 5: Integrated Programs" might be helpful to a WPA who is charged with starting a program that encompasses a curriculum for students and faculty outreach.

A second way into the collection is to read by institution type and size, which offers the reader a group of case studies with common resources

and challenges. For example, WPAs at independent institutions will read about the architecture of writing programs at five other independent schools. In doing so, they will learn what they might have in common with the structures of the programs, even if they are not building the same type of program as those represented here. In particular, for instance, both Notre Dame and Our Lady of the Lake focus their first-year writing curricula on institutional values: “virtue ethics” and “*comunidad*” respectively. Were this a priority for another independent school, these cases serve aptly as models.

Lastly, and we argue, most compellingly, readers can also make their way into *Writing Program Architecture* by element. As explained, each chapter in this book is arranged by a template of the eleven elements serving as headings. In this way, readers faced with an opportunity or challenge can focus their attention on that particular element, say, funding or technology, across thirty institutions. These elements *qua* chapter headings serve as *topoi*, or places for invention. They cut across the large number and wide variety of programs, supporting and mirroring the structural thinking required of WPAs for progress, decision-making, and action. Here, we provide an alternative Table of Contents by element:

**WPA’S PROFILE**, pages 28, 58, 122, 132, 144, 174, 202, 216, 226, 240, 254, 266, 304, 348, 359, 373, 416, 451

**PROGRAM CONCEPTION**, pages 29, 45, 59, 74, 91, 104, 122, 134, 145, 157, 175, 187, 204, 217, 226, 240, 256, 267, 284, 305, 321, 349, 361, 374, 390, 404, 418, 436, 452

**POPULATION SERVED**, pages 31, 46, 75, 91, 106, 123, 135, 147, 158, 177, 189, 205, 218, 227, 242, 257, 269, 287, 305, 322, 350, 362, 376, 391, 406, 420, 439, 454

**FUNDING**, pages 33, 47, 61, 76, 92, 107, 124, 136, 147, 158, 177, 189, 206, 219, 242, 258, 270, 287, 306, 323, 339, 351, 363, 377, 391, 406, 421, 440, 455

**OPERATIONS**, pages 33, 48, 62, 77, 92, 108, 137, 148, 160, 177, 190, 207, 219, 228, 243, 259, 271, 288, 307, 324, 337, 351, 364, 377, 392, 407, 423, 442, 455

**ASSESSMENT**, pages 34, 50, 64, 78, 94, 110, 126, 138, 149, 162, 179, 191, 209, 220, 229, 244, 260, 272, 289, 310, 326, 345, 353, 364, 395, 408, 424, 443, 457

**MARKETING/PR**, pages 35, 51, 64, 80, 95, 111, 127, 139, 150, 163, 179, 192, 211, 221, 231, 247, 261, 273, 290, 311, 327, 342, 353, 367, 380, 396, 409, 425, 444, 458

**TECHNOLOGY**, pages 36, 65, 83, 96, 113, 128, 139, 151, 164, 180, 193, 211, 221, 232, 247, 261, 274, 291, 311, 328, 343, 355, 368, 380, 396, 410, 427, 446, 459,

**ROLE OF RESEARCH**, pages 37, 52, 66, 83, 96, 113, 128, 140, 151, 164, 180, 194, 211, 221, 232, 248, 252, 275, 292, 313, 329, 344, 355, 369, 381, 396, 410, 428, 446, 459

**PEDAGOGICAL AND/OR ADMINISTRATION HIGHLIGHTS**, pages 38, 53, 68, 84, 97, 114, 129, 140, 152, 165, 181, 195, 212, 222, 233, 249, 263, 276, 294, 314, 330, 356, 369, 381, 397, 411, 430, 448, 460

