

To: Sue Abbotson, Chair of UCC  
 From: Mike Michaud, Chair of Writing Board  
 Date: 5/16/13  
 Subject: Annual Report (2012/2013)

### Writing Board Membership

Position	2012/2013	2013/2014
Chair	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud
Director of (Writing)	Becky Caouette	Becky Caouette
Director (Writing Center)	Claudine Griggs	Claudine Griggs
Director (FCTL)	Joe Zornado	Joe Zornado
Coordinator (First Year Seminar)	Quenby Hughes	Quenby Hughes
Faculty (FAS) (2) -- 1 Math/CS	Mikaila Arthur/Namita Sarawagi	Mikaila Arthur/Namita Sarawagi
Faculty (FSEHD) (1)	Martha Horn	Martha Horn
Faculty (SOSW) (1)	Deborah Seigel	Deborah Seigel
Faculty (SOM) (1)	Randy DeSimone	Randy DeSimone
Faculty (SON) (1)	Kiersten Brennan	Kiersten Brennan
Faculty (Adams Library)	Tish Brennan	Tish Brennan
Faculty (Comp/Rhet)	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud

Blue = Ex Officio  
 Green = Rotating

### Writing Board Meeting Dates (2012/2013)

- 10/10/12
- 10/31/12
- 11/28/12
- 2/27/13
- 3/27/13
- 4/24/13 (cancelled due to member unavailability--conducted business via email)

## **Review of Committee Activities**

### *Adjunct Dinner & Faculty Development Workshop (FDW)*

As in previous years, this year's primary Writing Board activities were the annual Adjuncts and the Academic Conversation dinner (1/15/13) and the FDW (1/16/13). This year's FDW, "Yes You Can! Using Writing to Facilitate Learning in the Disciplines," was a follow-up to the 2012 workshop. Whereas in 2012 our speaker, Dr. Chris Anson, focused on how to create effective writing assignments and respond to student writing, this year Dr. Anson focused on the ways faculty can use writing as a tool to facilitate learning (write-to-learn). The completion of this year's FDW marks the end of a two-year project that the Writing Board initiated in the fall of 2011, where we have tried to be responsive to faculty feedback requesting more "nuts and bolts" strategies for teaching of writing.

Dr. Anson was well-received again this year, despite a smaller turnout due to inclement weather. Appendixes A & B contain feedback on both the Adjunct Dinner and FDW a.

### *Writing Board Website*

This year, the chair picked up where last year's Board left off and worked to create an attractive, useful, and easily accessible "Resources" page on the Writing Board website. This work has been completed and the chair, along with the Board, has undertaken the task of publicizing this new resource. It can be accessed at: <http://www.ric.edu/writingboard/resources.php>.

### *Professional Development*

In addition to hosting the Adjunct Dinner and FDW, the Writing Board, and the chair of the Board, in particular, engaged in numerous professional development initiatives this year. First and foremost, the Board fulfilled its charge to "Meet regularly to discuss writing issues." As I have noted in my monthly reports, in previous years the bulk of the Writing Board's time was taken up with planning the two annual events. This year, with the Writing Board chair granted release time to take on additional commitments, I sought to off-load the planning activity and foreground the discussion of writing issues during Writing Board meetings. For the most part, these efforts were successful. I handled the behind-the-scenes decisions for the planning of our two major events and consulted with the Board as needed. This freed up our meeting times for the discussion of writing-related questions, concerns, etc.

Writing conversations proved fruitful not just in the sense that they gave members an opportunity to talk about the role of writing instruction in their own courses, to acquire information about best-practices in the teaching of writing, and to consult with one another and writing faculty, but also in the sense that they initiated conversations about how the Board could work towards its task of providing "materials, suggestions, and support to individual departments and faculty members." In one case, a conversation during one of our meetings led to the Chair being invited to visit with the School of Social Work to discuss writing-related issues and answer

questions. In another case, a discussion led to the creation of a bibliography of sources on the teaching of writing in math and computer science courses.

Within the Board itself, members read and discussed articles on the teaching of writing, shared teaching practices, and provided one another with support. In short, I believe that we achieved our goal of transforming the Writing Board from a group that plans writing-related events to one that both plans such events *and* makes conversations about the teaching of writing a regular part of the time it spends together during monthly meetings.

