

**Writing Board**  
Annual Report  
AY 2011-12

2011-12 was a year of transition for the Writing Board as the Board decided to develop more fully its advisory capacity. This was driven in part by the prominent role of writing in the new General Education framework.

The primary focus of the fall was the organizing of the 16th Annual Faculty Development Workshop, which was held on January 18, 2012 in conjunction with the 4th Annual Adjuncts and the Academic Conversation dinner the evening before. Both events were well received (see summaries of the feedback below). The day-long workshop had an explicit focus on writing in the disciplines (the theme was “Writing in the Disciplines: How YOU can do it”).

Members of the Board also met with the Committee on General Education at the end of the fall semester to discuss writing in the new GenEd (especially writing in the disciplines) and also begin thinking about how the Board might help COGE in its work. As a follow up to this, feedback from the Faculty Development Workshop was shared with COGE.

Feedback from both events was shared with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning. Based on the feedback the Board and the FCTL decided to co-host an event in the spring focused on informal writing. Unfortunately, logistical issues prevented this event from taking place; however, it is hope this type of collaboration based on feedback from the FDW will continue.

The major undertaking for the spring was the proposed reorganization of the Board, responding to a desire that the Board have a more active and visible role on campus in supporting writing instruction. The proposal was forwarded to the Executive Committee of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee in time for their May 4 meeting and is to be voted on by the UCC at the May 18 meeting.

Throughout the year the Board has worked to create a website that can serve as a resource on writing instruction for the campus. The website is up, although it is still a work in progress. Once it is fleshed out, the website will address feedback, from this and past FDWs, that information from the workshops be made available and accessible. The website will also serve as a venue for discipline specific resources to be made available (again, addressing feedback from faculty) and as another link between the various entities on campus that support writing instruction on campus.

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16th Annual Faculty Development Workshop  
January 18, 2012  
Evaluation and Feedback -- 29 Feedback forms returned

How satisfied were you with the quality of today’s workshop, led by Dr. Chris Anson? (please check one)

o Very Satisfied = 22

o Satisfied = 5

o Somewhat Satisfied = 1

o Dissatisfied

o Very Dissatisfied

Would you like to see this format at future Faculty Development Workshops?

Yes = 20 (More in depth experience with the scholar/expert is great! Yes, esp. given the COGE charge – a lot to digest; Yes, maybe slightly abbreviated; Could be shorter day; Yes, it was great! Yes – I liked the format of a presentation along with opportunities for group discussion; Yes – it worked well; Yes – maybe the “low stakes” assignments; The small group, larger discussion feedback worked well.)

Both = 2 (I liked this and previous format. Either OK; Yes, but I also have found the panel-presentation format useful.)

No = 1 (Not without microphones)

Additional Feedback/Comments:

- Fascinating!
- This was a useful presentation – I liked the chance to work with the ideas during the presentation. I do think the focus on “in the disciplines” was too weak. Not all the ideas discussed are equally transferrable to, for instance, genre-specific disciplinary writing.
- Great ideas – “writing to learn”, “learning to write”
- Great information and ideas packed in this workshop! More “workshop” time to write, think and talk with peers about concepts and our own experiences and ways of making meaning. I shut down about an hour before end of AM session. Great stuff – just not enough time given to help me process. ENGAGE ME THROUGH WRITING – i.e. demo informal writing prompts with group. Provide PowerPoint slides too. See M. Schiro’s book on curriculum theories – 4 competing theories.
- Timing on different workshops seemed off.
- Specifics! Specifics! Enjoyed sharing common areas of interest among departments.
- Group and whole seminar discussions during lecture worked well.
- I think Dr. Anson is a gifted presenter with an excellent message. I agree wholeheartedly with the lessons on writing assignment design. Unfortunately most of the things he presented are already part of my practice, so I didn’t get much out of it. That said, I did pick up a few valuable tidbits I’d like to work on w/ my classes. Last part went a bit fast. I maybe could have gotten more out of the ideas at the end if they weren’t rushed through. NOTE: I found the info presented in the intro to the afternoon session by Dr. Anson very interesting. Regarding all the WID models...I wish I knew what direction RIC wanted to go w/ this so informed department planning can proceed.
- I came away with a lot of new ideas about writing assignments in courses.
- Liked the group discussions interspersed. Info went too quickly at times – will we have access to the ppt?
- Would be great to have a workshop on low-stakes informal writing assignments. Really liked his expose on write to learn.
- Presenter was wonderful. I learned a great deal and my teaching will be enriched by thinking more about this topic. Would have liked copies of slides to refer to.

