

To: Sue Abbotson, Chair of UCC
 From: Mike Michaud, Chair of Writing Board
 Date: 5/13/20
 Subject: Annual Report (2019/2020)

I am pleased to submit this report summarizing the activity of the Writing Board (WB) and Writing Board Chair for the academic year 2019/2020.

Writing Board Membership (2019/2020 & 2020/2021)

The table below indicates Board membership for this past academic year and the year ahead. The numbers in parentheses indicate year of service within a two-year term.

Position	2019/2020	2020/2021
Chair	Mike Michaud (2)	Mike Michaud (1)
Director of (Writing)	Becky Caouette	Becky Caouette
Director (Writing Center)	Clarissa Walker	Clarissa Walker
Director (FCTL)	Chris Marco	Chris Marco
Faculty (FAS) (2) -- 1 Math/Science	Peter Little (1) & Andrea Del Vecchio (1)	Peter Little (2) & Andrea Del Vecchio (2)
Faculty (FSEHD) (1)	Martha Horn (2)	Martha Horn (1)
Faculty (SOSW) (1)	Josh Diem/Cary Donaldson (1)	Cary Donaldson (2)
Faculty (SOM) (1)	Michael Casey (1)	Michael Casey (2)
Faculty (SON) (1)	Deborah Kutonplon (1)	Deborah Kutonplon (2)
Faculty (Adams Library)	Tish Brennan (2)	Tish Brennan (1)
Faculty (Comp/Rhet)	Mike Michaud	Mike Michaud

Blue = Ex Officio
 Green = Rotating

Review of Writing Board Activity

Writing Board Budget

1. Faculty Development Workshop (1/15/20)

Speaker: \$200
 Food: \$1503.75

Total: \$1703.75

Writing Board Meeting Dates (2019/20)

- Fall 2019: 9/18, 10/23, 11/20
- Spring 2020: 2/26, 3/25 (cancelled), 4/22 (cancelled)

Writing Board Professional Development Offerings

This year, the Writing Board sponsored and hosted two main events on campus:

1. First-Pages (10/21/19)

This was the seventh year the WB teamed up with the First-Year Writing Program and Writing Center to host a Writing Week event and exhibit, First Pages. We had ten readers and twenty-nine first-pages submissions. Attendance was at 15-20.

2. Faculty Development Workshop (1/15/20)

This marked the 24th year that the WB has hosted the annual Faculty Development Workshop during the winter break. Our approach was a departure from prior years in the sense that we did not contract with a featured speaker to deliver a morning lecture, choosing, instead, to draw on the expertise of our own local RIC faculty to provide a range of professional development opportunities to attendees (our luncheon speaker was Dr. Howard Tinburg of Bristol Community College). In this way, we provided what we called an “Unworkshop” to our full- and part-time faculty attendees (promotional documents from the event can be found in Appendix A). Based on the feedback we received, it seems that our “unworkshop” approach was well-received; it is a format we will likely try again in future years (a summary of our feedback can be found in Appendix B).

In addition to a desire to try a different format, the rationale for our approach this year was to free up funds in our budget for targeted professional development on Writing in the Disciplines (WID) that was to take place at the close of the academic year. In short, with the money we saved on the FDW we hoped to incentivize our faculty to participate in PD targeted at WID pedagogy. Sadly, this was not possible given the emergency situation the college entered as a result of the COVID-19 crisis.

Review of Chair’s Activity

The WB Chair’s responsibilities include leading the WB and developing and facilitating professional development opportunities for faculty on writing pedagogy. Below, I share my activity from this year.

1. Summer Seminar for Teaching Writing (SSTW)

The 2019/20 academic year marked the ninth for the SSTW. Technically, the SSTW is offered under the Faculty Center for Teaching Writing (FCTL), but I teach it in my capacity as WB chair. Seven faculty members participated this year:

- Murat Aydogdu (Economics and Finance)--2nd time
- Sally Hamouda (Math and CS)
- Maria Lawrence (Elementary Education)--2nd time
- Soumyadeep Mukherjee (PE and Health)
- Jason Sawyer (PE and Health)
- Rebecca Sparks (Math and CS)
- Jiyun Wu (Management and Marketing)
- Benjamin Young (Physical Sciences)--2nd time
- Susan Zoll (Early Childhood Education)

Sadly, due to the COVID-19 crisis these faculty members were unable to share their experiences at our annual Panel Presentation event in March. In any event, I'd like to thank them for their time and efforts towards learning new strategies for teaching writing effectively in disciplinary courses.