**WPA'S VOICE**, pages 40, 69, 86, 130, 142, 153, 182, 214, 224, 237, 251, 264, 278, 315, 332, 357, 371, 383, 431, 461

## SOME NOTES ON INCLUSION

In collecting chapter contributions, we began by considering the types of programs that a new or struggling or stuck WPA might want to read about. First, we sought to balance attention to the traditionally understood types of writing programs: first-year writing, writing majors and/or minors, WAC programs, writing centers, and, finally, what we call “integrated” programs. Integrated programs are the type, for instance, where a single stream of funding or person’s line is devoted to, say, a Writing across the Curriculum program that, in addition to other projects, houses the writing center. We contribute this term to the WPA lexicon to denote multi-element programs such as the five examples in this volume: Arizona State University Writing Programs in the Department of English, Colby College Writing Program and Farnham Writers’ Center, Drew University Vertical Writing Program, New Mexico Tech Writing Program and Writing Center, and Pomona College WAC-Based First-Year Writing Seminar and Writing Center. In our argument that an exposed program architecture can help WPAs articulate and argue on behalf of their programs, an integrated program stands in contrast to those more easily defined by one specific role, such as the Duquesne Writing Center or the University of Wyoming Professional Writing major.

Second, we allowed the CCCC Certificate of Excellence award to guide our initial invitations. As a peer-reviewed honor in our discipline, the award suggests a level of vetting that we imagine readers appreciate (we do). Many of these excellent programs responded warmly. They include:

John Jay College of Criminal Justice First-Year Writing Program  
Louisiana State University Communication across the Curriculum  
Oakland University Writing and Rhetoric Major  
Rowan University Major in Writing Arts  
St. Louis Community College ESL Program

University of Connecticut Writing Center  
 University of Missouri Campus Writing Program  
 University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire University Writing Program

Yet, “excellence” is decidedly not the basis for inclusion in this volume. Our invitations and choices for the remaining contributions sought to achieve a balance of types of institutions whose purposes and missions vary, including large research universities, teaching-focused regional public institutions, small liberal arts colleges, and two-year colleges, institution types sometimes missing from accounts of writing programs. We were excited by submissions from programs representing basic writers, ESL students, STEM, and fully online environments. In rounding out the collection, we strove for equitableness, choosing not necessarily to include the most ideal or famous programs, but rather those programs that provide the reader with case studies demonstrating the nitty-gritty reality of writing on the ground across the country.

Lastly, while we aimed for balance and diversity, we also sought comparability. For that reason, readers will find here two independent writing programs out of Arizona State University—one completely online and one fully on the ground. Reading these profiles together provides an interesting picture of two vastly different approaches to the way writing programs can be administered even at the same university. Readers might find it compelling to compare the Basic Writing program at the University of Wisconsin–Superior and the First-Year Writing Program at the University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire. As independent regional campuses under one public flagship system, both programs have felt the effects of the state’s politics. Shevaun Watson’s chapter on UW–Eau Claire profiles a program before drastic budget cuts are made (to which we refer in the epigraph of this introduction), while Jamie’s chapter on UW–Superior describes how, over a period of only a few years, she and her colleagues pre-emptively revised their program in order to continue to meet the needs of under-prepared writers if and when developmental education in the state changes as it has in other states. Readers might also want to compare five profiled land grant universities: University of Connecticut, University of Rhode Island, Louisiana State University, Purdue University, and University of Missouri. Or, of similar interest might be a regional comparison, such as looking side-by-side at the four included profiles of programs at institutions in Pennsylvania: Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Duquesne University, Shepherd University, and Old Dominion University.

The full list of contributors, by institution type, includes:

**COMMUNITY COLLEGES:**

- Onondaga Community College, page 202
- St. Louis Community College, page 225
- Wallace Community College, page 359

**SMALL LIBERAL ARTS COLLEGES:**

- Colby College, page 402
- Drew University, page 416
- Monmouth College, page 132
- Pomona College, page 451
- Shepherd University, Page 348
- University of Wisconsin–Superior, page 254

**MID-SIZE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES (ENROLLMENT UNDER 30,000):**

- Arizona State University Online, page 173
- Indiana University of Pennsylvania, page 319
- John Jay College of Criminal Justice, page 184
- Louisiana State University, page 121
- Miami University, page 27
- New Mexico Tech, page 434
- Oakland University, page 42
- Old Dominion University, page 144
- Rowan University, page 72
- University of Connecticut, page 334
- University of Rhode Island, page 89
- University of Wisconsin–Eau Claire, page 254
- University of Wyoming, page 101

