

To: Sue Abbotson, Chair of UCC
 From: Mike Michaud, Chair of Writing Board
 Date: 5/16/14
 Subject: Annual Report (2013/2014)

I am pleased to submit this report summarizing the activity of the Writing Board (WB) for the academic year 2013/2014. You'll find, first, a review of the Writing Board membership going forward (note: I have been elected to another two-year term as WB chair). From there, I will review the work of the WB and the Chair.

Writing Board Membership

Position	2013/2014	2014/2015	2015/2016
Chair	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud
Director of (Writing)	Becky Caouette	Becky Caouette	Becky Caouette
Director (Writing Center)	Claudine Griggs	Claudine Griggs	Claudine Griggs
Director (FCTL)	Joe Zornado/Bonnie Macdonald	Bonnie Macdonald	Bonnie Macdonald
Coordinator (FYS)	Quenby Hughes	Quenby Hughes	Quenby Hughes
Faculty (FAS) (2) -- 1 Math/CS	Mikaila Arthur/Namita Sarawagi	Mikaila Arthur/David Abrahamson	TBA/David Abrahamson
Faculty (FSEHD) (1)	Martha Horn	Martha Horn	Martha Horn
Faculty (SOSW) (1)	Deborah Seigel	Deborah Seigel	TBA
Faculty (SOM) (1)	Randy DeSimone	Randy DeSimone	Randy DeSimone
Faculty (SON) (1)	Kiersten Brennan	Kiersten Brennan	TBA
Faculty (Adams Library)	Tish Brennan	Tish Brennan	Tish Brennan
Faculty (Comp/Rhet)	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud

Blue = Ex Officio

Green = Rotating

Writing Board Meeting Dates (2013/2014)

- 9/25/13
- 10/30/13
- 11/20/14
- 2/26/14
- 3/26/14

Review of WB Activity

This year, our busiest in some time, the WB sponsored/held three events on campus, the First Pages event (in collaboration with First-Year Writing), the annual Adjunct Dinner and Faculty Development Workshop, and a College Lecture Series talk. In what follows, I summarize developments at each of these events.

First-Pages

The WB co-sponsored a Writing Week event and exhibit, First Pages (10/21/13). This was the first time the Board collaborated with the First-Year Writing program on this event. Following the FYW program's lead, we solicited First Pages of writing from faculty across the disciplines, ultimately assembling a collection of 26 faculty First Pages. These were put on display in Adams Library during Writing Week and the week following it. From our 26 contributors, we solicited 10 faculty to join us at our First Pages event, held in the Rinehardt Room of Adams Library. At this event, contributors read their First Pages and briefly discussed the challenges and opportunities of professional writing. We heard from a diverse range of faculty, from across the college, about a diverse range of written genres. Food was provided by the FYW program. Attendance was around 15-20. The event seemed to be well-received by all who attended. One participant suggested we repeat the event each semester.

Adjunct Dinner & Faculty Development Workshop (FDW)

As in previous years, the WB's primary activities this year were the annual Adjuncts and the Academic Conversation dinner (1/14/14) and FDW (1/15/14). After two years of workshops on the nuts of bolts of teaching writing with Dr. Chris Anson, the Board decided that we wanted to take the FDW in a different direction, but still keep the event focused on issues of writing and pedagogy that are relevant to faculty across disciplines. For the first time, we recruited a speaker from outside the field of Composition/Writing Studies, Dr. Susan Blum, an anthropologist from The University of Notre Dame and author of *My Word:*

Plagiarism and College Culture (Cornell University Press, 2009).

Dr. Blum was well-received at the FDW. Here is a sampling of some of the positive feedback we received on her talk:

I am currently reading and enjoying and learning her book. Her presentation was interesting, thoughtful, and engaging.

Wish it were longer—Susan had a lot to share! Will read the book!

The delivery style of Susan Blum was very appealing and comfortable for me. One of the best presenters at these annual sessions.

Additional feedback on the adjunct and FDW events can be found at the end of this report, in Appendix A.

