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Introduction

COMMITTING TO THE NEW WORK OF WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Diversity and Inclusion and Faculty Development

I directed the first-year writing program at Western Michigan University for eight very long years, and I started in 2010, fresh out of a doctoral program and into my first tenure-track position. Over those eight years, I've watched many cohorts of new master's and doctoral students develop from novice and newly minted college writing instructors to confident and dedicated professionals and experts in the teaching of college writing. I've watched these instructors go on to esteemed doctoral programs and tenure-track positions. I've watched them publish pedagogical articles developed from assignments they produced in my courses on teaching writing at the college level. It was a very rewarding experience, and as a scholar I continue to take passion in sharing best practices in the teaching of college writing with colleagues in my field of rhetoric and composition. That said, I began to get bored with directing a first-year writing program year after year.

My schedule of teaching the same college writing prep class for new TAs never changed. Roughly six years into the gig, I felt I was going through the motions. Every summer would include a two-week orientation, with speaker after speaker and session after session. Every fall I would observe new instructors and prepare an observation report for each of them, every spring I would help develop instructional workshops, and at the end of every academic year I would schedule and staff 122 sections with sixty different TAs and part-time instructors. This would repeat year after year after year. After six years in, I knew I needed a change, but I also knew that I still had a passion for providing pedagogical training for how to teach college-level writing. I also knew that this sort of training did not have to happen only in a first-year writing program. It was around this same time period that a position opening for an associate director emerged at Western Michigan University's Office of Faculty Development, or OFD, our institution's teaching and learning center. This was the sort of opportunity I needed. As such, I

wanted to leverage my pedagogical training to show those not trained in English studies how to teach writing in their disciplines. It was in this space, OFD, that I began to work as the associate director to create a writing across the curriculum program. It was also in this space that I first began to reflect on the fact that the work of writing never ends. As long as we work in institutions of higher education, we will be called upon to do the work of writing. And even beyond higher education, we will be called upon to write. Writing and the professionalization of writing instruction continues, and its reach is far beyond first-year writing.

In 2016, I applied for the position of Associate Director of OFD, primarily because WMU lacked a formal writing across the curriculum (WAC) program. Seeking to develop a stronger WAC presence, I determined that from an institutional sense, the only designated location for teaching and learning professional development was OFD. Previously on campus, there had been on-again, off-again efforts by a few writing studies faculty and the campus writing center staff to start a few writing projects, one of which included a self-study of the different writing programs at WMU. The self-study included the First-Year Writing Program I directed, the required first-year writing course for the College of Engineering and Applied Sciences (a first-year technical communication course), the first-year writing required course for WMU's Haworth College of Business (informational writing), and select faculty teaching the courses certified for the University's baccalaureate writing requirement (a third- or fourth-year course focused on writing in students' majors). While the self-study began with some enthusiasm, it was never completed. Other reports simply focused on whether or not graduate students needed their own writing center. During these transitions, the Haworth College of Business shut down its first-year writing course and required their students to enroll in the First-Year Writing Program, housed by the Department of English, where I was director. It then shifted its instructors to a newly formed business and communication center for business students, where students could receive feedback on both oral presentations and writing assignments, therefore duplicating some of the efforts of the campus writing center.

The duplication of resources sought to deal with a bigger problem: the lack of an institutional site to support faculty teaching writing. Faculty would often seek professional development from the writing center and business communication center staff to help them prepare to teach writing; however, these centers were underresourced, and its staff were not formally trained to do professional development for faculty wanting WAC teaching and learning resources. While well-intentioned, these workshops

often resorted to classroom visits with faculty and students, with staff describing their services and what students could expect from an appointment with staff. While necessary, these workshops were not fulfilling the needs of faculty: faculty wanted pedagogical professional development that would help them improve their teaching of writing. In effect, they needed the resources that a WAC program might offer. Thus, I was hired as the Associate Director of OFD to create this type of program.

As a scholar whose pedagogical interests also included culturally relevant pedagogies, I also wanted to develop WAC workshops on linguistic diversity and anti-racist teaching practices, something I would do during my tenure at the OFD. However, immediately upon my arrival, I experienced an abundance of women faculty of color needing support and advice for navigating many of the microaggressions associated with the workplace and their academic departments. Many of them needed mentorship and support with navigating the tenure and promotion process, while others were so disenchanted they were seeking ways to leave the institution. Though I had initially come to develop a WAC presence, I found myself spending the bulk of my time working with women of color, serving as advocates as they filed grievances, and reviewing materials in response to adverse decisions about their tenure and promotion cases. I also found faculty reaching out to me for advice on how to address students' complaints regarding faculty microaggressions. I even had students reaching out for advice and support with navigating biases from faculty in the classroom, although our teaching and learning center was designed to serve instructors and not students. As a result, I knew that OFD needed to develop more formal diversity and inclusion programming in conjunction with WAC programming.