**LARGE PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES (ENROLLMENT OVER 30,000):**

- Arizona State University, page 173
- Purdue University, page 58
- University of Missouri, page 155
- Utah Valley University, page 281

**INDEPENDENT INSTITUTIONS:**

- Duquesne University, page 303
- Our Lady of the Lake University, page 216
- University of Notre Dame, page 239
- Westminster College, page 373

The reader will also note that the case studies here are built on the reports of a single or small collaborative group of informants per each program. Of course, their roles in their institutions provide them a

limited and biased point of view. We acknowledge that reported perspectives do not constitute the type of triangulated data on which a researcher would solely rely. The chapters also contain dynamic information such as budget figures and enrollment numbers, which might appear to be only relevant at a particular point in time. Yet, it is these details on which our teaching, writing, and administration are contingent. Further, projects of reporting to provide an array of usable and comparable information have become a priority in WPA scholarship, especially with the recent completion and publication of the WPA census.

As credible information goes, we have no reason to suspect that WPAs are intentionally misreporting the details of their programs. Our contributors conceive of their participation in this project as important to the advancement of their own scholarly and administrative work. Therefore, they report in good faith information that may change because of structural changes to their department or unit, but which nevertheless existed and which resulted in productive work in the local, contingent way that is well-documented in the collections of Writing Program scholarship that inspired this book.

#### OUR AUDIENCE, OURSELVES

In their article, “Twenty More Years in the WPA’s Progress,” Jonikka Charlton and Shirley Rose bust a common WPA myth when they write:

The question of whether or not assistant professors should take WPA positions is an ethical question our field has contended with since Carol Hartzog addressed it in 1986 in *Composition and the Academy* and longer. Not the least of the issues is whether junior faculty are sabotaging their efforts to attain tenure with the added workload and responsibilities of administrative life. But the data we’ve collected suggests that even though we may have legitimate concerns about a given jWPA’s ability to be tenured, our jWPAs *are* being tenured. (Charlton and Rose 2009, 132; emphasis in original)

This piece of evidence is important to bear in mind because it remains a (tired) adage that a person should not take a WPA role pre-tenure. Yet, as Christy Wenger of Shepherd University notes in this collection, many of the jobs in writing studies posted in the last several years specifically included some kind of WPA work in the title or asked for WPA-type work in the job description (e.g., assessment experience, assisting in running first-year writing). Wenger writes:

While the early professionalization of graduate students is a contentious subject in our field, and many warn against the political and personal

dangers of assuming administrative positions prior to being tenured, I found that most jobs on the market asked for WPA responsibilities in conjunction with assistant professor positions. Even if we are ideologically opposed to the idea of a “genAdmin,” or the rise of a generation of writing studies professionals who identify as administrators early in their careers (Charlton et al. 2011), graduate training and hiring trends currently reward this identification. (Wenger, this volume, 348)

Although experienced faculty will fill some of these positions, newly minted PhDs with some coursework but little hands-on experience in administration will fill the remainder. And, while some programs will be established and running smoothly, in more cases than one might expect, new WPAs are being hired to revise and even begin new programs with few or no resources (save their own time). These new hires, like us two authors when we began our jobs as WPAs, will be seeking out examples of how programs work. They will want models and case studies of how writing programs of all types are structured and sustained.

For this audience, our colleagues, mentees, and friends, we add this collection to our WPA resources. It serves as a complement to the white papers, theory, scholarship, and valuable lore in our field. With its templated chapters and focus on architecture, readers might use it as a collection of institutional data, a reference of program types and elements, or a way to simply confirm, “Yes, I do that, too.” The program elements explained here offer readers the support they might need to join, build, revise, and maybe, given the current state of higher education as Shevaun’s experience in spring 2015 exemplifies, dismantle programs in careful and strategic ways, rather than risk losing them completely. If WPAs are going to perform the many roles, responsibilities, and rhetorical maneuvers expected of them, they need to take stock of what structures exist alongside others’ stories and perspectives. Writing program architecture will allow WPAs to more fully articulate to crucial audiences at institutions of all stripes how their writing programs work.

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