WAW Newsletter

Supporting each other. Promoting Pedagogy.

This idea came from me running my mouth, again. I get overly excited and ambitious, particularly when exchanging ideas with colleagues. I'll offer a suggestion for something before I've fully considered the implications or even formed a coherent thought. This newsletter is one such project.

As a member of the WAW Steering Committee, I want to see WAW become more than a passing trend or information exchange. I want us to make knowledge, share knowledge, and find our own ways to get that information out in a timely and useful manner.

The WAW newsletter will be one option for teachers, students, and administrators engaging in this re-visioning of composition pedagogy. Like other great newsletters that have come before it (including the *Writing Lab Newsletter*), this publication welcomes clearly written, useful essays. We're offering readers four distinct sections to guide their reading, but all four areas are directly related to teaching, learning, and researching in and with the WAW curriculum.

Introducing WAW

Grounding Negotiation in Assessment

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I. Introduction

In her 2011 talk at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, Elizabeth Wardle stressed the importance of introducing the Writing About Writing (WAW) approach in a new setting by emphasizing its points of intersection with the writing studies concepts already valued by instructors in that setting. For instance, in a context where instructors see intertextuality as a key term, WAW proponents might encourage teachers to develop courses that use this concept to help students understand how discourse communities operate. Alternatively, in a program where instructors stress the rhetorical appeals and related terminology, WAW advocates might explore ways of helping students use these concepts to analyze discourse communities.[1]

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[1] Thanks to Moriah McCracken and three *WAW Newsletter* anonymous reviewers for very helpful comments.

Nonetheless, published work by Wardle and by Dew gestures toward the deep investments instructors often have in a familiar curriculum or teaching approach and suggests the disorientation that can arise when a program revises either. Dew, for example, describes a careful process of consulting with key stakeholders to evaluate her institution's first-year writing course. Although all stakeholders, including instructors, supported change, Dew's introduction of a revised curriculum based on a rhetoric and writing studies content still prompted what she describes as a sense of loss shared by many instructors (89, 95). When not all instructors agree on a need for change or an interpretation of program mission, such responses can intensify, impacting the success of a program revision significantly. We argue that effectively introducing the WAW approach involves a process of negotiation and that rooting such negotiation in program assessment can make it more effective.

To do so, we present a case study of the negotiations required in our program, which is housed in a large urban public research university whose student population is diverse in terms of race, ethnicity, socio-economic status, cultural background, and academic preparation. We explain the important issues for negotiation posed by three factors: a recent curriculum revision, a mandate to use assessment to improve low retention rates, and the investments of our program's teaching staff. By discussing these issues in terms of our program-wide assessment, we show how the assessment grounds our negotiations. This discussion shows three significant means of negotiation offered by a carefully designed assessment process: 1.) including multiple stakeholders and inherently dialogic approaches, 2.) using data collection and analysis to determine the shape of WAW implementation across a program, and 3.) integrating assessment findings into curriculum, pedagogy, and professional development.

While the negotiations we depict are shaped by our local context, they represent larger—and pressing—concerns in the field. These concerns include both labor issues and competing values with respect to writing instruction, such as the potential tensions between preparation for academic writing vs. preparation for civic writing. They embody practices and conflicts with long histories. Our case study suggests that if WAW is to take root, proponents must mediate between its priorities and these long-standing

challenges. To show how assessment can support this process, we next discuss key principles in writing assessment.

II. Principles of Writing Program Assessment

O'Neill, Moore, and Huot articulate six "basic principles for writing assessment," holding that writing program assessments should be site-based, locally controlled, context-sensitive, rhetorically based, accessible, and theoretically consistent (56-57). As they explain, the first three principles emphasize local design and management of assessment according to the particular program's needs. The fourth and sixth principles stress consistency with scholarship on writing, literacy learning, and writing instruction, while the fifth advocates transparency of procedures and results. To put these principles into practice, the authors recommend collecting qualitative and quantitative data that can be employed to address local goals (118-119). Finally, they advocate using assessment findings to improve the program and demonstrate its successes (135-136).

Similarly, arguments for portfolio evaluation typically emphasize that this form of writing assessment is most consistent with research from writing studies.[2] Hamp-Lyons and Condon argue that portfolio assessment encourages instructors to collaboratively negotiate evaluative criteria, assignments, pedagogy, and course design, thus leading to greater coherence in a writing program (73-80). White's phase two approach grounds portfolio assessment specifically in learning outcomes for a course or program, thus promoting context sensitivity.[3] Like Hamp-Lyons and Condon, O'Neill, Moore, and Huot advocate involving as many stakeholders as possible in planning, implementing, and interpreting the results of a program assessment (109-136). Similarly, Broad's method of Dynamic Criteria Mapping (DCM) engages instructors in

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[2] See, for example, Hamp-Lyons and Condon, 1-29 and 64-65.

[3] White's approach advocates asking students to draft a substantial reflective letter that introduces the portfolio by making an argument about how, and how effectively, the pieces in it demonstrate the student's achievement of learning outcomes for the course. Portfolio evaluators focus on the reflective letter, consulting pieces in the portfolio only to ascertain how well they bear out the letter's claims about achievement of learning outcomes. This approach streamlines evaluation and obviates potential problems that can result when students include varying assignments and genres in their portfolios.

analyzing sample student texts to explain and negotiate their evaluative criteria. Given the emphasis on inclusive dialogue in these approaches, we hold that assessment can effectively promote the negotiation needed to introduce WAW effectively. Next, we explain how our local context shaped our writing program assessment.

III. Local Context: Negotiations Required

This context includes our institution's recent focus on assessment and retention to address key exigencies. As recently documented in the *Chronicle of Higher Education,* our university has the largest gap in the U.S. between graduation rates for African American students and those for Caucasian students (Kiley). This disturbing statistic is part of a larger problem with graduation rates that, while more extreme here, parallels issues at many urban commuter schools. The Composition Program in particular faced pressure because an internal study done by an assessment administrator outside the program and department suggested that grading patterns in its courses did not correlate appropriately with grading patterns in Writing Intensive (WI) courses students took subsequently in their majors. An internal study of retention at the university as a whole recommended assessment, especially of general education courses' effectiveness in preparing students for other courses, particularly those in the major. It also prompted summits and workshops encouraging units to implement assessment approaches grounded in their disciplines.

To address these challenges, the Director of Composition from 2007 - 2010 revised the curricula for all program courses during her tenure. She developed common syllabi to guide instructors' design of their sections of each course, a short list of approved textbooks, and a campaign to reduce grade inflation. Introducing this level of standardization entailed some significant shifts across the Composition Program's core sequence of courses, particularly in the freshman writing course, Introductory College Writing (ENG 1020), and in Intermediate Writing (ENG 3010), a sophomore/junior level course taken by most students to fulfill their Intermediate Composition requirement. Prior to the curriculum revision, instructors taught whatever texts, written genres, and

course themes they chose. In the revised ENG 1020, the common syllabus focused on rhetorical modes, while in ENG 3010, the common syllabus mandated a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) approach. These revisions were lauded by the university administration and incorporated the interests of many key Program stakeholders. However, they also prompted some tensions among instructors who saw the WAC approach as incompatible with their training and teaching priorities. In summer 2010, the program director became department chair and advised the new director to implement a Program assessment to document the impact of the revised curriculum.