### *Activities of the Chair*

As I have related in earlier reports, during my first year as chair I tried to learn effective strategies for meeting my key charges to “Facilitate and coordinate the support of writing instruction on campus” and “facilitate collaboration between the Writing Board” and other entities on campus. I met these charges via several avenues:

1. offered support and guidance to members of the Writing Board (half of whom were entirely new to the Board);
2. met with several campus units to support and advance the teaching of writing in the disciplines (e.g. School of Nursing, School of Social Work);
3. met with individual faculty members to offer support and guidance in the teaching of writing;
4. coordinated with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL) to lead co-op workshops on various elements of writing instruction;
5. attended weekly co-op workshops at the FCTL to learn more about the needs of faculty members and to make myself present for questions, trouble-shooting, and information exchange;
6. collaborated with Quenby Hughes, director of First Year Seminar (FYS), to offer support to faculty teaching FYS courses;
7. communicated with department chairs to share resources and offer support and guidance on matters related to the teaching of writing in the disciplines.

In sum, during my first year I worked to both support and collaborate with faculty and campus units in both concrete and specific ways and to make myself visible as a writing “consultant” on campus. I took a great deal of pleasure from this work and hope that I have been successful in my efforts to assist faculty across disciplines on the “how to” of teaching writing.

### **Decisions Approved**

In addition to finalized its meeting schedule for the fall 2013 semester, the Board has agreed on a speaker and theme for the 2014 FDW. We’ll be focusing on plagiarism and student writing and asking our proposed speaker, Dr. Rebecca Howard of Syracuse University and the Citation Project, to talk both about what she has learned from her research on student writing and

plagiarism and to offer guidance on how to teach writing in ways that support student success (and thus avoid the exigence to plagiarize).

The Board deliberated carefully in choosing a theme for the 2014 FDW, feeling as though two years with Dr. Anson provided useful, hands-on guidance on the “how to” of writing and wanting to continue a focus on a) serving faculty desires for practical advice and b) focusing on writing-related issues that are of concern to faculty across disciplines. We feel as though in the past four or so years, we have worked to be attuned to the needs of faculty *across* disciplines as we’ve planned and organized the FDW. So long as we receive feedback that reminds us that too much of what’s discussed at the FDW is only useful for humanities and social science faculty, we know that there’s still work to do in meeting the needs of and providing support for all RIC faculty.

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In closing, I’d like to thank the chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee for the opportunity to share this report and Rhode Island College for the support it provides the Writing Board.

## Appendix A: Feedback from Adjunct Dinner

	Very Useful/Informative	Useful/Informative	Somewhat Useful/Informative	Not Useful/Informative	Completely Unhelpful	Responses
Guest Speaker	24	4	1	0	0	29
Format	18	11	1	0	0	30
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>59</b>
<b>Guest Speaker Feedback Responses</b>						
Enjoyed Chris Anson's presentation (general)				7		
Thought-provoking, practical, useful exercises				12		
Even better than 2012				2		
Will use suggestions in class				9		
Less lecture, more interaction				1		
N/A - already familiar with material				1		
				<b>32</b>		<b>Total Guest Feedback</b>
<b>Format Feedback Responses</b>						
Well-organized presentation				3		
Thought-provoking, practical, useful exercises				2		
Appreciates RIC supporting adjuncts				1		
General applause for the event				3		
Ran a bit long				1		
Please provide context for memorial/tribute				1		
Couldn't hear/please use microphone				2		
				<b>13</b>		<b>Total Format Feedback</b>
<b>Other Resources Responses</b>						
Writing Research page on Blackboard (links to support and info)				1		
Enjoyed chance to network/provide more adjunct gatherings				6		
Give assignment examples (by dept/via Blackboard)				1		
General Blackboard resources				1		
				<b>9</b>		<b>Total Gen</b>

## Appendix B: Feedback from Faculty Development Workshop

	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Somewhat Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Responses
<b>Morning Session</b>	19	2	1	0	0	22
<b>Afternoon Session</b>	12	1	0	0	1	14
<b>Total Responses</b>	<b>31</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>36</b>
<b>Morning Session Feedback Responses</b>						
Enjoyed Chris Anson's presentation				7		
Exercises were thought-provoking, practical, useful				12		
Good balance of lecture/discussion/exercises				1		
Chris Anson long on examples, short on slides				2		
Enjoyed interaction with colleagues				3		
Geared more toward humanities than sciences				1		
Enjoyed lunch				2		
				<b>28</b>	<b>Total AM</b>	
<b>Afternoon Session Feedback Responses</b>						
Enjoyed faculty teaching faculty				3		
Exercises were practical and useful				7		
Enjoyed interaction with colleagues				5		
Presentations went off track				2		
Excellent information on Blackboard/online tools				1		
				<b>18</b>	<b>Total PM</b>	
<b>General Comments Responses</b>						
Have coffee/snacks available throughout				3		
Keep conversation going/follow-up workshops				2		
Let's do some writing!				1		
Make speaker's slides/bibliography available				2		
General applause				4		
Please use microphone				1		
Room too cold				1		
				<b>14</b>	<b>Total Gen</b>	
<b>Workshops suggested:</b>						
Assessment						
Integrating WTL into Individual Courses						