

INFORMATION TO USERS

This manuscript has been reproduced from the microfilm master. UMI films the text directly from the original or copy submitted. Thus, some thesis and dissertation copies are in typewriter face, while others may be from any type of computer printer.

The quality of this reproduction is dependent upon the quality of the copy submitted. Broken or indistinct print, colored or poor quality illustrations and photographs, print bleedthrough, substandard margins, and improper alignment can adversely affect reproduction.

In the unlikely event that the author did not send UMI a complete manuscript and there are missing pages, these will be noted. Also, if unauthorized copyright material had to be removed, a note will indicate the deletion.

Oversize materials (e.g., maps, drawings, charts) are reproduced by sectioning the original, beginning at the upper left-hand corner and continuing from left to right in equal sections with small overlaps.

ProQuest Information and Learning
300 North Zeeb Road, Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346 USA
800-521-0600

UMI[®]

A

**Transformation of a College Writing Program:
Activity Systems and Emergence of Knowledge**

by

Michaela Rome

**A dissertation submitted to the Graduate Faculty in Psychology
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy, The City University of New York**

2003

UMI Number: 3103162

UMI[®]

UMI Microform 3103162

Copyright 2003 by ProQuest Information and Learning Company.

All rights reserved. This microform edition is protected against
unauthorized copying under Title 17, United States Code.

ProQuest Information and Learning Company
300 North Zeeb Road
P.O. Box 1346
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1346

This manuscript has been read and accepted for the Graduate Faculty in Psychology in satisfaction of the dissertation requirement for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

August 7, 2003
Date

Katherine Nelson
Chair of Examining Committee

August 13, 2003
Date

Joseph Glick
Executive Officer

Katherine Nelson

Joseph Glick

Anna Stetsenko

Supervisory Committee

The City University of New York

Abstract

Transformation of a College Writing Program: Activity Systems and Emergence of Knowledge

by

Michaela Rome

Advisor: Professor Katherine Nelson

In this study, I use ethnographic methods and qualitative analyses to explore the complex nature of knowledge development in the context of a college Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program. This study took place over a two-year period at Central College, an open admissions college which has long struggled with issues surrounding the teaching and learning of writing. Participants in the WAC Program had conflicting conceptualizations of writing as well as the roles and identities of the various program participants (i.e., WAC administrators, discipline-specific faculty, and Writing Fellows as well as students).

As described in the current study, knowledge development is a complex process involving historical, institutional, as well as personal aspects (Scribner, 1985). Rather than conceptualizing knowledge as an individual possession, I conceptualize knowledge as distributed across participants as well as tools (spoken discourse as well as material artifacts) (e.g., Engestrom, 1995; Glick, 1995; Salomon, 1993). In addition, I argue that knowledge development is not a purely cognitive process but depends on relational aspects of interactions (i.e., participant positions and identities which are constructed both historically and institutionally as well as through moment-to-moment, lived interactions).

Interactions among participants occur within specific context and are defined by institutional, social, and activity constraints. However, these constraints are not static and

immutable from context to context, nor are they fixed within a single context. Rather, these constraints (including participant positions and identities) are negotiated among participants through discourse and activity and are open to transformation. Thus, knowledge and practices (and therefore development) are not fixed. Rather, negotiations among participants in an activity system can lead to transformation in the knowledge and practices that are constructed and, ultimately, to innovations which can transform the overall activity system.

In this sense, knowledge is negotiated, distributed, and emergent and results from the lived interactions (activities and discourses) of participants which occur at the intersection of institutional and personal histories which are mutually transforming.

Acknowledgements

Like the development of knowledge that I discuss as the content of this dissertation, the dissertation itself is a social construction reflecting the contributions of many individuals with whom I have had the great opportunity and privilege to work. My heartfelt thanks to:

My advisor, Katherine Nelson, who has been unwavering in her support through the many ups and downs of my endeavors. She has been extremely patient as I struggled to find my footing in this dissertation process. And, once I got underway, she provided me with the constant and immediate feedback that allowed me to keep the momentum going. Her style was open and flexible as she probed my ideas, yet she was also rigorous and challenging when she felt I might be off-track and, with a few thoughtful comments and suggestions, was able to point me in the right direction. Her supportive nature gave me the confidence to take some intellectual risks, and her intellect required (and inspired) me to go further than I thought that I could.

My committee member, Joe Glick, who taught me to always question that which is assumed to be true and evident. He opened the door to a wealth of knowledge which continues to inspire and challenge me. He has offered me crucial support through the course of my studies. Thanks to him, I was able to persevere and overcome hurdles that I didn't think I could. Without his support, I would not have even made it to the dissertation-writing process.

My committee member, Anna Stetsenko, who has been a pleasant surprise. She agreed to be on my committee even before officially joining the Developmental Psychology Program at the Graduate Center. We had never met, and I had only her work to guide my choice (which, as it turns out, was a wise one). Aside from dissertation seminar, regretfully,

I did not have the opportunity to take one of her classes. However, the discussions we have had have been dense and energetic. What our interactions lacked in quantity (of time), they more than made up for in quality.

My dissertation reader, Martin Ruck, who offered valuable feedback and encouragement for my ideas in dissertation seminar and who always has time for supportive and helpful comments for students.

My dissertation reader, Roger Hart, with whom I had the good fortune to work, if only briefly. The experience was enriching and gratifying and brought my attention to the kind of powerful work that can (and needs to) be done in support of children.

My friends and colleagues, Nechama Presler and Jocelyn Solis. They have provided me with intellectual contributions and offered me emotional support that has helped to sustain and encourage me through this process.

Table of Contents

Abstract	iii
Acknowledgements	v
Chapter 1 Introduction	1
The Current Study	13
History and Perspective of Writing Across the Curriculum	15
Writing Across the Curriculum Background	22
Writing Across the Curriculum Models	24
Proposed (Emergent) Models for Writing Across the Curriculum	26
The Role of Writing Fellows	30
Chapter 2 Context, Methods, and Data Analysis	31
The Study	32
My Role in the Study Context	33
Research Questions	37
Methods and Data Analysis	37
Participants	39
Chapter 3 Expert and Novice Positions of Participants in the WAC Program	41
University-Defined Faculty Positions	41
University-Defined Writing Fellow Positions	45
Writing Fellows Training	47
Central College's Model of the WAC Program	48
WAC Coordinators as Experts, WFs and Discipline-Specific Faculty as Novices	48
English WFs as Experts and Discipline-Specific WFs as Novices	55
Writing Fellows as Experts, Discipline-Specific Faculty as Novices	57
The Perspective of Discipline-Specific Faculty: Framing the "Writing Problem" and the Roles of Participants	70
Transforming Expert and Novice Positions	73
Chapter 4 Knowledge, Identities, and Practices: Processes of Transformation, Tool Development, and Activity	81
Transformation and Reconceptualization of Knowledge, Identities, and Practices	81
Transforming Knowledge, Roles, and Practices: Connecting Existing Faculty Knowledge and Practices to WAC Knowledge and the Development of Writing Tools	84
A Context for Transformation in a Chemistry Lab Course: (Re)defining WF and Discipline-Specific Faculty Roles and Practices	85
Transformation of Discipline-Specific Knowledge: Connecting Perspectives	90

Transforming Chemistry Knowledge and Practices into WAC terms: Defining the Writing Difficulty and Proposing a WAC Approach	98
Connecting WAC Approaches with Chemistry Knowledge: WF Development of a Writing Tool	101
Transformation from Writing Tool to Pedagogical Activity: Connecting Discipline-Specific WF Expertise with English Composition WF Expertise	107
From WAC Activity to Chemistry Activity to WAC Activity: Emergent Knowledge, Tools, and Activities	113
Chapter 5 Agency and Control: Guiding and Constructing One's Own Environment and Development	123
Redefining the Culturally-Constructed Environment: Participants' Contributions to Shaping their Own Development	123
Noncompliance and Withdrawal from the Program.	124
Noncompliance and Program Transformation	126
Displaying Expertise	127
Processes of Identification and Dis-Identification	130
Negotiating Roles, Participation, and Practices	133
Building on and Transforming Existing Knowledge and Practices	138
Creating New Structures and Practices	146
Chapter 6 Institutional Transformation: WAC Program Reconceptualized	158
The Central College WAC Handbook	158
Introduction to Writing at Central College and the Faculty Resource Model	159
Case Studies: Four Perspectives on Participation	165
Chemistry	166
Art	171
Sociology	172
History	177
Integration of WAC Knowledge and Discipline-Specific Knowledge Through Activity	180
Defining a Structure and Process for Program Participation	182
Surpassing the Faculty Resource Model: The Faculty Participation Model	186
Intra- and Interdepartmental Faculty Interactions	187
Intradepartmental Interactions	188
Interdepartmental Interaction	190
WF Interactions	193
Chapter 7 Discussion: Positions, Identities, Practices, Agency, and Emergence in Knowledge Development	194
Identity, Activity, and Distributed Cognition	197
Historical, Institutional, and Personal Aspects of Knowledge Development	201
Community Normative Practices and Individual Variation: Conceptualizing the Community as a System of Dynamic, Lived Interactions	204
Conclusion	211

Appendix	213
Figure 1: Initial Institutional Structure: Top-Down Transmission Conversion Model	214
Figure 2: Initial Interactions: Top-Down Flow of Power and Decision-Making	215
Figure 3: Transformed Interactions: Collaboration and Emergence of Outcomes	216
Figure 4: Transformed Structure: Faculty Participation Model	217
Peer-Editing Feedback Checklist for Methods Section of Lab Report:	218
Writing Syllabus for Chemistry Lab I	119
References	220

Chapter 1 Introduction

The development of knowledge has been studied from numerous viewpoints and has inspired the elaboration of a variety of conceptualizations in which an attempt has been made to explain how this process occurs. In this study, I will endeavor to offer additional insight into explaining this complex topic.

In traditional theory and research, the development of knowledge has been conceptualized as the transmission of knowledge from one individual (usually a teacher) to another (to a student or students). Alternatively, knowledge development has been conceptualized as a process of discovery by children through their activity in the physical world (e.g., Piaget). Both of these approaches imply various assumptions regarding the nature of knowledge. First, there is the assumption that knowledge has a single source which defines it as being correct and true and, because it is defined as correct and true, it is “fixed.” In the transmission model, the teacher (or more knowledgeable expert) defines what is to be considered true and correct knowledge. In the discovery model, true and correct knowledge is governed by the laws of science and logic and is thus present in the environment to be discovered. That is, the knowledge that is transmitted or that is present in the environment is what will develop in all individuals. In both instances, knowledge development is a “top-down” process with a pre-determined, fixed endpoint or telos. In addition, the focus is on the individual and the transmission or discovery of “mental objects” that eventually wind up “in the head” of the individual. The implication is that the individual carries this knowledge around with him or her and can transfer it and apply it to a variety of situations as needed. Finally, these approaches describe knowledge development as a purely cognitive process.

That is, developing the appropriate knowledge is a matter of figuring out and understanding the knowledge that it being transmitted (or that exists to be discovered).

Other researchers have voiced their dissatisfaction with these approaches. For example, Cole and Engestrom (1993) note the “widespread belief that the positivistically oriented social sciences, with their notion of cognition firmly located inside the individual, are inadequate for the task of grasping the essential nature of human experience and behavior” (pp. 42-43). In addition, Pea (1993) notes that, “[w]idespread conceptions of learning and reasoning invoke ‘intelligence’ largely as a property of the minds of individuals” (p. 47). This has led researchers to reconceptualize knowledge as distributed rather than as located within an individual. Pea (1993) explains, “When I say that intelligence is distributed, I mean that the resources that shape and enable activity are distributed in configuration across people, environments, and situations. In other words, intelligence is accomplished rather than possessed” (p. 50). Glick (1995) notes specifically the important role of artifacts in the conceptualization of knowledge as distributed:

...the knowledge that is at issue is not knowledge which is “outside of” its embodiments. It is not knowledge carried around in heads, but rather it is knowledge “embedded” in artifacts—a computer screen, a read-out of a Lotus spreadsheet. Thus, it is not quite clear as to where the knowledge resides. To be sure, some is in the thinking process, some is in the “eyes” which can see the meaning in the artifact; but it is just as much in the artifact, where it exists to be seen. (p. 376)

This paradigmatic shift occurred as researchers began to explore the possibilities of Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory to reconceptualize the study of cognition. This new approach represented a shift from a focus on the individual to a broader conceptualization

which included various social, cultural, and historical aspects which shape knowledge development. A major tenet of Vygotsky's theory which has shaped current research is the following:

Any function in the child's cultural development appears twice, or on two planes.

First it appears on the social plane, and then on the psychological plane. First it appears between people as an interpsychological category, and then within the child as an intrapsychological category. (1981, p. 163)

In describing how this process occurs between adults and children, Newman, Griffin, and Cole (1989) state that,

The appropriation process is reciprocal, and cognitive change occurs within this mutually constructive process. While instructional interactions favor the role associated with the teacher, we cannot lose sight of the continually active role of the child. (p. 58)

Thus, this characterization of the learning process implies that knowledge development is a joint activity and is not simply a transmission of knowledge from teacher to student, from parent to child, or from expert to the novice but involves active construction of knowledge.

However, although the child is active in constructing knowledge, this does not mean that there is not a fixed endpoint toward which the adult is guiding the child (e.g., Rogoff's guided participation, 1990). Glick (1995) questions the fixed endpoint, directional nature of knowledge development described by some researchers, noting that "...developmental theories generally work with either an implicit or explicit notion of the 'telos' of development (that toward which development is developing)..." (p. 361). He suggests that

this notion may be linked to the institution within which a researcher is conceptualizing his or her object of study. That is, Glick states that

It often seems that the enterprise of “studying cognitive development” constructs development as the acquisition of knowledge structures whose telos is to be inherently university-like: abstract in form, literate in organization, and counted as true cognitive development when it is formulated and rationalized in an acceptable “public” and logical form. The academic form privileges knowledge of a certain type, and elevates that form of knowledge to universal and moral status as the kind of knowledge that people should have if they are said to have knowledge at all. (p. 361)

Engestrom (1995) further reinforces the idea that the definition of knowledge is related to the context in which it is studied: “The notion of organizational learning is closely connected to notions of innovation and change, implying a departure from the obsession with reception, adaptation, and acquisition dominant in laboratory- and school-based theories of learning” (p. 326).

In contrast to theories which describe development as a top-down process of adaptation to and acquisition of pre-defined knowledge, Engestrom (1995) describes how organizations can promote either *stability* in organizational norms through “single-loop learning” (Argyris and Schon, 1978) or *innovation* through “double-loop learning” which leads to “creative questioning and modification of the norms themselves” (p. 327). Engestrom thus makes the “basic distinction between adaptation and creation...[and] experience and experimentation” (p. 327). He refers to several authors who have addressed this issue (i.e., Dodgson, 1991; Garratt, 1990; Senge, 1990) and comments that Senge (1990) acknowledges the necessity of “survival learning” or “adaptive learning” but quotes him as

also noting that "...for a learning organization, 'adaptive learning' must be joined by 'generative learning,' that enhances our capacity to create" (p. 14, cited in Engestrom, 1995, p. 327). Engestrom notes the importance of tools in innovative learning drawing on Vygotsky's (1978, 1994) conceptualization of tools as *mediators* of thought and activity. That is, the introduction of new tools into a society (or, more specifically, into an activity taking place within a society) results in a transformation of thought and practices which thus leads to new forms of development (e.g., Scribner, 1984). This focus on the mediational nature of tools contributes to a conceptualization of development as a dynamic process with the possibility of multiple trajectories and emergent outcomes. Engestrom (1995) comments that, "While it is easy to agree in principle with the emphasis on creative or innovative learning, the state of concrete research and detailed theorizing in such learning processes is less than satisfactory."

While Engestrom does describe one such study, (Rittenberg, 1985), he criticizes it for focusing on "language and discourse as the only mediators of innovation" (p. 328). Engestrom states that Rittenberg's (1985) study "neglects the power of *material artifacts* as means of consolidating innovations and turning them into practical and theoretical tools of activity" (p. 328) (see also Glick, 1995). He notes that, recently, a number of authors have gone beyond "a narrowly interactionist and inter-mentalist notions" (p. 328) of innovation by focusing on "artifacts as mediators of socially distributed cognition."

Engestrom (1995) divides innovative learning into three types: solution innovations, trajectory innovations, and systems innovations. He states that *solution innovations* are the result of

a disturbance, tension, or conflict in the routine flow of activity....[Then], along with or instead of straightforward “action responses,” there is a moment of reflection and experimentation—or remediation—that leads to an attempted or completed nonroutine solution. (p. 331)

According to Engestrom, “solution innovation may lead to a novel tool, a novel rule, or a novel collaboration pattern” (p. 332).

Engestrom (1995) describes *trajectory innovations* as an extension of solution innovations in that the

time span and scope of impact of such innovative learning processes are significantly wider than those observed in solution innovations. Solution innovations require that the subject’s focus is widened from the outcome alone to include the potential mediating artifact, or rule, or form of division of labor. The decisive characteristic of trajectory innovation is that here the subject refocuses on the object and redefines and models it as a multistep procedural achievement rather than a once-and-for-all entity. (p. 331)

Finally, Engestrom (1995) describes *systems innovations* as “a long-term process of internalization and externalization, appropriation of available cultural resources and design of a novel forms of practice” (p. 331). Engestrom (1987) calls this approach learning by expanding, or expansive learning: “The notion of expansion refers to the phenomenon of going beyond the initially given context of specific problems and refocusing on the wider context that generates those specific problems” (p. 331). He further states that, “In all innovative learning, there is an oppositional flavor of questioning the prevailing norms and conventions” (pp. 332-333). He further states that

An expansive learning process that leads to a transformation of an entire activity system typically contains various complementary learning events and sequences....The crucial precondition for such complementarity is that events and specific sequences of learning and instruction are subordinated to a long-term process of encompassing systems innovation...[involving] joint exploitation of the potentials of multivoicedness in expertise. (pp. 352-353)

Thus, knowledge is conceptualized as *negotiated* and *transformed* rather than given or transmitted and as *emergent* rather than as having a fixed outcome. In addition, knowledge is not conceptualized as having a single, expert source but rather represents “multivoicedness in expertise.” What develops is not (only) the individual, but the system within which the individual is developing.

Engestrom’s (1995) description of innovative learning rests on the conceptual framework of activity theory (Leont’ev, 1978). Engestrom describes activity as “a collective, systemic formation that has a complex mediational structure. Activities are not short-lived events or actions that have temporally clear-cut beginning and end. They are systems that produce events and actions and evolve over lengthy periods of sociohistorical time” (p. 329). Engestrom describes participants in terms of “activity systems” made up of subject, rules, community, mediating artifacts, division of labor, object, and outcome. In addition, the development of knowledge is conceptualized as being a product of *activity* rather than as a purely cognitive process which takes place “in the head” of an individual acting alone.

Engestrom (1995) makes the important point that, when two or more participants (activity systems) come together, “The crucial feature of such an encounter is that a shared object cannot be taken for granted. Each participant, representing a specific position in the

organizational context, enters the encounter with a more or less clear preconstructed notion of the object of the meeting, as well as with preconstructed mediating artifacts, rules, etc.” (p. 333). This description of preconstructed notions, artifacts, rules, and so on is what I refer to as participants’ *personal histories* including their personal experiences, goals, tools, practices, values, beliefs, knowledge, prejudices, priorities, desires, points of view, and so on which shape their construction of the object and ultimately their interaction with other participants who have their own personal histories and their own preconstructions of the object. These personal histories are also embedded in the larger cultural/ institutional histories in which the individual participates (Scribner, 1985). Engestrom (1995) goes on to state that, “Although an encounter, such as a meeting, may have relatively clear-cut rules, even they are not automatically interpreted in the same way by the different participants. The key issue is whether or not a shared object will be constructed in the meeting” (p. 333). It is the construction of this shared object that can be problematic, not only in cognitive terms (i.e., understanding the object as it is defined by other participants) but also in terms of potentially competing goals, ideologies, priorities, identities, desires, etc.

Lave and Wenger (Lave, 1988, 1993; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Wenger, 1998) address some of the problematic issues that arise when participants act together in what they designate communities of practice. For Lave, the unit of analysis is “the activity of persons acting in setting” (Lave, 1988, p. 117). This “situatedness” of activity “always involves changes in knowledge and action” (Lave, 1993, p. 5) thus making room for the possibility of *transformation* of practices.

For example, Lave (1997) described a third-grade classroom in which mathematical practices developed, not as a result of the content of teacher instruction, but as an unintended

consequence of teacher practices—requiring that students supply the correct answers to math problems. To begin with, Lave noted that 75% of student math work was carried out during “individual work time” and that children “invested minimal attention and involvement in ongoing activity during the teacher’s instruction sessions (about 25% of class time)” (p. 30). She further noted that, “during the three weeks [of observation] the children gave no evidence of having adopted any of the specific strategies demonstrated by the teacher...” (p.30). Rather, children worked together to produce knowledge and practices that made sense to them, yet still allowed them to fulfill the teacher’s expectation of arriving at the correct answer:

[The children] asked each other for help....They collaborated and invented procedures....Essentially all problems were solved using counting and regrouping strategies. These were not presented in lessons and were not supposed to be in use....The children produced correct answers to problems that had been designed to inculcate a particular way to carry out arithmetic operations that they did not use....In sum, the teacher, text, and exercise books prescribed in detail how the children should act...while the children produced a different practice. (p. 30)

In addition, Lave and Wenger (1991) address the issue of problematic relations among individuals within a community:

Conflicts between masters and apprentices...take place in the course of everyday participation. Shared participation is that stage on which the old and the new, the known and the unknown, the established and the hopeful, act out their differences and discover their commonalities, manifest their fear of one another, and come to terms with their need for one another. Each threatens the fulfillment of the other’s destiny.

just as it is essential to it. Conflict is experienced and worked out through a shared everyday practice in which differing viewpoints and common stakes are in interplay. (p. 116)

Greeno et al. (1998) offer their own description of conflicting perspectives in community participation in terms of how individuals relate, not only to each other, but to the “prevailing standards” of the community:

...people participate in communities in many different ways—some by adopting the mainstream standards and values, some by rejecting them, and most by a mixture of conformity to and alienation from different aspects of the prevailing standards...individuals develop identities in which they relate to the prevailing standards in a complex variety of ways. (p. 10)

Walkerdine (1997) takes the analysis a step further by focusing on the history and construction of what Greeno calls the “prevailing standards.” She sets forth the idea that it is not sufficient to study the practices and standards which occur within a community and result in particular outcomes. She states that the history of these prevailing standards, in this case mathematical standards, needs to be examined:

“Why? Because attempts to demonstrate that cognition is produced in practices and not in an abstract way always hit up against the theoretical edifice on which cognition theories are built and the fears, phobias, and fetishes that are inscribed in them. In my view, it is not enough to demonstrate that people’s everyday calculations are different without thoroughly challenging the basis on which others can turn around and immediately argue that cognition, real cognition, is abstract reasoning that occurs

only through schooling. It is necessary to challenge the ideas of proof, abstraction, calculation, low level, and so forth. (p. 58)

While Walkerdine admits that Lave's account of how thought is produced in practices is "suggestive," she points out that there are limitations to her conceptualization:

I do not think that she got to grips with an account of how practices in which thinking is inscribed are produced. She made reference to the concept of activity, but apart from the clear demonstration of the route taken by shoppers and weight watchers in making their calculations, she did not really theorize *how subjects are produced in practices*. (p. 59, italics added)

Walkerdine goes on to state that subjects are produced through the discourses of "administration and regulation" (p. 62):

For Lave, practices were activities and people acting in a setting, specified by a dialectical relationship. I do not think that this is at all clear and carries the danger that neither the person nor the setting is theorized... In [my] analysis, the discursive practice is the place in which the subject is produced. (p. 63)

Other researchers (e.g., Hodges, 1998; Linehan & McCarthy, 2000, 2001) have built on Walkerdine's conceptualization and have investigated the construction of subjects, or identities, in practices. They have demonstrated that there are "multiple identificatory possibilities" constructed through the participation in practices, specifically, through the discourse that occurs within these practices.

Cole and Engestrom (1993) also describe the multiplicity of possibilities one finds within a culture or institution, specifically in relation to evolution in activity systems:

Another important feature of activity as a basic unit of analysis of human behavior is that when activities become institutionalized, they are rather robust and enduring....However, closer analysis of apparently unchanging activity systems reveals that transitions and reorganizations are constantly going on within and between activity systems as a fundamental part of the dynamics of human evolution....Consequently, activity systems are best viewed as complex formations in which equilibrium is an exception and tensions, disturbances, and local innovations are the rule and the engine of change. (p. 8)

Cole and Engestrom (1993) discuss the tendency to conceptualize "culture as a uniform, patterned ensemble of beliefs, values, symbols, tools, and so on that people share" (p. 14). They further state that,

This "configurational" approach is greatly influenced by the work of Franz Boas and his students in anthropology (see Bock, 1988, or Stocking, 1968 for an excellent summary of Boas's work)...as well as by the cross-cultural psychologists who study 'cognitive style' (Berry, 1976)....There is no doubt that culture is patterned, but there is also no doubt that it is far from uniform, because it is experienced in local face-to-face interactions that are locally constrained and, hence, heterogeneous with respect to both "culture as a whole" and the parts of the entire cultural toolkit experienced by any given individual. This point has been emphasized by Ted Schwartz (1978, 1990), who explores the way in which knowledge is distributed differentially across persons, generations, occupations, classes, religions, institutions, and so on. Schwartz argues that culture is necessarily a distributed phenomenon insofar as it is brought to bear.

and acquire, in everyday interactions among people, no two of whom share all of the culture of the group to which they belong. (pp. 14-15).

The Current Study

In the current study, I build on these conceptualizations of knowledge and development and attempt to present an analysis which reflects the complexity of developmental processes by bringing together personal, social, historical, and institutional aspects of development as they occur in goal-directed activity through the use of tools. A particular focus will be on subjects' agency in directing their own development, transforming their positions and identities, and transforming community knowledge and practices. In other words, I will investigate how participants construct and transform the "prevailing standards" of the community through their participation in practices and through their use of tools. Further, I will describe how knowledge emerged as a result of these community norms and practices.

In this study, I investigate how participants act and interact in the context of the implementation of a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program at one of the college campuses of Northeast University.¹ Participants who joined the program did so with pre-existing personal histories involving knowledge, positions, identities, experiences, practices, tools, values, and beliefs which they enacted in a variety of ways in the multiple contexts of their daily lives. I propose that individuals' pre-existing histories intersected with the history and practices of the WAC Program to produce knowledge which was not determined by either the participants or the program designers but emerged as a result of the moment-to-moment interactions of the specific participants involved in the program.

¹ Names, dates, locations, and other identifying features have been changed in order to protect the anonymity of participants.