Given the current circumstances, this will be the first year since 2011 that we will not offer the SSTW.

2. Co-Op Workshops, Professional Development, Consultations

- a. WAC Summer Seminar, Denver University (6/24-26)
- b. Grant Writing Workshop (ORGA) (8/19/19)
- c. SSTW: Ongoing meetings and consultation throughout the academic year.
- d. The How to of Peer Review (11/11-11/15/19)
- e. Co-Op Workshop (FCTL): Software for Peer Review (10/15/19)
- f. College Lecture Series Grant: Secured to bring Howard Tinberg to campus for January FYW Summit (event was cancelled, funding was reallocated to Tinberg's FDW talk)
- g. The How to of Great Writing Assignments (04/13-04/19/2020)
- h. Faculty Consultations: Ongoing consulting with our faculty on matters related to writing and pedagogy.
- i. Rhode Island Writing Program Leaders (RIWPL): I am a member of the RIWPL, a small group of writing program leaders who meet periodically to discuss pedagogy, curriculum, and writing program administration.

3. WID Visibility Initiative (WID Interim Director)

I'd like to provide an update on my ongoing work on this initiative, which began in the spring of 2018 when I was appointed the interim Writing in the Disciplines Coordinator by COGE. This

year, the WID Visibility Initiative by far took up the majority of my time as Writing Board chair.

1. WID Webpages

The following list provides an update of all departments/programs and the status of their WID webpages. All of these are completed unless otherwise noted.

A & S

Africana Studies
Anthropology
Art
Biology (incomplete: Health Sciences, Medical Imaging)
Communication
English
Environmental Studies
Film Studies
Gender and Women's Studies
Global Studies
History
Justice Studies
Liberal Studies
Math and Computer Science
Modern Languages (incomplete: all)
Music, Theatre, and Dance (incomplete: music)
Philosophy
Physical Sciences (incomplete: all)
Political Science (incomplete: geography)
Psychology
Sociology

FSEHD

Educational Studies (incomplete: all)
Elementary Education
Health and Physical Education
Special Education (incomplete)

Business

Accounting and CIS
Economics and Finance (in process)
Health Care Administration

Management and Marketing

Nursing

Nursing

Social Work

Social Work (incomplete)

2. Updating RhodeMaps

Rhodemaps for all departments/programs are being updated to reflect WID courses as of spring 2020.

3. Syllabus Statements

I will continue to work with departments/programs to ensure that faculty teaching departmentally-designated WID courses include a statement identifying WID courses as such.

4. "W" Designation for WID Courses

As you are aware, we are in the process of awaiting a final vote from UCC which will move forward work already approved by COGE to add a "W" designation to all WID courses in the college catalogue. This will be a significant step forward for the college in raising the visibility of WID classes.

Recommendations

With an incoming Provost/VPAA and having now completed my fourth two-year term as Writing Board chair, now may be a good time to step back and reflect and revisit the work of the Writing Board and the Writing Board chair (also the Interim Writing in the Disciplines coordinator). It's an apropos moment, in particular, to revisit the description and charge of the Board and Chair as outlined in the Curriculum Committee manual, section 2.5.3. and Appendix III-C (I-III). There are a number of questions here to consider:

1. Over the past half dozen or so years the college has allocated generous funding towards professional development for writing pedagogy, but these funds have not been centralized in a single budget and some have remained contingent upon ongoing approval. For example, in addition to the 4 FLH provided to the Board chair each semester, roughly \$8000/year is allocated for the annual Faculty Development Workshop and other PD offerings each year. These monies, I believe, originate in the budget of the Provost but are kept by the Dean of Arts and Sciences. Another \$10,000 or so per year is allocated for the annual Summer Seminar for Teaching Writing (SSTW),

but this money is not guaranteed or secured and must be requested anew each year. Finally, two FLH's are allocated to the Writing Board chair for teaching the SSTW during summer session 1. A more regular and secure funding mechanism might better serve the professional development needs of the faculty and student body.