IV. Assessment Design and Findings

To continue improving how general education courses prepare students for other coursework and to address concerns about the disjuncture between Composition Program course grades and WI course grades, a new Assessment Committee began with the interface between ENG 3010 and WI courses. We investigated the perceptions of students and instructors in both courses regarding how effectively ENG 3010 was preparing students to succeed in their WI courses.[4] To do so, we used dialogic methods advocated by O'Neill, Moore, and Huot and by Broad. In winter 2011 we surveyed students in both courses. That summer, we conducted focus groups with ENG 3010 students, WI students, ENG 3010 instructors, and WI instructors. We also conducted dynamic criteria mapping (DCM) sessions with instructors from both courses to learn whether students transferred writing-related knowledge and skills across our courses and from ENG 3010 to WI courses. Doing so provided insight into various stakeholders' concerns and positioned us to negotiate their competing values.

From ENG 3010 student focus groups, we learned that students whose courses used sequenced assignments could articulate what they'd learned and its importance, whereas students whose courses had used discrete assignments could not. From WI student focus groups, we learned that most students saw little relevance between ENG 3010 and their WI courses. DCM sessions with WI instructors generated three primary themes: 1.) these courses teach a diverse range of genres and emphasize varying priorities for

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[4] All but two co-authors served on the Assessment Committee from its inception, and those two have played a substantive role in the assessment project.

writing; 2.) despite these differences, WI instructors share many key evaluative criteria; and 3.) WI instructors have an implicit but strong concern with genre features. Both ENG 3010 and WI instructors introduced the term "critical thinking" as a key criterion for evaluating student writing. However, the two groups offered competing definitions. ENG 3010 instructors defined critical thinking in terms of complexity and depth, stressing extensive work with source texts. In contrast, WI instructors defined it in terms of categorizing, generalizing, synthesizing, and recognizing the progression of science, stressing brevity as one of its hallmarks.

The perceived lack of connection between the existing ENG 3010 course and the discipline-specific WI courses, as well as the range of genre variety across WI courses, prompted our Assessment committee to consider recent work on WAW. For instance, we drew on Downs and Wardle's "Teaching About Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning 'First-Year Composition' as 'Introduction to Writing Studies,'" which argues that the WAW approach is "forthright" about what writing instructors can actually hope to accomplish in a given course. Rather than characterizing writing as a universal activity or claiming to teach students how to write for the university at large, WAW proposes to help students understand *some* activities related to scholarly writing, particularly by demonstrating the "conversational" and "subjective nature" of professional and academic genres (559-560).   In this model, students are taught that writing is not governed by universal rules but by context-specific conventions. The model emphasizes that new learning contexts often require different approaches to writing. Downs and Wardle teach students how to identify written genres and the key contextual factors shaping them. Thus their approach mediates the diverging expectations of ENG 3010 and WI instructors. Although we cannot hope to meet all of the goals articulated by WI instructors, we seek to help students develop metacognitive skills that enable them to identify these expectations on their own. For instance, ENG 3010 instructors cannot teach students the full range of genre features that appear across WI courses and professional communities, but they can help students recognize the need to identify and understand these genre features as they enter new contexts.

These findings and WAW scholarship informed our development of five WAW pilot sections of ENG 3010 designed to test the outcomes of this approach in our local context. Four instructors worked collaboratively with the program director to design the sections. Two of the five sections used a WAW approach grounded in Beaufort's five knowledge domains.[5] The other three used this WAW approach and added reflective assignments intended to increase students' metacognitive awareness of their rhetorical decision-making and the thought processes informing it.[6]

Using Beaufort's framework, we developed a WAW curriculum designed to prepare students to learn how to undertake whatever mix of genres, writing priorities, and rhetorical situations they would encounter in their subsequent WI courses. In doing so, we took into account ENG 3010 and WI students' and instructors' focus group and DCM feedback; the existing version of ENG 3010, with its WAC focus; WAW scholars' emphasis on incorporating writing studies methods, concepts, and texts into writing instruction; and pilot instructors' interests in rhetorical and genre pedagogies. This curriculum took shape in a set of tightly sequenced assignments consisting of three large projects leading to a fourth and final project, a portfolio introduced by a six- to eight-page reflective argument. In their reflective arguments, students explained whether and to what extent they had achieved course learning outcomes. The assignment sequence engaged students in exploring a discourse community related to their academic discipline or future profession.

Because this assignment sequence asked students to analyze in depth the texts and writing processes of their chosen discourse community, it required the kind of critical thinking privileged by ENG 3010 instructors. Because it asked them to investigate the values of this discourse community, it offered them the chance to learn about the kind of critical thinking, genres, and writing priorities privileged by WI instructors. By using tightly sequenced assignments, it drew on findings from ENG 3010 student focus groups, and by linking work with writing studies concepts to students' disciplines or future professions, it addressed WI

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[5] These domains include rhetorical, genre, writing process, subject matter, and discourse community knowledges.

[6] We included three WAW+reflection sections because one instructor was scheduled to teach two sections of ENG 3010 and because our statistics consultant recommended obtaining as much data as possible.

students' sense of disconnection between ENG 3010 and their WI courses. It did so by taking up the emphasis on rhetorical concerns and genre foregrounded in recent work by Charles Bazerman and by Bawarshi, Reiff, and Devitt. Like Beaufort's framework for developing written expertise, this work on Rhetorical Genre Studies promotes the incorporation of critical genre awareness into classroom instruction to facilitate students' development of metacognitive skills and transfer of written genre knowledge across contexts. Consequently, to engage students with specific genres and genre conventions, pilot instructors used rhetorical genre studies texts to design the assignment sequence around the interplay between discourse communities, writing practices, and genres defined as social action.[7] Further, they incorporated short writing activities that encouraged students to reflect on the conventions of a particular genre and how these conventions differ across disciplinary and professional contexts. Thus the assignment sequence integrated the WAW approach with key feedback from each group of stakeholders in ENG 3010.

Further, through the portfolio evaluation component, the pilot sections of the course provided data we will use to determine whether and to what extent the WSU Composition Program will implement the WAW approach across additional sections of ENG 3010. At the end of the fall 2011 semester, the Program used White's phase two approach to evaluate portfolios from the five pilot sections and from three control sections of the course that taught the existing WAC curriculum. Like students in the pilot sections, students in the control sections assembled portfolios and drafted reflective arguments explaining whether and to what extent they had met course learning outcomes. Portfolio readers familiar with all three versions of the course scored students' work using a rubric based in the learning outcomes. The Program will conduct statistical analyses to determine whether students from any of the three types of ENG 3010 sections (WAW, WAW + reflection, or control) achieved significantly higher scores on any of the learning outcomes than did students in the other section types. The Program will use these analyses, another set based on winter 2012 portfolio scores, and discussions with pilot and control

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[7] Key rhetorical genres studies texts used in the pilot ENG 3010 courses include Bawarshi, Reiff, and Devitt's "Materiality and Genre in the Study of Discourse Communities" (2003) and Bawarshi and Reiff's *Genre: An Introduction to History, Theory, Research, and Pedagogy* (2010).

instructors and other stakeholders to determine the shape of fall 2012 revisions to the ENG 3010 course. Thus data collection and analysis are central to our process of introducing the WAW approach. Further, because portfolio assessment is a dynamic collaboration among instructors and students, one that extends beyond the parameters of a given classroom, this aspect of the assessment fosters both dialogic and data-driven approaches to negotiating Program priorities among stakeholders.

V. Assessment Supporting Negotiation

While teaching for transfer remains a crucial goal, whether and to what extent the WAW or WAW+reflection curricula promote transfer from our ENG 3010 course to students' subsequent courses is still under investigation. The findings generated by this investigation will determine whether we pursue teaching for transfer in fall 2012 sections of the course through a WAW curriculum or through other approaches. The data described above and continued conversations with key stakeholders, especially instructors, will determine the shape of the curriculum.

