Locating Support for Writing Transfer across the Curriculum

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Building the Foundation for Writing Transfer: The Important Ingredients of Curriculum Development and Faculty Support

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Presentation Outline

- Institutional Context: QEP
- Identifying a Gap
- Initiatives for Writing Transfer
  - Curricula Development
  - Faculty Support
- Practices to Align Writing on a Strong Foundation
Institutional Context: QEP

ECU’s Quality Enhancement Plan

**Broad theme:** “Improving Student Writing”

**Focus:** Foster the transfer of writing attitudes and practices across years and courses

**Working title:** “The Vertical Writing Curriculum: Integrating and Aligning Writing Instruction at ECU”

**Catchy Name for the Public:** Write Where You Belong
Identifying a Gap

Assessment Projects

- Recognition of “writing gap” between first-year writing and WI courses
- Disconnect between WI course GPA and faculty description of student writing
- Faculty and Student Misunderstandings with WI
- Review of Writing Intensive (WI) Course Syllabi
Identifying a Gap

Gathering Information

We developed channels through which to gather information that might inform our student learning outcomes and that might bring additional voices and enthusiasm to thinking about teaching writing:

- Surveys (students and faculty)
- Focus Groups
- Articulation Meetings
QEP Framework
The Vertical Writing Curriculum
General  Specialized Writing Instruction

Advanced disciplinary/career/post-ECU writing
Disciplinary-focused and generalized academic writing
Generalized academic writing
(WPA Outcomes Engl. 1100 and 1200 Outcomes)
Initiatives for Writing Transfer

1. Curriculum Enhancement
2. Faculty Support
3. University Writing Portfolio
4. Student Support
Initiative: Curriculum Enhancement

English 1100 will promote your facility with critical reading and writing by helping you to do the following:

- Formulate significant questions to explore and address via writing
- Recognize the many different purposes of writing, including writing to reflect, analyze, explain, and persuade
- Practice drafting and revising
- Identify and apply organizational strategies
- Create content and employ tone and style in response to different audiences and purposes
- Incorporate sufficient and appropriate details and examples both from your experiences and from secondary research
- Express your ideas with clarity and with effective syntax and punctuation
- Gain competence in using computer technology in the writing process
- Schedule and meet deadlines.
The Sophomore Writing Course builds on the reading and writing strategies introduced in English 1100 with the goal of preparing students to apply those strategies to writing in upper-level courses and in contexts beyond the university. Through an exploration of various genres and formats of research writing, this course will develop students’ abilities to:

- Appreciate the significance of variations in content, style, structure, and format across different writing contexts
- Convey the results of research to a variety of audiences through a variety of genres and formats
- Understand the purposes of citation practices in different contexts
- Read critically to analyze the writing strategies of experienced writers.
“Connected pedagogy emphasizes connections between course content and students’ need for forward-reaching knowledge” (Driscoll 71).

Sophomore Composition Course Versions
- Writing about the Disciplines (multidisciplinary)
- Writing about Arts and Humanities
- Writing about Business and Technology
- Writing about Education
- Writing about Engineering
- Writing about Health Sciences
- Writing about Natural Sciences
- Writing about Social Sciences
Initiative: Curriculum Enhancement

“Encouraging students to build connections between current learning and future contexts will better prepare them for the types of writing tasks they will face once they leave the FYC classroom” (Driscoll 72).

Work of the Course

- Category 1: Assignments that Teach Foundational Skills of Understanding Writing about the Disciplines
- Category 2: Assignments that Teach Foundational Skills of Composing in and about the Disciplines
Initiative: Faculty Support

- Faculty Seminars
- Expand WAC (Writing Across the Curriculum) Academy
- Articulation Conference with K-College Writing Instructors
- Community College Biennial Conference
- Resources for Writing Instructors (Handbook & Online)
- QEP Faculty Development Seminars
Initiative: Faculty Support

“[I]f we consider the lack of funding for faculty professional development, the challenges with contingent labor, and the lack of training in RC for many FYC instructors, it is plausible that a good number of FYC faculty are unaware of writing and communicative practices in diverse disciplines” (Driscoll 73).

- A year of professional development for Writing Foundations Faculty
- Challenges include balancing consensus/buy-in with teacher autonomy
- Coherency of a program through curriculum to influence and encourage transfer—forward reaching/backward reaching and near and far transfer that we can assess
Practices to Align Writing

- Find your champions and liaisons at the university
- Make time for discussions between all people teaching writing at the university
- Engage faculty and students in discussions about writing on campus
- Use the accreditation process to garner resources to improve writing programs
- Focus on student learning and support
QUESTIONS?

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