- I liked the old format better – many of us had problems hearing – but gave up asking people to speak up. This seemed to be a smaller group – perhaps some had heard the speaker the night before or ??
- Hard to hear some comments; would be good to have portable microphones for use at tables.
- Would prefer it as a morning and lunch. I had to leave to attend to dept./course business.
- OMG. I learned so much, and I can't wait to revise my syllabi and re-think my assgts. for spring. 5 days left!
- Helpful, relevant, great delivery.
- Maybe a few more handouts w/ important points – but otherwise great and important topic, excellent presenter.
- Excellent!
- Some great material here; in the latter part, would have liked to have had a chance to take more notes on some of the powerpoint ideas thrown up – not sure if all are in the accompanying packet – maybe they are – hope so.
- Great speaker! Very helpful ideas, very clear presentation, great slides and handouts.
- Chris Anson was fabulous! It would be helpful to have access to his Powerpoint later, if he would agree to make it available to us.
- The morning sessions clearly got at important issues connected to writing and learning. Practical, timely,
- informative!!
- This was great: I got many good ideas (from both the speaker and the workshop participants) which I will be incorporating into my classes.
- It would be good to hold similar workshops at departmental/program level.
- I will definitely incorporate some of the strategies learned into my writing course.

#### Group Discussions.

How satisfied were you with the group discussion in which you participated? (please check one)

- Very Satisfied = 6
- Satisfied = 9
- Somewhat Satisfied
- Dissatisfied = 1
- Very Dissatisfied

#### Additional Feedback/Comments:

- Good information presented; confident faculty; ready to tackle.
- N/A – was facilitator.
- Liked interdisciplinary conversation – expanded my ideas about writing genres, etc. (English, anthropology, communication, management & education). Awareness that there are different genres, name them, go in depth on 3-4.
- Felt a little too short; I will need a lot more discussion w/ other depts. to help conceptualize the WID course.
- All very constructive.
- Wish more time was allotted for group discussions.

- Well facilitated; helped me solidify my ideas for WID that I will bring to my department.
- I wish there were a way to get faculty to stay for them. People leave, and then complain about the fact that they don't know how to teach writing!
- Good idea to try groups by subject.
- Wanted to start with a broader perspective.
- Did not attend – sorry.
- Unable to attend.
- I was not able to stay for the discussion sessions.
- Had to leave early.
- I did not attend the afternoon session.

What additional support would you like to see provided either by the Writing Board or by other entities on campus to support your development of your writing in the discipline course and other facets of writing instruction?

- Someone to help facilitate departmental conversation, because I don't [know what's] (illegible, my best guess) happening. Resources – we have not time, not enough faculty, etc. This stuff is so important, and it is not going to happen unless there is [more time] (illegible, my best guess) and support.
- Departments need guidance. Uniformity and heterogeneity need to be developed. Need a structure. Dept  $\leftrightarrow$  RIC
- Workshops on creating assignments; how to give feedback; what to do w/varying backgrounds.
- Workshops on engaging students in processes of peer review; peer observation/coaching (not tied to formal evaluations); \*How do we not get bogged down in framing students' writing as deficient?\*
- I loved this for its support and discussion of longer research papers – but...MORE! Especially given the 'research fluency' outcome, this is essential. I feel such a divide btw my sense of what a research paper is and what my students seem capable of producing. What exactly do we want?
- Departmentalized workshops.
- I wish Dr. Anson would have helped us specifically with this issue [writing in the discipline course]. (All models he presented not open to us.); I think we need to reach consensus about where WID will fit in our program first.
- Then, maybe the WB could support the development of how to incorporate the explicit teaching of writing w/in the course and how to assess it. We really need help here (w/assessment)!
- More discussion and guidelines on the departmental level.
- Opportunities to continue discussion within and across departments about the kinds of writing students are involved in.
- More help with ELL students in writing English. If there could be a contact # phone or member staff/faculty to contact for getting help for a student – we might find out that the student is supposed to be attending support sessions but isn't. I try to give the student help on writing assignments but I often see little improvement. We are developing a writing course in my dept. However I teach other courses as well. If the Writing Center could come up with and disseminate a list like Anson mentioned. A