Further, in the winter and fall 2012 semesters, we will work through a similar process with ENG 1020 students and instructors. Many important program stakeholders, including GTAs, members of a new cohort of five lecturers, and the program's Assistant Director, have invested significant energy into developing an ENG 1020 curriculum that foregrounds the rhetorical stases and includes civic, as well as academic, writing assignments. We will conduct student surveys, student and instructor focus groups, and instructor DCM sessions in winter 2012. Full-scale planning for the pilot sections will begin in summer 2012 and will draw on the data generated. But because the existing curriculum is highly elaborated and has prompted significant investments from many stakeholders, we are beginning dialogue about the potential shape of the pilot sections now, to lay a stronger foundation for negotiating key priorities. Here, the challenge is to balance the course's obligation to prepare students for academic writing in subsequent courses with content from Writing Studies, attention to the public/democratic potentials of writing instruction, and the need to link ENG 1020 more tightly with ENG 3010.

Despite the importance of these formal assessment activities, the most important negotiations in implementing the revised curriculum may be informal dialogue among instructors. For instance, to expand teaching for transfer across at least half of our ENG 3010 sections next fall, we will ask instructors already teaching the course to consider how the WAW and/or other approaches to teaching for transfer intersect with their present teaching practices. To promote such dialogue, we plan to offer support through forums like teaching circles and online sites.[8] Teaching circles will promote the dialogue needed to integrate WAW and/or transfer principles into instructors' approaches. Online materials can be extended, updated, and revised based on our formal and informal assessment of the community's needs each semester and can provide a space for virtual discussions.[9] These steps help make assessment an ongoing endeavor and integrate assessment findings into our program's curriculum, pedagogy, and professional development. They do so by engaging instructors in dialogue about how to apply assessment findings to course design and classroom practices. We hold that such efforts are integral to implementing a new curriculum, as this process inherently involves negotiating familiar and new approaches.

We argue that this negotiation supports instructors in making professional, reflective decisions about their teaching while, as a program, we work to promote a particular curriculum. Acknowledging instructors as informed professionals means allowing them space to decide how they will implement a WAW or other teaching for transfer approach while also providing them instructional support and opportunities to discuss theory and practice. Just as any teaching approach develops over time, we believe a major shift in curriculum requires this reflective dialogue. We are integrating the contextual evidence provided by our assessment with theory and teachers' experience so we can revise the curriculum collaboratively. Thus we are integrating WAW and/or transfer approaches into our existing curriculum through both

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[8] Teaching circles were proposed by one of our new lecturers and developed at her former institution, Eastern Michigan University. (For more information, see https://sites.google.com/site/emuteachingcircle/home.) The approach is based in Cochran-Smith and Lytle's work with practitioner inquiry and communities of practice.

[9] The Composition Program already hosts an online handbook for instructors of general education writing courses, as well as a rhetoric and composition blog, a delicious bookmarking site listing recommended readings submitted by instructors, and a blog on teaching writing that hosts additional curricular and teaching support materials and posts by many people involved in the assessment project.

formal assessment and discussion of real classroom practice, rather than relying on theory alone.

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Establishing Programmatic Support

A Writing About Writing Approach Proposal

Laurie A. Pinkert
Purdue University
March 2012

Introduction and Context

Resources for learning about and teaching within a writing about writing approach certainly exists. From textbooks, to blogs, to SIGs at conferences – these resources aid teachers in designing,

refining, and implementing a writing about writing approach in their classrooms, and in my own experience, such resources were certainly successful at piquing my interest in teaching a writing about writing course.

In spite of my interest, however, teaching a writing about writing course wasn't an option for individual instructors at my institution. Programmatic support for the approach was necessary before such a course could be offered.   In Introductory Composition at Purdue, approaches to first year composition must be approved by the Introductory Writing Committee before they can be implemented by instructors across the program, and even before this approval process can take place, course materials must be drafted for the Director, the approach must be piloted with and reviewed by a small group of instructors, and a full proposal complete with student samples must be submitted.

What follows here is an annotated version of the full proposal that was submitted to and approved by the Introductory Writing Committee. For those like me and my colleagues who collaborated on this proposal who are interested in a writing about writing approach but need to establish programmatic support, the document provides a model for articulating the ways that a writing about writing approach meets shared program goals but remains a distinct approach to composition pedagogy.

Note: At Purdue, the writing about writing approach was piloted during the 2010-2011 academic year and approved by the Introductory Writing Committee in Spring 2011 for use in Fall 2011. In 2011-2012, I've been mentoring a group of English graduate students who are teaching a writing about writing approach in Introductory Composition at Purdue (ICaP). These teachers – all of them first year graduate students at Purdue and many of them first year composition teachers – are so successfully adopting and adapting the writing about writing approach that it's sometimes difficult to remember that this approach is new to them and new to Purdue.

Writing About Writing Approach Full Proposal
Collaboratively written by Laurie A. Pinkert, Caitlan Spronk, Michael Maune, and
Megan Schoen.
Submitted to the Introductory Writing Committee
December 7, 2010

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Comment: At Purdue, the Introductory Writing Committee works with the director and assistant directors to develop programmatic policies and materials. This committee also approves syllabus approach proposals and renewals.

The following members currently make up the Introductory Writing Committee: the writing program director and two assistant directors, a representative from the Writing Lab, a faculty member from Second Language Studies/English as a Second Language, a faculty member from Rhetoric and Composition and three graduate student representatives with varying roles in the program.

Comment: Throughout the proposal ICaP refers to Introductory Composition at Purdue.

Comment: The sample project guidelines included in this proposal were reformatted slightly to create a consistent format for readers of the proposal. Individual instructors might add additional information about grading guidelines, due dates, resources, etc.

The projects described here were initially developed in Fall 2009. They have since been shared with adapted by other instructors. Included here are the versions of projects one, three, four, and five that were those used in my Fall 2010 sections of the course. In order to demonstrate the breadth of possibilities for project two and to assure the proposal readers that our remediation project was not tied to a specific media, we included Megan's, Michael's, and my Fall 2010 assignment guidelines for project two.

In the proposal itself, we chose to omit identifying instructor information on the project guidelines in order to draw attention toward the connection with the overall sequencing of assignments rather than the specific instructor who taught the assignment.

Theoretical Rationale for the Writing About Writing Approach

Introduction: The Writing About Writing approach draws on three significant theories regarding the relationship between writing and knowledge-making. First, the approach views writing skills and literacy practices as highly situated. Second, it positions students as expert literacy users, and third, the approach considers content as crucial.

Writing Skills and Literacy Practices are Highly Situated: Students often approach English 106 by trying to figure out what their teacher wants them to do. They draw on previous writing experiences, most often associated with school, where one teacher said never to use "I" in a research project and another said never to start a sentence with "And." Students have learned to notice how sometimes the teacher's "rules" about writing don't operate universally, that is, transfer from one class to the next. Often without knowing it, such students are grappling with the situated nature of writing and literacy, and this approach foregrounds such realizations by moving away from just *teaching writing* toward *teaching how writing works* within a specific context to mediate various activities. Writing is presented as a rhetorical activity, and in accordance with much rhetorical theory, students are presented with heuristics or strategies for entering a rhetorical situation rather than offered a "how to" manual.

Students are Expert Literacy Users: This approach views students as expert literacy users who draw from many years of experience with literacy and language. As such, students are poised to contribute meaningfully to (verbal and written) discussions of writing practices. Although instructors and writing scholars may have more experience with *academic* discourse than their students do, students' experiences with discourses outside the academic provide an equally valid point of entrance into the ongoing discussions that emerges in scholarly articles and publications. Thus Writing About Writing invites students to reflect on and research writing-related problems or question that they have. In doing so, it encourages students to view research as genuine inquiry. By valuing students' varying expertise in multiple discourse communities (often different from those in which the instructor and other students participate) knowledge is distributed among the course participants and constructed collaboratively throughout the course.