2. Our WID requirement was created around 2012 when the "new" General Education program at the college was established. At this time the Committee on General Education (COGE) was given oversight on the requirement. A 2017 report by then-Assessment Coordinator Dr. Maureen Reddy, however, revealed significant concerns about the extent to which departments and programs were meeting the mandate of the WID requirement and as a result of Dr. Reddy's report I was appointed Interim WID Coordinator and tasked with creating more awareness and visibility about the existence of WID at the college (by faculty and students). It remains a question whether locating WID under COGE best serves the needs of the faculty and student body. This is a question that deserves further consideration.
3. Our WID requirement was drafted, as I indicated above, in 2012 and has not been significantly revisited or revised since. Does a "requirement" suffice? Many other colleges and universities have WAC or WID programs, not requirements. Our WID requirement statement is minimalist in its approach and, as Dr. Reddy discovered via her assessment work and as I have discovered over my two years of work as interim WID Coordinator, there are considerable questions among our faculty about WID at RIC. For example: How is a WID course different from a non-WID course? Who should teach WID courses (and who should not)? How many students should be allowed in WID courses? What kind of training, minimally, should faculty who teach WID courses be required to undergo? How often should departments/programs revisit the courses they have designated as WID and what is the mechanism for doing so? How should WID be assessed? In sum, while the awareness-work of the past two years has been an important step in working to meet the WID requirement, there are many additional questions to be addressed regarding WID at RIC.
4. My role at the college currently can be categorized in three ways: 1) Interim WID Coordinator (term unspecified), 2) founder/instructor of the Summer Seminar for Teaching Writing, 3) Writing Board Chair. With my WID work I report to COGE. With my SSTW work I collaborate/coordinate with the FCTL but am ultimately accountable to the Provost who funds the initiative. With my Writing Board chair work I report to UCC. There must be a simpler way to arrange these roles into one coherent position.

Further, I just sat, unopposed, for my fourth election to Writing Board chair. Given that the work of the chair now entails considerable professional development work, work which requires experience and knowledge of WID/WAC theory and pedagogy, it's no longer the case that just any faculty member could effectively lead the Board (hence the reason why I continue to run unopposed). If I were to decide not to run for WB chair,

aside from the WC Director and the Director of Writing, there are no other faculty members on our campus who are qualified to do the work of the chair as it is currently described. A better arrangement would be to appoint me as WID Coordinator, in the same that way we have an FYS Coordinator and, soon, a Connections Coordinator and to rethink the role of the WB chair. This position, elsewhere, is usually filled by a non-writing specialist. Further, boards or committees elsewhere typically have responsibilities which extend beyond planning professional development events (usually they vet WID/WAC courses, a task that is now handled at RIC by COGE).

I am raising questions here about curriculum, policy, compensation, lines of reporting etc. In light of these questions and with our incoming Provost, I would like to propose that now is an excellent moment to step back from our work to take stock and reflect on WID at RIC and I would like to propose two potential mechanisms for doing so:

1. The Association for Writing Across the Curriculum (AWAC) has a Board of Consultants who, according to their website, “may be contacted with invitations to lead WAC workshops, review WAC programs, and promote WAC program development.” The Council of Writing Program Administrators offers a similar consultant service. One way of taking stock might be to invite a consultant to our campus to conduct a study and offer their input on our WID requirement and various configurations as described above.
2. The Writing Board might conduct its own study of WID/WAC programs at benchmark institutions and at colleges/universities with well-regarded programs to understand how WID/WAC is configured and administered elsewhere and in order to propose changes to our configuration here.

Given the financial constraints the college is currently facing, option 2 might be the wiser choice, but should the Writing Board receive its funding in the fall per usual it might allocate some of its resources towards the consultant service (i.e. option 1).

Thank you for the chance to share these developments and for the college’s ongoing support of the work of the Rhode Island College Writing Board.

Appendix A (Promotional Documents for Faculty Development Workshop)

24th Annual

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT WORKSHOP
JANUARY 15, 2020
ALGER HALL
8:30AM-1:30PM

THE UN-WORKSHOP

Same great host.
 Same great date.
 Same great food.
 Different format.

Join the Writing Board for its First Un-Workshop.

Come to learn.
 Come to collaborate.
 Come to share.
 Come to prepare.

REGISTER!