Participants included college professors (both tenured and untenured) representing a variety of disciplines; doctoral students representing a variety of disciplines; adjunct professors; college administrators; researchers; journalists; etc.² This list is not exhaustive, and the choice of labels is obviously shaped by what I consider to represent relevant distinctions in terms of the focus of this study. The point is, however, that these labels represent the variety of participant experiences, practices, perspectives, knowledge, ideologies, identities, and community affiliations. I conceptualize these as tools which mediated the ways in which participants acted and interacted in the WAC Program thus resulting in emergent outcomes that could not have been predicted by the initial design of the WAC Program. In addition, the WAC Program was designed by a group of individuals representing a particular view of the world (WAC) and, as such, included pre-defined knowledge and practices as well as participant identities and positions which were represented in its discourse even before program participation began.

I propose that, as participants engage in practices within a community, the ensuing knowledge and practices that they produce are the result of a complex system of negotiated relationships and identities which develop through discourse and activity within a cultural, historical, and institutional context. These relationships and identities are characterized by predefined positions of knowledge, power, and authority. Through their actions and interactions (including their use of discourse and other tools), participants are continually constructing and re-constructing their positions within the community, the “accepted” practices of the community, and the “legitimate” and accepted knowledge of the community. These transformations reflect participants’ agency, the mediational and generative nature of

² A number of these roles are overlapping, for example, one of the participants was an

tools, and the distributed and emergent nature of knowledge. However, possibilities for transformation are not unlimited but are restricted by certain contextual constraints (e.g., Lave's [1988] description of the dialectical nature of "the activity of persons acting in setting" and Valsiner's [1987, 1997] description of the "indeterminacy of development," whose parameters are bounded by "action constraints" in a culturally constructed environment [p. 30]).

History and Perspective of Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is the general term for writing programs first initiated in the mid-seventies in which an attempt is made to infuse various forms of writing pedagogy into courses throughout the curriculum. According to McLeod and Maimon (2000), WAC ultimately serves to "enhance students' critical thinking and problem solving skills" (p. 574). Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Programs "are not additive, but transformative—they aim not at adding more papers and tests of writing ability, but at changing the way both teachers and students use writing in the curriculum....[It] certainly does not mean simply assigning a term paper in every class. Nor does it mean (as some faculty in the disciplines fear) teaching grammar across the curriculum" (McLeod & Soven, 2000, p. 2). As Maimon (2000) stated, "writing across the curriculum is about more than writing or reading or problem solving or critical thinking. Writing across the curriculum is a wedge into a reform pedagogy" (p. ix).

Russell (1991) describes what he perceives to be the historical basis for WAC

Programs:

Cross-curricular writing programs were almost always a response to a perceived need for greater access, greater equity. They set out to assimilate, integrate, or...initiate

English Department doctoral student who was both a former adjunct professor and journalist.

previously excluded students by means of language instruction....[T]he current WAC movement was born in the early 1970's, when open admissions in universities and racial integration in secondary schools forced educators to rethink language instruction. (p. 271)

Russell (1991) further traces the ideological roots of WAC:

One legacy of the 1960s for writing instruction was ideological. The political and cultural upheaval of the decade revived the communitarian vision in American social and educational thought that had spurred previous generations of curricular reformers, but it had its own antiauthoritarian utopian, and romantic cast. Such theorists as Peter Elbow, Ken Macrorie, Donald Graves, and James Moffett profoundly influenced the generation of teachers and curricular reformers who were nurtured in the 1960s and gave to the WAC movement its focus on the classroom as community; its student-centered pedagogy, often with a subversive tinge; and its neoromantic, expressivist assumptions, reprising themes familiar among child-centered progressives of the 1930s. (pp. 272-273)

Russell (1991) also notes the impact of "Britton's [developmental] theory that children develop writing ability by moving from personal forms of writing (what he calls expressive and poetic) to more public, workaday forms, which communicate information (what he calls transactional)" (p. 278). Further, Britton "focus[ed] on teachers as the agents of curricular change" (p. 287). Developers of the WAC movement "borrowed their methods primarily from the expressivist pedagogical tradition of the 1960s: free writing, personal journal writing, and dialogue from Peter Elbow....But they also stressed what had come to be known as 'the writing process': an emphasis on heuristic invention or 'prewriting' and conceptual

revision rather than mere proofreading for mechanical correctness" (p. 287) (see Fulwiler, 1981; Young and Fulwiler, 1986).

Russell (1991) describes the ideology behind expressivist pedagogies:

An expressivist element in composition studies today, like its forbears in the "sentimental" progressive tradition of the 1920s, sees the teaching of disciplinary conventions as a denial of students' "authentic voice" and a rejection of the possibility of true academic community in a reformed institution, where knowledge and discourse will not be controlled by disciplinary elites. Expressivists...argue that students should be encouraged to do personal writing...instead of learning to write in the public genres of the disciplines, a practice that..."encourages both conformity and submission" through a naïve and formulaic "cookie cutter" approach to composition. (p. 294) (see also Spellmeyer, 1989).

Russell (1991) also describes his conceptualization of the various "obstacles" that form the "resistance" to WAC "reform" which he claims originate in the "deeply held institutional attitudes toward writing, learning, and teaching: attitudes that are reinforced by the differentiated structure of knowledge and education" (p. 292). Obstacles cited by Russell include the following:

- [T]he century-old notion that writing is a generalizable mechanical skill, learned once and for all at an early age
- [I]deas of "correctness" inherited from the nineteenth century [which] make some instructors reluctant to accept writing (even in drafts, notebooks, or journals) that is not edited by the teacher.

- The instructor's role as examiner [which] is difficult to step out of because it is assigned to faculty by the institutional hierarchy.
- Assumptions about the nature of writing in their disciplines may also make faculty reluctant to assign personal or expressive writing.
- Faculty who are accustomed to complete autonomy and authority in the classroom often feel threatened by reforms in pedagogy that necessitate personal and intellectual involvements with students and colleagues.
- An instructor (or discipline or institution) may consider it a violation of her professional role to cover less material in a course to make room for more writing (particularly since the almost-ubiquitous standardized tests primarily measure such coverage).
- [T]he instructor's role has been traditionally...defined in terms of "discipline": showing students the "right" way within the constraints of that discipline. Thus, he may find his identity as a teacher of a discipline challenged by student responses that propose answers or use evidence or methods of inquiry not accepted by the discipline. (p. 292-293)

Russell (1991) further states that, "Faculty tend to retain narrow attitudes toward the role of writing in pedagogy not only because of disciplinary constraints but because those attitudes reflect the priorities of academia and are reinforced by its structure of rewards....At research institutions, for example, undergraduate instruction typically holds a lower priority than graduate teaching or research" (p. 295).

Russell (1991) describes a dichotomy between the idealism of expressivist, student-centered approaches to teaching writing and the approach of the disciplines which he defines

as an elitist community to which outsiders must assimilate by adopting its writing methods and conventions. He sets up this dichotomy and proposes the necessity of “bridg[ing] the old rift that has divided student-centered from discipline-centered education” (p. 301). He also describes WAC as a “convenient tool for focusing our attention on...the old battles between access and exclusion, excellence and equity, scientific and humanist worldviews, liberal and professional education....WAC ultimately asks: ...what discourse communities—and ultimately, what social class—will students be equipped to enter?” (p. 307).

Maimon (2000), an English compositionist and former faculty member of an open admissions institution, describes her experience of the beginnings of WAC:

In the mid-seventies, a few colleges provided space and time for composition instructors to exchange ideas with colleagues in other disciplines. Often these conversations began as confrontations at meetings of curriculum committees, with instructors from “content” disciplines offering diatribes on the various failings of English 101. Carleton College...was the first institution that I know of to move the venue of these cross-curricular exchanges to the more civilized setting of a summer workshop....Carleton College instituted the first faculty writing workshops during the summers of 1974 and 1975...[which] included undergraduate who were later designated “rhetoric fellows” and during the academic year were assigned to assist instructors of writing-intensive courses, performing the function of what we today call writing fellows or writing associates. (p. vii)

This excerpt reflects the confrontational history between English Departments and “content” or discipline-specific departments. In addition, the confrontational stance is attributed to content faculty. That is, Maimon states that composition instructors wanted to

“*exchange ideas* with colleagues in other disciplines” and implies that it is content faculty who turned this meeting into an unpleasant, uncivilized situation with their “confrontation[al]...diatribes” blaming composition instructors for not adequately teaching students how to write in English 101. She then states that changing the meeting situation to a workshop made the interaction more “civilized.” In addition, she comments on the role of what were initially termed “rhetoric fellows” who “assist[ed] instructors” and were the precursors of today’s writing fellows.

Maimon goes on to describe her view of the purpose of WAC which she feels “gets at fundamental principles of teaching and learning” and strives to break the “lecture/ test/ lecture” pattern of teaching to “make classrooms interactive....[WAC] means incorporating student responses into teaching” (p. ix). She further comments on the connection between the purpose of writing and how it relates to students:

When classrooms in all disciplines focus on writing as a process of *self-discovery* and as a means for *social interaction*, we are really attending to the voices of diversity in our classes. (p. x) [italics added]

In addition, Maimon notes that she developed a plan for a course that would help students to develop “the confidence to question conventions and to challenge rules” (p. viii). These views can be contrasted with writing instruction in the disciplines in which faculty focus on teaching students to develop an understanding of the rules and conventions of the writing forms of their discipline (e.g., the fixed format of the chemistry lab report).

Maimon offers her views on the perspective of discipline-specific faculty with regard to writing instruction:

...the most resilient enemy of WAC, fear over “coverage,” gains strength. The first issue raised by wary faculty members had always involved the “C word.” And the obsession with covering material is often more to bolster the professor’s sense of self-esteem than it is to benefit students. Often we race through material, so that instructors who teach our students in later courses cannot accuse us of neglecting to mention something. If students don’t remember what we said, we say, that’s their problem, but we can feel smug about covering the material. I’m still waiting for a T-shirt inscribed with the motto “I know that I taught it because I heard myself say it.” (p. x)

Thus, Maimon solidifies the confrontational nature of the English Department/ discipline-specific department relationship through use of the term “enemy.” She describes discipline-specific faculty as obsessive, self-serving, and smug and students as the victims of this bad behavior. She further states that professors place the blame for failure on students and absolve themselves of all responsibility in this matter because they “cover[ed] the material,” and this, in professors’ eyes, should be sufficient for students to learn.

Finally, Maimon states that “One of the most important outcomes of faculty writing workshops, as the essays in this volume confirm, is the reexamination of practices in light of redefined goals—goals that are realistically directed to student learning, not to abstract conceptions of what should be covered in a course” (p. x). Thus, from a WAC perspective (represented by Maimon as well as the other English compositionists contributing to the volume which presents itself as guide for developing WAC programs), discipline-specific faculty should redefine their goals and change their practices to accommodate the goals that are defined by these outside experts.

Writing Across the Curriculum Background

In WAC approaches, distinction is made between two types of writing that instructors ask students to engage in. These two types of writing serve different purposes.³ *Expressive* writing is writing that is done for the self. Its purpose is help students to *construct* understanding through various (usually) ungraded “writing-to-learn” assignments such as keeping journals or learning logs or participating in “freewriting” exercises. *Transactional* writing is done for the instructor. It is intended to *display* knowledge through (usually) graded learning-to-write assignments such as term papers, lab reports, or essay exams.

In fact, learning-to-write activities are more closely associated with a writing movement which is particular to “content” courses—Writing-in-the-Disciplines (WID). WID focuses on the discipline-specific (cultural) writing forms and conventions taught in content courses.

For example, the lab report in chemistry would be considered a discipline-specific form which follows a number of conventions defined by and accepted in the chemistry community (such as dividing the report into sections [abstract, introduction, method, results, conclusions, bibliography]; using the past tense and passive voice, etc.). In chemistry, fully understanding the content and reporting the results of an experiment in any random order or style is not sufficient or acceptable (in contrast to freewriting or journal writing, for example). The lab report must assume a specific form or structure in order to be accepted as a legitimate rendering of experimental results within the scientific community. The same is

³ I describe these approaches in the most general terms. Those interested in a more in-depth discussion can refer to Fulwiler, 1981).

true in other disciplines which formulate their written knowledge in culturally-accepted ways such as film critiques, art analysis essays, historical accounts, and so on.

Generally speaking, the WAC approach is more closely associated with English composition instructors while WID is more similar to the teaching focus of discipline-specific faculty.⁴

Writing Across the Curriculum Models

Most new WAC programs are developed largely through internal funding sources and do not have the budget necessary for a “visit from a WAC expert” (McLeod & Soven, 2000, p. 2). Thus, colleges and universities are left to their own devices to design WAC programs. In designing a WAC program, universities may draw on a number of approaches and models that have been developed throughout WAC’s thirty-year history.

Programs may be designed in a “bottom-up” manner, relying on the initiative of a few committed faculty which was the approach typical of early WAC programs. More recently, however, McLeod and Soven (2000) have noted an increase in administrative initiatives of WAC programs, a “top-down” approach. However, they point out that, while this increased administrative support is “gratifying, [...] faculty must own WAC programs in order for those programs to succeed” (McLeod and Soven, 2000, p. 2).

There are a number of different models for developing WAC programs (Walvoord, 2000). Two of these models which are relevant to the current study are discussed below: the WAC Conversion Model and the WAC Training Model. These models overlap to a certain degree and are thus discussed jointly. These models have developed as part of the history and ideology of WAC. The Conversion/ Training Model approach was that used at the

beginning of the WAC Program investigated in the current study. In addition, two new models emerged as a result of the implementation activities which took place as part of the WAC program in the current study. These models, the Faculty Resource Model and the Faculty Participation Model, are also discussed below.

Writing across the Curriculum Conversion/Training Models

Training models (or workshop models) seek to educate “untrained” faculty. This approach “impl[ies] that there are certain skills or procedures that you will train faculty to implement, and then they will go out and do what they have been trained to do” (Walvoord, 2000, p. 11). In a related model, the conversion model, discipline-specific faculty are conceptualized as “heathens who must be converted to the Right Way” (p. 11). In both of these models, there are the assumptions (1) that there is a “Right Way” (and a wrong way) to carry out writing instruction and (2) that English composition faculty are the prophets spreading the Truth of their scriptures (i.e., composition theory and research literature) to the unenlightened discipline-specific faculty who have it “all wrong” (p. 11).

This approach implies a top-down, transmission process of development and closely mirrors a teacher-centered model of education in which the teacher, as cultural representative who possesses the “correct” knowledge, transfers this knowledge to the child. Or, to use the terms employed by some researchers (who borrowed it from an information processing approach and adapted it to a Vygotskian approach to development), the teacher is the *expert*

⁴ The discussion of this chapter will focus on WAC since it is the basis of the program that was initiated and is being described in this study.

and the child is the less knowledgeable *novice* who must appropriate the cultural knowledge possessed by the teacher.⁵

In the WAC conversion model, English composition faculty (or other WAC “prophets” such as Writing Fellows [WFs]) are (implicitly) conceptualized as the experts while discipline-specific faculty are considered novices. In this top-down model, WAC theory and practices are transmitted by WAC representatives to discipline-specific faculty. These WAC practices are then appropriated (replacing faculties’ original practices and conceptualizations of writing instruction) and implemented in the classroom. The purpose of interaction with faculty is to assess the type and gravity of the “problems” with regard to their writing pedagogy and to advocate WAC practices that would address and fix faculty deficiencies in teaching writing.

Proposed (Emergent) Models for Writing Across the Curriculum

Faculty Resource Model

This model was not planned, but emerged as a result of the particular circumstances of the WAC initiative in this study and the activities of program participants. Initially originating from a Conversion/ Training Model approach based in WAC history and ideology, the WAC program in the current study evolved into an approach which its participants named the Faculty Resource Model. In this model, Writing Fellows (WFs), representatives of the WAC program in this study, were placed in the role of resource to discipline-specific faculty and used their knowledge of WAC to address faculties’ concerns, *as defined by faculty*, and to serve faculties’ needs. Unlike the Conversion/ Training Model, the Faculty Resource Model

⁵ These terms (expert/novice) are also commonly used to describe parent/child models of learning.

acknowledges the role of faculties' existing practices as well as their knowledge of and expertise in their discipline and takes into account the importance of faculties' voice in shaping the outcomes of the WF-faculty interactions.

However, while the Faculty Resource Model is a step beyond the Conversion/ Training Model regarding the role of faculty input, it still retains some undesirable connotations and does not accurately reflect the complexity of the interactions and activities that took place in the WAC Program in the current study. This model, as it is named and described, is unclear regarding the roles and activities of WFs and faculty. The name implies the passivity and conformity of WFs. That is, WFs' role is described as being in *response to* faculty demands and concerns; WFs are in the position of being resource available to be exploited by faculty; they are not given a role beyond that of carrying out activities requested by and in support of existing faculty needs and concerns.

Ironically, however, in this model, WFs maintain the role of experts who use their knowledge to extend existing faculty practices towards WAC-defined and accepted pedagogical practices. This model can be conceptualized as analogous to a teacher setting up the environment to "promote" student learning based on where the child is developmentally, in relation to the culturally-defined ideal.⁶ Thus, in reality, in the Faculty Resource Model, faculty are still conceptualized as recipients of expert knowledge which is made available to them based on their requests. They are expected to appropriate and use WF tools and practices in their classrooms as they have been designed and for the purposes that were intended. There is no component of this model which takes into consideration faculty

⁶ See also Valsiner, 1987 for a discussions of the "Zone of Proximal Development" and the "Zone of Promoted Action" in which parents set up the environment to shape and encourage culturally preferred developmental outcomes.

innovation or transformation of tools that have been developed. Thus, although faculty do have input that shapes, to a certain extent, the tools that are developed, there is no mechanism to account for transformation of what has been developed, nor is there consideration of faculty playing a role in guiding and contributing to the process of creating tools or using tools that have been developed to further develop their own thinking about the writing pedagogy process.

A related problematic issue concerning the Faculty Resource Model is that WAC knowledge (theory, practice, approaches to development) is not conceptualized as an object that can or should be transformed. The idea is that the already well-established and accepted WAC “general writing principles” could be used to address the needs and concerns of faculty and their disciplines. However, there is no mention that WAC knowledge can, will, or should, fundamentally be transformed or that its principles should even be questioned. In point of fact, WAC “general writing principles” espoused as basic to the Faculty Resource Model are decontextualized, theoretical pieces of knowledge which do not have meaning in and of themselves until they are situated and enacted in (inter)personal, course-specific, discipline-specific, and institutional contexts.

That is, knowledge is transformed through its *enactment* (practices) during which discipline-specific and WAC knowledge come together in particular institutional, departmental, and interpersonal contexts to create *emergent* outcomes. Through analysis of this process of participation in practices, it becomes clear that knowledge and practices are not *transmitted* but are *transformed*. Thus, while the Faculty Resource Model does make great strides in overcoming the limitations of the Conversion/ Training Model, it is still limited.

Faculty Participation Model

In an effort to more fully and accurately describe what actually happened during the WAC Program, I propose a Faculty Participation Model in which neither the institutional nor the personal contribution is privileged. Development is conceptualized as occurring through an interaction, integration, and transformation of WF and WAC administration knowledge of writing pedagogy and faculty members' knowledge of their disciplines and teaching. In addition, this knowledge is conceptualized as being *enacted* by particular individuals involved in the program. The knowledge produced is not an idealized cultural form representing WAC knowledge or discipline-specific knowledge. Rather, in the Faculty Participation Model, cultural and personal forces are envisioned as working together to create a new and unique construction that is not predicted by either side considered in isolation.

Described in general terms, in the Faculty Participation Model, a particular disciplinary culture (e.g., biology, history, philosophy, etc.) comes together with WAC culture. But, in fact, what really occurs on a concrete level are any number of specific social interactions taking place at specific moments in time in particular places. The participants in these social interactions are not neutral and all-knowing representatives of either the discipline in question or of WAC, but represent distinct individuals—what one might refer to as “instantiations” or “enactments” of a culture. Individuals possess (1) varying degrees of knowledge within their “culture,” (Nelson, 1995), (2) a particular perspective of their culture (which causes them to emphasize certain knowledge, values and approaches and to downplay or reject others), (3) personal histories including knowledge, practices, experiences, goals, ideologies, values, and beliefs which extend beyond their experiences related to their WAC or discipline-specific culture, and (4) personalities encompassing a host of conscious and

unconscious needs, fears, and desires. In addition, each “culture” has its own history which presents pre-defined constructions of knowledge, roles, practices, and positions. These cultural histories come together in the context of the WAC Program in this study. Thus, one of the difficulties in implementing a WAC program (or any program or other institutional endeavor) is being able to take into account these potentially divisive factors and develop and unite different individuals to work successfully together.

In contrast to the rigid expert/ novice roles inherent in the Conversion/ Training Model and the ambiguous and conflicting roles of the Faculty Resource Model, the Faculty Participation Model posits that outcomes developed as a result of an *open system* of interactions with knowledge and expertise distributed across all participants. That is, the various participants contributed knowledge from a range of perspectives which resulted in transformed knowledge and a self-developing program with emergent outcomes. In addition to the variety of (direct and indirect) interactions among participants, new elements were brought into the system (new knowledge and perspectives such as research literature, knowledge gained through practices and tools that were developed and enacted, bringing in new faculty and WFs, etc.) which further contributed to the program’s continued self-development and transformation.

The Role of Writing Fellows

The models discussed above describe the transformation of conceptualizations of Writing Fellow-faculty interactions as they evolved through implementation of the WAC program in this study. In addition to changes in WF-faculty interactions, there were also changes in the roles and practices of the Writing Fellows themselves which were an important factor in the evolution of the WAC program models. As part of the Faculty

Participation Model, not only are faculty considered as equal participants in the development of the program. Writing Fellows are also conceptualized as key contributors and experts in the development of program outcomes.

Chapter 2 Context, Methods, and Data Analysis

Background and Context

The context for this study is a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Program at Central College in its first two years of development. This program was one of 17 campus WAC Programs developed as part of a five-year WAC Initiative which took place at Northeast University (NU) during the latter half of the 1990's.⁷ The WAC programs were implemented through the activities of NU doctoral students acting as Writing Fellows (WFs) under the supervision of campus-based WAC Coordinators and administrators. WFs were hired under a contract which limited their employment to two years. They were required to work 15 hours per week, totaling 225 hours per semester. Although the contract did not clearly specify what activities WFs should carry out, it did stipulate that WFs should not be used as teachers or graders. At Central College, WFs worked on various discipline-specific "projects" with a number of faculty members.⁸

Approximately 100 WFs were hired from across various disciplines of the NU doctoral program, and five to six WFs were assigned to each campus. A required two-day training including all 100 or so WFs took place before the start of the program and was designed and run by WAC Coordinators. WAC Coordinators were representatives from each campus who, during the school year, supervised the activities of the WFs assigned to their campus.

⁷ To protect the anonymity of participants, identifying information has been changed such as names of individuals and institutions, and, in certain cases, the disciplines with which they were affiliated. In addition, exact dates for the initiative have not been provided. Throughout the text, dates will be indicated with the last digit of the year left blank (i.e., 199_).

Central College is a four-year public urban college with an open admissions policy which began in the mid-1960s on the heels of the Civil Rights movement. This open admission policy led to the transition of Central College from a predominantly white campus to a campus made up of largely of ethnic minorities (including many ESL students) a number of whom were attracted by the open admissions policy as well as financial incentives to support minority enrollment. These “underprepared” students represented a challenge to faculty, some more committed than others to the idea of equal access to education. Thus, the history of teaching writing on Central College campus is one of tense relations among faculty. It is in this setting, among the highly charged topic of writing, that the current study took place.

The Study

This study did not originate as a research project. Throughout the two years of the WAC Program, I was a WF assigned to the Central College campus. It was in the final month or so of my two years of participation in the WAC Program that two of my colleagues (English WFs) and I began to discuss and reflect on our experiences during the program. We felt that, despite some initial failures, we had succeeded in helping to create a unique and promising program at Central College. We wanted to share our story and decided to write an article which we hoped to publish. Coming from different disciplines (I from psychology and the other two WFs from English), we had varying perspectives and interests regarding the purpose and focus of the proposed article. Thus, unable to decide on a specific focus, we agreed upon a strategy to begin writing the paper. We decided that each of us would choose

⁸ Much more detail on the roles and practices of the WFs and the WAC Coordinators is provided in the next chapter.

a “moment” from our program participation that was of particular importance to us and describe our experience. It is from these personal narratives that the article developed.

There was always, however, a tension between me and the other two WFs regarding the purpose and focus of the article. For the other two WFs, the focus was on the “how to,” that is, how to use the Central College approach to develop WAC Programs on other campuses. In particular, they focused on the specific content of the WAC materials we had developed and how to use them in the classroom. For me, the focus was more on “how did,” meaning, how did the Central College WAC Program transform from its initial state (reflecting a conversion model of WAC, see Chapter 1) into something so different (Faculty Resource Model and Faculty Participation Model, see Chapter 1)? In particular, what were the personal, social, cognitive, historical, and institutional aspects of participant interactions that occurred which resulted in the outcomes that developed? Ultimately, the article developed into a *mélange* of both English and psychology approaches. However, because of space limitations, the article could not go into great depth regarding either focus. Even without these limitations, in my opinion, the two perspectives could not have been integrated coherently into a single document. Thus, I decided to conduct my own analysis of the Central College WAC Program in which I could focus on the areas of most interest to me—the developmental aspects of the program related to knowledge, practices, identities, and positions.

My Role in the Study Context

During the course of the two years of the WAC Program, I was a full participant in the ongoing activities of the program. My role was one of Writing Fellow, not of researcher. It was not until the end of my two years of participation that I began to reflect back on my

experience in the program from the perspective of a researcher. Thus, this gives my study of the program a unique quality. That is, unlike in other studies, I, as researcher, did not influence participant actions or program outcomes. My role in the program was one of fellow participant, not of outside researcher or even participant observer. I, as researcher, entered the study context only after the two years of participant interactions had already taken place. However, unlike many outside researcher who have limited experience and knowledge of the context and the participants, I have the in-depth, privileged knowledge of the context and the participants that comes from spending 15 hours per week for two years participating in the practices of WAC Program. Thus, my approach to this study is both grounded and naturalistic (Strauss & Corbin, 1997).

This does not mean, however, that I had unfettered access or unbiased interactions with program participants. My interactions with participants as well as my interpretation of events (including decisions regarding which events were worthy of note) were necessarily defined by my position as a WF. Thus, there is still a trade-off in terms of bias and access to information. For example, an outside researcher would likely have had more access to and openness from WAC administrators and coordinators but would have been limited in his or her interpretation of these data due to a lack of in-depth information that comes from participating in the program. Thus, the issue of subjectivity always enters the equation (Fine, 1994; Rosaldo, 1989). However, the uniqueness of this study is that its data were not shaped by a research agenda. That is, I, as researcher, did not artificially create opportunities in which data were generated in order to elicit information to answer my research questions; rather, data described in this study are a result of normally occurring program activities. Thus, there is no need to question whether or not the activities observed were “artificial” and

simply created by the very method that was constructed to observe their “natural” occurrence (e.g., creating an artificial problem solving context to observe “naturally” occurring interactions between peer dyads). This said, it must also be noted that, although all of the data are “authentic” (i.e., constructed for program rather than research purposes), my theoretical approach necessarily guided my decisions in choosing which data to focus on and how to interpret these data.