Content Matters: Early writing scholars such as Janet Emig argue for writing as a "unique mode of learning," and this approach builds on that idea to assert that as students write they learn about the topic of their writing. Writing to learn is embraced by this approach, and because writing is both the activity of the course and also the content, the activity and content reinforce each other. Accordingly, vocabulary is perceived as key both to understanding and to practice. The approach seeks to offer students a robust vocabulary that operates rhetorically within their growing understanding of theories about composing rather than as an arhetorical set of terms to be remembered.

Comment: Approaches in our introductory composition program must articulate a theoretical rationale that can support multiple instructors. We developed this rationale to reflect our connection to the larger Writing About Writing community but also to articulate the commonalities with our program's emphases. For instance, in the concluding paragraph, we articulate the way that this approach might provide students with an understanding of writing that can be adapted to personal, academic, and civic purposes, which aligns with one of our program goals.

Although we could have drawn on a variety of scholarship to support this rationale including those scholars who explicitly advocate for the use of Writing About Writing pedgaogy, we tended to draw from Writing about Writing scholarship in more general ways and to mention by name only those scholars whose work is commonly read in our course for first-year TAs (i.e. Emig). We did not assume that the Introductory Writing Committee had read any Writing About Writing scholarship, and we chose to develop a general rationale that was, we hoped, accessible to a wider audience

A secondary audience for this theoretical rationale was the teachers within our program. Since approved approaches must develop a webpage that offers the theoretical rationales and describes the common assignments, we tried to provide an explanation of the approach that would be accessible to instructors from a variety of English studies backgrounds.

If we had been developing this proposal for a different program or different group of instructors, we would have, perhaps, drawn more specifically on Writing About Writing scholarship or on the recent studies regarding the relationship of transfer to this pedagogical approach.

Conclusion: Ultimately this approach recognizes that the specific genres of this (or any other) writing course may not be transferable to all students' future writing situations. However, it offers students transferable knowledge about how writing works that students may use as they participate in a variety of discourse communities and engage in literacy practices as part of those communities. By reflecting on the ways writing functions within varying communities, they may be better able to adapt rhetorical strategies suited to their own future situations.

How Writing About Writing Differs from Other ICaP Syllabus Approaches

The proposed Writing about Writing (WaW) approach shares several critical elements with other syllabus approaches, but it is unique in that its subject matter focuses entirely on writing. While other approaches may ask students to write about and discuss issues related to a broad range of topics (campus facilities, politics, literary works, etc.), this approach maintains a central concern with writing as a subject. Other approaches may ask students to talk about writing and analyze writing samples. Writing About Writing does this, too, integrating writing research and theory into such activities in a way that is engaging to first-year composition students.

Within this approach reading and writing are seen as connected practices. By introducing students to the ongoing conversation that other writers and scholars have had about writing, the approach attempts to give students a framework for thinking about writing activities. It also gives them a vocabulary for discussing how and why people write in different situations. While the specific genres of this (or any other) writing course may not be transferable to all students' future writing situations, this approach offers students transferable content: throughout their lives students will participate in discourse communities and will engage in literacy practices as part of those communities. By reflecting on the ways writing functions within varying communities, students might be better able to adapt rhetorical strategies suited to their own future situations.

Since many of the readings within this approach are scholarly articles and the major assignments include an analysis and a research project, this approach may appear similar to the Academic Writing and Research approach. Writing About Writing, however, emphasizes that the academic discourse community is only one of a myriad of other communities in which students can and will participate. Additionally, Writing About Writing's broader focus on literacy and language is a significant difference.

The Writing About Writing approach shares some concerns with the Rhetorical Situations/Real Texts approach in that it sees writing as rhetorically situated, but unlike that approach, the Writing About Writing approach is less product-focused. Writing About Writing approach balances product and process by using student writing as a way for students to explore ideas brought up by class readings about writing. Students write to learn: in doing so, students will certainly practice different types of writing, but the focus for such assignments will not always be on that writing as a product.

The archived Fieldworking approach, although similar in some ways, does not encompass all ways to approach Writing About Writing but might be one way to fulfill this approach.

Comment: In initial conversations with our Director, she asked how Writing About Writing differed from the Academic Writing and Research Approach, which had already been approved and was currently in use. Since the difference wasn't as obvious to everyone else as it seemed to be to us, distinguishing Writing About Writing from other syllabus approaches became a crucial part of the proposal process.

Comment: The Academic Writing and Research approach is described as an approach that "seek[s] to help students identify and understand the voice, genres, modes and argumentative strategies preferred and privileged in many academic discourses. Instructors also teach students the importance of and strategies to deal with the complexities of academic research. They understand that many students have not been exposed to academic discourse and need practice decoding and generating it" (ICaP Website).

Comment: The Rhetorical Situations/Real Texts approach in described as an approach that "stress[es] the rhetorical nature of all situations, the student's ability to identify and work in a variety of rhetorical situations, the ways in which the audience constantly shapes the writer's work, and the ways in which rhetoric involves thought, the spoken word, the written work, design, and performance" (ICaP Website).

Comment: Fieldworking is an approach that was archived around 2005. It centered on students' development of primary research projects that were similar to the ethnographic research assignment later described in this proposal. If we had not been able to sufficiently distinguished Writing About Writing from Fieldworking, the committee might have suggested that we revive the Fieldworking approach rather than start a new Writing About Writing approach.

As writers of the proposal, we understood that knowledge of the Fieldworking approach would be limited to those who had been in the program for several years; therefore, we mentioned it here to indicate our knowledge of it but did not describe it in full.

Writing About Writing Reading List

Because the Writing About Writing Approach requires the integration of reading assignments that address writing theory but requires this integration at a level that is appropriate to first year students, the approach developers have generated a common coursepack that is shared by those within the syllabus approach. Instructors may add or substitute additional readings specific to their students' projects, but this list provides a common unit sequencing for all instructors across the various sections and all students within sections.

Unit One: Literacy

Didion, Joan. "Why I Write" from *The New York Times Magazine*, December 5, 1976.

Douglass, Frederick. "Learning to Read and Write" from *Narrative of the Life of Frederick Douglass*.

Brandt, Deborah. "Sponsors of Literacy." *College Composition and Communication* 49.2 (1998): 165-85.

Rose, Mike, "I Just Wanna Be Average" from *Lives on the Boundary: The Struggles and Achievements of America's Underprepared*.

Bullock, Richard. "Literacy Narratives," from *The Norton Field Guide to Writing*.

Unit Two: Rhetorical Situation

Rhetorical Situation Handout (to be distributed in class)

Purdue OWL Resource on Rhetorical Situation (http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/625/01/)

Unit Three: Discourse Communities

Bruffee, Kenneth. "Collaborative Learning and the Conversation of Mankind." *College Composition and Communication* 46.7 (1984): 635-52.

Mirabelli, Tony. "The Language and Literacy of Food Service Workers" from *What They Don't learn in School*.

Selzer, Jack. "The Composing Processes of an Engineer" from *Central Works in Technical Communication*.

Sunstein, Bonnie Stone and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater. "Stepping in and Stepping Out: Understanding Cultures" from *Fieldworking*.

Unit Four: Academic Discourse

Bartholomae, David. "Inventing the University" from *Cross-talk in Comp Theory: A Reader*.

NCTE, "Students' Rights to Their Own Language"
   (http://www.ncte.org/library/NCTEFiles/Groups/CCCC/NewSRTOL.pdf)

Handout on CARS model of research introductions. adapted from Swales, John. *Genre Analysis: English in Academic and Workplace Settings*. Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 1990.