The afternoon sessions at this year's FDW were particularly well-designed and well-attended. We had some truly terrific panels--among them, one that included tutors from the Writing Center, another that featured Randy DeSimone and Deborah Siegel addressing the "emotional" dimensions of responding to plagiarism, and a third featuring members of the Academic Integrity Board, who shared their experiences working with students who had been brought before them on charges of plagiarism or academic dishonesty. In total, there were six panels during the afternoon session and I feel as though they were the some of the strongest we have ever assembled, bringing together a diverse range of faculty from across the disciplines to think and talk and learn about our day's theme.

Finally, I will note that our end-of-the-day summary discussion, led by new FCTL Director Bonnie MacDonald, was among the best-attended and most thought-provoking that I have seen and participated in. Two dozen or more faculty stayed on until the end of the day to participate.

College Lecture Event

This year, for the first time that I am aware of, the WB applied for and received funds from the College Lecture Committee. With these funds, we invited members of the Quinnipiac University Writing Across the Curriculum (QUWAC) group to come and talk about the establishment of WAC at their institution and to advise us on further WAC/WID work here at Rhode Island College. QUWAC sent to speakers on April 16, 2014 for a lecture in

Adams Library. The event was well-attended, with members of the Writing Board and the faculty from across the disciplines in attendance. The lecture was entitled “Building Writing-in-the-Disciplines Programs in Higher Education” and the speakers were Dr. Mark Hoffman (Department of Computer Science) and Andrew Delohery (Associate Vice-President of Retention and Academic Success). Dr. Hoffman and Mr. Delohery defined writing-across-the-curriculum and then talked about the way they have built their program at Quinnipiac. Their talk was well-received.

Review of Chair’s Activity

As chair of the Writing Board, my work continues to be divided between two tasks: 1) leading the WB, 2) outreach to the RIC community to provide support for faculty on writing pedagogy. As regards the former, I plan and lead our monthly meetings and lead the WB in planning events such as those described above. As regards the latter, I provide various professional development opportunities as regards the teaching of writing. In what follows, I will speak about the professional development I offered during the 2013/2014 year.

Three-Part Workshop Series on Assignment Design (fall 2013)

During the fall semester, in collaboration with the Faculty Center for Teaching and Learning (FCTL), I offered a three-part workshop on writing writing assignments which focused on three questions:

- What makes a good writing assignment?
- How do you design effective writing assignment guidelines?
- How do you successfully sequence formal writing assignments?

I devoted one workshop to each question and so the workshops built on one another over the course of the fall term. They were held according to the FCTL co-op workshop schedule (twice in one week). Attendance was not especially large, but enough faculty came out to make it worthwhile. Any opportunity to get faculty in a room talking about writing is an opportunity to potentially make positive change and I have learned in my first few years as Writing Board Chair to be grateful for the chance to talk about teaching writing to whomever happens to show up for a given workshop (and to be flexible enough to treat my own plans as a rough outline to be partially abandoned in the event that other questions and problems arise).

Writing in First-Year Seminar (spring 2014)

During the spring semester, I collaborated with the FCTL and the First-Year Seminar (FYS) program to lead a series of discussions on the role of writing and writing instruction in FYS courses. These went especially well. I recruited faculty who had taught in the FYS program and asked them to serve as discussion leaders. Here are the faculty who participated:

Janice Okoomian (3/6/14)

Anita Duneer & Whitney Blankenship (3/18/14)

Kay Kalinak & Corrine McKamey: (3/27/14)

Rudy Kraus and Desiree Ciambrone: (4/1/14)

At each discussion, faculty members shared a specific assignment that they had used in their FYS and talked about their successes and challenges with regard to this assignment. The discussions were well-attended and offered the opportunity to talk and work on issues related to writing and pedagogy in FYS courses. It was terrific to see the work of the faculty who led the discussions and to hear their perspectives and experiences. I am increasingly aware of the thoughtfulness of our faculty when it comes to assignment design and also their patience and flexibility when working with first-year students on writing.