Although I am no longer with OFD, the office continues to expand and develop a variety of programming. From all of my current and past administrative roles on campus, OFD was one of the most welcoming, inclusive, and collaborative environments in which I had worked, one that significantly contrasted the work environments I discussed in previously published scholarship (Craig and Perryman-Clark 2016; Perryman-Clark 2016; Perryman-Clark and Craig 2019). It was my refuge, and I was hesitant to leave and also halt any progress WMU would see around WAC and diversity and inclusion outreach. Nonetheless, after being honest with myself, I knew in my heart that I really had aspired to pursue a career in administration, and my institution had only committed to reassigning faculty time for the position, not a full-time senior officer position as I desired. Regardless of the timing of my previous initiatives, I knew I had to pursue a new opportunity.

It wasn't until I began working in additional administrative roles, one as the former associate dean of an honors college and the other as chair of an interdisciplinary institute, that I'd come to recognize how much diversity and inclusion work was tied to WAC outreach and professional development. After meeting with various groups of underrepresented scholars on campus, I initially asked why members from these groups were not joining the honors college despite the college's efforts to recruit a diverse group of students. One director responded that because she knew I had a background in writing, and because I shared a similar racialized subject position to those of the students with whom she works, she would share that her students feared writing the most: in short, they were afraid of writing the honors thesis, the final requirement for graduating from the honors college. They had been told all too frequently by faculty that although they had the required GPA to remain in academic standing in the honors college, they could not write.

When I became a department chair of a unit not within the Department of English, I would soon find out how deep the wounds of racial microaggressions, hostile work environments, and additional traumas felt, especially for BIPOC women in higher education, traumas I've since written about with these colleagues (Perryman-Clark, Konaté, and Richardson 2022). For this reason, I'd later accept an opportunity to serve as the chair and director of the Institute for Intercultural and Anthropological Studies (IIAS), a unit that would house multiple Black women after their exodus from the toxic Gender and Women's Studies department, where I formally held a joint appointment. From this exodus, every BIPOC woman left the department, and three of us moved to IIAS. While my previous scholarship had always argued from the standpoint that diversity work is writing work, particularly as this work relates to writing program administrative (WPA) work, and that honoring lived experiences with racial microaggressions is indeed rhetorical work, it was clear that there needed to be a book written from the standpoint that diversity work is WAC work and WAC work is institutional work. There needed to be a book that made connections between diversity, WAC, and institutional teaching and learning centers. My career trajectory from WPA to faculty developer to academic administrator suggested that it was I who should write this book.

Using my previous positions as Associate Director of Office of Faculty Development (OFD), Director of First-Year Writing, and current position as Chair and Director of IIAS, this book provides a descriptive analysis of how institutions can work collaboratively to foster stronger intellectual activities around writing as connected to campus-wide diversity

and inclusion initiatives. It moreover contends that teaching and learning centers and WAC programs gain tremendously from each other by building explicit partnerships on campus-wide diversity initiatives that emphasize cultural competence. In addition, it shows how both cultural competence and written proficiency enhance the transferable skills necessary for completing undergraduate education requirements and how the work of WAC programs and faculty development centers can be leveraged to draw the attention of senior administrative leadership.

This book also provides readers with a practical example of a career trajectory in which writing specialists move from WPA work, to campus-wide work in faculty development centers, and then to administrative positions. From this trajectory, readers see how a background in writing studies provides sets of transferable skills to develop key initiatives and programs in senior-level administration. It moreover reveals the connections between retention and writing programs, and between diversity and inclusion and writing pedagogy. In doing so, it shows how WPAs can continue doing writing as intellectual work beyond writing programs. It further shows how a background in writing studies enhances one's ability to lead and develop college-wide initiatives. Finally, it provides us with the opportunity to be campus-wide champions and leaders for diversity and inclusion.