"Writing in the Disciplines: Learning to Write" from *A TA's Guide To Teaching Writing in All Disciplines*.

Comment: When we were developing the approach proposal in 2009, *Writing About Writing: A College Reader* had not yet been published, and we did not know of any other textbooks that would suit a Writing About Writing Approach. Therefore, Caitlan Spronk and I developed an initial reading list during the summer before we began teaching this approach for the first time. At that time, I had recently attended a Writing About Writing workshop at the CCCC's Convention, so we collected a number of readings that were mentioned at that workshop, read them in full, determined their appropriateness for our course goals, and grouped them in units.

Initially, we taught these readings in addition to an ICaP-approved textbook because using an approved text is a requirement for all instructors. This combination of coursepack and an additional textbook proved to be too high a reading load for the course, and we struggled to effectively incorporate readings from the approved textbook. We learned, however, that we needed to work within the constraints of our program policies even if that meant a difficult balancing act at first. By working with an already-approved textbook, we were able to try out this reading list and further develop our course materials based on student responses.

Anyone who has taught a one semester composition course can probably imagine that we found it difficult to sufficiently cover five units in one term. As the approach has continued to develop, instructors have tended to complete four units: Literacy, Rhetorical Situation, Discourse Communities, and Academic Discourse. The Academic Discourse unit often incorporates an annotated bibliography or literature review rather than assigning this as a separate project on a new topic.

As of Fall 2011, *Writing About Writing: A College Reader* was approved as a textbook for this approach, and instructors currently in the approach have adopted this textbook in lieu of the coursepack outlined here in the proposal.

Comment: Instructors within the approach read the whole coursepack; however, they might substitute readings within particular units. For example, when teaching in a Computer Graphics and Technology Learning Community, Megan supplemented the reading list with the media and technology-focused readings at the end of this list. Thus, the reading list provided common unit themes and a common sequencing of the units, but did not necessarily dictate all of the reading for a particular instructor's course.

Academic Articles – students will be responsible for selecting articles from their field of study for this unit

Unit Five: Research and Writing (about Writing)

Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review Handouts – to be distributed

Selections to be chosen specific to student projects not generally assigned (From Dunbar-Odom, Donna. "Conducting Field Research." *Working With Ideas: Reading, Writing, and Researching Experience*. NY: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2001. 75-98. or from MacNealey, Mary Sue *Strategies for Empirical Research in Writing*.)

Additional Readings that can be integrated into other units:

Williams, Joseph M. "The Phenomenology of Error." *College Composition and Communication* 32.2 (1981): 152-68.

Selber, Stuart A. "Reimagining Computer Literacy" *College Composition and Communication* 55.3 (2004): 470-503.

Bolter, Jay. "Introduction:Writing in the Late Age of Print" from *Writing space: Computers, Hypertext, and the Remediation of Print*.

Jenkins, Henry. "Interactive Audiences: The 'Collective Intelligence' of Media Fans" (http://web.mit.edu/cms/People/henry3/collective%20intelligence.html)

Jenkins, Henry. "Do You Enjoy Making Us Feel Stupid?" from *Full of Secrets: Critical Approaches to Twin Peaks Full of Secrets*.

Assignment Descriptions and Relationships

In addition to a reflection/response journal, the writing assignments in this course include a literacy narrative, a remediation of the literacy narrative, an ethnographic essay, an analysis, and a writing and research portfolio. The first four are assignments in which the students will respond or interact with the content of the course readings in some specific way. The fourth project, while still integrating topics from the course readings, invites students to develop a portfolio of work that demonstrates their attainment of ICaP goals. Within this portfolio, students pose their own questions about writing and answer their question through secondary research that culminates in an annotated bibliography and/or literature review and a possible class presentation.

The sequencing of the assignments invites students to move from topics of personal literacy acquisition to exploration of the discourse communities in which they participate to an examination of the conventions of academic discourse within their disciplines. Moving from the private to the public or from the personal to the communal aims to prompt students to first consider their own experiences about which they are experts and then to move into areas about which they might know less.

Additionally, the sequencing provides content in the earlier assignments that will be crucial to the assignments that follow.

> **Comment:** At Purdue, moving from the personal to the public to the academic has remained the common way of sequencing assignments.

Writing Project 1 - Literacy Narrative

In this assignment, students will draw on Brandt's concepts of "sponsors of literacy" to reconstruct key moments in their literacy history and identify agents of this literacy. Students will explore previous writing, reading, communication activities and be encouraged to name different literacies that they have/use. Although students may choose to interview parents, teachers, siblings or friends about their history, the focus will be on the students' experiences as a valid topic for writing. The assignment culminates in a written narrative.

The initial Literacy Narrative feeds directly into the second significant assignment in which students will be re-mediating the text-based literacy narrative into an audio essay.

Writing Project 2 – Remediated Literacy Narrative (Audio Essay, Video, Poetry Slam, Etc.)

In this assignment students will consider revision and remediation of their initial literacy narratives within the context of a specific rhetorical situation. Instructors may choose the medium and situation for these revisions. For instance, students may be introduced to the NPR "This I Believe" series and to the National Conversation on Writing (NCoW). After examining the purpose and goals of NCoW and the conventions of the NPR audio essays, students can select portions of their literacy narrative appropriate to a remediation. They

> **Comment:** Since Purdue's introductory composition program emphasizes multimodal composing, we integrated this remediation as a means of teaching revision for a new rhetorical situation and as a way to give students practice as composing in a new medium.
>
> Composing in multiple genres and multiple media is a programmatic goal, and this assignment allowed instructors to work toward this goal explicitly.
>
> In most courses, instructors ask students to read and/or review sample texts from the genre they assign. For example, in a course that assigns an audio essay, students would listen to audio essays in order to understand their standard conventions. Although these do not appear in the reading list, they are a common part of this unit.

would also write and record introductions to contextualize their 3-5 minute audio essays. Additionally, the same rhetorical situation of NCoW might also be used to prompt video essays or alternative media. Students can also be invited to remediate their literacy narratives into verbal texts such as those performed in a poetry slam. In this case, the instructor might host a poetry slam to create an appropriate context for the assignment. (Note: Due to the possible variation within this project, multiple Writing Project 2 Assignment Guideline Sheets have been included in these materials.)

While the topic of the first two assignments is personal literacy experience, the third assignment builds on their personal experience by asking students to investigate one specific discourse community in which they participate.

Writing Assignment 3 - Ethnographic Essay (With Visuals)
In this assignment students will investigate a non-academic discourse community of which they are a part. They will document literacy practices, examine the community's texts, and provide photos, sketches, or other visuals that contribute to overall portrait of the community. Through reflection and writing students will also locate themselves within the context their chosen discourse community. The project culminates in a document that integrates multiple media. Projects can be paper based or digitally based. As the major research assignment for the course, this project focuses heavily on both the practice of research and the writing of the research essay. Students not only learn to cite sources appropriately, but also gain experience discussing their research methods and their findings.

The next project moves from the students' more familiar literacy practices toward the practices of the academic discourse community that they are joining/have joined. Discussion will focus on the status of academic discourse and highlight that "academic discourse" is NOT a universal term: discourses are often discipline specific.

Writing Assignment 4 - Analysis of Academic Publication
In this assignment, students will use the John Swales's CARS model of research introductions to analyze an article from their own discipline. Students will interact with reference librarians to determine appropriate library databases and then use these databases to find the article to be analyzed. This project facilitates students' inquiry into the research and writing practices of their own academic communities. As a means of helping students to gain practice at many of the shorter writing prompts that they will encounter on essay exams, the written project, although not completed in a timed setting, can take the form of one coherent essay or several shorter essays.