This approach can also be located in the tradition of participatory action research (Reason & Bradbury, 2001). In a participatory action approach, research is carried out *with* participants rather than *on* participants. Both researchers and participants define issues, questions, and problems of interest. That is, the knowledge and experiences of participants contribute to the development and carrying out of the study rather than these being the exclusive domain of the researcher. Although this study did not begin as a research project, the interactions that evolved resembled those that one might find among researchers and participants in a participatory action research project. That is, initially, individuals who planned the WAC Program had a role similar to that of “traditional” researchers in that they approached discipline-specific faculty participants with theories and ideas about how the program should be implemented. (In research terms, one would say that the researcher predetermined how the study should be carried out, what questions should be addressed, and so on.) However, as described in chapters 3-6, implementation of the program (including interactions among participants, issues to be addressed, and production of knowledge) became a collaborative effort involving input and decision-making by both program developers and discipline-specific faculty participants.

Knowledge and power are intertwined (Gaventa & Cornwall, 2001). That is, the type of knowledge that is produced and accepted as legitimate is that knowledge which is produced and accepted by those in power (Henriques et al., 1984; Walkerdine, 1997). Power itself is not an essential characteristic of individuals but is relational (Foucault, 1977, 1979). Thus, in the case of this study, an expert is not an expert based on some essentialistic property such as amount of knowledge possessed; an expert is an expert in relation to those with whom he or she is interacting at a particular moment within a particular context. That is, an individual may be granted the title of “expert” based on his or her position (professor vs. student) and based on the accepted legitimacy of his or her knowledge (WAC expert in how to teach writing vs. discipline-specific novice in how to teach writing). In this study, “expert” and “novice” are used in order to relate these common terms to other studies in which they have been used (e.g., teacher-student and parent-child expert-novice pairs). However, throughout the text, the fluid nature of these concepts is emphasized in order to demonstrate their relational character.

This approach does have its limitations. For example, while data for the most in-depth analyses (i.e., the chemistry project described in Chapter 4) result from first-hand interaction, a number of analyses are performed on data reported through the narratives of other participants. In addition, it would have been informative to collect data from some of the participants who withdrew from the program, but, because their departure was a result of dissatisfaction with the program, this was not a feasible option. Other participant viewpoints which are underrepresented are WAC administrators. Because of my position as a Writing Fellow, my relationship with administrators was one of limited interaction. Had I been an outside researcher, my access to administration would have been broadened (provided I had

been welcomed as a researcher). Finally, though the voices of students are present in the current study, they are not as strong as the voices of WFs and faculty.

Research Questions

My research questions were guided by my theoretical approach which defines development as an interactional, relational, and emergent process which takes place in sociohistorical context through goal-oriented, tool-mediated activity. My questions are as follows:

1. What is the pre-existing conceptualization of knowledge, practices, identities, and positions of participants as constructed through the ideology, history, and models developed in the Writing Across the Curriculum movement? How does this historical conceptualization relate to how participants (i.e., Writing Fellows, WAC Coordinators, discipline-specific faculty, and students) are initially positioned through the discourse and activities of the WAC initiative and the WAC Program at Central College? How are the WAC Program and positions of participants transformed from initial conceptualizations through participant discourse and activity?
2. How are knowledge and practices developed and transformed through the activities of the participants in the WAC Program? What tools are developed? How are these tools used and transformed in specific contexts? How do these tools transform the knowledge and practices of the WAC Program?
3. What is the nature of the knowledge that is developed in the WAC Program context?

Methods and Data Analysis

Because my goal in this study was to describe transformation (of knowledge, identities, practices, and positions) in the program, I analyzed data which illustrated how program knowledge, identities, practices, and positions were defined at various points in time. In

addition, I wanted to examine the processes that took place which resulted in program transformation from one time point to another. I identified two “phases” of program functioning and used data to illustrate the differences in knowledge, practices, identities, and positions between these two phases. I also performed an in-depth analysis of one of the WAC projects in order to examine the processes that occurred which resulted in transformation of knowledge, practices, identities, and positions at the level of specific social interactions (which eventually spread to the overall activity system).

Analyses focused on the role of discourse and practices in development and were carried out on a range of forms of discourse which illustrated knowledge, practices, identities, and positions from the perspectives of the various participants (the university Board of Trustees, WAC administrators and coordinators, English Department and discipline-specific WFs, and discipline-specific faculty). These forms of discourse included university mandates and planning documents; WAC Program proposals, reports, and memos; notes from meetings, research, and classroom participation; and narratives and letters describing participants’ experiences in the program. In addition, as a participant in the program, I had the opportunity to have many formal discussions and informal conversations with participants. Thus, there are instances in which I incorporate this knowledge into my analyses as illustrations of transformations of knowledge, practices, identities, and positions. Finally, I also use my own experiences of program participation to demonstrate various aspects of program transformation.

These data were analyzed in terms of how they defined the knowledge, practices, identities, and positions (Goodnow, 1990; Solis, 2002) of participants as well as how they illustrated transformations of knowledge, practices, identities, and positions. Analyses also

reflect how the knowledge, practices, identities, and positions reflect the historical and institutional context of WAC as well as my theoretical approach (described in Chapter 1) which emphasizes processes of transformation, emergence of outcomes, and the role of discourse and activity in development. These various forms of data reflect historical, institutional, social, cognitive, and personal aspects of development.

Participants

Central College WAC Program participants are indicated in Table 1. In addition, sources of data are indicated for each participant.⁹ A WAC Handbook, written by WFs, WAC Coordinators, and discipline-specific faculty was also used as a data source.

⁹ Although my participation in the program was not originally in the role of researcher, my data collection most closely resembles ethnographic methods of data collection (Miles & Huberman, 1984) and took the form of notes taken during participation in program activities as well as reports written about program activities.

Table 1
WAC Program Participants

Participant Name¹⁰	WAC Program Title	University Title	Discipline Affiliation	Data Sources (Written Documentation)¹¹
		Board of Trustees		WAC Resolution
	WAC Administrator	Dean	Sociology	
	WAC Coordinator 1	Professor	English	
Steven	WAC Coordinator 2	Professor	English	Proposals, WAC Handbook
Michaela	WF	Doctoral Student	Psychology	Meeting notes, observation notes, memos, reports, WAC tools, WAC research
Pat	WF	Doctoral Student	English	Narrative
Carey	WF	Doctoral Student	English	Narrative
Charles	WF	Doctoral Student	Chemistry	Report, WAC tools
Sarah	WF	Doctoral Student	English	Report
Tracey	WF	Doctoral Student	Sociology	Observation notes
Dr. Graham	Faculty WF	Professor	Sociology	Narrative, syllabus, WAC tools
Dr. Harris	Faculty WF	Professor	Chemistry	Narrative, syllabus, WAC tools
Dr. Devon	Faculty WF	Professor	Art	Narrative
Dr. Green	Faculty WF	Professor	Chemistry	Syllabus, WAC tools
Dr. Franklin	Faculty WF	Professor	Chemistry	WAC tools
Dr. Grimes	Faculty WF	Professor	Philosophy	Report
Susan	Faculty WF	Professor	History	Letter
	Faculty WF	Professor	Architecture	Observation notes
	Faculty WF	Professor	Philosophy	Narrative description

¹⁰ Pseudonyms are given only for those participants whose names are mentioned in the text of this document.

¹¹ In addition to written documentation, informal conversations, meeting discussions as well as observations during participation in program practices were used to inform analyses.

Chapter 3 Expert and Novice Positions of Participants in the WAC Program

The University's Model of the WAC Program

In this chapter I describe the hierarchical and interactional structure which reflects the initial implementation of the WAC initiative (see Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix) as well as the beginnings of a transformation of the positions and interactions of program participants.

University-Defined Faculty Positions

As part of the university-wide guidelines for developing a WAC program at the campuses of Northeast University [NU], a resolution named, "The Enhancement of Student Writing Skills" was adopted by the [NU] Board of Trustees. This resolution stated that the purpose of the program was "To assure that [NU] graduates bring fully developed communication skills into the workplace and into graduate and professional schools..." Thus, the university's conceptualization of the underlying, ultimate purpose of the resolution was to implement a WAC program which would ensure students' success in the workplace and in graduate and professional schools.¹²

In order to accomplish their goal, the university stated that,

...a major University initiative over the next five years will intensify and extend the colleges' efforts to teach writing in courses across the curriculum.

The resolution further stated that it recognized that,

advanced writing ability represents the hallmark of a comprehensive college education and can only be developed through extensive writing practice, promoted across a wide spectrum of academic experiences.

¹² This is only one of many possible goals, for example, using enhanced literacy development as a form of liberation education (e.g., Freire, 1996).

These statements frame the issue of writing ability (or, more specifically, students' development of acceptable writing skills) as the responsibility of *faculty* through their teaching of writing. This conceptualization can be understood in contrast to other possible conceptualizations which might place the responsibility of developing writing skills on *students*. For example, the writing issue might have been framed to focus on encouraging students to make greater efforts in their studies or to make better use of available resources rather than to focus on faculty efforts and abilities in teaching writing.

Thus, in constructing the issue of poor student writing, instead of positioning students as deficient in their abilities or efforts, the university positioned faculty as deficient or ineffective in their teaching of writing. In particular, this resolution expanded the responsibility of teaching writing to *all* faculty (not exclusively English composition faculty as is traditionally the case). Thus, with this resolution, it is specifically discipline-specific faculty who are positioned as deficient in their teaching of writing.

This conceptualization of faculty, as stated in the Board of Trustees' resolution, is consistent with the university's framing of the WAC movement (as stated in the a "WAC Guidelines" memo), "The WAC movement attempts to *reform pedagogy*" (italics added). By framing the WAC movement in this way, the university frames the writing pedagogy of discipline-specific faculty as somehow unsatisfactory and thus in need of change (or, in more drastic terms, reform). It positions discipline-specific faculty as less competent than faculty who are familiar with WAC writing pedagogy (that is, English Department faculty).

Further, the "WAC Guidelines" memo offered specific suggestions regarding ways in which discipline-specific faculty should change their courses and their teaching practices.

The memo stated that, “The [Northeast University] subcommittee on WAC and WID¹³ Programs and Practices reviewed the literature on successful programs nationwide and examined existing programs within [NU].” Based on their findings, “the subcommittee compiled a set of recommendations for developing writing intensive courses.” The memo further stated that “[t]hese recommendations are intended to set the direction for a full implementation of WAC that meets the needs of each campus.” Their recommendations consisted of the following:

- Informal “writing to learn” activities should take place throughout the semester.
- Students in all WI [Writing Intensive] courses should write a minimum of 10-12 pages of formal writing, which will incorporate opportunities for revision and which can be satisfied by a variety of writing assignments.
- Instructors should be encouraged to use a series of short assignments rather than one long one and integrate writing into the course throughout the semester.
- Research papers (if assigned) should be completed so that students profit from instructional mediation and feedback.
- Course grades in WI courses should be based in substantial part on assessment of students’ written work.

By making these recommendations, the University WAC subcommittee thus made the assumption that these activities were not already taking place in WI discipline-specific

¹³ Writing in the Disciplines (WID) is a writing movement which emerged after WAC and focuses more on issues of discipline-specific writing forms (e.g., informational essay, lab report, film critique, etc.) than content or conceptual understanding.

courses¹⁴ and, combined with the wording of the Board of Trustees' resolution, reinforced the suggestion that current faculty writing instruction was deficient and had to be changed.

Based on this perceived (framed) need for faculty change, the University WAC subcommittee "identified well-designed, sustained faculty development as essential to the success...of the University-wide Writing Across the Curriculum Initiative..." and made plans to develop and institute faculty development activities focused on effective writing pedagogy:

The subcommittee on Faculty Development will coordinate the design and operation of the initial summer seminar [for WAC Coordinators, discipline-specific faculty, and WFs] and will recommend other faculty development activities...

Of the 26 members of the University-Wide Committee on Writing Across the Curriculum, 4 were upper-level administrators who worked at the Northeast University central office (i.e., not on one of the college campuses), and 3 were administrators on college campuses. None of these 7 administrators participated in the day-to-day planning and implementation of WAC Program activities that took place on their campuses. The remaining 19 members of the University-Wide Committee were WAC Coordinators and were responsible for the actual day-to-day planning and implementation of WAC activities at

¹⁴ Certain discipline-specific courses are designated as Writing Intensive are supposed to include more writing than "regular" discipline-specific courses. Courses in the English Department are not differentiated in this way as it is automatically assumed that students do a great deal of writing in these classes based on the very fact that they are English Department courses.

the campus level. Of these 19 committee members, 17 (89%) came from an English Composition and Rhetoric background.¹⁵

This represents a substantial English Department influence in the planning and implementation of the WAC programs at the various NU college campuses as well as the Writing Fellow training. It is also consistent with the overrepresentation (in fact, almost exclusive representation) of English Department faculty in the development of the WAC movement and the ongoing operation of current WAC programs across the country. Thus, historically, the tenets, principles, techniques, values and beliefs of the theory, research, and practices of the WAC movement have been formulated from an English Department Composition and Rhetoric point of view and have been applied (from the outside) to the disciplines. It is from this same point of view that the Northeast University WAC programs and training were developed and (initially) implemented.

Thus, in traditional WAC programs, as well as those proposed at Northeast University, English Department Composition and Rhetoric faculty were positioned (implicitly, through discourse and practices) as experts while discipline-specific faculty were positioned as novices.

University-Defined Writing Fellow Positions

As part of the WAC initiative, the university established a Writing Fellows Program which they described in the resolution as follows:

This initiative will be linked to a new [NU] Writing Fellows Program that will place *specially trained* [NU] doctoral students on undergraduate campuses and offer them

¹⁵ Sixteen of these 17 WAC Coordinators were current NE University English Department Faculty, and one was the Director of her campus' Writing Center. Of the two WAC

the opportunity to be *mentored* by faculty members while *assisting* in a variety of capacities in *support* of intensive writing instruction. [italics added]

The University further described the Writing Fellows' position:

The Writing Fellows Initiative is a commitment to [NU] students at two levels: it advances the professional *training* of [NU] graduate students, who in turn *assist* in improving the writing skills of [NU] undergraduates....Advanced level doctoral students will be offered the opportunity to participate in a wide variety of *teaching and administrative* activities to *enhance undergraduate learning* and, at the same time to broaden their own professional experience. The Writing Fellows will be *mentored* by full time faculty members, coordinators with whom they will *work closely* throughout the academic year. [italics added]

These statements frame graduate student Writing Fellows (WFs) as lacking the appropriate knowledge and skills to carry out their roles. They are positioned as novices in need of training and close supervision by more expert individuals (i.e., WAC Coordinator faculty mentors). WFs are also positioned as assistants who would be playing only a supporting role in working with faculty and in other activities of the WAC program. In addition, the focus of the WF role, as outlined in the guidelines, is to "enhance undergraduate learning." There is no mention that WFs would be working to change or enhance faculty instructional methods. Rather than pointing out what WFs could offer faculty in terms of professional development, the University frames WAC activities as benefiting WFs in their own professional development. Thus, although the focus of the WAC initiative was stated to be pedagogical reform, WFs are not positioned as having an influential role in this process

Coordinators who did not come from an English Composition and Rhetoric background, one

but rather a secondary or supporting role in the planned activities of the University and, in particular, the campus WAC Coordinators.

Thus, WFs are positioned as novices who, upon having received the required training, could act with some degree of WAC expertise in the role of assisting and supporting in the development of students' writing skills.

Writing Fellow Training

The initial WF training consisted of two full-day seminars. WFs were divided into approximately 10 groups with about 10-15 WFs in each group. Each group consisted of WFs assigned to work at different campuses as well as WAC Coordinators and (a few)¹⁶ discipline-specific faculty. Each group seminar was carried out by WAC Coordinators representing two (or three) different campuses.

During these seminars, WAC Coordinator group leaders had members of the group do a large amount of freewriting—a common WAC “writing-to-learn” technique. For example, group members were given a dense and complicated quote by Chomsky and asked to freewrite about it for a few minutes. They were then asked to read their writing aloud to the group. These activities—freewriting and sharing what one had written—were central to the seminar and are a fundamental component of WAC writing-to-learn approaches.

However, as familiar as these activities may be within the context of accepted WAC practices, they were unfamiliar to many of the discipline-specific WFs (i.e., non-English Department WFs). As a WF from the field of psychology, I was taken aback by and very uncomfortable participating in these activities. What was I supposed to be writing? What if

was an Education Department faculty member and one was a Law School Dean.

¹⁶ As this training was scheduled at the last minute and took place in late August, most faculty had prior obligations and could not attend.

I had no inspiration or any idea of what to say in response to this quote? What if I did not understand it? What complete and utter embarrassment to share the nonsense that I had written in front of complete strangers, colleagues! After two days of such experiences, I felt completely alienated from the whole process and had made no sense of what the workshop was trying to accomplish.¹⁷

Central College's Model of the WAC Program

WAC Coordinators as Experts, WFs and Discipline-Specific Faculty as Novices

Consistent with the University-wide conceptualization of WFs, at Central College, WAC Coordinators regarded WFs as novices. WFs needed to be trained in WAC theory and methods, thus, a WAC Coordinator was assigned to provide them with this training. WFs were given readings and assignments and met with the WAC (training) Coordinator¹⁸ once a week for a seminar-type WAC course. In addition to assigned readings, WFs discussed their current projects (their work with discipline-specific faculty at Central College) in the seminars in order to get feedback, guidance, and approval from the WAC Coordinator. The WAC Coordinator also reviewed project-related materials developed by WFs, provided feedback on these materials, and expected them to be revised accordingly before they were given to discipline-specific faculty and implemented in their classrooms.

¹⁷ A University-wide gathering of WFs from across all campuses took place the following year. At this time, many of the discipline-specific WFs reported that they were also left confused and frustrated by the activities that had taken place during the initial training.

¹⁸ Initially there was only one WAC Coordinator at Central College. A second English Department faculty member was given the task of training WFs and later became named as a second WAC Coordinator as he became more and more involved in WAC activities beyond his initial defined role as WF "trainer."

In addition, WAC Coordinators required that WFs write and submit reports describing their project activities and recommendations. These reports would later be submitted to the discipline-specific faculty members with whom the WF had worked. However, WAC Coordinators reviewed and revised these reports before they would allow them to be released to discipline-specific faculty.¹⁹

Thus, although WFs positioned themselves as experts compared to the discipline-specific faculty novices (see discussion below), WFs were positioned as novices as compared to the WAC Coordinators. WAC Coordinators were, in fact, the gatekeepers of what knowledge was to be appropriated by WFs (i.e., selection of WF training topics and revision of materials and reports). This knowledge, shaped and defined by WAC Coordinators, was the knowledge that was, in turn, transmitted by WFs to discipline-specific faculty.

WAC Coordinators also acted in concert with the Board of Trustees' resolution in its call for "close supervision" of WFs. WFs were barred from even contacting departments until WAC Coordinators made the initial contacts and then gave WFs permission to follow-up. This meant that WAC Coordinators controlled which contacts were made and how initial departmental relationships were defined. Thus, WFs were positioned as novices in the eyes of the discipline-specific faculty with whom they would be working. As a result, although WFs were charged with the task of trying to get faculty to follow their direction and recommendations, they were introduced to faculty in a way that placed them in a position with little or no power or authority. This compounded WFs' already existing inferior position in terms of university status: They were (inferior status) students in comparison to

¹⁹ As discussed below, one of the WFs, Sarah, was not permitted to submit her report to the philosophy professor with whom she had worked until it was revised and approved by the WAC Coordinators.

the (superior status) faculty with whom they would be working and to whom they would be making recommendations for pedagogical change.

The WAC plans developed by WAC Coordinators also positioned WFs and discipline-specific faculty as novices. WAC coordinators initially proposed two potential plans for implementing WAC at Central College. One of these plans was to assign each WF to work on a particular course with a discipline-specific faculty member and to have the WF design a sequence of seven to eight writing assignments for the course. This one-size-fits all plan did not take into consideration the specifics of the content and writing forms (e.g., reports, essays, critiques, etc.) of various disciplines, what type of writing was already taking place in courses, and discipline-specific faculty preferences in terms of their own perceived needs with regard to writing assistance.

This plan demonstrates the WAC Coordinators' assumption (consistent with the University-wide resolution and recommendations) that discipline-specific faculty were not doing much writing in their courses. In addition, discussion between WAC Coordinators and WFs regarding this plan centered around trying to determine various writing forms that cut across all disciplines so that writing assignments could be "plugged into" a particular course with only minor adjustments to "insert" the content of the particular discipline into the structure of the writing assignment or activity (e.g., peer review, grammar review, revision of drafts, pre-writing and other low-stakes/ writing-to-learn exercises). This plan emphasized a general, theoretical approach to teaching writing in the disciplines rather than considering each discipline (not to mention each course and each faculty member) in terms of its uniqueness. That is, the content of the discipline would have to shape itself in order to fit into the practices suggested by WAC theory instead of the other way around.

Another proposal, to develop “Pedagogical Guides,” was presented to WFs by one of the WAC Coordinators. A page-long type-written handout was distributed to WFs by the WAC Coordinator and began with the following statement:

I propose that we create, for each course, a booklet titled “Writing in X Course”; such booklets would provide students with explicit information about writing in particular content courses...

This proposal for pedagogical guides, similar to the previously discussed assignment sequence proposal, implies a generalized WAC approach to writing in the disciplines. In this case, the WAC Coordinator literally suggests a fill-in-the-blank approach (“X” course) in which WAC writing approaches take precedence over the specifics of the discipline. That is, WAC theory and practices form the structure into which the discipline-specific content must fit itself. Thus, just as a liquid adapts itself to the form of a container into which it is poured, the discipline in question (whether it be chemistry, history, art, or engineering) is framed as needing to adapt itself to fit into the preconceived ideas of WAC theory and practices.

In addition, the use of the pronoun “I” (i.e., “I propose that...”) unmistakably identifies the WAC Coordinator as the source of the WAC proposal and thus gives him authority over and ownership of the proposal and design of the WAC Program. The WAC Coordinator then makes a clear distinction between the *idea* for the plan (the proposal) and the actual *implementation* of the WAC proposal by using the pronoun “we” (i.e., “we create...a booklet...”). Thus, WAC Coordinators are once again in a position of ownership, power, and authority while WFs are positioned as recipients (and eventual transmitters) of a prefabricated WAC plan. In fact, when WFs questioned some of the aspects of the proposal, the WAC Coordinator responded by saying that, if WFs did not like the current proposal, he

would develop another one and bring it to the group. He did not suggest or envision that WFs and WAC Coordinators (not to mention discipline-specific faculty) would or could collaborate on a proposal for the WAC Program. When questioned further, the WAC Coordinator replied, "I don't know who you are or what you can do," thus reinforcing his role as authority and expert and WFs role as submissive and novice.

Before going on to discuss the contents of the proposed pedagogical guides, the WAC Coordinator made the following introductory comment in his proposal:

Here's how I imagine a possible table of contents.

Here, the WAC Coordinator again uses the pronoun "I" indicating ownership of the *content* of the pedagogical guide (in addition to the ownership of the *proposal* for the guides as mentioned above).

The proposal continues with a somewhat detailed outline of what the pedagogical guide should include:

The first section would briefly describe:

- The function of writing in the particular discipline;
- The function of student (as opposed to expert) writing in the particular course;
- The major forms that are regularly assigned (no more than 3-4 forms; notetaking should probably be included), with sample annotated assignments; and
- Possibly, criteria for grading; sample graded essay

Before any discussion with WFs or discipline-specific faculty took place, the WAC Coordinator thus pre-defined areas of importance (i.e., those to be addressed in the pedagogical guide): the functions and forms of writing as well as the grading system used.

He next decided what type of assistance would work best for students to help them in improving their writing: consulting model “essays” (a typically English Department form of writing), annotated drafts, grading criteria, and information on integrating outside material into a paper.

In the following section of the proposal, the WAC Coordinator suggested a method (or *practice*) for accomplishing the goal he has laid out:

This is the information that needs to be elicited from the professors you/we interview. Possibly we might invite some teachers of content courses to a whole meeting and, in a freewheeling discussion, ascertain what they see to be the dominant aims and shapes of assigned writing in a particular course.

Apparently, the WAC Coordinator felt that interviewing faculty would be a sufficient means of obtaining the knowledge, values, beliefs, norms, and practices of a discipline in order to construct a tool (pedagogical guide) to help students improve their writing. Furthermore, he suggested that the interviewing activities might take place as a group meeting involving “teachers of content courses.” This suggestion implies that there would be some sort of consensus regarding what issues are most important and which are less important.

The WAC Coordinator then described further contents to be included in the second and third sections of the proposed pedagogical guides:

The second section would illustrate the first section:

- 1-2 model student papers that are annotated for each dominant form;
- If possible, an annotated set of drafts leading to a final product of the major form;
- Criteria for grading; and

- If reading is central, or observation, it's appropriate perhaps to begin with a sketch of how the material gets transformed into a final product.

The third section might cover the following:

- Modes of documentation;
- Lists of other useful books and resources (internet: Writing Center).

It is not my intention, through analysis of this proposal, to condemn the ideas presented by the WAC Coordinator.²⁰ Rather, this analysis illustrates the way that WAC Coordinators began the program with preconceived ideas of what would be best for *all* discipline-specific faculty regardless of the discipline, the course, or the particular professor's style and preferences. It represents a limited and limiting perspective of what the WAC Program could become through the participation and collaboration of all the involved parties: WAC Coordinators, WFs, and discipline-specific faculty. And, it represents a top-down approach in which knowledge and practices are imposed on faculty without considering the possible negative implications of such an approach.

Thus, consistent with the University-wide resolution regarding the WAC initiative, WFs were positioned in a supporting role. They were expected to appropriate the WAC knowledge transmitted to them in their trainings and to use this knowledge to implement the WAC program that was designed by the WAC Coordinators. In effect, WFs were used as the delivery (or transmission) system of WAC theory and practices to discipline-specific faculty at the College. This positioning and role of WFs further implies a hierarchy in which discipline-specific faculty are, in relation to WFs, novices and passive recipients of WAC

²⁰ In fact, some of the proposed suggestions (such as the use of models) were eventually implemented in discipline-specific faculty classrooms.

knowledge and practices. The role and position of these faculty are further discussed in one of the following sections in this chapter.

English WFs as Experts and Discipline-Specific WFs as Novices

As discussed in the section describing WF training, as a discipline-specific WF, I felt confused and alienated by the activities that took place during the initial WAC training. Weeks later, after having developed a working relationship with one of my WF colleagues at Central College (an English Department WF and former English Composition adjunct lecturer), I relayed my confusion and frustration regarding University-wide WF training activities that had left me so perplexed and upset. He replied to me that, when indeed activities such as freewrites are carried out in class with students, sharing what one writes is optional and typically done only on a voluntary basis. In addition, sharing is done only after several weeks into the semester, after students have had a chance to get to know one another and develop a certain level of trust. He also assured me that these freewrite pieces were in no way supposed to be intelligent, articulate, or insightful and were often incomprehensible. The point of doing the exercise, he explained, is to simply get students to think about the topic and write *anything* stemming from their current knowledge and experiences which they might relate, however tangentially, to the topic.