Summer Seminar for the Teaching of Writing (SSTW)

While the primary work of the SSTW takes place in May, after the academic year has ended, my responsibilities as SSTW facilitator extend throughout the academic year as I conduct follow-up meetings and one-on-one conferences with SSTW participants during the fall semester and then plan and facilitate the Panel Presentations event, at which SSTW participants share and reflect on their learning, in the spring (I also read and respond to SSTW participants' final written reports). The SSTW heads into its fourth year on campus this summer and I am pleased to say that we are at full capacity, with ten faculty participating this summer.

Additional Conversations

1. At one point, I had hoped to spur conversations on campus about the pedagogy of WID courses. We now have many such courses through COGE and faculty are talking about where they will be teaching writing in their disciplines. I still work to find ways to talk with faculty about what makes for meaningful instruction in such courses, but also still wonder what all such courses might have in common, if anything (including whether or not WID-faculty should have some minimal level of training in the teaching of writing). At this point, working to ensure that faculty who teach WID courses have received training in writing instruction appears to be an elective process and happens largely via the SSTW.

Next year, I hope to initiate conversations with department chairs about teaching writing in WID courses and investigate ways to further support faculty teaching WID.

2. The WB has chosen to focus its FDW for 2015 on the topic of “reading during the college years”--again, working to find a theme that will speak to faculty across disciplines. We are in the process of finalizing our speaker for next year.

In closing, I'd like to thank the chair of the Undergraduate Curriculum Committee (UCC) and the UCC, in general, for the opportunity to share this report and I'd like to thank the college for the ongoing support it provides the Writing Board. The Board feels supported by the UCC and the college and for that we are grateful.

Appendix A: Feedback Summary of January Events (2014)

Adjunct Dinner (AD)

Signed in: 40

AD by the Numbers

Session	VU	U	SU	NU	CU
Speaker	22	6		1	
Format	22	7			

AD by Words

Largely positive feedback.

Suggestions

- Keep the annual dinner but get presenters who ask us 1st what we are looking for--why we are here.
- The open-discussion was much more useful than the speaker
- Activities would have helped, rather than hoping people would contribute and participate.
- perhaps pick up the pace; shorter dinner hour or have the speaker start while people are still eating

Faculty Development Workshop

Signed In: 60

FDW By the Numbers

Session	VS	S	SS	D	VD
Morning	15	5	2		
Afternoon	14	4			

FDW by Words

- Susan Blum: One of the best presenters at these annual sessions.
- Provide diet Coke.
- Randy and Deborah rocked!
- Could you please include the schedule on the flier
- A3 Impressive students, B3 Well done.
- Tish Brennan and Judith Stokes presentation was awesome and should be shared with teh rest of faculty.
- Marie B was great!
- Topics of sessions were promising but the sessions themselves turned into more story-sharing sessions than instructional workshops.
- Blum didn't really expand my horizons.
- Dr. Siegel and DeSimone: excellent topic and discussion, very helpful, practical suggestions.
- Writing Center presentation was excellent
- Dr. Blum: Excellent! A true academic!
- Dr. Blum introduced ideas that I had not connected with teh issue of plagiarism previously. The historical and theoretical backgrounds of plagiarism was interesting. She provided useful suggestions. This was one of the best presentations I have attended in years.

Suggestions:

- Mid-Semester session deadling with plagiarism as a follow-up to this--either in FCTL or as a separate event. See if this had an impact, of if more questions have come up.
- Idea for future workshop: the art of test design.
- Offer the first presentation (A) after the morning break (in lieu of the Q & A) would help for those of us who find it difficult to make both sessions after lunch.
- Maybe only one session in afternoon due to the length of the day
- It might be nice to end a little earlier in the afternoon so we can get back to course planning.
- Wanted to go to more panels in the afternoon. Maybe have sessions A, B, C each with two options, shorter the time for each session to 30-35 min and you'd still complete all three within 2 hours.