The research and writing portfolio project incorporates previous writing projects and strategies for revision. The companion annotated bibliography and/or literature review also prompts students' exploration of credible sources related to a writing-related question. Students may use this project to further their previous investigations.

Writing Assignment 4 - Research and Writing Portfolio (will integrate Multiple Media)

This assignment will integrate primary and secondary research to respond to a writing-related question that the student has developed throughout the course. In this project, students may further develop/refine their ethnographic essay or may interrogate a new topic altogether. The stages of the project will foreground writing as a process, encouraging invention activities, drafts, and peer reviews. Additionally, annotated bibliographies or literature reviews may be incorporated. The project will culminate in a word-based artifact and will also be publicly presented.

Sample Writing Project One Guidelines

Me, Myself, and I: (Re)Constructing Literacy Through Narrative

Context: For the past couple weeks, we have been discussing literacy as a dynamic facet of our lives. In our discussion of the writings of Joan Didion, Frederick Douglass, and Deborah Brandt, we have considered the personal, social, and economic implications of literacy. We have stretched our definitions in order to include literacy practices beyond reading and writing, and we have considered the ways that the practices we develop in one arena may be transferred to another. This assignment asks us to look backward, inward, and outward as we consider the way that we have pursued literacy and literacy has pursued us.

Writing Scenario: Draw on Brandt's concept of "sponsors of literacy" to reconstruct key moments in your literacy history and identify agents of this literacy. You may explore previous writing, reading, or communication activities and/or name the different literacies that you have/use. You may choose to interview parents, teachers, siblings or friends about your literacy history; however, the focus will be on your own experiences. Although looking backward suggests that you will explore your past, you may decide how far backward you will recount. In other words, the narrative does not have to begin at a certain age. It should, however, discuss at least one key moment or theme in your literacy history.

Requirements: This assignment requires that you write a narrative or story. Although some analysis or interpretation may figure into your text, a narrative element must be present. To strengthen the narrative, you should draw on specific examples or experiences. Through description and dialogue you can strengthen the reader's ability to "see" and not just "hear" your experiences. With the completed assignment, you will submit a reflective cover memo that explicitly connects the theme(s) of your writing with the concepts from our course readings. Additionally, you will submit (for credit) your drafts.

Goals: This project aims to (1) connect our personal literacy with larger theories of literacy acquisition, (2) validate the breadth of our individual literacy practices, (3) give us practice at writing in a familiar genre, and (4) offer a springboard for future writing assignments.

Sample Writing Project Two Guidelines for Audio Essays
Sounding it Out: (Re)ME-diating Literacy Narratives through Audio Essays

Context: For our last project, we considered our own experiences and memories as a resource for writing about literacy acquisition and practices. We drew from scholarly concepts to consider the sponsors that influenced us and to reconstruct the important moments in our literacy history. Our previous writing project was primarily a personal narrative for a relatively small audience within our classroom. This second project, however, requires that we reconceptualize and remediate our narratives for the larger audience of the National Conversation on Writing and for the genre of the audio essay.

Writing Scenario: Draw from your literacy narrative to create an audio essay suitable for the National Conversation on Writing. Remember to highlight an element of you literacy acquisition or practices that might be unique to you or interesting to the audience of the National Conversation on Writing. You should not simply read your original text but rather should revise that text to suit an audio essay.

Requirements: This assignment requires that you select an appropriate portion of your literacy narrative, that you revise the narrative for an audio essay, and that you record this selection for submission to your instructor (and potentially the National Conversation on Writing). Based on your listening to the NPR "This I Believe" audio essays, you should develop an understanding of conventions of an audio essay and should employ these conventions. You may record individually or as a group, and you may employ other voices in your essay. Collaborative projects should be discussed with the instructor before the due date. Also, if you would like to propose an alternative medium suitable for NCoW, you may do so in a written proposal to the instructor. As always, you will submit (for credit) your drafts and will include a Cover Memo that explains your rhetorical choices. Your final project should be submitted in an mp3 or mp4 format. If you have trouble converting your file, please visit the Digital Learning Collaboratory in the Hicks Undergraduate Library or contact me before the project due date.

Goals: This project aims to (1) prompt our thinking about the way that remediation affects and is affected by the rhetorical situation, (2) allow us to write for an audience larger than our classroom, and (3) give us practice at writing for an audio essay (an unfamiliar genre for most of us).

Comment: Teachers in our composition program are affiliated with the English Department but come from a variety of programs. The remediation of the Literacy Narrative offered instructors the opportunity to adapt the project genre to their or their students' expertise.

Comment: Rather than assigning one or two audio essays that everyone listens to, I usually ask students to select a certain number of audio essays to listen to but leave the selection up to the students. The differences among the essays often prompts good discussion about what the conventions of this genre actually are.

Comment: One element that is not discussed in detail in the proposal but is commonly included for projects is the Cover Memo. In this document, which is used my most of our current Writing About Writing instructors, students explain their writing process, writing experience, and writing goals related to the individual projects. This reflective writing throughout the semester prompts them to do further reflection at the end of the term.

Comment: Instructors who teach the audio essay for this assignment typically reserve one of our Mac Labs and use class time to teach students to create podcast files in GarageBand. Although students learn to use this particular software during class time, some choose to record using other free software such as Audacity. Others choose to record the vocal pieces with their phones and then add in music or sound effects using GarageBand in one of the campus computer labs.

Sample Writing Project Two Guidelines for Video Essays
Re-Visioning Literacy Narratives through Video Essays

Context: For our first project, we considered our own experiences and memories as a resource for writing about literacy acquisition and practices. We drew from scholarly concepts to consider the sponsors that influenced us and to reconstruct the important moments in our literacy history. Our previous writing project was primarily a personal narrative for a relatively small audience within our classroom. This second project, however, requires that we re-conceptualize and remediate our narratives for the larger audience of the National Conversation on Writing and for the genre of the video essay.

Writing Scenario: Draw from your literacy narrative to create a video essay suitable for the National Conversation on Writing. Remember to highlight an element of your literacy acquisition or practices that might be unique to you or interesting to the audience of the National Conversation on Writing. You should not simply read your original text but rather should revise that text to suit a video essay.

Requirements: This assignment requires that you select an appropriate portion of your literacy narrative and that you revise the narrative for a video essay. Based on your looking at several sample videos, you should develop an understanding of conventions of a video essay and should employ these conventions. If you would like to propose an alternative medium suitable for NCow, you may do so in a written proposal to the instructor. Again, you will include a Cover Memo that explains your rhetorical choices. If you have difficulty making your video, please see me or visit the DLC in the Hicks Undergraduate Library before the project due date.

Goals: This project aims to (1) prompt our thinking about the way that remediation affects and is affected by the rhetorical situation, (2) allow us to write for an audience larger than our classroom, and (3) give us practice composing a video essay.

Sample Writing Project Two Guidelines for Poetry Slam
Remediating Narrative to Slam Poem

Context: Using your narrative and your own ideas of your literacy history, remediate your narrative to function as a slam poem.

Writing Scenario: You will need to choose a specific aspect, image, event, person, or idea from your narrative to be the focus of your slam poem. Consider the unique rhetorical situation of both the narrative and the slam poem as a guide for remediation. Lastly, memorize and prepare a performance for your poem that fits within the slam poetry genre.