Given this background information, I felt a little more at ease with the activities. However, I also recognized and could understand how some discipline-specific faculty (unfamiliar with the techniques) might feel if they were presented with them in a casual, inexplicit way as was done in the WF workshops. In addition, my attendance at the WF training seminars and subsequent adoption of the WAC techniques taught there was a requirement for my job; full-time faculty were under no such obligation to be open to and

take the time to learn and use these techniques. In addition, I was concerned about the fervor displayed by my colleagues, one of whom, in his narrative describing his experience as a WF, used a Conversion Model-inspired metaphor to describe our WF role: “[We were] anointed as the chosen WAC disciples sent out on a missionary quest to help faculty increase and improve the use of writing in their courses.”

This conversation also illustrates a further positioning of individuals involved in the WAC initiative—English Department WFs were positioned as more knowledgeable than discipline-specific WFs; discipline-specific WFs thus had more to learn about writing pedagogy and WAC theory and practice and less to offer the program. As one of the English Department WFs at Central College stated:

...only two out of five of us [WFs] had even taught a writing course at all, so there was that learning curve to tackle.

This idea reflected the University conceptualization of writing in the disciplines—that discipline-specific faculty were was not really teaching writing (that is, that writing instruction in the disciplines was inexistent or inadequate). In fact, as a adjunct lecturer in my discipline, I had had my students do quite a bit of writing—assignments which I had painstakingly developed, presented, reviewed, and gave feedback on. Yet, just as discipline-specific faculty were positioned as ineffective teachers of writing, discipline-specific WFs were positioned as needing to learn (be converted to) the “correct” way of teaching writing. This was the “learning curve” problem of discipline-specific WFs as noted by the English Department WF.

Thus, WFs were further differentiated into expert (English Department) WFs and novice (discipline-specific) WFs. Although I had knowledge and experience in teaching

writing in my discipline (psychology), I was relegated to novice status in comparison to the English Department WFs. The implicit message is that these WAC experts felt they had more knowledge and experience to teach writing correctly in psychology, a discipline they knew little or nothing about, than I did although I had both studied and taught it.

This comparison also brings to the forefront a glaring conflict in WAC philosophy (at least how it is traditionally envisioned and practiced). The core principle of the WAC movement is that writing plays a key role in courses in disciplines across the entire curriculum, that it is not just the domain of courses in the English Department. However, WAC advocates (those with English Department backgrounds) who adhere to traditional expert-novice conversion or training models of WAC do not want to release control of this domain and feel a sense of ownership of writing knowledge and expertise. This presents an inherent tension in traditional WAC approaches. That is, discipline-specific faculty are expected to embrace theory and practices that are foreign to them, yet they are not given the option or opportunities to own and control them. In other words, there is no opportunity for transformation of these practices to make them meaningful for the individuals who are expected to implement them.

Writing Fellows as Experts, Discipline-Specific Faculty as Novices

WFs were assigned to work in various disciplines with a number of different faculty. However, within this general assignment of whom to work with, WFs were not given specific instructions regarding how to go about accomplishing their very general goal (as defined by the University resolution) to help faculty improve their writing pedagogy. Both of the initial WAC Coordinator proposals had been rejected. The pedagogical guide proposal was rejected by WAC administration because it focused on students and not on faculty as

mandated by the University resolution. The other proposal, to create 7-8 writing assignments, was rejected by one of the WAC Coordinators as being too time-consuming and labor-intensive. Thus, WFs began their work with faculty without a specific plan or clearly-defined, concrete goals.

As a starting point, one pair of WFs, Carey and Pat, decided to meet with one of their assigned professors from the Philosophy Department. The purpose was to find out more about the course and to identify writing problems. This would then enable WFs to suggest ways of helping the faculty member to address these problems. In reflecting on the experience, one of these WFs wrote the following:

The first step, we decided, was to meet with each professor to learn about their syllabus, their teaching style and their understanding of writing pedagogy. This seemed like a fairly innocuous strategy. Eventually, after one or two meetings, we hoped to figure out how we might be able to help facilitate the use of writing in their course.

Further reflecting on this interview experience, Pat pointed out one of the failings of the University WAC plan—WFs had no power or authority to carry out the University resolution:

Sitting in the small office we politely called the hovel, Carey and I anxiously awaited the arrival of Professor X from the Philosophy Department....Though we were employees of the college with a mandate from high up the food chain, and though we had called Professor X and invited him to our office space, there was something graduate-schoolish about this meeting. We were on the defensive from the moment [the Professor] walked in and took a seat in the falling apart classroom we were using

for meetings. I remember thinking, maybe we should be taking his course rather than asking him how to help plan it.

Thus, although he had received instructions and authorization to implement the University's pre-defined WAC plan and despite his WAC expertise and self-described role as missionary, Pat realized that this process would be problematic. He recognized and defined his position in the faculty-WF interaction as inferior in power and status to that of the faculty member. This realization illustrates the conflict with the University's positioning of discipline-specific faculty as inferior (specifically, as inferior in knowledge concerning effective writing pedagogy).

Thus, the interaction between faculty and WFs in this case was defined by conflicting positions of power, authority, and knowledge. In this instance, faculty were still positioned by WFs as needing guidance and improvement in their writing pedagogy, however, an additional element that was not addressed by the University WAC resolution was introduced—faculty had a position of power to accept or reject the knowledge that was being offered by WFs.

There are any number of ways to deal with such situations. Having already defined the situation as one of conflict, Pat further positioned himself as the underdog with limited resources (describing the WF Office as “the hovel” and pointing out that it was a “falling apart classroom”) and decided he would have to *defend* his point of view and his knowledge against this professor's point of view (“we were on the defensive”). The term “defend” has a number of implications in terms of human interactions. In this context, one implication is that participants are positioned as adversaries with conflicting points of view. Further, the eventual desired outcome of defending one's point of view implies the goal of overcoming

the opposition and taking control of the situation. In the context of the WAC program, this would have meant that Pat would be allowed to implement suggested WAC activities in this professor's classroom and, eventually, that the professor himself would adopt these activities for his own use in the classroom.

In addition to WFs' lower status in relation to faculty, the interaction with the philosophy faculty member led to another realization: WFs lacked the practical knowledge of how writing was being used and taught on Central College campus in the disciplines. Thus, in further explaining the rationale behind the initial faculty interviews, Pat made the following comments:

...we were admitting that we knew very little about the campus, the courses and the writing that students were assigned. In a way, we were also admitting that we knew very little about Writing Across the Curriculum...

Again, there is a range of possibilities and perspectives to take in order to make sense of this situation and respond to it. Pat's response was to suggest that WFs needed to bolster their knowledge base in order to be able to present themselves as legitimate representatives of WAC in order to accomplish their goals. Based on his experience with the philosophy professor, Pat wrote:

We understood then...that we needed to be *experts* if we expected anyone to listen to us about how to use writing in the classroom. [italics added]

Thus, the approach Pat thought appropriate was to increase WF knowledge of WAC as well as their knowledge regarding the "state" of writing pedagogy on Central College campus (or, more specifically, writing in the courses of professors with whom WFs were assigned to work). In this way, WFs would become experts on both topics (WAC knowledge as well as

writing as it occurred in the discipline-specific courses). They would hence gain the status they needed to present their suggestions for change and have these suggestions accepted. Within this approach, it is also assumed that, through brief study of WAC and a few faculty interviews, WFs could understand— better than the faculty themselves—faculties' disciplines, their courses, their students, their departments, and the College in order to suggest how best to approach and improve writing instruction in the discipline-specific courses of these professors.

Another WF, Sarah, took a similar but much more elaborate approach in her work with a different philosophy professor.^{21, 22} An initial meeting was arranged and attended by three discipline-specific (non-WAC) professors (including the philosophy professor), several WFs (including Sarah), and two WAC Coordinators. The purpose of this meeting (as with the other philosophy professor) was to find out more about the course and professor's "Objectives re: Writing."²³ The philosophy professor stated that one of his main objectives was to have students learn to write an "essay" with a well-developed "central idea." Through ongoing discussion at the meeting, an "Activity Plan" (another heading on the handout) was decided upon. I recorded this plan on my handout:

Activity Plan:

- (1) Interview students: -How do they perceive the assignments?

²¹ Sarah's work actually included three courses and two professors. However, in this example, I will discuss only her work with the philosophy professor which was the most in-depth and extensive of her assignments.

²² This philosophy professor taught the same course as the professor that Pat and Carey worked with, however, Sarah's work preceded Pat and Carey's work by one semester.

²³ This was one of the categories on the handout distributed at this meeting which included the points that the WAC Coordinator wanted to cover.

-Where do they need help?

-What is ambiguous?

-What is working?

→Provide feedback to teachers

(2) Sit in on classes

(3) Student orientation

Sarah's WAC activities spanned an entire semester and consisted of classroom observations as well as interviews with students, the professor, and the professor's undergraduate teaching assistants for the course. Sarah also examined course materials (the syllabus and textbook) and read several sets of student papers. At the end of the semester, Sarah produced a 2 ½ page, single-spaced written report of which about 2 pages concerned her work with the philosophy professor.²⁴ The report was entitled:

English Course—Joan Smith/ Philosophy Course—Stephen Grimes

Fall 199__ Writing Fellow report: activities and suggestions

As the title indicates, this document was a report on the courses and the professors that were investigated by the Writing Fellow during the fall semester. The content of the report covered what the WF did and what she suggested based on her "activities." The audience for the report were members of the Central College WAC program (WAC administrators and Coordinators as well as WFs) and was to be used as evidence of the type of work that the participants of the Central College WAC program had carried out during the first year. This information was, in turn, designed to be reported to administrative representatives in charge

²⁴ The rest of the report concerned Sarah's work with the two other faculty with whom she was assigned to work: an English professor and an economics professor who also worked collaboratively with the philosophy professor.

of the WAC program at the University level. In addition, after Sarah received feedback from the WAC Coordinator and revised the report accordingly, it was to be submitted to the philosophy, English, and economics professors with whom she had worked.

Sarah began the report by summarizing her role in the philosophy project:

Activities:

During the fall term I observed classes, interviewed students, professors, and student assistants, examined syllabus and textbooks used for the philosophy class, and read several sets of student papers from the English, philosophy, and economics classes. By using the referent “I” and placing herself in the role of observer, interviewer, examiner, and (external) reader, Sarah positions herself outside of the ongoing classroom practices and as separate from the course participants (students, professors, and student assistants [i.e., undergraduate teaching assistants]). She positions herself as looking from the outside in, and positions the course participants in the same way as she does the course materials—as objects of study; she does not position herself as a collaborator working with discipline-specific faculty.

After describing her activities, Sarah summarized the writing assignments already in place in the course and offered her suggestions for improving the overall collection of writing assignments outlined on the syllabus:

Syllabus:

Over the course of the term Professor Grimes assigns a dozen writing or preparation for writing assignments (not including the exams, which, aside from one quiz, are the only in-class assignments).

Suggestions:

- *reduce the number of out of class writing assignments

- *prepare handouts explaining the writing assignments

(Assignments are listed briefly on the syllabus, explained in class as they come up and clarified either in the English class²⁵...or by student assistants.)

- *include in-class low-stakes assignments (see below)

- *allow opportunities for proofreading/revision (see below)

- *change the sequence of graded writing assignments

Begin with the notetaking assignment (which now appears at mid-term) and gradually build to the comparison-contrast essay (which is now the 1st assignment, which many students do poorly on). Cross-cultural comparison is one of the main objectives of the course; this intellectual skill can be developed over the course of the term by sequencing writing assignments.

Although Professor Grimes was the individual who was to implement these suggestions in his class, Sarah referred to him in the third person. This reinforces the fact that he was only the secondary audience for this document: WAC program participants (WAC administrators, Coordinators, and WFs) were the primary audience. In addition, this approach positions the professor as secondary to the process of implementing the practices of the WAC program. That is, a mechanism for feedback and revision of the content of the report was in place for WAC Coordinators, however, the completed report outlining suggestions for course, pedagogical, and grading improvements was submitted in final form

²⁵ The philosophy professor worked in collaboration with this English professor, and the two classes had students in common.

to the professor who was positioned as the recipient of WAC expert knowledge. No mechanism for transformation of this knowledge by the professor was considered.

Sarah presented her suggestions as directives: “reduce,” “prepare,” “include,” “allow,” “change,” “begin with.” She did not offer room for negotiation, for example, by suggesting that one, a subset, or all of her recommendations could be adopted (at the professor’s discretion) or that they could be transformed. In addition, she recommended a sequence of writing activities and stated that “one of the main objectives of the course, [cross-cultural comparison],...can be developed over the course of the term by sequencing writing assignments” (presumably by adopting the sequence she or another WAC expert would propose). However, she did not offer any rationale or explanation to support this conclusion. While the connection between sequenced writing and development of particular intellectual skills may be evident to someone familiar with WAC, it may not be so clear to someone outside of the WAC community. The philosophy professor was thus expected to accept the WAC “expert’s” suggestion without rationale or explanation.

Sarah then addressed the issue of the professor’s pedagogical method:

Pedagogy:

As Professor Grimes has noted, he is an authoritarian teacher and this is primarily a lecture/discussion class that uses 3 texts to help students think critically about the [content of the course].

My one suggestion would be to incorporate

***occasional in-class low-stakes writing assignments**

examples: These assignments can be thought-provoking questions that address the major themes of the reading²⁶...or questions that force students to peruse reading they (should have) done and find particulars...Student assistants can collect as completed and professor can read aloud a select few. Students can be graded with a check for completing the assignment, check plus for coming up with an especially good response, check-minus for not participating/taking the assignment seriously. Students can work on these individually, in pairs or in groups (though the lecture classroom might make the latter less feasible).

Professor Grimes does something similar to this, but asks for oral response only, which produces limited results. On the days I observed, some students searched the texts and had something to say (though only a few had a chance to speak); some searched the text and seemed lost (and communicated to me either confusion "I wasn't sure what he wanted" or indifference). Ideally, using low-stakes writing to help get students into the text would take only a bit more time than Prof Grimes' current method, force fuller participation, and force students who may be confused to get clarification. It would also help students develop reading skills: dealing with the quantity of reading, knowing what to get out of the reading is something all of them addressed to me as a major concern with the course.

Sarah offered only one suggestion for improving Professor Grimes' pedagogical approach in contrast to the numerous suggestions for course (syllabus) revision. She also provided concrete, detailed suggestions for carrying out the suggested activity (examples of

²⁶ In this section, Sarah gives specific examples of questions/suggestions that relate to a book that the students had read in the philosophy professor's class. The specifics of the themes

low-stakes, in-class writing assignments based on the professor's course content). However, she began the section by indicating that Professor Grimes is "an authoritarian teacher." Although she also points out that this is a self-described characteristic of the professor, the term "authoritarian," nonetheless, has negative connotations, and, among all possible characteristics she could have chosen to highlight to describe Professor Grimes' pedagogical style, Sarah chose "authoritarian." Thus, in this situation—pointed out by an outsider in the context of a report suggesting pedagogical improvements—this term can easily be construed as a critique (and, in fact, based on information relayed informally to WFs and WAC Coordinators, this was indeed Sarah's perspective).

In addition, Sarah openly criticized the outcomes of the professor's current pedagogical practice—asking only for oral responses to his questions from which he receives only "limited results," he does not give students enough opportunity to speak, students are left confused and unmotivated. Sarah then went on to describe how her suggested pedagogical method (a classic WAC technique—low-stakes writing) would be an improvement over what the professor was currently doing.

Finally, Sarah discussed the professor's current grading system:

Evaluation/feedback:

Observations: Marking is done by student assistants in conference with Professor Grimes and according to guidelines (a number system) established by him. Aside from the number-grade, marking on the papers is usually limited to locating grammar and usage errors (circling or writing an abbreviated description of error, s-v, for example). The overwhelming majority of marks are negative: errors found, noting

have been omitted in this analysis as they could possibly be linked to the true discipline of

students' general writing problems, directions to seek out the assistants for help. The assistants [who are the ones who grade the students' papers] clearly feel that doing a good job [of grading] means finding all errors; they are unsure how to help students improve.

Comments/suggestions:

- * prof and assistants read "Minimal Marking"
- * prof and assistants and fellow discuss objectives in marking system
- * prof and assistants and fellow come up with a system for noting problems and helping students learn how to locate and correct errors
- * incorporate proofreading/revision into written assignments

The students themselves admit a good deal of frustration with their writing skills; as marked, the papers validate that they are bad writers but do little to help them improve. [The WAC Coordinator] and I brainstormed about holding training workshops for the student assistants and noted that since they are both to graduate this year, it would be very fruitful to train the new students [Professor Grimes] hires to take their place. I would suggest having them (and Prof Grimes) read over Richard Haswell's essay "Minimal Marking" and discuss feedback systems and incorporate revision into students work. [note: Prof Grimes did in fact return one set of papers to students to locate their own errors before marking].

Sarah again placed herself outside of the teaching/ classroom practices by positioning herself as an outside observer, entitling her summary of the professor's evaluation/ feedback system as "observations" and referring to the professor and student assistants in the third person.

the professor. This change was made in order to protect the professor's anonymity.

This places them in the position of objects of study, just as the grading system was an object of study (e.g., “number-grades are assigned and errors are circled”). Sarah again pointed out negative aspects of the professor’s current approach to grading: it was limited (“to locating grammar and usage errors”), unclear (errors were indicated by simply circling them with no accompanying explanation or using abbreviations that students may or may not be familiar with), and negative. These are three issues that are clearly defined in WAC literature as inappropriate approaches to grading.

Sarah further critiqued the professor’s approach by noting that all it accomplished was to point out students’ inadequacies and frame them as failures (“bad writers”). Moreover, she claimed that the grading system was not useful in offering students a means of changing their position as failures as it did “little to help [students] improve” their writing. Thus, students are positioned as the victims of bad pedagogy: not only was the professor’s approach *unhelpful* to students, it had, in fact, a *negative* impact on students.

Sarah again offered suggestions that would require that the professor “convert” his current approach to grading to a traditional WAC approach (i.e., “minimal marking”). In addition, although she suggested that the professor, student assistants, and WF “discuss” objectives for the marking system, it is likely that “discuss” really meant that the WF would try to “convince” the professor and student assistants to change their thinking to align with what *she* felt the objectives should be (i.e., minimal marking or other WAC approaches to response to student writing), not what the professor wanted to accomplish. For example, based on the current grading system as described in Sarah’s report, it is clear that grammar was a major concern for the professor. In WAC approaches to grading and WAC conceptualizations of “important” writing issues that need to be addressed, grammar is an

issue whose importance is generally downplayed.²⁷ Further, Sarah's other suggestions indicate that she already had a clear idea of what the objectives and approach should be: minimal marking approach, coming up with a system for noting problems, having students take responsibility for locating and correcting their own errors (for example, by having them proofread and revise).

Thus, the philosophy professor's pedagogical approach was given a negative label (authoritarian) and was criticized as ineffective in comparison to suggested WAC techniques. Students were positioned as victims of this "bad pedagogy" which resulted in "confusion," "major concerns," lack of motivation, "frustration," and feelings of failure. The philosophy professor was asked to transform his course, his pedagogy, and his grading method to align with a WAC perspective on how writing should be taught in the disciplines. That is, he was asked to "convert" his practices to be in line with WAC theory and practices.

The Perspective of Discipline-Specific Faculty: Framing the "Writing Problem" and the Roles of Participants

The Writing Problem. The University and WAC representatives framed students' writing problems as resulting from the lack of writing assignments and inadequacy of writing pedagogy in discipline-specific courses. However, discipline-specific faculty framed the problem differently. As WFs eventually discovered, there was a great deal of writing taking

²⁷ In fact, during WF training and WF work at Central College, the issue of how to get faculties' focus off of grammar was a major concern and topic of discussion. At Central College, WFs and WAC Coordinators only grudgingly included a section on grammar—which they reframed as the more general WAC-inspired term "error"—in the Writing Across the Disciplines Handbook that they authored (discussed in Chapter 6). After much discussion, this section on grammar was included because, as the WAC Coordinators stated, they knew faculty would be looking for it, so it "had to" be included.

place within the discipline-specific courses. For example, one of the WFs recorded his experience of a meeting with a discipline-specific faculty member:

We asked Professor X to describe his course to us....He told us that...[i]t includes seven writing assignments, something he thought the students needed. "The students don't know how to read and they don't know how to write," he seemed to imply....After only a few minutes, the conversation moved to larger issues. Professor X said that the problem with the students is they had "no culture of reading." They simply came to college without any clue as to how to approach a book, any book. "We can blame the high schools for that," he surmised. "You can get by without reading and so the students become lazy."

Thus, a good deal of writing was already being assigned in this professor's course (seven writing assignments). He felt that he was doing his part in helping to bolster students' literacy skills. He blamed the students for being lazy and the high schools for making them that way.

Reflecting on the totality of his experiences with faculty during this first semester of the WAC Program, the WF wrote the following:

The large majority of professors we spoke with placed the blame outside their own classrooms. They pointed fingers at a host of plausible scapegoats: the students' effort; the inadequacy of the public high schools; [Central College's] lack of money; the class sizes or course loads; department policies and politics; and [Northeast University's open] admissions policy. Of course there was also a certain amount of thinly-veiled hope for a return to the good old days of [Central College] when we were considered an elite institution...and in a line of rhetoric that is particular to

[Central College], a desirous wish to be teaching somewhere else, at a real school, where students can write and speak in good English. The problems, they believed, could best be solved by major restructuring, large infusions of money, or a complete revamping of one university, college or department structure or another. Many times the full hour-length interview would have disappeared and we would have failed to even begin discussing their courses, their curriculum, their pedagogy, or their use of writing.

Thus, discipline-specific faculty felt that they were doing what they could to address students' writing difficulties and framed the problems as stemming from the high schools, the university, and/or the students themselves. They did not feel the need to focus on their writing pedagogy or their expertise (or lack thereof) as instructors. This conflicts with the University resolution and WAC representatives' conceptualization of discipline-specific faculty as novice writing instructors in need of assistance and "reform."

The Roles of WAC Program Participants. One of the WFs, in a continued reflection on his meeting with the philosophy professor (described above) portrays the conflict that emerged with regard to the role of WFs:

As Carey and I grew increasingly less comfortable, [the professor] asked us what our role was, what we could do to help him. As we began to explain that we were not tutors or TA's, he grew increasingly less comfortable. Though we had engaged him in this conversation, he was unable to envision a role for us beyond the traditional graduate assistant model.

Carey then offered a general, summary statement reflecting how discipline-specific faculty responded to WFs:

Somewhere near the end of the meeting, the professor would turn and look at us as if to say, "So what's your role in all of this?" They were often beleaguered to find out that we were not TA's, paper graders, or tutors. When we began to suggest that we could help design writing materials, or help them use writing in the classroom, or suggest alternative ways of responding to student writing, we were met with incredulous stares.

Thus, faculty perceptions of the WF role conflicted with the role that the university intended for them to play. Faculty viewed themselves as experts and authorities regarding their disciplines and their courses. They defined the WF role as traditional faculty assistants.

Transforming Expert and Novice Positions

The beginnings of a transformation of WAC approaches and conceptualizations began with the faculty-WF interactions that took place between a discipline-specific WF, (myself), and a chemistry professor. Before meeting with chemistry faculty, I had done a great deal of research on WAC theory and practices and had consulted numerous books and Internet sites relating to WAC and, specifically, WAC approaches in chemistry. I felt as though I was familiar enough with the topic to be of help to the Chemistry Department and compiled a list of various activities that I felt would be useful in the chemistry course in which I was assigned to work. These WAC activities were inspired mostly from Thaiss (1998) *The Harcourt-Brace Guide to WAC* and included the following: critical thinking warm-up, class closer, note-taking techniques, pre-reading activities, reading response logs, learning logs, summary writing, response to lecture topics, connecting lecture topics to personal experience, use of journals, practical applications, email discussion groups, peer collaboration, use of model writing samples, microthemes, and questioning techniques. In

other words, I had compiled a laundry list of available WAC techniques which were lacking specific content based on the professor's discipline, teaching style, course objectives, and personal preferences. I planned to suggest these general approaches to chemistry faculty with the idea that they would implement at least some of them in their courses.

On October 26th, about two months into the semester, an initial meeting took place between me and the chemistry professor with whom I was assigned to work. During this meeting, there was discussion regarding the course content, requirements, and structure as well as the type of writing that the professor expected his students to do (e.g., summaries, descriptions, paraphrasing, doing a "poster" summarizing an experiment, etc.). Having listened to the professor present all of this information, I ended the meeting with the comment that I would try to come up with some "free-standing" writing techniques for the professor to use in his course. That is, I planned to choose from among the various approaches I had come across in my WAC studies (listed above) and present them to the professor. The professor responded by saying that he hoped for something a little more specific.

Following the meeting, I thought about how I could move from my general knowledge of WAC writing techniques to something more specific that the professor would find useful and would be able to implement into his classroom. However, I was unable to make the connection between what I had learned about WAC through my reading and training and the information that the chemistry professor had presented about his discipline and his course. I could not move beyond his general knowledge of WAC techniques to develop specific writing assignments or activities for the professor.

I recognized this dilemma, but was unable to resolve it and thus made no progress in the chemistry project. In an effort to move forward, the WAC Coordinator held a phone meeting with me on November 30th to find out more about the chemistry course. I relayed the information that the chemistry professor had presented. I also responded to the WAC Coordinator's questions and clarified points regarding chemistry as a discipline and forms of writing in chemistry. Based on this information, the WAC Coordinator once again drew up a proposal for implementing WAC in the classroom:

Possible First-Semester Writing Tasks in [Chemistry]

Continuous Writing:

In the workshops, students are apparently asked to write—to define terms, often by paraphrasing them; to contrast or distinguish between terms; to explain concepts; to describe processes; and to solve problems.

This might be seen as “writing to learn.” The teacher could explain to students that this continuous writing helps them to master the [chemistry] concepts that are established as benchmarks at the beginning of each workshop packet. Such writing appears to be included in every workshop; it is essentially “low stakes” writing that students use to understand content.

Sequenced Writing: Writing about Reading (6-8 weeks)

We propose that, in the first six weeks or so of a semester, the focus on sequenced writing begin with writing about reading. There appear to be two major skills associated with their reading: summary and synthesis. In the first month, students might be given a packet of model summaries, possibly by the lab teacher or the lecture teacher. The teacher might spend 15 minutes or so of one class or lab

period explaining what constitutes a good summary in [chemistry]. At the same time, such modeling should explain to students why such summaries are significant for [chemists]: what is the purpose of summary writing: The models—summaries written by students which received an A from teachers—should be annotated (the parts described in the margin). Students could keep a Learning Log where they write summaries and receive some brief feedback, possibly from a Writing Fellow, a tutor, or lab teacher.