By making these arguments, this book surveys scholarship that addresses diversity, faculty development, and WAC and finds that many of these initiatives are created in isolation, therefore reinforcing institutional silos; activities that occur in silos often are not leveraged strategically to gain the attention of senior administrators, particularly those working at state-supported public institutions who must manage shrinking institutional budgets due to reductions in state allocations to higher education. In many cases doing this intellectual work in isolation makes stand-alone programs like WAC vulnerable to budget cuts, because senior administrators either do not see this work as campus-wide work or because they see it as a duplication of services done in other units. As such, I argue that such partnerships must be bridged more formally when universities commit and invest in establishing stronger commitments to diversity and inclusion, as many institutions include both written proficiency and diversity and inclusion student learning outcomes. I revisit conversations from Susan McLeod and Margot Soven's collection, *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*, while also considering Linda Adler-Kassner and Elizabeth Wardle's collection, *Naming What We Know: Threshold Concepts in Writing Studies*, to establish a foundation for the impact of WAC programs on college campuses.

Additional sources, including *Faculty Development in the Age of Evidence*, are also referenced. In short, both writing on WAC and faculty development literature are positioned in relation to each other to identify the parallels that run across both sets of intellectual work, particularly in response to the ever-increasing needs of working with students from diverse populations.

To provide updates for the importance of providing diversity and inclusion–related professional development in a twenty-first-century context, I argue that both faculty development and WAC need to make diversity and inclusion initiatives a priority for professional development, as both enhance student learning. Furthermore, these alliances can be strengthened by collaborating formally on diversity and inclusion programming. To establish the need for diversity and inclusion programming in both areas, I review both faculty development and WAC initiatives that point to increased understandings of diversity and inclusion (Anson 2012; Beach 2016; Cox 2014; Nielsen 2014), with linguistic diversity being one example of programming that WAC specialists might offer with faculty development centers. In essence, this book responds to my call, previously identified in chapter 6 of *Afrocentric Teacher-Research: Rethinking Appropriateness and Inclusion*, for rhetoric and composition to create additional opportunities beyond writing programs to promote linguistic diversity in WAC outreach. The book concludes by offering descriptive analysis and reflection on institutional examples of the ways in which WAC initiatives and faculty development have collaborated formally at Western Michigan University, despite lacking a formal WAC program. These examples of formal collaborations include general education reform and diversity and inclusion programming. At the foundation of these initiatives is the work of faculty development and teaching and learning centers as hubs for making such initiatives possible, particularly in the absence of formal WAC programs.

This introduction, then, orients readers to the processes that inform how my shifts from WPA to faculty developer to academic administrator have allowed me to fulfill my passion for diversity and inclusion intellectual work. For me, a shift from WPA work was necessary to develop sustainable diversity and inclusion programming beyond the first-year writing experience. While the shift from WPA in an academic department to a campus-wide leadership role is a natural evolution for WPAs, I argue not only that this shift was critical to my own personal development for improving postsecondary writing instruction across campus, but also that such a shift is necessary for WPAs to consider when committing to doing diversity and inclusion work; this shift has

been helpful for navigating senior leadership positions. Such work is necessary to effect larger-scale institutional change, a skill needed in senior-level administration; moreover, stronger collaborations between WAC initiatives and centers for faculty development and teaching and learning are vital steps toward moving diversity and inclusion efforts forward as they pertain to teaching and learning at institutions of higher education.

BRIDGING PARTNERSHIPS: WHY WAC, WHY FACULTY DEVELOPMENT, WHY DIVERSITY, WHY NOW?

It is also important to define precisely what I mean by diversity. Drawing from Mathew Ouellett's (2004) definition of diversity as it relates to faculty development programming, I define diversity to "include a systemic analysis of how such forces work together to hold systems of discrimination and oppression in place" (188). While WAC development and diversity and inclusion programming were two initiatives as part of my OFD portfolio, therefore institutionally and practically connecting the work that I do on both fronts, WPA work and culturally relevant pedagogy have always shaped the work that I do as a scholar; perhaps it is without accident that my portfolio of work at OFD would include both WAC and diversity and inclusion professional development. For the past several years, Collin Craig and I have been calling attention to the challenges associated with confronting microaggressions in WPA work (Craig and Perryman-Clark 2011, 2016; Perryman-Clark and Craig 2019), and I've also (2016) discussed the challenges and microaggressions associated with WPAs charged with doing writing assessment, when the faculty member is a woman of color. As such, professional development and training in implicit bias are closely linked to the professional development that WPAs possess the opportunity to facilitate when assisting faculty with pedagogical strategies for teaching writing more effectively. In other words, inclusive teaching *is* WAC outreach, and teaching and learning centers, like OFD, have been useful platforms for WPAs to become a leading presence for writing instruction and culturally relevant pedagogy on college campuses.