Requirements
Completion of this project requires the following elements:
Rough draft (electronic submission and hard copy)
One peer review (see Peer Review Template)
Cover memo (see Cover Memo Guidelines)
Final draft (electronic submission, hard copy, and recitation)

Goals: This project aims to (1) allow us to use genre theory to remediate a composition, (2) give us practice analyzing the rhetorical situation of a text, (3) show comprehension of one of the following concepts literacy or sponsor through inclusion explicitly or implicitly in the slam poem.

Comment: Although some might find the inclusion of a poetry assignment to be unusual in a first year writing classroom, this Slam Poem project met similar goals as the projects used by other instructors in this unit. The students were learning about the rhetorical situation by remediating their narratives for public performance/recitation.

By working from the goals for the unit rather than working from a particular genre for students to produce, instructors were able to design a remediation assignment in which they felt they could effectively teach the concept of rhetorical situation.

Comment: The instructor for this particular project was a linguistics graduate student who was able to draw on his knowledge of genre theory. He introduced students to this theory, which they used not only to understand the slam poem in this assignment but also to later examine the genres within their own discourse communities and academic fields.

Sample Writing Project Three Guidelines
What did you say?: Investigating Discourse Communities Through Ethnography

Context: The content of our first two projects was our own personal literacy acquisition and practices: in Project One, we explored that content through narrative forms of writing, and in Project Two, we selected a portion of our narrative to present to the National Conversation on Writing. In the same way that we learned to read and write as children, we have learned to be a part of other communities. In this project, we'll explore the discourse practices of one of the communities in which we participate.

Writing Scenario: Employ primary research methods to investigate the discourse practices in a community of your choice and report your findings in an ethnographic essay that incorporates text and one additional medium (photo, video, chart, etc.). The project should be appropriate for fellow college students who may be unfamiliar with your chosen community. The project should focus on explaining what kinds of texts and language the people in the chosen discourse community use. For example, is there special slang the members/workers/players use to communicate with each other? What kinds of texts does the community use? What does this language say about the community? (See "Learning to Serve" for a model of the way that you might organize such a project.)

Requirements: For this project, you must keep a research log with all your research documents: observation notes, interview questions, communication with community members. You should date each of your entries and be careful in your record-keeping. To support your claims about your methods, you will submit your research log as a part of your final project packet. As mentioned above, the project should be text-based with a visual or audio element. It may, however, be formatted as a magazine article or newsletter article rather than a straightforward essay. As always, you will submit (for credit) your drafts and will include a Cover Memo that explains your rhetorical choices. Unless otherwise negotiated, projects should be about 1000 words.

Goals: This project aims to (1) prompt our thinking about the discourse practices that exist in our communities, (2) allow us to practice integrating multiple media into our writing, and (3) give us practice at conducting ethnographic (primary) research.

Sample Writing Project Four Guidelines
Analyzing Academic Discourse

Context: In our ethnographic essays, we investigated discourse practices with a community of our choice. Through examining artifacts such as texts and vocabulary, we came to understand how language works in relationship to membership within a community. That is, we came to realize that members of a certain community know how the language works in ways that are specific to their community. This analysis project furthers our thinking about language within communities by prompting our investigation of our own academic/career fields as a discourse community with specific practices of its own.

Writing Scenario: Select an academic research article from your field of study and conduct an analysis that responds to the first prompt and an additional two of your choosing:

All Analyses must respond to this prompt:

(1) Analyze the introduction of your article using the CARS model. (You should explain the ways that it follows or does not follow the model.)

Additionally, each writer should choose two of the following three prompts:

(2) Analyze the ways that the author demonstrates that he/she is writing into a conversation in the field of study. (Among other issues, you might consider the use of sources here.)

(3) Analyze the way that tone/writing style and format/design and explain what these factors tell us about the discourse (values) of the author/community.

(4) Analyze the way that the author(s) tie(s) the content/elements of the introduction to the rest of the article. (You might consider the organization pattern set forward in the introduction and examine the ways that the pattern is followed. Be sure to focus not only on what the article says but also on how is says. That is, does it give examples, report statistics, define a term, etc.)

> **Comment:** Students participated in developing the additional three prompts for analysis. Thus, students had an opportunity to write about the elements that they were interested in discussing.

Requirements: You may choose to answer these questions separately or to answer them in a single coherent essay. As is relevant in each section, your response(s) should be an analysis – that is, it should name the parts of the article (e.g. citations, headings, quotations, etc.) and explain their relationship to each other and to the claim you are making about the whole. It is essential that you demonstrate your ability to apply the concepts from our readings to your article, to make a claim about how article "works," to appropriately support your claims with specific evidence from the text,

and to provide appropriate citations for your evidence. I ask that before you answer the questions, you provide an appropriately formatted annotated citation for the article. (We will discuss annotations in class and further clarification will be provided.)

Goals: This project aims to (1) give us practice at applying the terms and theories that we've been reading, (2) allow us to gain a better understanding of the kinds of research that are valuable in our own fields, (3) highlight the way that academic discourse communities have the same features as other discourse communities in which we participate, and (4) require us to analyze and make claims that we must support with evidence.

Sample Portfolio Guidelines: Digital Writing and Research Portfolio

Context: Throughout the semester, we have completed various kinds of writing for various audiences. The Digital Writing Portfolio project gives us the chance to employ many of our developing writing skills and to demonstrate our understanding of important rhetorical terms. In this project, we will not only compile previous work but also add to this work through the writing of reflective elements and research-based Annotated Bibliographies/Literature Reviews.

Writing Scenario: Create a Digital Writing Portfolio that showcases the work that you have completed this semester to an audience that includes our classmates but also a larger online community. Your Portfolio should offer the audience a sense of your identity as a writer and should contextualize course materials through inclusion of your own reflections. Together, we will learn how to create websites that can provide a digital space for our writing. Although we may not be skillful web designers by the semester's end, we should still employ effective visual rhetoric as we design our portfolios. Consideration for the genre of the website is essential.

Requirements: The portfolio must be digital, that is, computer-based. At the very least, you should leave your portfolios online until one week after exams end. If you do not want to host your portfolio on your own Purdue webspace, please see me at least one week before the due date in order to discuss alternative options for submission. See below for a list of elements to include:

Required Elements:
1) Copies of Final Drafts of All Writing Projects
2) Glossary of Key Terms and Definitions (derived from the course materials)
3) Annotated Bibliography/Literature Review of a Writing Issue*
4) Reflective material that demonstrates your comprehension of course material (both practical and theoretical) and your attainment of course goals
5) Demonstration of and Discussion of your writing process (I'm imagining at least one project that includes all drafts, peer reviews, etc.)

Optional Elements:
1) Entries from your Reading Response Journal
2) Writing from other courses
3) Additional material that demonstrates your writing

*The Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review will be developed in your Writing Groups in preparation for/combination with your group presentations. As a group, you should develop an Annotated Bibliography of at least 9-10 credible sources. These sources should include both online and print texts. After choosing your sources, write an MLA or APA or Chicago style annotated

bibliography for your sources. Then narrow the sources further and complete a Literature Review that includes at least 4-5 sources about your topic. Your Literature Review must include appropriately cited material (quotes or paraphrase or references) from the sources and should be a minimum of two pages.

Goals: This project aims to (1) prompt our thinking about writing for the web and the ways that this writing might differ from other kinds of writing, (2) give us practice at creating texts that employ both visual elements and text, (3) introduce us to basic elements of web design, (4) allow us to practice research genres such as the Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review and (5) offer a space for reflection on our course activities and demonstration of our learning.