Brought to you by the campus Writing Board (with Generous Funding from the VPAA/PROVOST). Questions: mmichaud@ric.edu

The RIC Writing Board Presents[¶]

The 24th Annual Faculty Development (Un)Workshop[¶]



January 15, 2020, 8:30am-1:30pm (Alger Hall)[¶]

Itinerary[¶]

- 8:30-9:00 → → Breakfast & Registration[¶]
- 9:00-9:15 → → Welcome & Workshop Overview[¶]
- 9:15-10:30 → → Break-Out Session A ***[¶]
- 10:30-10:45 → → Break[¶]
- 10:45-12:00 → → Break-Out Session B ***[¶]
- 12:00-1:30 → → Lunch and Guest Lecture, Dr. Howard Tinberg[¶]
 (Bristol Community College)[¶]

→ *** Please consult accompanying materials for list of Break-Out Session A & B room assignments.[¶]

Funding and support for this day of professional development come from the Office of the Provost/Vice President for Academic Affairs and the Dean of the Faculty of Arts and Sciences.[¶]

24th Annual Faculty Development Workshop Overview

The Writing Board is excited to invite you to the 2020 Faculty Development Workshop--with a new format and new opportunities to learn and collaborate!

We are breaking from tradition this year and trying something different. From faculty feedback, we know that many people want more time to talk and work with colleagues, so we are making this year's workshop more interactive. The morning will include hands-on workshops, independent work sessions, and time for consultations with on-campus experts, rather than having a speaker as we have in the past.

Here is the itinerary for the 2020 Faculty Development Workshop:

Breakfast	8:30-9:00am
Welcome	9:00-9:15am
Break Out Session (A)	9:15-10:30am
Break	10:30-10:45am
Break Out Session (B)	10:45-12:00pm
Lunch	12:00-1:00pm
Wrap-Up Discussion	1:00-1:30pm

When you click on the link below to register you will see that we are asking you to choose how you would like to spend your morning (i.e. Break-Out Sessions A and B). There are several options to choose from:

1. Discussion Workshops

These workshops, facilitated by RIC faculty, will be a collaborative sharing of ideas and teaching strategies with other faculty. Plan to bring an assignment, a problem, or a question that you would like to share and discuss with your colleagues on a given topic (see registration for topics).

2. Consultation/Work Time

Alger 110 will be reserved for faculty who wish to work individually or collaboratively with others on assignments, syllabi, etc. We envision the room as a kind of "maker space" for the entire morning. Various campus experts will be on hand to consult and offer assistance on matters related to writing and pedagogy (i.e. FCTL, USS, ESL faculty, Writing Board members, etc.).

3. "How To" Instructional Workshops

These workshops will offer more direct instruction on best practices in writing pedagogy. There will also be time for discussion of specific questions you may have about how these practices can be applied in your courses (see registration for topics).

For more information and to register, please visit our [website](#).

Appendix B (Feedback from Faculty Development Workshop)

Signed In at Event:

2020: 63 (16 part-time faculty registered)

2019: 88

Feedback (41)

1 = very satisfied

2 = satisfied

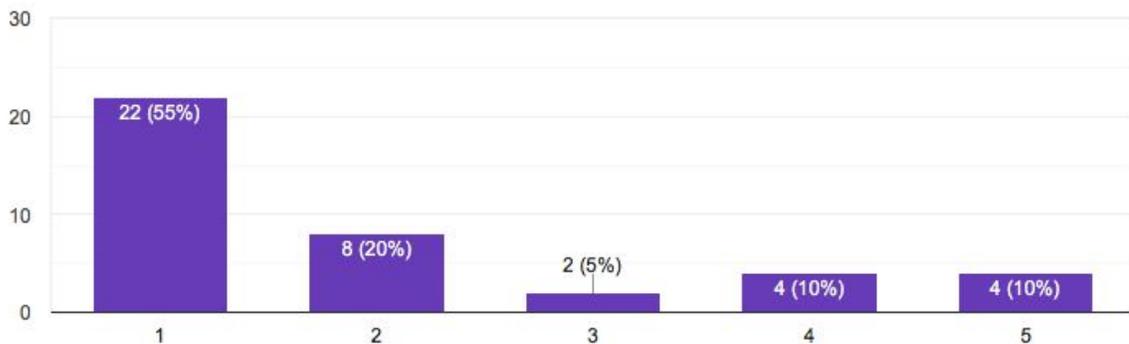
3 somewhat satisfied

4 = unsatisfied

5 = very unsatisfied

Please rate your overall level of satisfaction with this year's Faculty Development Workshop.