- numbered list with common writing problems – 1. Noun- verb agreement – suggestions  
 2. Incomplete sentence (or an example) 3. Splicing \_\_\_\_\_
- Focused efforts on individual schools/departments to develop writing assignments in the particular majors.
  - It would be helpful if there was a follow-up by IT or FCTL on some of the technology Chris mentioned; workshops for individual dept?
  - Plan a follow up to this session – for those who attended to examine how they may have implemented some ideas; perhaps have some attendees offer a variation of Dr. Anson’s ideas to a wider faculty audience; can Faculty T/L Center take an initiative here?

## General Feedback

What other feedback or suggestions can you provide on this year’s Faculty Development workshop?

- I’d love to see a keynote speaker for this event who was not a writing scholar. And the lack of vegetarian food, but you know that!
- Folks are still “up in the air” about where the writing instruction requirement/issue is going and that makes many uneasy. What that has more form I believe people and depts. will run with it.
- Move (more?) group conversation from 11-12; more activity and less “talking at”; more writing!
- Nice food.
- In general, I feel the FDW has sometimes, but not always, been a valuable use of a whole day during the critical week before the start of a new semester. I would love for these workshops to be ½ days & sprinkled throughout the year. Other weeks in Jan? May? March break?
- Excellent. I really like the workshop approach.
- Excellent. Poor attendance in final portion of program.
- Best workshop I have attended (and I have just about done them all). Of all of them, this was the most practical.
- The point of the group discussions was unclear.
- This workshop was outstanding – I would just appreciate more like it.
- Make sure food is really hot!! Microphones – might have this in a smaller room if there are fewer participants.
- Thank you for providing easy access to high-quality professional development.
- Enjoy the opportunity each January to learn from knowledgeable, experienced and interesting nationally recognized speakers AND the experience of brain-storming innovative approaches to integrating writing into the curriculum with colleagues.
- I thought Writing Board & Praveena did a fabulous job of organizing & running this event. Thank you.
- Great speaker – knowledgeable and engaging – intersected will with the group and I feel I learned a few things of great potential use.

Do you have any suggestions for topics/issues for future workshops (either full-day, half-day, or shorter sessions such as brown bags)? Please consider volunteering to create or participate in a

session in 2013. Or, your suggestions can include approaches or point of view that should be shared. Please include your suggestions here or send them to writingboard@ric.edu. Thank you.

- I'd love more practical, hands-on workshops – bring an assignment and work on it, or something.
- Feedback – teacher & peer; identifying genres in your discipline/within disciplines; writing to learn/using low stakes writing assignments; using technology (wikis, blogs, discussion boards, post it notes) to encourage/facilitate writing.
- Building a comprehensive curriculum to avoid duplication and repetition in the various courses in the major; targeting curricula to a changing job market.
- How to better help our English Language[ Learning] (illegible, my best guess) students in writing!!
- Group activity where all look at a single paper and discuss possible responses – as we kind of did here – is always informative and worth repeating.

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4th Annual Adjuncts and the Academic Conversation

January 17, 2012

Evaluation and Feedback – 36 forms returned

Did you find the guest speaker, Dr. Chris Anson, to be informative or useful? (please check one)

- o Very Useful/Informative = 14
- o Useful/Informative = 16
- o Somewhat Useful/Informative = 6
- o Not Useful/Informative
- o Completely Unhelpful

Additional Feedback/Comments:

- Could this be a week sooner to allow for time to adopt good ideas?
- Excellent topic and excellent presenter. Really interesting topic that has an important value to consider ways to incorporate new methods.
- Thank you.
- More practical advice rather [than] product advertising would have been helpful.
- This method of providing students with feedback would be extremely useful in commenting on mathematics exams (after scanning them in).
- Lots of interconnected ideas, techniques – conveyed the complexity of adding a new technology. Like to see and hear about works in progress.
- Interesting but problematic – adjuncts may not have access to the hardware.
- Provocative technology – expands horizons here.
- Glad to learn about this use of technology. I think I'll try it.
- Great topic – outside my area of expertise but very pertinent to my teaching dilemmas.
- He was informative on the topic of Jing. However might not be useful for all areas of study: primarily in writing intense courses.
- Loved it – had no idea SC existed!
- I had never heard of this technology before and it did make me think about alternative ways of giving feedback.