While diversity and inclusion programming has not historically been the primary mission of WAC outreach and program development, this book argues that perhaps it should be, though WAC programs need not bear this responsibility alone. With the help and support of teaching and learning centers, WAC programs can form stronger partnerships with teaching and learning centers to move forward diversity and

inclusion initiatives for both faculty and students. To do so, however, WAC and faculty development centers must foster stronger collaborations and partnerships, as opposed to duplicating similar efforts in silos. Thus, faculty development and WAC work are essential for helping universities and divisions fulfill their missions of fostering diversity and inclusion, with equity and justice being the goal.

My rationale for bridging both diversity and inclusion with WAC and faculty development centers also centers around my assumption that both audiences have a tremendous amount to gain from one another. In the absence of formal WAC programs, teaching and learning centers can benefit from the expertise of rhetoric and composition scholars and WPAs. Likewise, writing specialists benefit from more explicit training on inclusive excellence in teaching and on how to overcome implicit biases and microaggressions as educators and writing program administrators. For me, my work has focused on biases associated with race and gender when doing WPA work. In chapter 1 of our collection, *Black Perspectives in Writing Program Administration: From the Margins to the Center* (2019), Collin and I assert: “Centering WPA discourse as intersectional critical race work is an opportunity for exploring these subjects of inquiry as critical interventions. It positions us to cultivate antiracist responses from the perspective of those of color . . . and enact socially responsible approaches to program building” (11).

This is not to suggest that diversity-related topics, especially as they pertain to anti-racist practices, have not been addressed in rhetoric and composition or WPA scholarship. That said, scholars continue to call for the allyship of white WPAs in supporting students and WPAs of color. Scott Wible (2019) contends that “white allies operate with self-awareness about this privilege and are motivated to put this unearned privilege on the line when they have an opportunity to support and advocate for a person of color—and they don’t ‘just go away when difficulty appears’” (82). Wible further describes his own experiences leading professional development workshops in the teaching of writing, noting:

During my first seven years as WPA of our professional development program, which delivers the upper-division general education writing course at our university, I tried to make language diversity an area of focus in our professional development and our pedagogy. I led full-day professional development sessions on topics such as helping students build on non-standardized varieties of English and working with multilingual writers, and on three other occasions we hosted nationally recognized composition scholars to facilitate professional development sessions on linguistic diversity in composition classrooms . . . One critical piece missing from these activities, however, is integrating these values toward language

diversity into mission and vision statements that articulate a social justice mission for our program's teaching and research. (92)

Such an earnest and candid reflection on the implications associated with the ways that writing and WAC specialists can contribute to larger conversations about anti-racist practices. As one notices from Wible's exchange, his professional development workshop is conducted for and with writing faculty; however, Wible's reflection significantly underscores the need for these conversations about writing conventions to be had with faculty who are not writing specialists but teach writing. In effect, Wible's professional development work is potentially also WAC professional development, work that could significantly benefit from collaborations with teaching and learning centers that are structured to reach large populations of faculty.

In addition to anti-racist teaching practices, collaborations with teaching and learning centers enable us to provide richer and more extensive conversations about diversity and inclusive teaching beyond race. However, as I discuss in chapter 5 of this book, collaborations with teaching and learning centers have provided opportunities to work with disability support offices to design accessible teaching materials, as well as opportunities to work with LGBTQ+ offices, faculty, and organizations on campus to design trans-friendly syllabi and curricular materials that affirm students' preferred names and pronouns, for example. Collaborative work with LGBTQ+ constituents has enabled WMU to begin changing restroom facility signs on campus to reflect gender-neutral bathrooms. This work not only benefits the whole institution but also those teaching in writing programs. In essence, WPAs and WAC directors can also benefit from these professional development opportunities offered by centers for faculty development and teaching and learning who possess the institutional space to house and facilitate such collaboration.

SYNOPSIS OF SUBSEQUENT CHAPTERS

This book provides practical examples of and reflections on campus-wide initiatives that bridge WAC and faculty development partnerships with diversity and inclusion initiatives. Chapter 1, "Faculty Development and Writing Across the Curriculum Initiatives: Enhancing Diversity in Twenty-First-Century Higher Education," reviews the ways in which both WAC and faculty development work have historically been connected in higher education, through both formal and informal structures. I also build on research that provides opportunities for collaborative

partnerships through faculty development centers and WAC programs, by demonstrating the ways in which such collaborations can enhance diversity and inclusion initiatives at the institutional level. In essence, programmatic units can take stronger leadership and ownership over diversity and inclusion efforts when they work together.