40 responses

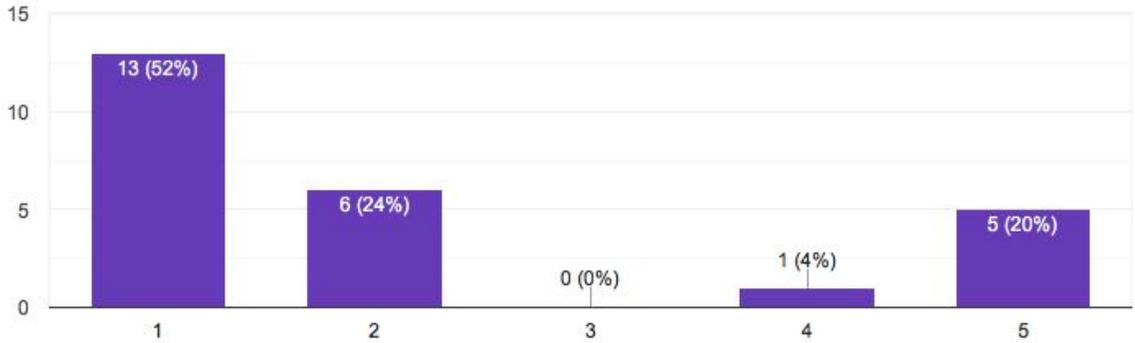


Sample Comments:

- I thought the new sequence of workshops was good - no post-lunch sag.
- I liked the format and found the content covered applicable to my current needs.
- Best I've ever attended
- This was very helpful for me as a new hire.
- I really enjoyed the format used this year. I found it refreshing
- Some of the workshops were not very well managed to produce maximum discussion.
- The new format worked well, I thought. I fear that we may be losing some faculty, though, without a featured speaker and hope that this year's format is not forever.
- I got some really great ideas to try out in my own courses, and other attendees expressed the same thing. Several said they wished the Writing Board would do this type of sharing workshop every year.
- I learned about the complexity of teaching writing in a spectrum of contexts.

How satisfied were you with the "How To" session you attended?

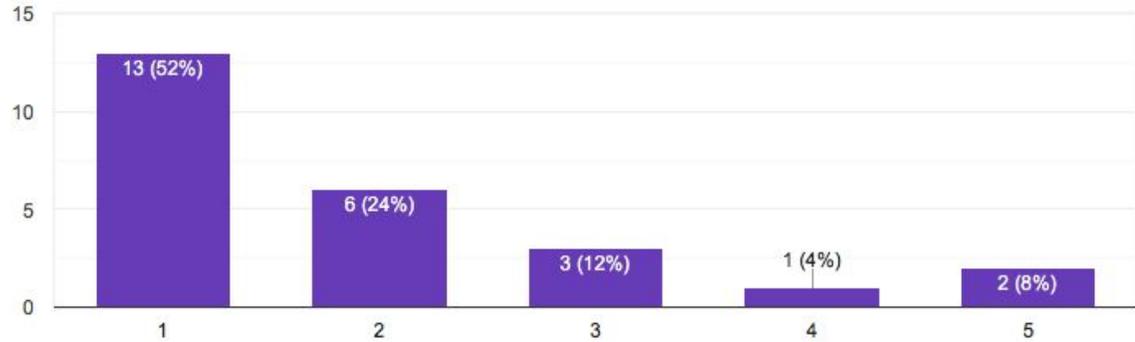
25 responses



How satisfied were you with the Session B Discussion Workshop you attended?



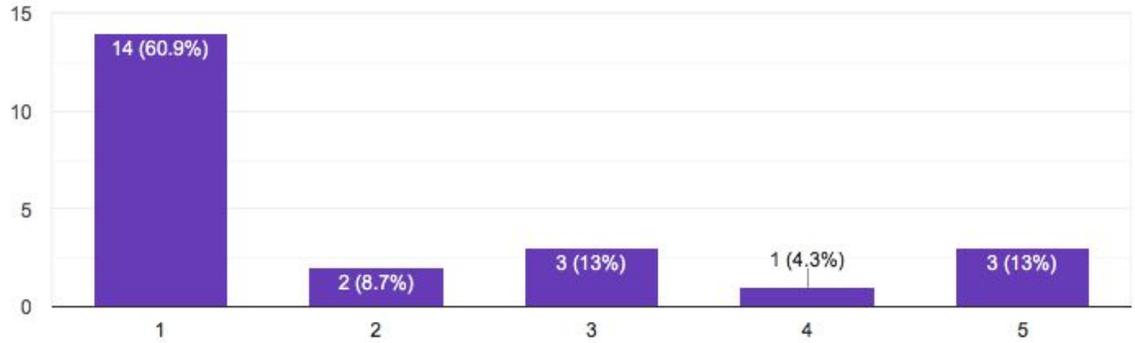
25 responses



How Satisfied Were You with the Session A Discussion Workshop You Attended?