- It would have been helpful to have had written information regarding screen capture to take with us.
- Not sure what the purpose/intent was in relation to its audience (RIC adjuncts). I can see certain paper grading being helped using SC, but I'm not sure if the software is generalizable across disciplines.
- Great information on new ways to provide feedback to students.
- Interesting technique!
- Very interesting way to grade papers/comment on papers. Definitely worth a try to see what students think!
- I'll have to try this!
- Provocative! I wish that the discussion was more open-ended/speculative. It was more instrumental instead, e.g. "how to" and questions about methodology of the study.
- Interesting idea – has potential; local RIC implementation would be easier with IT support.

Do you find this year's format for the evening to be useful (i.e., having a guest speaker during coffee and dessert)? (Please check one)

- o Very Useful/Informative = 23
- o Useful/Informative = 11
- o Somewhat Useful/Informative = 2
- o Not Useful/Informative
- o Completely Unhelpful

Would you prefer an alternate format? (Please describe)

- Nope – worked well.
- I wish we had better audio for the presentation.
- Donovan staff excellent!
- Worked well.
- Keep this format. Perhaps serve spicier food.
- I think the speaker should be during dinner and have dessert for open discussion. Most are full and tired after dinner to fully pay attention.
- No!
- Good opportunity for networking with colleagues.
- No. This is very efficient.
- Perhaps addressing some pragmatic and academic issues that RIC adjuncts have via Q&A format.
- (Maybe have questions collected ahead of time by the adjuncts.)
- Have an opportunity for adjuncts to meet each other from different departments.
- Not really a mechanism for meeting adjuncts outside of one's dept...however – would rather learn something new than talking more...
- Well done!
- I think a variety of formats can work; this is not a biggie.
- No. As usual, it was a nice event.
- Worked very well. Almost all folks stayed the entire time.

What additional resources or events would be helpful to you as part-time faculty? What types of events would you attend?

- Technology, e.g. Blackboard
- Each of these dinners have focused on writing which is a topic important to all. It would be good to have a different topic too.
- Special education trends – bridging the gap.
- Other opportunity to talk w/ adjuncts to help understand better ways to navigate the role of adjunct vs. traditional faculty.
- Loved it.
- Differentiation for varied learners; est. clear expectations.
- Any such as this.
- An adjunct orientation to discuss all necessary topics: textbooks, available services, safety issues, student resources, library services, etc.; new technology available for innovative courses specifically tailored to the adjunct instructor.
- Conduct event 2x a year.
- Really liked the two-hour format – good length of time...
- I really like this event over break!
- To me, the very fact that RIC does things for PT faculty is great! It made me feel more part of a community. The topic has to be at least somewhat relevant, but it's almost secondary.

### **Writing Board Membership**

The Writing Board consists of 12 persons. The *ex officio* members are

- The Director of Writing -- Becky Caouette
- The Director of the Writing Center – Claudine Griggs
- The Director of the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning – Joe Zornado
- Coordinator of First Year Seminar – Quenby Hughes

Rotating members of the Writing Board appointed by the Executive Committee of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee are:

- Two faculty members from the Faculty of Arts and Sciences, at least one of which is from Math/Science: Namita Sarawagi (2012-2014)  
Mikaila Arthur (2012-2014)
- One faculty member from the Feinstein School of Education and Human Development Martha Horn (2012-2014)
- One faculty member from the School of Social Work  
Deborah Siegel (2012-2014)
- One faculty member from the School of Management:  
Randy DeSimone (2012-2013)
- One faculty member from the School of Nursing:  
Kiersten Brennan (2012-2014)
- One faculty member from Adams Library: Tish Brennan (2012-2013)
- One faculty member from the Composition and Rhetoric faculty:  
Mike Michaud (2012-2013)