In chapter 2, “Fostering Partnerships between WAC, Faculty Development, and Diversity and Inclusion in General Education Reform,” I use Western Michigan University’s general education reform process as an example to describe the ways that general education curricular revision provides ripe opportunities to strengthen collaboration between faculty development and WAC. This chapter further reflects on the successes and challenges associated with writing instruction when considering faculty development and WAC partnerships, while also addressing the ways in which diversity and inclusion and written communication student learning outcomes within general education programs can provide opportunities for workshops on assessment-based activities aligned with those student learning outcomes. Institutional assessment data one year after the launch of WMU’s revised general education program are also analyzed.

In chapter 3, “The Work of Writing Never Ends: Writing Across the Curriculum and Diversity and Inclusion Professional Development Opportunities,” I survey the existing literature on the ways in which centers for faculty development and teaching and learning and WAC programs have worked collaboratively through both formal, explicit partnerships and informal, implicit partnerships, where connections between writing and diversity intersect. This chapter further identifies specific opportunities and reasons for WAC programs and faculty development centers to form formal partnerships as they work collaboratively in a twenty-first-century context. Additionally, I will draw upon WMU’s University College model of establishing the Merze Tate College. The Merze Tate College is named after the first African American woman to graduate from WMU, who also received her PhD from Harvard. Its namesake and foci strengthen and enhance diversity. Specific components of the Merze Tate College include a centralized model that merges student and career success, academic advising, WMU Essential Studies (general education), and the Writing Center under one centralized college that focuses on diversity, equity, and student enrollment. This chapter also draws from my experience designing both WAC and diversity and inclusion programming from OFD and in current administrative roles, to discuss how WAC and faculty development training and expertise help administrators, in particular college deans, craft large-scale leadership

initiatives that assist with retention and student enrollment. Building on examples of programs created for WAC and faculty development, I describe the ways in which the work developed from these programs has shaped the institutional priorities that continue to address diversity and inclusion for faculty and students.

In chapter 4, “Toward an Institutional Transformation of WAC: A View Forward Despite Shrinking Operating Budgets,” I review previous WAC scholarship on stand-alone WAC units that point to vulnerability for budget cuts in a post-COVID higher education context. In doing so, I urge readers to consider a new vision of WAC work, one that aligns more strongly with teaching and learning initiatives, and one that considers contributions to the broader field of faculty development, beyond rhetoric and composition scholarship. This chapter further describes the things I learned about institutional change once I began to do intellectual work outside of writing programs and academic departments, particularly at a time when my institution was experiencing multiple changes in senior leadership at the president, provost, and dean levels and when my institution began the process of moving from an incremental budget model, strategic resource management, to one that resembles responsibility-centered resource management (RCM). To effect long-term institutional change requires buy-in and support from senior-level administration, particularly at a time when state-funded institutions can no longer rely on state-supported funding primarily. For me, such change, however, would not have been possible without the grassroots efforts of faculty development centers in the absence of a WAC program.

I also draw from the discussion of the Merze Tate College model in chapter 4, in addition to WMUx, which now houses faculty development. Both fall under the purview of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning and are carefully integrated to foster stronger collaboration within and across units to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion. In drawing upon this example, I argue that centralization, while threatening to individual unit identities, is the future of higher education. Leveraging centralization enables units to share resources, collaborations, and initiatives.

The final chapter, chapter 5, builds on the previous chapter by taking up key threats to WAC programs as stand-alone units. Using the process of centralization, especially as related to institutional budget models, enables us to connect the WAC, faculty development, and diversity and inclusion work with larger missions and initiatives that reflect institutional values. This, then, enables us to align our work with existing

strategic plans. Collaborations with centralized units make visible the work that we do when stand-alone programs are threatened by budgetary constraints.

In sum, this book seeks to provide insights for those who direct or are looking to direct WAC programs, faculty developers who lead teaching and learning centers, and those interested in moving on to senior-level administrative positions beyond the department chair or WPA levels. Faculty developers take on a wide variety of roles including but not limited to directors of centers for teaching and learning (CTLs), instructional designers, and learning and teaching consultants and benefit greatly from the expertise of WPAs and WAC specialists. Likewise, WPAs and WAC specialists benefit greatly by gaining an in-depth understanding for how institutional change happens beyond the department or writing program. It is my sincerest hope that those with broad interests in higher education leadership and development, including directors of higher education leadership programs and university administrators (provosts, vice provosts, deans, and chairs or directors), will have a better understanding of the intellectual work that happens across institutional units and sites. Moreover, it is my sincerest hope that this book elevates conversations regarding institutional and programmatic change beyond work in writing program administration.