After the first few weeks, the emphasis might shift toward a synthesis of summaries, which may be appropriate for the introduction section of the poster paper (if it's required at the end of this course). The same process should be repeated: a teacher or tutor should briefly go through a model which summarizes but then makes a connection between the major ideas of articles. Again students might write syntheses in Learning Logs, which become part of the writing for the course.

Sequenced Writing: Major Genre (Poster Paper) (4-6 weeks)

If the poster paper contains those parts of the larger genre called "the lab report," then students should be introduced to this form early in their training as [chemists]. The introduction, which may involve a summary (or perhaps synthesis) of ideas in sources may provide the starting point at the end of six or eight weeks of focus on writing about reading. At this point, the teacher might again model the form for the students: A 15-minute lecture on the parts of the form and an explanation of its purpose are essential. Professors might again put student models on reserve and require students to look at them in order to get a visual sense of the form.

The different parts of this form (e.g., introduction, methods, results, discussion) can be assigned separately so that students have the opportunity to meet briefly for peer critique / feedback sessions. In this way, each part might be revised before the next is written. Collaborative peer groups might meet briefly during a lab and evaluate one another's writing using a standardized peer critique sheet. This sheet, formulated by [chemistry] faculty, gives students the criteria for standards: it identifies the parts of the form and the expectations that readers will have when evaluating the whole poster paper at the semester's end.

Thus, with relatively limited information regarding chemistry, this professor's course, and the professor himself, the WAC Coordinator developed a semester long plan stating how writing should be taught in this professor's chemistry class. Just as I had intended to do, the WAC Coordinator proposed a series of WAC techniques that relate in some general way to the course: writing to learn techniques to "master the chemistry concepts that are established as benchmarks," using "a packet of model summaries" to teach the writing of summaries, syntheses, and poster papers, keeping a Learning Log which can be used to give feedback, having students "evaluate one another's writing using a standardized peer review critique sheet."

This proposal does connect to the chemistry course more so than did the WAC Coordinator's original general proposal for pedagogical guides. It makes reference to structures already in place such as student workshops and lab tutors and relates the proposed WAC activities mentioned above to specific forms of writing done in this chemistry course (summary, synthesis, poster paper). In this sense, it is more specific to the chemistry class than my "laundry list" of WAC activities. However, this proposal still reflects a general

WAC approach with limited understanding of the chemistry course. It is based on the WAC Coordinator's many years of experience teaching and writing about English Composition coupled with several brief discussions with WFs regarding writing in chemistry. What is lacking is a specific understanding of the chemistry concepts to be presented, how much time the professor wanted to allot for writing instruction, what teaching style the professor preferred, the schedule of exams and assignments, and so on. That is, as it is written, this proposal is still very much from the perspective of WAC representative as expert on teaching writing in the disciplines and "fixing" the problems with discipline-specific faculty's writing pedagogy.

Having spoken at length with the chemistry professor, I felt that this proposal was inappropriate and would, at best, overwhelm the chemistry professor, and, at worst, alienate him completely from the WAC program (as had been the case with other discipline-specific professors). Thus, when the WAC Coordinator asked me to review the proposal and forward it to the chemistry professor, I agreed but purposely delayed doing so. Because it was the end of the semester, I was able to avoid following through on proceeding with the proposal, and, at the start of the following semester, I was assigned to begin working with a different professor who was teaching a different chemistry course. Thus, I began my new assignment without ever having presented the WAC Coordinator's proposal to the first chemistry professor.

This represented a deliberate act of resistance to the WAC Program's conversion/missionary approach to writing pedagogy reform and the beginning of a transformation of the expert/ novice positions as they had been defined by the university (i.e., the Board of Trustees resolution and the Writing Fellows trainers), the college (WAC Coordinators), the

Writing Fellows, and the discipline-specific faculty. In this instance, there were several shifts in positions and perceptions of expertise:

- The discipline-specific (chemistry) faculty member was open to receiving suggestions from the WF as a writing expert in his discipline.
- The discipline-specific WF recognized the importance of the chemistry professor's expertise in his discipline and course as integral to any WAC techniques to be suggested or implemented in his course.
- Through his use of the pronoun "we" in his proposal for the chemistry course, the WAC Coordinator shares ownership of the proposal with the WF and, implicitly, recognizes her role (and thus, to some extent, expertise) in contributing to the development of the proposal.
- Based on the knowledge she had obtained through her intensive study of writing in chemistry and her interactions with various members of the Chemistry Department over the course of the semester, the discipline-specific WF recognized the importance of her own expertise with regard to this specific situation (the chemistry professor's course) above and beyond the WAC Coordinator's expertise based on years of teaching, writing about, (and publishing in) the area of English Composition.

This example from the chemistry project represents the beginning of a transformation in the conceptualization of expert and novice positions initially defined by the University and the WAC Program participants. The initial conceptualization of participants was a rigid hierarchy of experts and novices. That is, WAC Program planners (English Department faculty) were called upon by the Board of Trustees to develop a WAC initiative. These

English Department faculty, the initial experts, trained Writing Fellows, initially novices. WFs then became experts in relation to discipline-specific faculty novices. However, English Department WFs continued to maintain a greater degree of accepted expertise in comparison to discipline-specific WFs just as English Department faculty maintained a more expert status in comparison to all WFs (see Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix). As described in the Methods chapter, these designations of expert and novice were both relational and intricately intertwined with issues of power (hierarchical position within the WAC Program) as well as acceptance of “legitimate” knowledge as defined by those in power. In spite of this, as the example with the Chemistry Department begins to illustrate, interactions among program participants were more reflective of a fluid concept of expertise that was distributed across participants rather than of a traditional conceptualization of an expert/ novice opposition or dichotomy. The following chapters will further describe how this traditional expert/ novice concept was transformed through WAC Program practices.

Chapter 4 Knowledge, Identities, and Practices: Processes of Transformation, Tool Development, and Activity

Transformation and Reconceptualization of Knowledge, Identities, and Practices

At the beginning of the WAC Program, from its inception at the University-wide level to its implementation at the Central College campus, the issue of writing was framed based on a deficit model. That is, the assumption was that there was little writing being done in discipline-specific classes and, in addition, that the writing instruction that was taking place was inadequate.²⁸ The writing instruction taking place in the disciplines was framed as a problem to be solved; the solution was that WAC Program representatives (those who were positioned as the experts and therefore knew the “right way” to teach writing) would “fix” this problem by showing discipline-specific faculty “the light” and converting them to this “right way” of teaching writing.

This conceptualization resulted in a WAC Program which approached discipline-specific faculty as novices in their own fields. WAC representatives (Writing Fellows and WAC Coordinators) acted as outside experts offering advice based on WAC ideology, theory, and research with limited knowledge (and acceptance) of professors’ disciplines, courses, or teaching styles. Discipline-specific faculty rejected the notion that they were the problem and that individuals from the outside (especially lower status graduate students)

²⁸ This assumption was not based on a review of discipline-specific course requirements or any other type of data collection such as surveys or interviews with discipline-specific faculty teaching at Central College. This assumption reflects the history of the WAC perspective which locates the problem of poor student writing skills in a lack or inadequacy of writing instruction by discipline-specific faculty.

could tell them how best to teach their classes.²⁹ These faculty felt that they knew more about writing in their courses and disciplines than the WAC representatives did. That is, they viewed themselves as the experts.

In addition, in contrast to WAC representatives, discipline-specific faculty held the view that the writing problems on their campus originated at the student level, not the faculty one. Thus, faculties' focus was not on themselves and how they could improve their teaching, but rather on their students and what supports could be put into place at the student level to assist them (for example, tutoring). These conceptualizations shaped professors' views of WFs and the role that they could (and should) reasonably play in addressing the writing problems in their classrooms. Discipline-specific faculty viewed the role of WFs from a traditional perspective, envisioning that they would fill a role similar to that of a Teaching Assistant. WFs could be useful by carrying out such activities as grading papers, attending lectures so that they could be available for students who needed help in understanding the material, assisting students as they wrote papers. In other words, faculty envisioned WFs as graders and tutors working directly with students, not as filling the role of outside pedagogical consultants to faculty (as described in Chapter 3).

In addition to these issues of conflicting perspectives of expertise, there were also conflicting priorities. WAC representatives held that the teaching of writing was a priority whereas discipline-specific faculty were constrained to complete a certain amount of material in a given semester (what WAC representatives referred to as the "coverage" issue). Furthermore, as is generally the case, faculty were not rewarded for good teaching practices but rather received academic recognition for research and publications. Thus, there was little

²⁹ Chapter 3 presents a discussion of discipline-specific faculty perspectives regarding the

extrinsic motivation for them to devote substantial time and effort into changing their teaching practices; it was much more appealing and useful for them to have assistants to remove some of the teaching burden from them (i.e., having someone else grade papers and meet with students who had difficulties) so that they could focus more of their time and energy on research and publication. WAC representatives viewed professors' attitudes towards coverage and motivation as real concerns but also felt that these concerns did not warrant abandoning the implementation of WAC techniques in their classrooms. That is, WAC representatives felt that discipline-specific faculty should align their values with the values of WAC despite the discipline-specific constraints they faced.

These conflicting perspectives and positions were entrenched in the discourses of both WAC representatives and discipline-specific faculty (as discussed in the previous chapter). Thus, when the two sides attempted to find common ground through discourse—both face-to-face verbal interaction and written discourse in the form of reports and proposals—their perspectives clashed. Because of this clash of perspectives (including values, priorities, and practices), they were unable to connect their WAC knowledge (regarding general writing processes) with discipline-specific faculty knowledge (of writing in their courses and their disciplines). In addition, they were unable to reach a compromise regarding the priorities of the WAC representatives and the discipline-specific faculty constraints. All of these conflicts resulted in the inability of WAC representatives and discipline-specific faculty to integrate their knowledge and perspectives.

However, at the start of the second semester of the WAC Program, an important change occurred in WFs' interactions with faculty. This change led to a transformation of

source of students' writing difficulties as well as the role they envisioned for WFs.

WAC Program participants' conceptualization of discipline-specific professors' position with regard to writing instruction. These faculty were no longer considered as novices in their fields but were treated as experts possessing valuable knowledge and practices to be built upon to create a successful WAC Program. The conceptualization of discipline specific faculties' writing instruction was transformed from a *problem* to be solved to a *resource* to be supported and further developed. In addition, the role of WFs was reconceptualized by discipline-specific faculty. These faculty began to view WFs as experts who could serve as pedagogical consultants (see Figure 3 in Appendix).

Transforming Knowledge, Roles, and Practices: Connecting Existing Faculty

Knowledge and Practices to WAC Knowledge and the Development of Writing Tools

The beginning of a transformation of knowledge, roles, and practices was sparked when I, a WF, attended a discipline-specific faculty's class. My role and goals in working with this professor were only vaguely defined, so there was an opportunity to transform the previously defined WAC expert/ outside pedagogical consultant versus WAC novice/ teaching assistant roles. In addition to my vaguely-defined role and possibility for transformation, the professor did not have a clearly defined role in the WF-faculty partnership. Thus, the professor's role was also open to transformation. In this chapter, I describe the processes through which transformation of knowledge, roles, and practices took place in the context of my and other WFs' work with discipline-specific faculty from the chemistry department. In addition, I describe the crucial role of tools and activity in the emergent development of knowledge and practices in the classroom.

A Context for Transformation in a Chemistry Lab Course: (Re)defining WF and Discipline-Specific Faculty Roles and Practices

An initial meeting took place at the beginning of the second semester with two chemistry professors who were scheduled to teach a total of three sections of a chemistry lab course. They were planning to “pilot” a new method of teaching the writing of the chemistry lab report and were interested in obtaining the assistance of the WFs with this task.

The “traditional” chemistry lab course (of which there were typically 6-9 sections each semester) presented a 45-minute discussion of the lab report at the beginning of the semester and had students write several complete lab reports during the semester. The plan for the pilot lab course was to present each section of the lab report *separately* and to teach students how to write one section at a time throughout the semester. This course would culminate with students writing a complete lab report.

At this February 8th meeting, it was decided that a WF would be “attached” to each of the three sections of the lab course, and several general activities were proposed for WFs to carry out (as recorded in my meeting notes as the “lead” WF for the chemistry project):

- attend the lab class
- evaluate students’ writing
- come up with writing assignments
- offer help in grading

While the WFs’ role in this instance was not clearly defined, the proposed activities seemed to suggest a mix of both traditional Teaching Assistant duties and writing expert/consultant activities. For example, it was clearly stated in WFs’ contracts that they were not to do any grading of student papers. However, these chemistry faculty suggested (1) that

WFs “evaluate” student writing in order to better understand the writing difficulties that students were facing and (2) that WFs grade student papers. These activities can be interpreted in either traditional Teaching Assistant terms or in WAC terms. First, in WAC terms, WFs could “evaluate” student writing and determine student difficulties in order to propose possible instructional techniques to faculty to address these difficulties. Or, in traditional terms, WFs could evaluate student writing and make suggestions to students to help them overcome their difficulties (in other words, tutoring). Second, in WAC terms, WFs could grade student papers in order to illustrate effective grading techniques (i.e., techniques that students would find useful and understandable) to faculty. Or, in traditional terms, WFs could take the place of faculty and save them time by grading student papers. Suggesting instructional methods and offering suggestions as to effective grading techniques (or, in WAC terms, “response” to student writing) were definitely in the realm of the types of activities envisioned by the WAC Program. However, tutoring and grading student papers were clearly activities associated with the traditional Teaching Assistant role. Thus, there was still much room for negotiation and need for defining of the roles and activities for WFs in the context of these chemistry classes.

In an effort to begin clarifying roles and practices, I compiled my meeting notes into a memo which I submitted to the chemistry faculty with whom I would be working:

To: [Chemistry Professors]

From: [WAC Coordinator and the Central College Writing Fellows]

Subject: Writing Fellow activities for the Spring, 199_ semester

It was a pleasure meeting with you all on Wednesday, February 8 and discussing your ideas for using the Writing Fellows as a *resource for contributing to*

the development of the writing component of the three pilot sections of the [Chemistry I] Lab course being taught this semester. We are very excited about this project and look forward to working with you on it. *[italics added]*

Although this memo was written by me, I indicated that the senders were the WAC Coordinator and *all* WFs (in fact, the memo was reviewed by the WAC Coordinator and the other WFs). This strategy served two purposes. First, I felt that inclusion of the WAC Coordinator as an author of the memo would give it more authority and weight than it would have had coming from a WF. I hoped that this would counter my lack of status and power in the event that the chemistry professors objected to parts of the memo.

Second, the inclusion of all WFs as authors served to communicate that WFs were a collaborative “body” rather than unconnected individuals working separately. In addition, this strategy was a direct attempt to oppose the WAC Coordinator’s practice of (1) putting only his name on all WAC documents that he wrote although the ideas may have been constructed collaboratively with WFs and (2) using the personal pronoun “I” on WAC documents (e.g., in his proposal for pedagogical guides presented in Chapter 3 in which he wrote “I propose that...”). This new practice communicated that no single individual in the WAC Program “owned” the knowledge that was produced or had authority over the practices that were carried out.³⁰

In addition, I define the role of WFs as a “resource” to faculty and that their role is to “contribut[e] to the development of writing in their course.” Thus, I make clear that WFs’

³⁰ A discussion regarding this issue took place among WFs who agreed, from that point on, to author all documents and tools produced with the designation “Central College Writing Fellows” rather than using any one individual’s name. While this practice did serve to “share” ownership of the program among all WFs and to give them more power and

role is to *serve* faculty needs, not to impose outside, pre-defined goals and activities on faculty. I also make clear that it is not the role of WFs to replace the professor and become the writing instructor for the course (i.e., to become a writing Teaching Assistant) but to play a contributing role in the development of writing instruction in the classroom.

I next summarized the meeting discussion that took place regarding WF activities:

As you requested, we have designated the Writing Fellows that will be attending the three pilot lab sections. Tracey Connor will attend the Tuesday morning section, Sarah Carpenter will attend the Wednesday afternoon section, and Michaela Rome will attend the Wednesday evening section. As we discussed, our goals for the semester will be to:

- (1) develop a sequence of writing assignments for the course,
- (2) suggest techniques for composing writing assignments that will be most clear to students
- (3) suggest methods of feedback that will be most helpful to students in improving their writing,
- (4) generate a set of writing benchmarks

In actuality, my summary involves both a review of the discussion (i.e., the designation of WFs to the three lab sections) as well as a transformation or reframing of the goals to be more reflective of the language and goals of WAC (e.g., addition of the term “sequence” with regard to the development of writing assignments; noting that WFs will “suggest methods of feedback” rather than “grade assignments”).

I further defined the practices that WFs would use to accomplish the stated goals:

authority than they would have had separately, it did create other problems regarding

In order to accomplish these goals, we will focus on information gleaned by attending the lab sections, through conversations with you, and by examining students' writing in order to determine what is expected of students and what their difficulties might be in reaching those expectations. We will draw upon our knowledge of composition theory and experience in teaching writing in order to offer you what we hope will be useful suggestions in addressing these difficulties.

We envision that this project will be carried out in a collaborative manner, both among the six Writing Fellows and between the Writing Fellows and the [Chemistry] faculty. As we begin to generate ideas, we hope to be able to bring them to you and receive your feedback. This will enable us to revise as necessary in order to best accommodate your needs and address your concerns.

I describe chemistry as the source of knowledge ("information gleaned by attending the lab sections...") that will result in the achievement of goals while at the same time pointing out that this knowledge will be connected to writing expertise ("knowledge of composition theory and experience in teaching writing"). I frame the work that will be done by the WFs as "suggestions" and characterize the interactions that will occur as collaborative. Finally, I define the role of faculty in this collaboration as providing feedback to WFs and the role of WFs as addressing faculty needs and concerns.

Transformation of Discipline-Specific Knowledge: Connecting Perspectives

The first lab course attended by a WF (me) was on February 9th, the day after the initial meeting with chemistry faculty. I had no specific goal or task guiding my activities at this lab, only the general guidelines discussed the day before. I was there "to help" with

accountability. This issue is discussed in Chapter 5.

writing. When the class began, I was introduced to the class by the chemistry professor as a “writing expert”—a completely different conceptualization of the role of the WF compared to other professors.

I then took a seat among the students and listened to the lecture the professor gave in which she was explaining to students how to write the methods section of a lab report. This lecture was not shaped or influenced by outside WAC knowledge or practices which were proposed by WAC representatives but was the professor’s standard lecture. Unsure myself about how to write a methods section of a chemistry lab report, I took notes as though I were a student in the class trying to understand the information in the lecture and make sense of it. The professor presented the information in a series of questions and statements during a class discussion. The following is a copy of the notes I took during the class discussion:³¹

T: What was the aim?

S: To measure the Oxygen content

T: To see how light affects Oxygen content in water containing a plant—is photosynthesis taking place?

.

.

.

T: What is this called?

S: Methods

³¹ “T” denotes comments made by the teacher, and “S” denotes comments made by various students in the class. Three periods indicate a section of the lecture during which I did not take notes.

T: It's a part of the methods section. What would you put in the methods section?

What are the important components?

S: Variables

T: What are the variables?

S: Meters

T: Are those variables?

.

.

.

S: Light

S: Temperature

S: Oxygen content

S: Size of the plant

S: Body of water [volume]

T: Is this the first thing in the methods section?

S: No

S: Materials

T: The word for materials you are talking about is equipment

T: What else?

S: Data

T: No. There is no data in the methods section. It is a recipe for what other people need to know to do the experiment...Procedures, experimental protocol, steps you are using...Order of procedures—the logical sequence of activities...

S: Like a checklist to help you keep track?

T: That's a good idea, but that not how it's done in the report... The general procedure, what do you need in a methods section? Variables and controls go together.

S: How to calibrate [the O₂ meter].

T: That's part of the procedure.

S: What equipment you need

T: That's in the materials. What is the other generic component? You need the calculations necessary to get the final answer of how to convert the measures taken into numbers that mean something in chemistry... Statistics, the tests you will be doing

I then began summarizing the main points of the discussion rather than taking notes of what was being said *verbatim*. I asked no questions myself and received no additional information from the professor regarding her presentation. I relied only on the information presented in the class lecture as well as my own knowledge based on my experiences of writing lab reports in my field, psychology. My summary was as follows:

METHODS

1. Aim/objective → general, 1 to 2 sentences describing the experiment: measure oxygen in water in the presence or absence of light; why I am collecting what I appear to need
2. Equipment: For this experiment, you will need... (only key components, not pencil, ruler, beakers—these are not necessary to list)
--Ask yourself why you are doing a certain step.

Ex: Why put an airtight container in a bowl of water (conductive medium for magnetic current)

3. Procedure in logical sequence of events

--what you did and why

--tin foil-so it's not exposed to light, to create experimental control

--variable under study

--measurement taken

--timing of measurement

--don't need outside info for this section

--can put a diagram to illustrate procedure

4. Calculations

5. Statistical tests to be used

--sentences for procedures

--lists for equipment

--can separate procedures into subheadings

Ex: calibration (paragraph about this)

I continued taking notes, again choosing to record the discussion *verbatim* but, instead of writing down the entire discussion, I focused on and wrote down *questions* brought up by the students based on the professor's discussion as well as the professor's replies to these questions:

S: Why do you list the equipment separately when you already write it in the procedures?

T: Some papers list the "key" equipment separately

.

.

.

S: Why state how to calibrate [the O₂ meter] when the instructions come with the calibrator?

T: You can state the instructions briefly or you can say “according to the instructions for [model type] you must...”

.

.

.

S: How long should it be?

T: About two pages

I also rephrased students’ questions and the professor’s answers in the language of WAC (or, more specifically, the language of English grammar):

--what tense and person are to be used?

--“modern” way → can use 1st and 3rd person

--“old days” → 3rd person only

Finally, at the end of my notes, I made an interpretation of the previous discussion based on the professor’s presentation, the students’ questions, and my own experience and WAC background:

*there seems to be the problem of needing to find a balance between detail and generality

Thus, as illustrated by my notes as well as my self-reflection on this experience, my understanding of the lecture on “how to write the methods section of a chemistry lab report” represents a complex construction of knowledge and sense-making processes which resulted in a transformation of the knowledge presented by the professor.

My process of understanding the knowledge that was presented by the professor involved looking at it from multiple perspectives and interpreting it through the lens of various “bodies of knowledge” and points of view:

Student Perspective. I struggled to understand the unfamiliar knowledge that was being presented by the professor. In this sense, I experienced the lecture as a student would. I used the tools and practices of a student—taking notes and summarizing main points—to make sense of the lecture material

Researcher Perspective. I also approached the knowledge from the perspective of a researcher, using the tools and practices of a social science researcher to make sense of the lecture on a different level. That is, I tried to write down, *verbatim*, the interaction that occurred between the professor and her students for later analysis of patterns and themes that might help me to understand the *interaction* between professor and students as well as the content of the lecture. By not asking my own questions regarding the content of the lecture, I used the approach of outside observer.³²

By using this approach, I gained valuable knowledge regarding a “naturalistic” classroom interaction, that is, a classroom interaction in which I did not play a role in directing the actions of participants. However, because I had not asked any questions, I was

³² It could be argued that, by virtue of sitting in the class and taking notes as a student would, I was actually acting as a participant observer. This interpretation could be valid in the sense

left with an incomplete understanding of the material that had been presented and an uncertainty as to whether or not I had enough of an understanding of the content to offer any useful writing suggestions to the professor. In this sense, I would have to approach the task of creating a writing tool from the perspective of a novice-student. However, I was familiar with the structure and content of a lab report based on my experience in writing lab reports in psychology. Though clearly there are differences between a chemistry lab report and a psychology lab report, the basics of structure and style are similar enough to draw parallels between the two. Thus, I relied on the knowledge and practices of my discipline to make sense of the material being presented.

Professor's Perspective. Another perspective that was represented in this process of understanding and making sense of the knowledge being presented was that of the professor. Having met with this professor as well as other professors in the Chemistry Department, my goal was to try to gather information during this class that would help me address students' writing difficulties. Thus, this goal, which was created through the history and experiences of discussing student writing issues with chemistry faculty, was a factor which shaped my process of trying to make sense of the classroom interaction and the chemistry material being presented. My focus on the questions and difficulties of the students reflects the professor perspective. In addition, the professor perspective is represented in that her lecture was the source of what I considered to be "chemistry knowledge."

WAC Perspective. Knowledge of WAC and goals of the WAC program also shaped my process of making sense of the material being presented. For example, the focus on

that I could be conceptualized as participating member of the class who simply did not ask questions. In this interpretation, I would more accurately be called a *participant* observer.

issues of grammar (using 3rd versus 1st person) and on defining the writing “problem” as one of generality versus detail are reflections of WAC knowledge and approaches.

However, the WAC perspective became much more evident and influential *following* the lab course. That is, at a later, time I analyzed and re-interpreted my notes and shaped the chemistry knowledge I gained based on a WAC perspective in order to create a WAC writing tool. This process is discussed in the next section and illustrates how knowledge development is an ongoing, transformative process which continues to take place long after the initial “imparting” of knowledge by the “expert.” Hence, the chemistry knowledge that I “received” during the class (the notes he took based on the professor’s lecture) were re-interpreted at a later time in the context of another perspective and activity goal.

Transforming Chemistry Knowledge and Practices into WAC terms: Defining the Writing Difficulty and Proposing a WAC Approach

Following the chemistry lab lecture, I further grappled with making sense of what I had experienced. In doing so, I moved even further from the specific content of the class. (i.e., the chemistry material presented to be understood from the perspective of a chemistry lab student). Instead, the focus became making sense of the chemistry knowledge in the context of the knowledge of my discipline, using the tools of my discipline (psychology), and linking this with my knowledge of WAC and the goals regarding the WAC program at Central College. This process is evident in the first entry made in my notebook following the lecture:

-The sciences are viewed as communities or cultures (Latour, 1990; Pera, 1994; Lemke, 1990)

In the above statement, I choose to conceptualize the chemistry class in the broader context of science as a community of practice (a conceptualization which stems from my discipline—psychology) and use the tool of my discipline—citing sources to support one's position—to legitimize this conceptualization. I further state in my notes,

-[There] must be socialization, [a] process of enculturation into the language ([and written] forms) of the scientific community/ culture just as it is necessary for one to learn appropriate behaviors when entering what we traditionally consider to be a "culture" (e.g., learning the language, customs, behaviors appropriate to the French culture).

Here again, I draw on the tools of my discipline to make sense of my experience in the chemistry class. Reflecting the education I received in psychology, I choose to focus on the existence of a *process* which is hypothesized to lead to a particular outcome, and use the vocabulary of my discipline—socialization, enculturation—to describe this process. In addition, I relate my experience in the chemistry class to my personal history—my experience of living in France and learning various aspects of the French culture.