23 responses

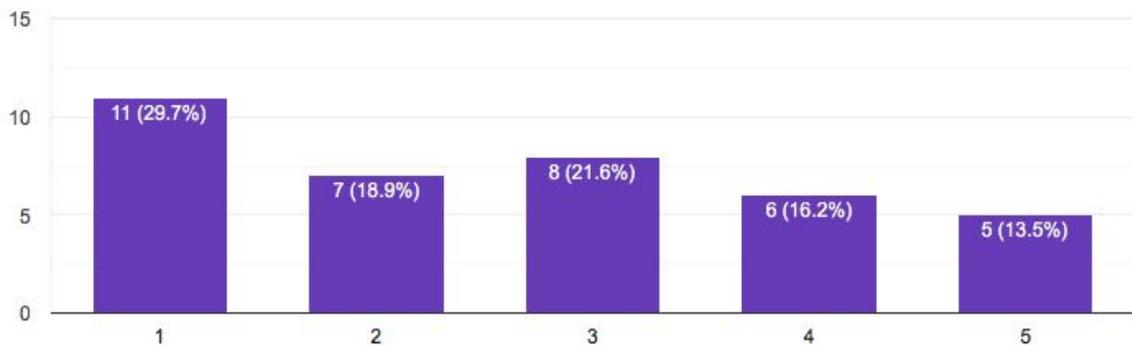


Comments:

- Very helpful, in particular the section presented by the two students who work at the Writing Center, insightful
- I liked being able to get responses from several people and talking through the problem several times. Good strategy that I will definitely steal for class.
- I liked the "peer Review" workshop with Marcotte. She encouraged us to move around and discuss methods with 2 or more attendees. Also, I was tickled because we all share a universality when it comes to writing in our various content areas.
- There weren't any solutions presented or really any guidance to focus us toward any kind of research-based ideas. I'm fine just sitting around shooting the bull with peers about the discussion questions, which is what we did, but I don't need to come to a workshop to do that.
- I signed up for an event, but spent the time working with Rachel and Tish from the library. This was tremendously helpful to have them and Scott on hand.
- Very well designed and delivered. Learned things that I can immediately implement, such as using blogs to make students writings visible to peers and having them comment on each others writings. Also became aware of the distinction between responding/grading vs. giving feedback and how I often choose the former over latter whereas it is the latter that will help my students improve.
- I did not attend a workshop. I worked one-on-one with Scott Badger, spoke with Laura from Project ExCel, and networked with other faculty. This was extremely useful. I strongly suggest that this opportunity continue to be an option in the future.
- This was a fun and really practical was to brainstorm with colleagues.
- The discussion was interactive and collaborative. Each member of the group shared an issue or concern about a formal writing assignment. Then the other members of the group gave suggestions and strategies about dealing with the issue or concern. I found these to be very helpful and plan to implement some of the suggestions. It was also nice to share issues in formal writing assignments with faculty from different disciplines.
- Interesting, but as a new hire I expected a bit more guidance
- Make sessions longer if they are to be interactive so that everyone has an opportunity to work on assignments.
- Interesting that we had about half science faculty and half humanities faculty and the difference between what constitutes low stake assignments in each

Please rate your level of satisfaction with this year's lunch speaker, Dr. Howard Tinberg?