ICaP Goal	Literacy Narrative	Remediation of Literacy Narrative	Ethnographic Essay	Analysis of Research Article	Research Project Portfolio
To help students develop effective and efficient processes for writing by providing practice with planning, drafting, revising, and editing their writing in multiple genres using a variety of media.	Introduces students to and gives students practice in the genres of the literacy narrative.	Asks students to revise the literacy narrative for a new medium. Gives students the opportunity to re-mediate for audio/video/etc.	Allows students to gain experience in the incorporation of visuals into a word-based text.	Introduces students to the practice of analysis and to the genre of the academic article.	Encourages students to draw from and revise previous work to include in the portfolio. Additionally, this project, often web-based employs a new medium and genre.
To provide students with opportunities to write as a means of discovery and learning about themselves; as an integral part of inquiry about the material, social, and cultural contexts they share with others; and as a means of exploring, understanding, and evaluating ideas in academic	Directly asks students to write about their own literacy history, which encourages self-discovery.	Asks students to consider a community they are a part of and describe it, which fosters an understanding of shared cultural contexts.	Allows exploration of not only text as artifact but also other cultural practices.	Asks students to evaluate the features of a specific academic discourse community.	Presents the opportunity for students to create their writing own writing persona through the creation of personalized portfolio.

disciplines.					
To help students develop their abilities to create, interpret and evaluate a variety of types of texts integrating verbal and visual components.	Uses and applies Brandt's concept of sponsor; requiring interpretation of concepts for application	Requires students to remake the literacy narrative for a specific rhetorical situation that must be understood.	Requires inclusion of visual elements such as pictures related to places used by the discourse community and/or documents used by the community that may include visuals	Develops interpretive and evaluative abilities through consideration of credibility of academic articles gathered for assignment	Requires that students create a presentation of their research that includes a visual element. May also involve presentations of research or of portfolios to the class.
To prepare students for writing in later university courses across the curriculum by helping them learn to articulate, develop, and support a point through both first-hand and archival research	Introduces first hand research through the possibility of interviews as a source of material		Encourages students to collect data through surveys, interviews, observations, etc.	Introduces students library database searching skills by asking students to find multiple possible articles for analysis.	Requires research using secondary sources to complete the Annotated Bibliography and Literature Review portion of the portfolio project.
To help students understand that they can and should use writing for multiple academic, civic,	Introduces the idea that students have already used writing for multiple purposes and in	Focuses on the rhetorical situation and highlights the different nature of writing for different	Helps students see the purposes of writing within their selected discourse community.	Further develops the idea of writing in multiple situations by asking students to consider a	Asks students to consider academic purposes for writing.

and personal purposes.	multiple situations in their own lives.	purposes and audiences.		specific non-academic writing context.	
To help students understand the inherent rhetorical situation of writing.		Focuses on how to adapt an existing piece of writing with which students are familiar, taking into consideration audience, context, purpose, and writer	Requires students to collect and analyze artifacts from a discourse community and to view these as situated within that community		Allows students to contribute (through research and writing of Bibliographies and Literature Reviews) to the scholarly conversation about writing and discourse
To teach students to use the conventions of form, style, and citation and documentation of sources that are appropriate to their purposes for composing in a variety of media for a variety of rhetorical contexts.		Asks students to consider the conventions of an audio essay and apply those conventions to their own work.	Requires students to document the sources for their primary research.	Invites students to examine the conventions of form, style, and citation that are used within their selected fields of study.	Requires students to consider appropriate form, style, and documentation for the research/portfolio project they have undertaken.
To demonstrate that coherent structure, effective style, and grammatical and mechanical correctness contribute to a	Emphasizes possible organizational patterns for the literacy narrative	Encourages students to rework narratives using conventions in a way that establishes credibility with	Requires the students to examine their credibility to write within/about a community	Asks students to consider the conventions, structure, and style used by the subject of analysis, and to make inferences	Allows students to practice using conventions in their own work in order to contribute to their own credibility.

writer's credibility and authority.		the audience.		about why the writer uses those conventions.	

Correlation of Writing About Writing Projects with ICaP Goals

Student Samples

The previous section of ICaP goals offers a correlation of projects and outcomes. This section of student samples offers the chance to see how exactly students are fulfilling the ICaP goals that correlate with their various writing projects.

The following links provide sample portfolios for students who have completed the Writing About Writing sequence. All portfolios are used with student permissions. To view permission forms, please contact Laurie A. Pinkert (lapinker@purdue.edu).

Yunho Lim's course portfolio:
Yunho's portfolio includes the Journal Prompts that were assigned throughout the semester. These correspond with the readings listed in the coursepack and offer a reflective space for students to think about course concepts. These, too, help students to integrate the vocabulary of the course in a writing-to-learn exercise. (Portfolio Link:
http://www.lauriepinkert.com/portfolios/yunho/index.html)

Matt Hollars course portfolio:
In his portfolio, Matthew includes his literature review of the issue of coherence and cohesion. In it, he addresses well the genre of the literature review and demonstrates the way that this smaller writing assignment as part of the larger portfolio can still integrate elements of research and research writing. (Portfolio Link: http://www.lauriepinkert.com/portfolios/matt/index.html)

Marie Bradburn's course portfolio:
Marie uses quotations from her own work throughout the semester to explain her projects and to demonstrate the fulfillment of ICaP goals. You can see her quoted material in orange. Her academic article analysis, which can be found under the "Audience-Focused Writing" Section demonstrates the application of the CARS model to a research introduction and the discussion of the values in her field as demonstrated by research writing. (Portfolio Link:
http://www.lauriepinkert.com/portfolios/marie/index.htm)

Comment: When Caitlan and I drafted the initial chart to map the relationship between the Writing About Writing projects and the ICaP Goals, we found that most of the projects involved multiple course goals. This supported the eventual decision to revise the common curriculum to four units instead of five. Since all the course goals were being met with the first four units, we felt that we could eliminate the final unit without sacrificing course outcomes.

Rather than showing this chart in order to students to argue that they are meeting the goals of the course, I ask my students compile a reflective portfolio in which they discuss the ways that they have met the ICaP goals for first year composition.

Additionally, when I began teaching our English 505 courses for new teachers in the ICaP program, I asked first year TAs to map their units onto the ICaP Program goals in the beginning of their second semester of teaching. This chart has proven useful as a heuristic for course design and as a reflective tool.

Since the development of this chart, the ICaP program has revised its course goals to align with the WPA Outcomes Statement for First Year Writing. The syllabus approach has mapped the four primary units onto these new program goals.

Comment: The sample portfolios were selected to represent various ways that students represented themselves and their writing. We offered some description of a particular element in the portfolio that was unique to each writer.

During the presentation of the proposal to our Introductory Writing Committee, we found that the student samples were, perhaps, the most compelling evidence for the approach. The samples allowed committee members to see the ways that students were evidencing not only the ICaP goals but also the abilities that a Writing About Writing approach emphasized.

Comment: These websites were initially created by modifying open source templates in Dreamweaver and were housed on students' webspace that is provided by Purdue. However, since students' webpages will not be accessible once they graduate or leave Purdue, these sites have also been archived on my website as well. The links included here reflect the archived versions of the sites.

Since free webdesign programs like Wordpress and Wix have become increasingly common, some instructors integrate these programs instead of teaching webdesign at a more basic level.

Albert Louis's course portfolio:

In his portfolio, Albert Louis aptly highlights the difficulty of assessing the rhetorical situation when writing online: "If my instructor reads this, I don't know if she'll like my sense of humor or sass when I write, but if my peers are reading this, I don't want them to get bored of reading some seriously boring website. I'm trying to moderate, be funny when I should be, and be serious when I should be. It is a difficult process, but I feel I did a fine job on this website." His Project 3 which focuses on the discourse community of gamers shows a students' use of a website to discuss and display ethnographic research findings. (Portfolio Link:
http://www.lauriepinkert.com/portfolios/albert/index.html)