In my notes, I further describe what I envision to be the process of learning to write a chemistry lab report:

-Rather than *deducing* (tacit vs. explicit) rules of appropriate behavior from experience (which could take years), [the] most efficient way to achieve [the culturally desired outcome] is through *explicit* presentation and explanation of rules [italics added].

I then relate this general learning process to WAC knowledge and practices as well as knowledge I gleaned from interviewing and attending meetings with chemistry faculty. I

draw on this knowledge to propose specific ways of carrying out the process of teaching students to write a chemistry lab report:

-We [the WFs] will present the rules [of writing a chemistry lab report] in the form of written guidelines and benchmarks (rubrics?) and will try to determine the best means of explaining these rules (e.g., use of models) and provide exercises for students to practice these rules, (e.g., specific assignments and low stakes writing in which students are given an opportunity to “step out” of the form and make sense of [these rules] from their own perspective, using their own knowledge and experience). [We] can do this [low stakes writing] during [class] “down-time.”

The ideas to “provide exercises for students... specific assignments...low stakes writing...[and] use of models” stem from original WAC Program proposals discussed in the previous chapter and also reflect the WAC training that I received. The term “benchmarks” comes directly from the chemistry professors. These professors were already using benchmarks as a way to focus and develop their curriculum. In my notes, I tried to relate the chemistry professors’ concept of benchmarks to the WAC concept of rubrics. My use of the question mark highlights my tentative understanding of the relationship between these concepts. I note the possibility of using models, a typical WAC teaching tool, to explain the rules of writing a chemistry lab report but outline no specific suggestion as to how to go about doing this. I also suggest the use of low-stakes writing, another common WAC teaching tool. I quote a WAC article which explains the utility of low-stakes writing as

allowing students to “step out of the form.” This direct quote also reflects an incomplete understanding of the concept of low-stakes writing on my part.³³

As the last entry in my notebook on this date, I write,

-Peer-editing with guidelines

Thus, from among the various approaches I mention in my notes (models, rubrics, low stakes writing, etc.), I decide on a single, specific approach to follow. I choose to develop a set of written guidelines (in the form of a peer editing sheet) to address the difficulties I feel students are facing in trying to write a chemistry lab report (or, more specifically, a methods section of a chemistry lab report). Attending the lab class thus provided me with the context I was lacking when attempting to address the needs of the previous chemistry professor. In the current context, I was able to choose from among the “laundry list” of possible WAC techniques to offer a specific technique which integrated chemistry knowledge with WAC knowledge.

As stated in my notes, I identified the students’ writing difficulty to be that they were having trouble deducing the rules of the practice of writing as it occurs in the scientific community. The decision to create a set of guidelines was based directly on the professor’s lecture during which she gave a presentation of how to write a methods section. However, attending the chemistry lecture allowed me to experience the difficulties of trying to make

³³ This incomplete understanding is reflected in the fact that I did not make specific suggestions for using the WAC techniques of models, rubrics, and low-stakes writing until much later in the program, once I had more knowledge and experience of these tools and had gained a better understanding of their use and how they might fit specifically into the structure, activities, and knowledge of the courses I was working in. This confusion and incomplete understanding further illustrates the way in which discipline-specific WFs’ experiences were analogous to that of students struggling to understand the content and writing conventions in the chemistry course.

sense of the material being presented by the professor. Thus, I felt that, in addition to the professor's lecture, the students would benefit from being given the rules of writing a methods section in an explicit, systematic way to be used as a tool to guide their writing.

Connecting WAC Approaches with Chemistry Knowledge: WF Development of a Writing Tool

Faced with the complexity of the information presented by the professor, I began to try to make sense of it by listing all of the points presented by the professor during the lecture. Feeling as though I did not fully understand the material and did not have enough information to systematically describe the methods section, I consulted a chemistry article (which is, in essence, a published lab report). I dissected this article, painstakingly identifying each of the various "pieces" of the article within the methods section. That is, next to each paragraph, I noted my understanding of the content and purpose of the paragraph. This is a common WAC approach to understanding writing and, described in WAC terms, would be called "annotating a model text."

I made a total of 10 comments on the paper's methods section, each one written next to a different paragraph. My notes are as follows:

1. [This paragraph] shows how the baseline for the experiment was set up → what needed to be done before starting any measuring
→ Dependent Variable 1: Oxygen consumption
2. [This paragraph is a] description of equipment used to measure O₂ consumption and how it was set up and how it functioned (for example, how flow was maintained) (is this a control technique?)
3. [This paragraph] explains the process of measuring O₂ consumption in the fish

4. [This paragraph] shows how O₂ consumption was accurately calculated and transformed into a measure of metabolic rate
5. [This paragraph is an] explanation to support why measurements were taken only during first 14-18 hours
6. [This paragraph] shows how control variables (weight, length) were measured
→ Dependent Variable 2: Activity
7. [This paragraph is a] description of the equipment used to measure activity and how it was set up and how it functioned (for example, flow of water, temperature) (controls?)
8. [This paragraph] shows how activity level was calculated
9. [This paragraph] explains process of measuring activity
10. [This paragraph] shows how control variables were measured
→ Dependent Variable 3: food intake

My knowledge of writing a chemistry lab report was transformed through using the WAC tool of annotating the text. That is, through connecting this WAC activity to the reading of the chemistry article, I was able to construct a more complete understanding of the structure, content, style, and conventions of a chemistry lab report. I was able to confirm and extend the knowledge I gained through the professor's discussion, to identify areas in which I still lacked understanding (i.e., my questions regarding the use of "controls"), and to reconceptualize the professor's discussion on the level of explicit understanding of the underlying purpose, content, and structure of the methods sections.

This is a reconceptualization in which knowledge presented from a chemistry professor's perspective is deconstructed and transformed to reflect knowledge understood

from the perspective of WAC. This transformation of knowledge allowed me to take the next step in the process of proposing a WAC approach to the professor, which was to create a WAC tool to address students' writing difficulties. To accomplish this task, I integrated the knowledge I had gained from the various fields (chemistry, psychology, WAC) and perspectives (student, professor, WAC trainers/ coordinators as well as my own) and transformed them into a tool—a peer editing guidelines sheet (see Appendix). This tool was composed of 6 categories: Materials, Procedures, Calculations/ Statistical Tests, Scientific Terms/ Vocabulary/ Accuracy, and Logic of Ideas. Each of these categories included a number of questions students could use to guide their thinking when editing their fellow students' drafts of the methods section of the lab report.

The next step was to present this writing tool to the chemistry professor. I decided to do this via email. This decision had two purposes: first, it was a convenient means of contacting the professor quickly and with a minimum of disturbance. Second, it maximized the professor's control of the situation. That is, I felt that an email message would provide the professor with the time and space to assess the information she was being presented with, that it would allow the professor an opportunity to build up any potential defenses the situation might raise (rather than leaving her feeling "on-the-spot" or ambushed by the WF's suggestions),³⁴ and that it would also give the professor the freedom to respond in a way that felt comfortable to her. The email begins as follows:

³⁴ The idea of allowing an individual the time to build up his or her defenses was presented to me the previous year during the teaching of one of my psychology classes, Psychology of Adolescence. During a teaching evaluation, I was covering topics related to divorce and stepfamilies, two potentially sensitive issues. During the follow-up discussion between me and the evaluating professor regarding my teaching performance, the professor suggested that such sensitive topics be addressed slowly in order that students might have the opportunity to build up their defenses before being confronted with the topic.

Dear Professor Green,

I would first like to tell you that I really enjoyed attending your class on Wednesday.

It also gave Sarah and I fertile ground for beginning to generate ideas to help your students with their writing.

In this introduction, I establish the importance of the chemistry class as a foundation for my and Sarah's ideas. It also places a great deal of responsibility on the WFs by defining their task and role as that of "generat[ing] ideas." Finally, it frames the role of the WF ideas as "help[ing]...students with their writing" rather than as reformulating the professor's pedagogy.

I discussed with the other Writing Fellows the different topics that you suggested we might present to your class (i.e., plagiarism/ citing, writing style, differences in purpose between scientific writing and other types of writing). We will work to prepare something on these topics, however, we thought that it might be too much to cover in one lab. It would probably be necessary to address these three topics on different days. We can discuss this further so that you can let us know what you think.

With the above statements, I acknowledge the professor's needs and state that her requests will be addressed, though there may need to be some modification in the professor's plans in terms of the timing of the presentations. I do indicate, however, that this is still open for discussion and negotiation. In addition, though not evident to the professor, these statements reveal my lack of expertise in the areas requested by the chemistry professor. That is, I was unsure what the presentations requested by the professor might entail and immediately consulted my English composition colleagues for their feedback. The ideas in this email

regarding the professor's suggested topics reflect the English composition knowledge and expertise in these areas, not mine.

In the meantime, we thought of an activity that might be helpful to students' writing. Composition theory and research has indicated that students are not likely to use comments on final drafts of papers in order to improve their writing. Rather, it appears that giving students an opportunity to revise drafts in response to comments is more likely to contribute to their writing development. Peer-editing is one activity that has been used as a means of providing students with feedback on their drafts.

Here, I reiterate my focus on helping students (not in "fixing" a problem with the professor's pedagogy). I introduce the activity by first providing the rationale behind it which has its foundation in composition expertise (i.e., "theory and research") and present the writing issue as a student problem ("students are not likely to use comments on final drafts of papers in order to improve their writing"). I present the proposed writing activity as a tested and successful method of addressing this student problem ("peer-editing...has been used as a means of providing students with feedback").

We know that this is very short notice and may best be considered for future use, but we would like to suggest that the students be given an opportunity to comment on each other's methods sections in the lab on Wednesday. It may not be extremely effective this first time, but will introduce students to this process in order that it might be more useful the next time. We have come up with the following "Peer-editing Feedback Checklist for Methods Section of Lab Report" that might be used in order to give students some guidance in carrying out this activity. This is, of course,

just a template. You are the expert on writing a methods section and would be better able to outline what should be checked.

These statements provide the professor with a reasonable excuse for rejecting the idea of carrying out the peer editing activity during the following scheduled class. This approach was used to minimize the potential damage that could be caused by a confrontation and clash of ideas. In addition, I set up the context to provide an excuse to protect myself (and the reputation of the WAC Program) against the potential failure of the activity by noting that integrating writing activities into the classroom is a process and may take a few tries before being successful. I end this paragraph by noting that the chemistry professor is the “expert” and that any tool created by the WFs is “just a template.” Thus, while I do establish the WFs and their knowledge as credible (by drawing on WAC theory, research, and practices), I also defer to the chemistry professor’s expertise and needs regarding what she feels she would want to implement in her class and when. I reiterate this in the closing paragraph of the email:

Again, this is extremely short notice, and you may not have time to think about this activity before Wednesday. In that case, it will just be something to think about for the future, if, indeed, this is even something you would be interested in having your students do. I look forward to hearing what you think.

The professor responded by saying that she would like the WFs to come in and carry out the activity during the next scheduled class (as the WFs had requested). She did not make any suggestions for changes to the peer editing sheet.

Transformation from Writing Tool to Pedagogical Activity: Connecting Discipline-Specific WF Expertise with English Composition WF Expertise

The WF writing tool was already designed with the idea of pedagogy and classroom activity in mind. That is, it was not designed as a static list of guidelines or a checklist for students to use on their own when writing their methods sections outside of class. Rather, it was created as a series of questions for students to ask themselves in the context of a classroom activity during which they would be reading and exchanging ideas about their peers' writing. In addition, this peer editing session was to be carried out with the participation of the instructor who would also be involved in the activity. The instructor's activity in relation to the peer editing tool would take place in the classroom as well as out of the classroom. That is, in addition to her participation in the classroom peer editing activity, the instructor would use the student-completed peer editing sheets as indicators of student revision in response to peers' feedback and would base her grading on this (among others factors).

In response to the tool I had created, the WAC Coordinator commented that it was a unique combination of both WAC (Writing Across the Curriculum) and WID (Writing in the Disciplines) approaches.³⁵ I had integrated a writing *process* approach (peer editing activity) with a discipline-specific focus on writing *form* (explicit guidelines describing the structure, content, conventions, and style of a chemistry lab report). This integration of approaches

³⁵ As described in Chapter 1, WAC was the first approach to emerge and focused on the writing process, emphasizing content and conceptual understanding which WAC proponents sought to develop through writing to learn activities such as journal writing, freewriting, and peer editing. WID approaches emerged later and were focused on the forms (structure) of writing in the various disciplines (for example, lab reports, critical essays, case reports, etc.) rather than content. An example of a WID approach to writing would be to provide students with an outline of the structure or guidelines to guide them in writing a report. In fact, students in the chemistry class were given an entire book containing the guidelines of how to write a chemistry lab report.

represents a transformation of knowledge that I had gained through my WAC training, my own research on WAC and WID, my discipline-specific knowledge, my experience in the chemistry lab class, and my own teaching experiences.

However, I had only limited experience in carrying out a peer editing activity with my own class when teaching the previous year. I therefore felt I did not have the expertise necessary to actually carry out this peer editing activity in the chemistry class or to explain the process to the chemistry professor. Thus, although I felt I had gained a certain expertise in both WAC and chemistry (especially with regard to Central College's Chemistry Department and the particular professor I was working with), I was a novice in the field of WAC pedagogical activities and felt it was necessary to get expert guidance in carrying out this activity. I decided to consult two of the English Composition WFs, each of whom had had several years of experience teaching and carrying out WAC pedagogical techniques such as peer editing.

I, psychology WF, and the two English WFs discussed the peer editing writing tool and how it might be translated into a classroom activity. One of the English WFs suggested that small peer editing groups should be formed. And, in order to ensure that all students were active in the process, each person should be assigned a role. I remarked that the class was already divided into lab groups of 4-5 students, so it was agreed that it made sense to use these groups. The English WFs then suggested appropriate roles for each student, and I recorded these in my notebook:

- scribe: keep a record and make copies for the group

- time manager: keep track of time [so that there is] enough time to finish

- facilitator: make sure everyone gets to talk, keep the group moving
- reporter: reports [summary of the group discussion] in front of the class
- liaison: gets info from other groups and reports back to group

The English Composition WFs also said that the activity could be carried out with two individuals exchanging papers rather than in groups. I responded that I would ask the chemistry professor which approach she preferred, but that I had a feeling that pairs would be better because of the limited amount of time that could reasonably be devoted to a writing activity in the context of a chemistry lab class. Thus, although the English Composition WFs were considered the experts in this task, local knowledge and perspectives gained through participation in the chemistry class were also part of the development of the activity, i.e., the knowledge that the class was already divided into groups and the perspective of the chemistry professor as to her preference for the grouping for the activity (pairs versus small groups).

This latter consideration for the preference of pairs rather than small groups reflects the even larger context of the institutional perspective with regard to the time constraints of the writing activity: As discussed earlier, discipline-specific professors are under constraints to meet certain requirements imposed by their departments, the college, the university, and graduate and professional schools to which their students will apply. That is, students must be prepared to continue their studies in other courses in the chemistry department with a solid foundation in chemistry concepts and practices. They must do well in these advanced courses so that they can make adequate progress to graduate from the college. Their performance in the college (GPAs and passing rates) and on graduate and professional school entrance exams (such as the GRE or MCAT) should reflect well on the university, and

students should be well prepared so that they are accepted to these schools and are able to succeed once admitted. Thus, unlike English composition professors, discipline-specific professors must teach their students a variety of concepts and skills of which writing is only one component. I recognized and respected this constraint and thus suggested the preferential use of pairs in the peer editing activity.

After consideration of the student grouping and roles for the activity, the English Composition WFs then stated that the activity needed to be “introduced” to the students. The English composition WFs discussed some of their personal experiences with this type of activity: They explained that some students were resistant to the idea of peer editing and would not want to *take* advice from other students. The reason for this is that they felt their fellow students did not have enough knowledge to offer them any useful suggestions on how to improve their writing. Conversely, some students were reluctant to *give* advice because they did not have confidence in their knowledge and their ability to give useful suggestions. Based on the discussion with the other WFs, I made notes for myself of how these issues might be addressed to the chemistry students:

- You now have some experience writing a methods section. You can help your fellow students revise their methods sections by bringing a fresh eye to it.
- Having someone else read your paper will, at the very least, let you know if your presentation is coherent and understandable.
- In addition, I'll provide you with this more detailed sheet that will show you some specific things you want to look for [when reading your fellow student's methods section]

The English Composition WFs also suggested that, if there was time, the peer editing activity should be modeled for students in front of the classroom before they attempted the activity themselves.

The culmination of this discussion resulted in a series of steps that I recorded in my notebook which outlined the procedure to be followed in order to transform the writing tool I had developed into a pedagogical tool to be used in a classroom activity:

Instructions for Peer Editing Activity:

1. [tell students to] choose a partner
2. [model part of the activity:] go over a couple of examples
 [refer to the first point on the peer editing sheet which asks about the aim of the experiment:] “aim of the experiment was to measure O₂”
 [ask students] What might be missing?
 [tell students:] you can take a couple of minutes to quickly review the sheet so you can get an idea of some of the things you’ll be looking for
3. [tell students:] Exchange papers and read through your partner’s paper once without taking notes.
4. [tell students that] one person starts and goes through, point by point, with the author of the paper.
 -Be sure to write down the comments of the other person and make a check when you complete each point.
5. [tell students:] When you are done with all 13 points, switch to the other person’s paper.
 -you can mark directly on the paper if you need to

6. [tell students:] Write your name on the line where it says peer editor
7. [tell students:] You will take this sheet home and use the comments to help you revise your methods section. You will turn in [the following] next week:
 - a. old [original] draft
 - b. peer editing sheet
 - c. final draft

-this will help us to see if this activity has been useful, how it might be changed...

The above procedures illustrate the various perspectives, knowledge, and expertises of the WAC representatives as they relate to the specific context of this chemistry lab class in this institution.

From WAC Activity to Chemistry Activity to WAC Activity: Emergent Knowledge, Tools, and Activities

Once the procedures were outlined, I prepared myself to carry out the peer editing activity during the next chemistry lab class. The professor decided that the students should work in pairs, trading drafts of their methods sections for their peer to review. Contrary to the procedures outlined by the three WFs prior to the class (and agreed to by the chemistry professor),³⁶ the students exchanged papers, but, instead of discussing the papers one after the other, worked quietly without interacting with their peers. Students sat side-by-side, simultaneously reading each other's drafts and writing down suggestions for revision on their partner's paper. After about ½ hour of reading and revising, students were told to exchange papers and to review what their peers had written on their papers. They were encouraged to

³⁶ It is possible that the students did not intentionally act counter to my instructions. It is likely that the instructions were unclear because I was unfamiliar with the process and still

ask each other questions if they did not understand their peers' comments, and a few of them did so.

After the activity was over, I suggested to the chemistry professor that she ask the students what they thought of the activity and if they thought it was useful. I paraphrased some of the students' responses in my notebook:

- [reading someone else's paper] gives me more info about how my paper could be structured; [it gave me a] different perspective.
- [it would have been more useful further in the class (later in the semester)]
- [it] raised questions for me that I had not thought about before
- [you] might think you had everything, [it] tells you what was missing
- [I] might have written [the methods section] slightly differently if I'd had the peer editing sheet before.
- It told me how to write more, what was missing
- It slipped my mind to put in the aim, if I'd had this sheet, I would have remembered.
- It made it clearer what you [the instructor] were looking for [in a lab report], what you expected
- It helped me because you always miss a few things [in the lecture presentation]
- [I] found things that shouldn't be in it.

This last comment was in reference to the procedures outlined in the chemistry "lab manual." This manual contains the step-by-step instructions on how to carry out each experiment to be completed in the lab course during the semester. However, during the O₂ experiment that took place in the lab the week before, one of the steps that originally

somewhat unclear myself as to how the process should be presented and carried out. I may

appeared in the manual was omitted because of a problem with the equipment. Thus, this student's comment (which was generated in response to the question, What did you find useful in the peer editing activity?) generated another question from the professor regarding the writing of the methods section.

[When writing your methods section], did you include the necessary changes that you made in carrying out the experiment?

The professor's question succeeded in connecting the activity of *writing about* chemistry (writing the methods section) to the activity of *carrying out* the scientific method (the experiment). It also generated a discussion of purpose and audience which, from a WAC perspective, are two subjects of high priority when teaching writing. This discussion was not planned beforehand as part of the peer editing writing activity and, had the student not mentioned it, it may not have taken place. A summary of the discussion is as follows:

Purpose. Students were confused as to whether they should write the methods section so that it reflected the "right way" of carrying out the experiment, i.e., the ideal procedures as they appear in the lab manual. Or, alternatively, should they write what actually occurred in the course of the experiment as it took place in the lab class? In response, the professor asked, Why do scientists write methods sections? In essence, she was asking, What is the *purpose* of writing a methods section in a lab report? This led to a discussion of the importance of replicability of experiments and how the activity of writing lab reports for the chemistry lab class fit into the larger practice (activity) of publishing articles in chemistry journals and the purpose that these journal articles served. Through further discussion, it was concluded that the purpose of writing a methods section, in the

have thus been vague when giving the instructions to students.

larger context of the scientific community, was to ensure that results are reliable and that experiments are replicable by other scientists.

Audience. The conclusion of this discussion led students to question how exactly a methods section for this lab course should be written (in contrast to a journal article). The students pointed out that all of the experiments in the lab manual had already been carried out, the results were well-documented, and most scientists could easily replicate these experiments with little instruction (i.e., with a limited amount of information in the methods section). So, they wondered, Whom should they be writing for? (In WAC terms, one would ask, Who is the audience?) Students wondered, did they need to demonstrate to the professor that they understood what they were doing (i.e., professor as audience) or should they be writing “authentic” methods sections (i.e., scientific community as audience)? The professor responded that, although the process is somewhat artificial, she needed to know that the students understood the material.

In my notes, I summarize the discussion, transforming it into WAC terms:

Discussion of audience: methods need to be replicable by whom? A professional scientist? An intro [to chemistry] lab student? Who needs more detail?

Following this entry, I generate an idea for another WAC tool—a description of purpose and audience that can be discussed with students to further clarify the discussion that began in the lab class:

*[note to self] write up something brief on purpose and audience of methods section → [is the purpose for students] to demonstrate their knowledge (like on a test) or to [genuinely] inform [the field of chemistry]? [The difference in purpose can be defined as] school vs. professional.

This example illustrates how the WAC peer editing activity (a *writing* activity) generated knowledge related to the field of *chemistry* which in turn generated further knowledge about *writing* in chemistry (for the WF). This new knowledge, in turn, generated another idea for a *WAC tool* which could be used in this chemistry class.

In addition, one of the students commented that she would have written her methods section differently had she had the peer editing sheet beforehand. Thus, WFs and chemistry faculty decided to institute a new practice which was to distribute the peer editing sheet *before* students wrote their lab report sections in addition to using it during the peer editing activity *after* the first drafts were written.

Further, another student commented that he found the peer editing activity to be of limited utility so early in the course. Thus, additional supports (WAC tools and activities) were developed and put into place in the chemistry class (e.g., the use of annotating questions and discussion of model texts). These activities were designed to precede the peer editing activity and better prepare students to understand and write the lab report, thus allowing them to better understand the guidelines on the peer editing sheet prior to the peer editing activity.

These were just a few of many instances in which WAC tools and activities generated knowledge within the class (for students), which generated additional knowledge regarding writing (and writing difficulties) in chemistry (for the WF and chemistry professors), and led to the development of WAC tools which led to classroom activities in which the WAC tool was implemented, and so on.

By the end of the two years during which the I worked with the Chemistry Department, the chemistry lab course had been thoroughly infused with WAC tools and activities which addressed the writing of each section of the lab report (introduction,

methods, results, conclusions, references) as well as other types of writing that took place in the course (quiz and test-taking) in a multitude of ways (see syllabus in Appendix). The various WAC tools and activities developed for the chemistry lab course over 1 ½ years are as follows:

- models of all lab report sections (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- overview of all sections of the lab report (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- annotating questions for all model lab report sections (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- peer editing of first quiz and all lab report sections (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- written description of the writing assignment for each section of the lab report (handout and discussion)
- model quiz answers (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- standardized assessment rubrics (handout and in-class activity/ discussion following the grading of report sections)
- written guidelines for grading (handout for professors)
- integrating the different sections of the lab report/ how the lab report is related to the scientific method (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- how to carry out library research (handout and in-class activity/ discussion)
- how to write answers for tests (in-class activity/ discussion)
- integration of writing activities into the course syllabus (handout and discussion)

- expanding the requirement for students to keep a binder with all of their lab handouts to include writing handouts as well (class requirement which affected the student's grade)
- connecting writing activities developed in the chemistry lab course to the English Department course, "Writing in the Sciences" through sharing the tools with these faculty in a workshop. Additionally, connecting the knowledge, practices, and concerns of the English Department "Writing in the Sciences" instructors to the chemistry course by providing feedback from the workshop to chemistry faculty.

These WAC tools/ activities were developed based on knowledge (loosely defined) generated from implementation of a previous WAC tool/ activity and connected with the WFs' and/or the chemistry professor's personal experiences, WAC and chemistry knowledge, preferences, etc. The WAC tools/ activities developed for the chemistry class originated from various participants in a variety of settings:

- knowledge generated from questions raised by students during class activities/ discussions (examples of tools/ activities developed in this way are the peer editing sheet, the idea for the description of purpose and audience, the use of annotating questions for discussion of lab report sections); WFs connected this knowledge generated during the WAC activity to their WAC training and identified a "writing need" and created a tool/ activity they considered useful and which they determined could be "smoothly" integrated into the chemistry course based on the professors needs, priorities, teaching style, and activities already in place.
- knowledge based on professors' experiences with WFs and WAC tools which led them to request additional WAC tools not originally suggested by WFs (examples of

tools/ activities developed in this way are the use of models and peer editing for quizzes); these requests came from professors' knowledge of their students' needs and the knowledge that WFs were "writing experts" whose role it was to come up with solutions to address these needs (an examples of a tool/ activity developed in this way is the activity and handout used to discuss the integration of the different sections of the lab report).

- knowledge from mutual determination through discussion between WFs and chemistry professors of the utility of a WAC tool/ activity (examples of tools/ activities developed in this way are the decision to create peer editing sheets for *all* sections of the lab report and the use of models of lab report sections).

In addition, the construction of these tools took place with the varying expertises of the discipline-specific faculty, WAC trainers and coordinators, discipline-specific WFs, and English Composition WFs; whether or not they were physically present during the construction of tools, their perspectives and expertises were present in the process of tool and activity development (for example, the chemistry professor's expertise was part of the development of the methods section peer editing guidelines sheet although she was not physically present when the actual handout was created).