37 responses



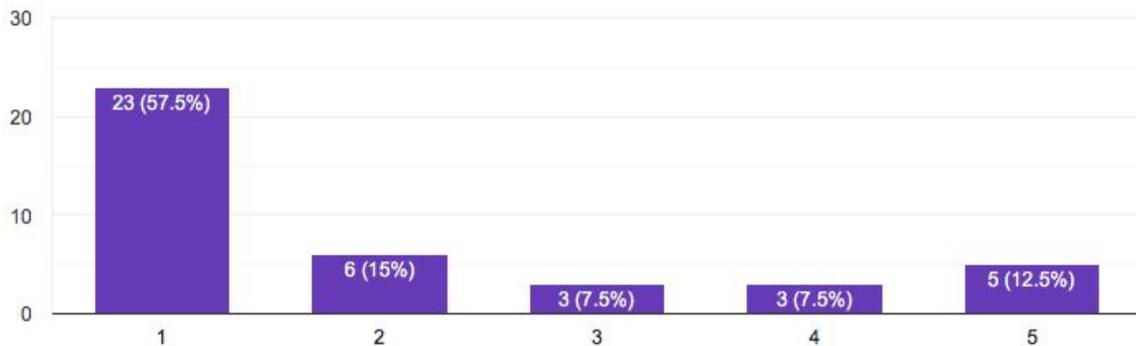
Comments

- He seemed like a nice guy, but the talk was uninspiring. Really directed to those who teach Comp rather than classes in a discipline, and he used incomprehensible acronyms. Felt like a re-tread of a conference paper.
- Unappealing, lacked dynamic or spontaneity, read from a prepared statement, unengaging, a minor-league presentation performed before a major-league crowd
- The content was superb. He's thoughtful and informative. However, his reading his comments as deadly dull, and he mumbled a lot so despite the microphone I had difficulty deciphering his words. When he spoke extemporaneously, and during the Q and A he was much more effective and stimulated useful discussion.
- Dr. Tinberg's lecture was very interesting and thought provoking. It made me think of the reading/writing connection a little differently. As instructors, we should think about and try to implement reading in our course so that students can engage more with the text and comprehend it more meaningfully. Reading should be more than a basis or prompt for a writing assignment. It should foster a lifelong and useful skill. The challenge is how to incorporate reading into our classrooms so it does motivate more student engagement.
- Dr. Tinberg missed his audience entirely.

How satisfied were you with the food/meal options (i.e., breakfast, lunch)?



40 responses



Comments

- The food at these things is usually so bad that I just eat before I come and after I leave, but going forward I may not need to do that.
- The chicken taco was off the charts! Loved the lavish, unctuous, gloppy-gooeyness and slippery-sloppy-spilling-on-your-chin condiments!
- Best food in any RIC event I attended!

How can we improve the Faculty Development Workshop in future years?

- By continuing to maintain the standard of excellence you have exhibited year after year.
- I think this was a winning format.
- I like what it's done and how it's evolved
- The Writing Board is creative and resourceful, year after year, in thinking of different ways to engage the faculty in discussions of how to be more effective educators. I also appreciate the opportunity to interact with faculty across the campus.
- I would have you continue to have us bring work and share feedback.
- I really enjoyed the time I spent after my workshop and before lunch working on my courses. It was very helpful to have Scott (BB) and Tish (Library) there to get quick answers to questions and problem solve in real time. I would like to have the room reserved after lunch for an hour to continue working with the resources provided; I didn't get the chance to get to everyone.
- I know there aren't agreed upon right answers for most of the questions people have but some presentation of researched strategies and where to find them might help. The sessions seemed to reveal that we mostly have the same experiences and questions, but we all kind of just shared what we've tried and guessed at why they failed to achieve our desired results.
- Not sure. I like the balance between being able to talk about writing with faculty and staff here at RIC and also hearing from somebody who is engaging with issues more broadly.

- Incorporate a follow-up session where we can further interface with faculty regarding ideas, get feedback etc. in case we run out of time.
- Idk. It seems great. I like the variety. Jiani is pretty awesome. Maybe something about online content and teaching writing.
- This is hard to beat. Maybe additional topics. Regardless, I will come back. Discussing even these same issues multiple times with others outside of my discipline is helpful to me. Gives me a chance to get out of my confined space and meet/talk to colleagues in other disciplines and see how they approach similar problems/issues.
- I think the newer schedule , morning through lunch w/presenter, works really well!
- As a WIC instructor, I realized now that I actually have to teach various aspects of writing - that I am also a writing instructor. Future workshops could look at technical aspects of writing, such as how to teach students to write a position paper, how to integrate reading in writing, and various specific difficulties students encounter in writing a position or research paper.
- If we could add a total of 1 hour, extended into the afternoon, I think it would be time very well spent.
- I generally am used to passively listening to a presenter such as Dr. Tinberg; however, I found this year's sessions with active group activities to be especially good.

And the number one comment of all is...

The veggie crumble was not salty ENOUGH this year. Everything else was fine, though.