Finally, the end-of-semester report written by the chemistry WFs during the fourth semester of the WAC Program presents evidence of the continuing emergence of tools, activities, and knowledge in the chemistry project, even with greatly reduced participation by

WFs.³⁷ This report was written for and submitted to the WAC Administrator and the two WAC Coordinators by the two chemistry project WFs:

To: [WAC Administrator, WAC Coordinators]

From: Michaela Rome, Charles Price [WFs]

[Chemistry] Summary Report—Spring 199__

Three [chemistry] faculty have been using a variety of WAC activities in their three sections of [Chemistry Lab I]. These are three of a number of [chemistry] lab sections which range in number from about 6-9, depending on the semester. These faculty have been using models, written guidelines, peer review, revision, and standardized assessment sheets in their instruction of how to write a [chemistry] lab report. They have also used a model and peer review to help students perform better on the weekly quizzes. Finally, they carried out a presentation and activity on library research and citing sources. All of these activities were outlined for students on a separate "writing syllabus" indicating the activity, handouts, writing assignment, and due date for each week. This program of writing activities has worked well, but is still in the process of revision as the curriculum itself is still being refined. One specific change to be made is the use of a range of models representing different grade levels as compared to the current practice of using one exemplary, well-written student model. Faculty would like for this writing program to be followed, eventually, in all sections of the [Chemistry] lab course.

³⁷ As described in Chapter 5, WFs participation by the final semester of this study was limited compared to previous semesters. The bulk of WF work with the chemistry professors during this final semester was to develop an evaluation of the writing component of the course and to assist the chemistry professor who was new to the program in implementing previously-developed WAC tools.

[Chemistry] faculty would also like to make writing an integral part of their “workshops” which are peer-led, small-group sessions used to reinforce course content (not necessarily from the lab course, but from other core lecture courses). This might be a new focus for Writing Fellows to take and will be a step in connecting writing into the sequence of courses in the core. Writing Fellows wrote a report (October, 199__) outlining some writing activities that might be incorporated into lower-level core courses. This document might be used as a starting point.

[Chemistry] faculty are also interested in implementing some of the Writing Fellows’ suggestions for implementing writing activities for upper-level courses. These suggestions are in a report submitted to [chemistry] faculty by the Writing Fellows.

[Chemistry] faculty are still very interested in evaluating the success of their program. At this point, a number of papers have been collected for evaluation, however, data collection is still in progress at this time.

This report reflects the ongoing *emergence* of writing activities in the Chemistry Department which extended far beyond any initial WAC Program plan. In addition, this report also demonstrates that previously-implemented writing activities underwent continued *transformation* (i.e., transformation in how model writing samples will be used in the classroom: “One specific change to be made is the use of a range of models representing different grade levels as compared to the current practice of using one exemplary, well-written student model”). Thus, the knowledge and practices in the Chemistry Department are not static, but are continually emerging and transforming through the continued activities of the chemistry faculty, even in the absence of “writing experts.” Thus, this chapter reflects

the fluid and relational nature of expertise in knowledge development as well as processes of collaboration, transformation, and emergence (see Figure 3 in Appendix).

Chapter 5 Agency and Control: Guiding and Constructing One's Own Environment and Development

In the previous chapter, I presented an in-depth description of the transforming WAC Program in the context of the work that was carried out as part of the chemistry project. This chapter presents a more global look at transformations that occurred in a number of different WAC Program projects. Specifically, I present instances of how participants' agency re-defined and transformed various aspects of the WAC Program including the knowledge, roles, and practices of participants.

Redefining the Culturally-Constructed Environment: Participants' Contributions to Shaping their Own Development

As discussed in Chapter 3, program participants (WFs, WAC Coordinators, and discipline-specific faculty) were placed in pre-defined positions of power, authority, and expertise. Outcomes for participants were also pre-defined. That is, the WAC Program was framed based on a conversion/ training model which implied a process of top-down transmission of pre-defined, (WAC) expert knowledge, practices, values, and beliefs. However, as described in Chapter 4, the culturally-defined, pre-planned positions, knowledge, and practices were transformed by participants. That is, in the face of a culturally-constructed environment, participants engaged in processes which re-shaped this pre-defined environment into a new program. As a result of this transformed program, outcomes (including knowledge, practices, and roles) that were originally pre-defined by WAC experts were transformed and became *emergent* developmental outcomes shaped by participants.

In the following sections, I describe the transformative processes that were engaged in by program participants which resulted in the transformed WAC Program. I also describe

the ongoing interactions which took place in the context of the “transformed” program as roles, knowledge, and practices were continually renegotiated and redefined as new participants joined the program and as participants engaged in new activities. In certain examples, I describe the further outcomes which emerged from these new practices. These descriptions illustrate a conceptualization of knowledge development as a complex, dynamic, emerging, self-transforming, self-selecting, self-defining system of human interactions that take place as individuals negotiate, define, and participate in goal-oriented activities.

Negotiation, Transformation, Rejection, and Acceptance of WAC Program Roles, Knowledge, and Practices

Noncompliance and Withdrawal from the Program. The WAC Program evolved in the way that it did in part because of the characteristics, desires, and motivations of the participants who chose to continue with the program and those who chose to withdraw from the program. As mentioned in Chapter 3, two of the philosophy professors withdrew from the WAC Program because they did not receive the kind of assistance from WFs that they desired. That is, they were interested in having WFs tutor their students and grade papers rather than in receiving assistance with their writing pedagogy. WAC administration and WFs refused this role of Teaching Assistant, and faculty refused the role of novice instructor. Thus, these roles did not emerge as part of program practices. Had either the WFs or the professors adapted their roles to fit the pre-defined positions, it is likely that the type of program to emerge (including the knowledge and practices associated with it) would have been quite different from the program knowledge and practices that emerged based on the Faculty Resource Model approach.

The knowledge and practices of the integrative faculty resource approach that emerged in the chemistry department were shared with WAC Coordinators and WFs as part of their weekly meetings, in the weekly progress report (see below), in memos, through collaborative development of writing tools and activities as well as informally. WFs began to rethink their initial roles and practices³⁸ and to change them to better fit the needs of the faculty. However, in the case of one English Department WF, Sarah, this did not occur. Sarah decided to leave the program after one year of participation rather than stay and finish out the term of her two-year contract.

Sarah's first semester was spent working with a philosophy professor, and her end-of-semester report (described in Chapter 3) is illustrative of the WAC-oriented, outside expert role and practices she assumed. The following semester, she worked with the chemistry department in the midst of the transformation that was taking place from a conversion approach to a collaborative, integrative faculty resource approach. Following the lead of the other WFs participating in the chemistry project, Sarah participated in classroom activities and collaborated with chemistry professors to produce writing tools that integrated WAC knowledge and practices with chemistry knowledge and practices (see Chapter 4).

At the end of the semester spent working with the chemistry professors, Sarah decided to leave the program and accepted a position as an English tutor supervisor at another Northeast University campus. I asked Sarah why she was leaving the program. She explained that she was a writing instructor, and she wanted to teach writing; she did not want to spend her time struggling to learn and understand chemistry material. This perspective is

³⁸ That is, the roles and practices associated with the conceptualization described in Chapter 3 that WFs were "anointed as the chosen WAC disciples sent out on a missionary quest to help faculty increase and improve their use of writing in their courses."

in direct conflict with the integrative WAC/ discipline-specific collaboration approach promoted by the Faculty Resource Model and is more in keeping with a Conversion/ Training Model approach. Thus, Sarah ultimately decided that she preferred to leave the program rather than to adapt to this new role in which she was not the expert writing teacher, but was a collaborative partner who had to transform her writing knowledge by integrating it with discipline-specific knowledge.

Thus, program participants chose either to adapt their roles to align them with the program knowledge and practices that were emerging, or they chose to maintain their roles and, because these roles were not acceptable in terms of program goals and practices, they withdrew from participating the program (see also the discussion below presenting the example of another WF who withdrew from the program because she did not conform to the norms constructed by program participants).

Noncompliance and Program Transformation. Other WFs refused to participate in particular practices but continued with the program. In these instances, noncompliance led to changes in the program rather than in participant exclusion or withdrawal from the program.

One example of this is my act of noncompliance in my work with the Chemistry Department. I refused to participate in an existing structure/ practice of the program when I defied the power and authority of the WAC Coordinator. I did this when I ignored the WAC Coordinator's "request" to submit his WAC proposal to the chemistry professor. Rather than choosing to impose a pre-defined plan on the professor's course (an action I felt would alienate yet another professor), I chose to take a different approach. This approach emerged through my participation in the chemistry class activities and resulted in the development of the first WAC tool for this class—the peer editing sheet and activity. In this instance, my

choice of writing activity overrode the WAC Coordinator's choice (as defined in his proposal). As explained further below, rather than resulting in a dismissal or reprimand, this action placed me in a greater position of authority, power, and independence in relation to the WAC Coordinator.

In addition to choosing not to submit the WAC Coordinator's proposal, I chose not to inform the WAC Coordinator that I was planning to carry out the peer editing activity in the chemistry class. I chose to do this because I did not want the WAC Coordinator to make any changes to the peer editing sheet that had already been approved by the chemistry professor or to get involved in the carrying out of the activity itself. I feared that the sheet or the activity might be changed to reflect a more WAC-oriented and less discipline-specific approach. In addition, I wanted the freedom to act more independently in my role as WF. This act served to further shape and direct the emerging WAC program towards transformed roles and practices. That is, the WAC Coordinator chose not to reprimand me (which would have reinforced the practice of having WFs obtain his approval before submitting materials to professors). Rather, he praised my writing tool as a unique and thoughtful combination of both WAC and WID techniques. This response resulted in a transformed role for WFs which allowed for greater autonomy in their interactions with faculty. It also reflected an appreciation for the ability of discipline-specific WFs to develop and implement writing tools in the classroom. In other words, it granted them some degree of expertise in the eyes of the WAC Coordinator.

Displaying Expertise. Another form of noncompliance, purposely creating opportunities to display one's expertise, led to a transformation in WF roles. That is, I (a discipline-specific WF) refused to comply with the role of non-expert writer in comparison to

the English Department WFs. This act of noncompliance took place in the context of the editing of the WAC handbook that was written by all WFs (described more fully in the following chapter).

WFs were under a strict deadline (imposed by the WAC Administrator)³⁹ for completing the handbook and had to undertake this task in addition to continuing to carry out their regular project work with professors (e.g., doing in-class presentations, creating writing tools, etc.). Each WF was assigned to write different sections of the handbook. Despite their heavier workload at the time, English Department WFs were assigned to write the majority of these sections and were given responsibility for editing *all* of the sections because, having studied and taught English, they were the “writing experts.”

I saw my opportunity to transform my role as non-expert writer when I was assigned jury duty. At the courthouse, I explained to the English Department WFs, I could not carry out any WAC activities except for editing the already written sections of the handbook (I had already finished writing the handbook sections for which I was responsible and had no pending work with faculty outside of carrying out classroom activities). I reasoned that, given the strict deadline, it would at least be of some help to have me do a “first round” of edits, and I undertook the task with the understanding that English Department WFs would look over the sections again to check them. Following my first attempt at editing, I asked one of the English Department WFs, Carey, to look over my edits. I asked if they were

³⁹ The WAC Administrator wanted to use the handbook as a recruitment tool. He wanted to provide the handbook to faculty before the end of the semester in the hopes that they would join the WAC Program and be ready to begin participating in WAC activities at the start of the following semester. His concern was that, once the semester began, faculty would quickly become overwhelmed and too busy to take on additional activities.

“okay” and if it was worth it for me to continue editing other handbook sections. After reviewing the edits, Carey replied,

They’re fine; I knew when I saw your comment “dangling participle” that I had nothing to worry about. Go ahead with the rest of the edits.

Following this interaction, I, a discipline-specific WF, was assigned the role of *sole* editor for all the remaining handbook sections (i.e., no one else would have to “check” them to make sure they were acceptable) in order that the English Department WFs could continue with the rest of their work. In addition, one of the English Department WFs, Pat, asked me to read and discuss drafts of his handbook sections *as he was composing them*. He then revised the sections to incorporate my feedback. Thus, as a result of my creating the opportunity to display my editing knowledge, a new role emerged for me. My role was transformed from non-expert writer to expert editor and writing advisor. In addition, as a result of this transformed role, a new practice—collaboration among WFs on handbook sections—emerged.

This role was further developed in the following semester: Carey consulted with me to get my feedback on some of the writing tools she was developing for a project in which I was not officially involved.⁴⁰ My expertise was thus expanded to include not only writing and editing but also writing *pedagogy*. This represents a transformation from conceptualizations of the lack of expertise described in Chapter 3 by an English Department WF, (i.e., “the learning curve” that had to be “tackle[d]” with regard to discipline-specific WFs’ lack of expertise in writing instruction).

⁴⁰ Though all WFs were potential collaborators on any particular project, only two WFs were “officially” assigned to a faculty partner and were ultimately accountable for project completion.

Processes of Identification and Dis-Identification. I felt alienated with regard to the WAC practices that were presented in the initial WAC training as well as the perceived novice position in which I was placed in relation to English Department WFs and WAC practices and thus rejected this position. In addition, during the first WF meeting with one of the WAC Coordinators during which he presented his proposal for pedagogical guides, the group of WFs felt alienated. That is, when the WFs began to question some of the aspects of the WAC pedagogical guide proposal, the WAC Coordinator's response was to make the comment, "I don't know who you [WFs] are or what you can do," thereby calling into question our ability to contribute to or act as experts regarding English composition and the teaching of writing (especially as compared to his many years of teaching and research experience in English composition). In addition, he made the statement that discipline-specific professors lacked appropriate pedagogy in that they did not hand out written descriptions and requirements for their writing assignments but instead would simply write a very brief (inadequate) description of the assignment on the board for students to copy. He further commented that "adjuncts are even worse, they don't even write the assignments down." These two comments had special significance for the WFs to whom they were addressed: 4 of the 5 WFs had been adjuncts before becoming WFs (3 of them at Central College); and 3 of the 5 WFs had been English composition instructors.

Thus, based on my perplexing and upsetting experience at the WAC training workshops as well as my interaction with the WAC Coordinator, I identified more with discipline-specific faculty in that I understood their potential confusion with regard to WAC practices as well as their potential rejection of the novice position in which they were being placed. This identification thus gave me a different perspective on the role of WAC and its

participants and may account for my interaction with discipline-specific faculty in which I took on the role of resource rather than expert and collaborator rather than transmitter of knowledge. In addition, I identified with the students in the chemistry class as I struggled to understand what was being taught.⁴¹

My response to these feelings of confusion was to propose a WAC tool and activity (peer editing guidelines and activity) which built upon the professor's existing knowledge and practices. Further, I framed this activity as providing an opportunity for students to take responsibility for working on and improving their writing skills, not as a critique of the professor's pedagogy. That is, I presented the idea that students need to revise their work in order to present a quality piece of writing and that they should do this using the information that the professor had already presented, (i.e., the guidelines were a systematic [re]presentation of the professor's previous class discussion).

Sarah also seemed to identify with students in her work with the philosophy class (see Chapter 3). In her report, she noted that students experienced "confusion," "major concerns," lack of motivation, "frustration," and feelings of failure. However, Sarah seemed to use this information as evidence of the philosophy professor's bad pedagogy and positioned students as victims who were passive recipients of this bad pedagogy. She thus places the responsibility for student failure in the professor's hands and indicates that he needs to change. In contrast, I frame my suggestion in a way that places responsibility on students (i.e., they need to revise their papers in accordance with what their professor has

⁴¹ This identification process can also be understood in the context of my experience of being a confused novice in the initial WAC training workshops.

taught them) although the end result is both a change in students' writing practices *and* a change in the professor's pedagogical practices.

Finally, there was another possibility for identification in terms of the relationship between the English Department and disciplines which came to light during one of the WAC projects. This project involved working with a group of first-year students who were participating in blocked courses. That is, the same group of approximately 30 students were enrolled in the same 3 classes including philosophy, history, and English composition. In addition, a number of these students were enrolled in an ESL course. Because the students were all enrolled in the same philosophy class, the ESL instructor worked closely with the professor of this class and adapted her course to address the issues and concerns that students had regarding the content of the philosophy class. Thus, the ESL professor often changed what she had planned for a particular class if students arrived in her class with questions about the philosophy class material or assignments. She thus became more of a tutor than an instructor with her own course material and course plan. The WAC Coordinator was the instructor for the English composition course in this blocked course section and reported, "I will not be a service course for [the philosophy professor's] class like [the ESL class] is." Thus, the WAC Coordinator dis-identified with this role and felt that English composition was a discipline in itself and was not meant only to provide students with the writing skills they needed to write in the "other" disciplines. Having had this experience, however, the WAC Coordinator did not identify with discipline-specific faculty. That is, he did not take into account that discipline-specific faculty might object to what they perceived as an undermining of the integrity of their discipline as well as their authority in their classrooms by being asked to take on the role of teaching writing.

Negotiating Roles, Participation, and Practices. In certain cases, conflicting desires had to be negotiated and resolved. For example, WFs had taken on a large role in carrying out writing activities in the classroom. It was the intention of the WFs to model these writing instruction activities for professors. In this way, WFs reasoned, professors would feel more confident in carrying out these unfamiliar activities themselves in the semesters and years following the departure of WFs from their classrooms and the Central College campus.

However, this practice of implementing WAC activities in the classroom straddled a fine line: WFs could be conceptualized as fulfilling the role of a WAC resource who was communicating knowledge and practices to professors (i.e., modeling practices for faculty to learn from), or they could be perceived in the role of Teaching Assistant, taking the place of the professor in teaching the writing portion of his or her course. The latter role was strictly prohibited by WFs' contract and did nothing to accomplish the goals of the program (i.e., *sustained* pedagogical change after the departure of the WFs). Thus, during the semester, WFs made attempts to gradually transfer the role of carrying out writing activities to the professors. This was done in a number of ways.

For example, during classroom presentations, when students asked questions that in any way focused on the discipline-specific content, the WF admitted his or her limited knowledge and requested the assistance of the professor in answering the question. Thus, in fact, rather than having WFs act as models and professors as observers, WFs and professors became "co-presenters" and co-constructors of the writing activity. In addition, once an activity had been carried out a number of times in the classroom, WFs requested that the professor take the lead in presenting the activity, asking if he or she felt "comfortable" carrying out the presentation in the WF's place. Even in this instance, however, the WF was

in the classroom during the presentation in the event that the professor wanted or needed assistance in carrying out the writing activity.

In other cases, faculty members suggested that WFs carry out the writing activity on a date when they would not be in the classroom. This served the need of the faculty member to have a "Teaching Assistant" fill in for him when he was unavailable, but it did not further the goals of the WAC program to model writing pedagogy for the professor so that he could continue the practices in the future. In one case, with a history professor, WFs agreed to carry out the activity without the presence of the professor. However, they informed him that they would be tape recording the activity. This approach was undertaken based on what the WFs knew about the professor's personality: Based on their work with him, they knew that he would not be able to resist listening to the tapes. Thus, they reasoned that the professor would, in fact, be receiving the benefit of WFs' modeling of the writing activity. In another case, with an architecture professor, the WF chose not to carry out the activity at all, reasoning that, if the professor was not present, WAC goals of influencing instructor pedagogical practices were not being met. He simply stated to the professor that he preferred to carry out the activity at another time when the professor was available to attend the class (in essence, he refused the professor's request).

Finally, there was the situation involving three professors from the Chemistry Department. One of the chemistry professors was completely new to the WAC Program, while two of the professors had worked with WFs for two semesters. One of these veteran professors planned to carry out all of the activities in her class without any WF assistance while the other one requested that WFs continue to come to his classroom and carry out the

activities. Not wanting to alienate this professor by flatly refusing, WFs drew up a “semester plan” for working with the two professors who wanted WF support.

This document served to reinforce the WFs’ role as resources or collaborative partners rather than Teaching Assistants. It was circulated to WAC Coordinators as well as to the three chemistry professors and covered three areas that WFs planned to address during the semester: in-class presentations, evaluation of writing activities, and “other” activities.

The following excerpt describes the WF role in in-class presentations:

Writing Fellows plan for Spring 199__:

- In-Class Presentations

Writing Fellows are permitted to give in-class presentations for the purpose of developing materials or as a way of modeling writing activities that instructors will implement in their classes.

After having reviewed the activities on the writing syllabus, we concluded that we should anticipate modeling the following in-class presentations for [Chemistry Lab Course I]:

(Professor Green) [**Veteran** WAC Program participant]

Week 1: Overview of lab report

Week 2: Discussion of Model Introduction

Week 5: Using references and How to write a literature cited section

Week 12: Integrating sections of a lab report

(Professor Franklin) [**New** WAC Program participant]

Week 1: Overview of lab report

Week 2: Discussion of Model Introduction

Week 4: Peer review of Introduction

(Additional support for Methods section, if needed.)

Week 5: Using references and How to write a literature cited section

Week 12: Integrating sections of a lab report

The in-class presentations cited for the veteran WAC Program participant, Professor Green, all involved the implementation of newly developed writing tools and thus qualified as being appropriate “modeling” activities. Professor Franklin’s list is more extensive as he was new to the WAC Program, however, even in his case, WFs defined their role as more limited than with the preceding chemistry professors. That is, instead of carrying out all of the in-class presentations that were similar (e.g., peer editing WAC activity that was repeated for each different section of the lab report), they chose to participate in only the first presentation of these activities (for the Introduction section) and to offer additional support “if needed” for WAC activities repeated for the methods section.

In both cases, the chemistry project WFs defined their roles and their participation by drawing on rules and regulations that were already in place at the start of the pre-defined WAC Program. However, rather than being a hindrance to the emerging program (as some of the other aspects of the pre-defined WAC program were), these rules were used to serve the purposes of the WFs in advancing their goals for the new program.⁴²

Another conflict occurred when one of the chemistry professors, Dr. Harris, asked one of the WFs if he would “provide a student with feedback on her paper.” This WF,

⁴² This type of “negotiation” is similar to the elaboration of the WFs “can and can’t do” list elaborated during the fourth semester of the program (discussed in the following chapter) which was distributed to professors new to the WAC Program and was also a deliberate attempt to define WF roles as resources and collaborative partners rather than as tutors or Teaching Assistants.

Charles, was a WF who was also a chemistry doctoral student and had previously taught the same chemistry lab course as Dr. Harris. Thus, he had experience in grading lab reports and could not “plead ignorance” or inability to do so. The conflict regarding Dr. Harris’ request was partly related to the fact that it breached contract rules (that WFs were prohibited from grading papers). However, Dr. Harris was only requesting that Charles provide feedback on *one* student’s paper—hardly an unreasonable request—thus, it was difficult, if not impossible, to refuse.

Nonetheless, Charles did feel uncomfortable in this role, not because of the contract stipulation (which was barely breached by this request to grade one paper) but by the fact that this practice did not advance the goals of the WAC Program. Charles consulted with his fellow chemistry project WF (myself), and they asked themselves the question, What will the professor gain in terms of improved writing instruction if a WF grades the student’s paper? They came to the conclusion that this activity could be transformed to serve the purposes of the WAC Program. That is, Charles would provide feedback on the paper in a way that best represented WAC knowledge of constructive and useful response to student writing and would use this activity as a “model” for the professor to learn from. Thus, rather than violating WAC Program practices, the WF transformed the professor’s grading request into a practice which further promoted the WAC goal of the Faculty Resource Model (fully described in the following chapter): Improved writing pedagogy through supporting and developing faculty instructional practices.⁴³

⁴³ Though the connection may not appear evident, response to student writing is envisioned in WAC approaches as an *instructional* practice. That is, in contrast to certain types of grading practices which serve to point out errors but offer no suggestion, guidance or

Building on and Transforming Existing Knowledge and Practices. As discussed in Chapter 4, WFs and faculty in the chemistry project proceeded in their activities by building on existing practices which either pre-dated WAC or which were a result of the implementation of WAC tools in the classroom. The chemistry project was carried out within the general framework of making the implicit underlying structures and expectations of writing in chemistry explicit for students so that they could learn to write in a manner consistent with the conventions of the scientific community.

One of the activities carried out by WFs was to produce a report which outlined a developmental sequence of writing skills and activities which spanned the five course chemistry “Core” curriculum (i.e., a sequence of courses that must be taken by all chemistry majors). This report was framed with the same goal in mind as stated above—making explicit the implicit rules and writing norms of the scientific community. However, this approach (making the implicit explicit) represents just one of a number of possible approaches to the teaching of writing in chemistry.

As mentioned above, one of the WFs, Charles, was a doctoral student in chemistry and had taught the chemistry lab course for seven semesters. As part of the course, he carried out an optional weekly discussion group in which he and his students would read a current, progressive (and usually controversial) book by a scientist. This type of activity was in direct contrast to the activities that took place in the classroom: learning that involved the replication of procedures and experiments and rediscovery of well-documented knowledge (e.g., photosynthesis). Charles’ purpose in carrying out this out-of-class activity was to

direction for improvement, other kinds of feedback will allow students to learn from and go beyond their mistakes or limitations to further develop their writing skills.

stimulate creative thinking in his students which surpassed the traditional, accepted knowledge, assumptions, and practices of chemistry (and of science in general).

After having read the WAC report on sequencing writing assignments written by WFs, Charles asked his fellow chemistry project WF (myself) if he could write an addendum to the report. Charles wanted to propose an upper level course component that consisted of the discussion group activity he had carried out in the past that he would modify to include writing activities. For example, each week students would respond in writing to different questions, and, at the end of the semester, based on this writing, they could write a paper for extra credit discussing some of the ideas that were brought up in the discussion group. In addition, during the following semester, Charles worked with a chemistry professor in an introductory level course to develop a series of writing-to-learn activities for his course (for example, freewrites and journal writing exercises used to explore and make sense of scientific concepts from a “personal experience” perspective rather than from a top-down, conventional, scientific perspective). Thus, rather than attempting to communicate established scientific community norms, Charles created writing activities which addressed creative scientific inquiry and conceptual understanding, thus extending and transforming the goals, practices, and knowledge for the chemistry project.

This approach is also a departure and transformation of the original conceptualization of the purpose of the WAC Program as outlined by the University resolution.⁴⁴ The

⁴⁴ This example also represents a transformation in roles between me, a veteran WF, and a new WF. Charles admitted that he arrived at work each day and asked me, “So, what are we doing today?,” thus relying on my knowledge and placing me in a position of authority and power (though I had no official authority). Charles’ expertise in this different approach to writing pedagogy which focused on creativity rather than conformity placed him in a position of authority based on his knowledge. I was unfamiliar with the kind of work he was proposing, which transformed my role to that of novice. Following this event, Charles

underlying, ultimate purpose of the resolution was to implement a WAC program which would ensure students' success in the workplace and in graduate and professional schools. Teaching students to conform to standards and conventions of the scientific community aligns with this goal. In contrast, while teaching unconventional, nontraditional approaches to science is worthwhile and has its place, it is not a practice that will advance school or career success in the majority, mainstream scientific community.

In addition, discipline-specific faculty were active in transforming the knowledge, tools, and practices that were initially developed through interaction with WFs. This was an important goal of the WAC Program as Carey describes below:

One of the problems that we encountered as graduate students working on a WAC initiative was the discontinuity that our eventual departure from the program (at the end of a two-year fellowship) might cause. It was especially important, given this obstacle, that our faculty members ultimately be able to implement the tools that we gave them without our presence in the classroom and on campus.

While WFs recognized the importance of faculty independence, control, and agency in the WAC Program, they also had mixed feelings about releasing their ownership and control of WAC knowledge, tools, and practices. These conflicted feelings are evident in the continuation of Carey's narrative:

The most difficult aspect of our work with faculty, for me, was letting go of the materials that we created, with the knowledge that faculty would change them and deliver them in ways that we could not oversee. But this freedom - again created largely by our impermanence - was probably the most important aspect of the

became more independent in his work and began to develop other ideas on his own rather

program. In the music class, this became apparent on the day that we came to class to facilitate the exercise. Prior to the day that we were to visit his classroom, we gave the instructor a copy of the activity including a minute-by-minute plan for carrying it out as well as directions for facilitating student groups.

On the day of the activity, we met the professor before class and discovered that he had piloted a more advanced version of the exercise himself with an upper-division class earlier that morning. We experienced mixed feelings at first. There was a sense of loss—that we had created something, and he had stolen it—and a sense of worry that maybe he had used what we created poorly. We also had feelings of superiority about our expertise, just as faculty had strong feelings about their knowledge and teaching experience. The “theft” of our exercise allowed us to experience the difficulty of relinquishing control.

Once we got past these initial power-centered fears, however, we understood that the professor had been a good instructor long before we arrived, and his reinvestment in changing his classroom practice was exactly the result we wanted. Our job was not to tell instructors how to teach, and to control every aspect of the teaching activities, but to start processes that faculty could work on independently and evolve on their own.

These statements illustrate the tension that WFs felt between control and freedom regarding their relationships with discipline-specific faculty and the tools and teaching practices that they developed. Nonetheless, WFs had no choice but to release control. As Carey mentions above, without notifying or consulting with WFs, the music professor with whom the WFs

than relying on me for guidance and direction of his activities.

worked transformed the WAC tool and activity that the WFs had developed and had carried it out in a different context than originally intended by the WFs (with a more advanced class). Other professors also took control over WAC tools and practices and transformed them to meet their needs. Pat describes another instance of transformation by faculty:

In subsequent semesters we were happily surprised by an even more blatant case of “thievery” by a sociology faculty member. In her class, students were assigned a large research paper based primarily on journal entries recorded during a summer internship in which each student participated. During the semester before the internship, we worked with the professor to design two workshops to help students assemble their journals, including introducing them to a web-based software that would enable them to write responses to each other. During this process, we had a number of conversations with the professor about how this initial step would provide the students with more material for their papers. We also discussed sequencing, drafting and feedback methods.

When we returned in the fall and attended the first session of her course, we were surprised to discover that she had completely changed the structure of assignments and classroom work for the course. Instead of the one-deadline, all-or-nothing research paper class she usually designed, she had built in steps with smaller pieces, including exercises on developing a research question, evaluating sources, and critiquing drafts. We had provided her with elements of writing pedagogy that she built on and re-fashioned to suit her needs; she did not simply take our ideas into her classroom, and did not settle on having an add-on, (outside-of-class) workshop; she transformed the ideas and activities we had suggested to fit new concepts and goals

that she developed herself on the basis of our work together. Although the steps were not exactly as we might have designed them, we accepted the fact that we had achieved our goal. It was up to her to “re-envision” the course.

Finally, a history professor (with whom an English Department WF and I worked) began the program with the idea that she needed help in addressing the grammar difficulties of her students (in particular, her ESL students). After participating in the WAC Program for one semester, she outlined a plan to integrate WAC in her classroom in a variety of ways including the use of written guidelines, a writing syllabus, a summary of common writing mistakes, an evaluation form for written work (based on written guidelines), and a pattern error chart (used for students to correct their grammar and track their progress). These WAC tools and activities emerged out of both WF knowledge and practices as well knowledge, practices, and needs of the professor. In addition, the history professor developed two ideas on her own (though these emerged as a result of her participation in WAC practices). These two ideas were presented to me during my final meeting with the history professor and were outlined in my summary report to the WAC Administrator and WAC Coordinators:

Written statement of expectations—[Susan] will provide students with a written statement of what she expects in terms of [student] writing.

Writing guidelines— [Susan] has determined a clear writing goal for her students for this class: to have them be able to write a clear and well-supported argument which follows the guidelines that were elaborated for the class.

These ideas represent a transformation in the history professor’s conceptualization of teaching writing in her classroom. She decided to more clearly define her teaching approach by limiting her efforts to focus on a single, manageable goal—to have students “write a clear

and well-supported argument” and decided that writing development should become an explicit part of her teaching (by providing students with a written statement of expectations regarding their writing in the course). By connecting her writing instruction (including her choice of writing assignments) under a single, coherent theme (learning to write a coherent, well-supported argument), the professor departs from her “piecemeal” approach to writing instruction which consisted primarily of making grammar edits on a series of students’ homework assignments which were connected to the course content but were not connected to an overall goal for writing development.

Finally, the history professor exercised her control in the implementation of WAC tools and activities in her classroom by rejecting the idea of using model student texts in her writing instruction. She explained to me that she had two sisters and grew up always hearing “you should be more like this one or you should be more like that one” and did not like the idea of comparing students to one another. I clarified with the professor that the texts to be used as models *should not* be texts written by students in the classroom, thus there would be no direct comparison of any students in the class. However, I was not sure if I had convinced the history professor and wrote the following in my summary report of proposed activities for the history class:

Model texts—Susan may do class presentations of model texts. I told her that a WF could do the first presentation to model the process for her. (She seemed to like this idea.) Also, there may have been a misunderstanding about which models to use. I think that the message did not get across that, if student models are used, these should not be texts from students currently in the class. Susan doesn’t like the idea of using student texts. She doesn’t like the idea of comparing students and saying, “You

should be more like that one.” Maybe, *maybe* she would not feel this way if she were to use models from students from a different class. Then again, she may have understood perfectly and simply may not want to use student-written texts at all. This is up to her.

Thus, based on her personal experience, the history professor did not like the idea of using model student texts in her writing instruction. In my report, I affirm her right to choose not to do this (although I felt it would be useful for students) by stating to WAC Administrators, “...she...may not want to use student-written texts at all. This is up to her.”

Faculty also contributed to changing the knowledge and practices of WFs by defining the boundaries of WAC participation in their classrooms based on their needs and constraints and by integrating their discipline-specific knowledge into WFs’ WAC knowledge. Carey describes one of these instances below in her work with a music professor:

The first challenge for us in designing the exercise was to understand the kinds of sources that are appropriate in an introductory music class. For instance, while we had intended to include some encyclopedias as examples of sources that are too simplistic for college-level work, we learned from the instructor that the Grove Encyclopedia of Music was a valuable source and an important starting point for students. Another major challenge for us as we worked on the in class exercise was to “cover” material that in our composition classes would have taken days or weeks in 45 minutes.

Thus, WFs had to transform their knowledge regarding appropriate versus simplistic texts for college-level students based on the music professor’s knowledge and expertise. In addition, WFs had to transform their practices and find a way to present complex material within the

professor's time constraints (45 minutes) rather than rely on the practices they were familiar with (from their composition experience) which would be too time-consuming for the music professor.

In another instance, a chemistry professor told me that he had distributed the peer editing guidelines sheets for the lab report sections to his upper-level class for them to use as a guide in writing their lab report. Based on what I had learned in my WAC training, I became alarmed and told the professor that it was not really useful to just "hand out" such information but that it should be embedded in a classroom activity so that students could make sense of it. The chemistry professor replied that, in fact, his students reported to him afterwards that the peer editing guidelines sheets had been very useful in helping them to write their lab reports. This experience made me rethink my ideas regarding WAC tools and practices. I placed my ideas into a broader conceptualization of how WAC tools might be usefully used in different ways by students with varying levels of knowledge and experience. This experience also made me feel that I should begin to question some of the knowledge that I had received from WAC trainers and English Composition WFs.⁴⁵

Creating New Structures and Practices. At the beginning of the program, in the absence of a functioning WAC plan and clearly defined roles, activities, and practices, WFs began to implement practices in order to create a structure to the newly-formed WAC Program. Because they had no authority to begin working with faculty but instead had to

⁴⁵ In particular, I thought back to a conversation with an English composition WF regarding the difficulty level of WAC materials to be used for introductory level students. The English composition WF had insisted that it was crucial to use materials with a low level of difficulty for introductory students while I felt that it was important to use materials that more closely resembled the actual readings that students would encounter in the "real world" rather than watered-down versions of these materials. In the end, I had deferred to the English WF's experience in teaching English composition.

wait for contacts to be made, WFs worried that the semester would go by and they would not have accomplished anything. Thus, they suggested that they compile a “reference library” of WAC articles for discipline-specific faculty to consult. WFs would search the literature, find relevant articles, and write a summary for each article to make it easier for faculty to locate articles of interest. Thus, the first tangible activity that was carried out by WFs was one that was suggested and defined by the WFs themselves.

Other practices grew out of this process as well. As WFs began the process of compiling literature for the reference library, they located a number of books that they wanted to include but had no funds to buy these books. They decided that the best way to obtain these books would be for the WAC Coordinator (in his role as university professor with access to university letterhead) to request desk copies from the publishers. They also found themselves in need of resources such as copiers, printers, computers, paper, paper clips, etc. Because of their lack of authority and their status as part-time employees at Central College, they did not have access to much of what they needed. In addition, they were faced with working with a busy WAC Coordinator who did not follow through on requests that were made.

Thus, WFs developed the practice of composing weekly progress reports in which they described their project progress, their difficulties and needs, and the action that needed to take place in order to overcome difficulties (for example, “Action needed: WAC Coordinator to contact the Dean to request access to a copy machine so that WFs can photocopy articles for the reference library;” Action needed: WFs awaiting WAC Coordinator’s contacting the chair of the Engineering School so that they can begin working with engineering professors;” etc).

In this way, WFs were able to document all of their activities as well as the barriers to completion of their activities. If need be, they could produce copies of these reports to WAC administration if there was any question regarding why a goal was not met. WFs could demonstrate that they made official requests for assistance, and that these requests were ignored. Thus, the progress report became a means of creating a system of accountability for WAC Coordinators and for getting their requests addressed. It also provided documentation of all WF activities, whether or not they resulted in a concrete, measurable accomplishment (e.g., time spent and preparations made by WFs to carry out a plan to conduct and summarize faculty interviews which was ultimately abandoned).

In following semesters, once projects were underway and WFs were working more or less independently, the progress report format was changed. Rather than having columns entitled "progress made," "next steps," and "action needed," the progress report was organized in sections with heading representing the different WAC projects (e.g., chemistry, sociology, etc.). Thus, each week, WFs listed all of their project activities and accomplishments and outlined their upcoming plans for the project. However, because multiple WFs worked on each project, the accomplishments and activities listed could have been carried out by one or more WFs; they did not specify which WF performed which activity. Thus, once it became apparent to the WFs that one of the other WFs was not doing any work, they decided to begin the practice of placing their initials next to each activity and accomplishment (e.g., under the chemistry heading they would write, "developed a peer review sheet for the methods section [M.R.. and C.P.]" to demonstrate that Michaela Rome and Charles Price were the only WFs who worked on this activity). If, in any one week, a WFs initials did not appear, or appeared only minimally, on the progress report (which was

submitted to WAC Coordinators and WAC administrators), this signaled that the WF was not completing his or her required 15 hours of work for the week. In this way, the weekly progress report became a tool of accountability for WFs.

Finally, towards the end of the third semester, WFs were spending the majority of their time working on the WAC handbook. Thus, rather than spend their limited time on preparing weekly progress reports which, in any case, would include only one activity (“worked on preparing the WAC handbook”), they suspended this activity. Following this semester, WFs did not resume the practice of completing weekly progress reports. This decision was made based on several reasons: (1) By this time, there were a number of projects already underway for which work was being done and concrete goals were being met (e.g., development and implementation of writing tools), so WFs did not feel they needed to document these activities, (2) a formal system for application and participation had been developed so that WFs did not have to rely on WAC administration to contact professors to secure their participation, (3) WFs were working more or less independently with faculty and did not require much assistance from WAC Coordinators, and (4) the WF who was not completing any work withdrew from the program. Thus, there was no longer a need for weekly progress reports, and the practice was abandoned completely.

At the beginning of the WAC Program, WFs also established a structure for their work with each other and with faculty. They made the suggestion and request that at least two WFs be assigned to each project so that they could work collaboratively. Further reinforcing this collaborative predisposition, WFs decided that it would be a good idea for

them to all work on the same days and established an “official”⁴⁶ work schedule for themselves: Mondays and Wednesdays from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

WFs also established their own meeting schedule which “sandwiched” the official WAC administration meetings scheduled to take place once a week. That is, WFs met during the hour *before* official WAC administration meetings in order to “plan their strategy” (e.g., to discuss how they would try to lead the agenda towards issues they wanted to discuss or away from issues they did not want to discuss; to come to a common understanding and agree on a decision on how to address certain issues so that they could present a united front and thus have more power in the decision-making process, etc.).⁴⁷ WFs also met *after* the 1 ½ to 2 hour WAC administration meeting to “debrief.” During this debriefing meeting, they decided how to interpret, ignore, transform, or carry out decisions made during the WAC administration meeting.

Thus, WFs developed the practice of a collaborative approach both in their work with developing tools and activities for projects as well as in their interactions with WAC administration. This practice gave them a much stronger voice and more power and authority in the planning and implementation of the WAC Program than they would have had

⁴⁶ WFs were required to work 15 hours per week, however, Central College WAC Coordinators and administrators did not propose any requirements regarding WFs daily work schedule. On other campuses, WAC Coordinators decided that they wanted to have at least one WF on campus every day of the week and imposed this schedule. Other WAC Coordinators allowed WFs to work from home if they chose to do so and if the activity lent itself to such a practice (for example, constructing a WAC tool or writing a WAC report could be done at home rather than on campus). In these cases, WFs worked on campus only when carrying out WAC classroom activities and attending meetings.

⁴⁷ WFs pre-planned strategies were not always successful, but they do represent an attempt on the part of the WFs to reconstruct and re-define the WAC-constructed environment and shape their own development and outcomes.

if they had worked separately. In addition, WFs' practices set firm, if unwritten, rules and norms for WF conduct.

The WF who did not conform to these norms (by missing meetings, not keeping up with the knowledge and activities that had emerged,⁴⁸ not working the Monday/Wednesday schedule, not completing work that the other WFs counted on him doing) was excluded from WF activities and decisions. This WF was transferred from project to project as, one-by-one, other WFs refused to work with him. They felt he was unreliable and uncommitted, and collaborating on a project with him usually meant doing extra tasks, often last-minute, to make up for work he had promised to do for a professor but did not actually complete. Unable to conform to the norms established in this program, this WF ultimately resigned from his position.

Another WF who joined the program after these norms had been established admitted that he "had to change his work ethic" to keep up with the standards, norms, and practices defined by the other WFs. However, he also blurred the boundaries of these norms and practices in that he chose not to work in the WF office with all of the other WFs. He already had an office at another location on Central College and decided to continue working there. In addition, he continued to follow the same schedule he had before becoming a WF, working late morning to late evening hours rather than 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. as the other WFs did. Because WFs had no real authority in enforcing these practices, and because this WF was

⁴⁸ During the third semester of the program, while all of the other WFs were working on developing tools and implementing classroom activities, this WF was still doing library research and getting background information on "why writing is important in the disciplines." This is a topic that WFs addressed in their initial university-wide training in the on-campus training during the second semester of the program.

reliable, they accepted and adapted to this “deviation” in established rules and norms. Thus, in this case, there was transformation of accepted practices on both sides.

Another practice that emerged which developed and reinforced the norms of the WAC Program was related to the training of new WFs. Initial training at the college began during the second semester of the program.⁴⁹ WFs met with the WAC Coordinator once a week for two hours of training. This training was run as a seminar-type course for which WFs were assigned readings related to WAC and discussed them in “class” with the WAC Coordinator. Because there were only two new WFs who joined the program after the second semester training took place, (one in the third semester and one in the fourth semester), it was not practical to continue with this type of training practice. Thus, the new WFs were given a number of articles to read on their own.

However, the important difference is that, among these WAC articles were reports and other documents *written by WFs*. When the newest WF joined the program, she had difficulty understanding the program, its practices, and her role. The other new WF, who had joined the semester before her, recommended that she should focus on the WF reports rather than the outside articles because that is how he learned the most about how to participate in the WAC Program. He said that, throughout his first semester as a WF, he continually went back to these reports to consult them when he was confused about what he should be doing, about the concepts that were being discussed, or about the activities that were being carried out. Thus, the main source of knowledge became the internal WAC documents written by WFs rather than external articles written by “WAC experts” in the field. By using their own reports as training documents, WFs further reinforced the knowledge, norms, practices,

values, and beliefs of the learning environment that they had (re)constructed through their activities.

Students also made attempts to shape and determine their own development. For example, in the chemistry course, students were required to submit a final report which incorporated all that they had learned throughout the semester and incorporated all report sections. Although in-class peer editing activities had been scheduled for each of the previous writing assignments (i.e., each separate section of the lab report), there was no in-class peer editing activity scheduled for the final report. However, the students insisted on doing this in-class writing activity for that final report as well, so the professor reorganized some of the other activities he had planned in order to accommodate this request.

Students also contributed to the emergence of tools and activities indirectly. That is, through professors' observations of student performance, new ideas for tools and activities emerged. At least two practices emerged from a professor's grading of student papers. First, one of the chemistry professors noted that, at the end of the semester when students had to write an entire lab report (including all sections) the sections seemed to be "disconnected." He thus suggested that the WFs prepare an in-class presentation of which would address the integration of the various report sections that were taught separately. I, one of the chemistry project WFs, took this idea a step further and combined the discussion of the integration of the various sections of the lab report with the dominant classroom practice—carrying out experiments, i.e., the scientific method. This presentation linked the classroom activities to the writing of the lab report and helped students to see that the sections of the lab report were not arbitrary but had a specific purpose and meaning that were connected to the experimental

⁴⁹ Initial *off-campus* training took place before the first semester of the program began.

practices of science. Second, this professor noticed that many students were making common mistakes in their writing of the lab report sections. This led him to institute the practice of summarizing common mistakes and discussing them with the class as a group in order to provide enhanced clarification for students (in addition to simply marking and correcting these errors on individual student papers).⁵⁰

Students also contributed to the emergence of practices in another way. Students from the chemistry lab course went to the WF Office to seek out the help of WFs. They requested that WFs review and provide feedback on their draft lab report sections. Because this was not their role, (and they did not want to expand their role to include this practice), WFs chose not to participate in the program in this capacity. However, based on the students' needs and requests, they made arrangements with the Writing Center to hire two chemistry tutors who specifically had experience with the chemistry lab course and the type of writing that was required for the course.

Other student requests could not be accommodated by providing additional resources or activities. Instead, WFs attempted to transform students' conceptualizations to align with program goals and activities. For example, when students were asked if they found the peer review activity useful, several students complained. One of the chemistry project WFs made notes of this experience and shared it with the other WFs, WAC Coordinators, and chemistry faculty:

One student noted that he did not enjoy the experience because of the criticism which he felt was too harsh. (Another student mentioned that he lost points

Formal *on-campus* follow-up training did not begin until the second semester of the program.
⁵⁰ This practice, learned through WFs' work with this chemistry professor, was later suggested by WFs to the history professor who adopted this practice in her classroom.

for line spacing.) He noted that the criticisms left him quite frustrated and not wanting to write again or to expose his work to others. I probed a little deeper into the nature of the criticisms and whether he did in fact benefit from the comments. We finally agreed that, while the criticisms were ego-deflating, they did in fact lead to improvement in his paper and a better understanding of what was expected of him. The students admitted in the end that good writing can be a painful process out of which could come some good.

This comment illustrates the importance of not abandoning new techniques on the grounds that the students did not enjoy whatever it was that was tried. In the end, students were willing to admit that, even though they did not enjoy the activity, ultimately they profited from the experience.

Thus, in this case, rather than eliminate the peer review activity, the WF built on the students' concerns and used this opportunity to push students' writing development even further. That is, through participating in the peer review activity, students constructed (and likely re-constructed) their concept of writing. They realized that writing is a *process*, it can be difficult and painful, and it demands work and revision in order for a quality product to be produced. Thus, knowledge regarding the concept of writing was developed as a result of students' attempt to reconstruct their learning environment (i.e., objecting to and perhaps hoping to eliminate the peer review process). This discussion of writing as a process was not a pre-planned outcome of the peer review writing activity but *emerged* from participants interactions in the activity.

In addition, new practices emerged as a result of this previously described experience. WFs learned that they needed to address not only students' writing skills but also their

concept of writing. First, in subsequent chemistry classes, the initial peer review activity was prefaced with an introductory commentary which provided students with the rationale behind the peer review activity (i.e., why it was important and how they could benefit from it). It was pointed out to students that writing was a process and that it demanded effort and revision.

Second, in the architecture project, an initial in-class presentation was developed specifically to address the importance of good writing skills in architecture. This seemed acutely important in architecture since the connection between designing buildings and good writing skills did not seem particularly evident. Given this lack of connection between writing and architecture, WFs concluded that there would also be a lack of effort and desire on the part of students to improve their writing. In fact, the architecture professor indicated to WFs that students were not focused on working on improving their writing. Students were more likely to focus their efforts on other areas (such as math and drawing) which they perceived to be much more relevant to their success as architects.

Thus, the purpose of the presentation was to emphasize the importance of writing in their field and why they should devote time and effort to improving their writing skills. As part of this in-class presentation, the WF brought in a stack of approximately 10 rough drafts of a paper that he had written in order to demonstrate the amount of work that was involved in producing a quality piece of writing and to reinforce the concept that writing is a *process* that requires effort and revision.

Thus, the transformation of the program and emergence of outcomes was the result of complex interactions of program participants—WAC Administrator and Coordinators, WFs, discipline-specific faculty, and students. All of these participants worked together (though

not without difficulty) to negotiate the roles and practices that developed in the WAC Program. Program participants did not simply act within the bounds of the institutional constraints to develop pre-defined outcomes using pre-defined roles, practices, and tools but actively participated to change some of these constraints thus characterizing program development as emergent and emerging rather than following a predictable path.

Chapter 6 Institutional Transformation: WAC Program Reconceptualized

In Chapter 4, I described the crucial role of tools and activity in the emergent development of knowledge and practices in the discipline-specific classroom. Then, in Chapter 5, I described emergent development in larger context of the WAC Program. In the current chapter, I will present data that illustrate this global transformation in WAC knowledge and practices as resulting in the reconceptualization and institutionalization of a *transformed* WAC Program (see Figure 4 in Appendix). The program that resulted from participant activities was not an outcome that could have been predicted based on the initial program conceptualization (as defined by the University and implemented by the WAC Coordinators). Rather, after 3 semesters, a transformed, re-defined WAC Program *emerged* as a result of participants' activity and their transformed knowledge and conceptualizations regarding WAC, the WAC program, and the roles of participants.

The knowledge and practices that Writing Fellows and WAC Coordinators had developed over this time culminated in a 36-page booklet which they entitled: *Innovative Teaching at Central College: A Writing Across the Disciplines Handbook for Central College Faculty*. In addition, a formal structure and process for participation in the program was developed and communicated to faculty and included a description of rules, requirements, activities, and participant roles. The content and processes involved in developing these formalized representations of WAC Program knowledge and practices are described in the sections that follow.

The Central College WAC Handbook

The WAC Administrator requested that WAC Coordinators ask the WFs compile a booklet describing the various writing and pedagogical tools developed in the WAC Program. He

wanted to use the handbook as a means of providing faculty with information on WAC techniques as well as a recruitment tool for faculty to join the WAC Program. Additionally, this handbook would serve as an easily demonstrable achievement of the WAC Program for University WAC Administrators. WFs and WAC Coordinators discussed the proposed content and structure of the booklet and agreed that it would reflect their transformed approach to working with faculty which they named the Faculty Resource Model. WFs developed a collaborative structure of activities to complete the booklet in which different sections and activities were assigned to various WFs and WAC Coordinators. The handbook represents a compilation of the transformed knowledge and practices developed through WAC participants' program activities. It is comprised of several sections including an introduction to the WAC Program, descriptions of various WAC techniques as they were implemented in the disciplines, and "case studies" of WAC projects.

Introduction to Writing at Central College and the Faculty Resource Model

The introduction to the handbook begins by discussing the history of the program: The passing of the Board of Trustees' resolution, the proposal to implement WAC Programs at all Northeast University college campuses, and the use of Writing Fellows in the implementation of these programs. This introduction then goes on to explain the background for the development of the handbook:

[This handbook] is the result of *a collaboration* between the Fellows, the Coordinator for WAC, and a range of faculty and administrators from across the disciplines. In this handbook, we—the WAC Coordinator and the Fellows—have *documented what we have learned* from working with faculty to *enhance* the amount, variety, and complexity of writing used in particular disciplines [italics added].

The WAC representatives (WFs and the WAC Coordinator) point out that this is not an English Department handbook representing knowledge from “outside” of the disciplines; it is a cross-disciplinary handbook based on “a collaboration” with discipline-specific faculty. Further, it is not presented as knowledge that WAC representatives want to transmit to or impose on faculty. Rather, it is framed as a document that records transformed WAC knowledge (“what we have learned”) that was co-constructed with discipline-specific faculty. They further frame their work with faculty as an *enhancement* of writing in the disciplines, not a conversion of faculty knowledge or practices.

The handbook then describes the emergence of the transformed conceptualization of the WAC Program which the authors term the “Faculty Resource Model”:

Over the course of two years, through trial and error, and after thorough study of nationwide WAC and WID programs, we have developed what we call a Faculty Resource Model for writing activities at [Central College].

This statement recalls the many failures of the initial WAC approach (“trial and error”). At the same time, it balances these admitted failures with an underlying expertise on the part of the WAC representatives which is based in “thorough study” of similar programs across the country. In this way, WAC representatives maintain a certain degree of authority and power regarding the type of knowledge and practices they are presenting.

The authors then describe what they learned and how it fits into the context of (yet transcends) other WAC models:

Often, Writing Across the Disciplines programs are centered around a series of faculty development workshops where faculty learn about principles of writing instruction derived from composition research, while also sharing their own practices

and concerns. We do not reject this model, but we have found that writing instruction is so integral to learning a specific content that the best work resulted when we collaborated with faculty in their classrooms.

These statements reflect a transformation in the Training/Workshop conceptualization of the implementation of WAC. The new Faculty Resource conceptualization represents a recognition that the “best” way to implement WAC is (1) to tailor it to the discipline (because “writing instruction is so integral to...specific content”) and (2) to link it to classroom activity (“collaborat[ion] with faculty *in their classrooms*”) rather than try to develop a program through general, theoretical discussion with faculty (i.e., through workshop discussions). Thus, if not completely rejected, a one-size-fits-all, generic approach to WAC Program implementation is at least recognized as limited and less desirable than the Faculty Resource approach.

The authors continue to describe what they have learned and how they envision their transformed role:

We have also learned that faculty in the disciplines already possess a great deal of knowledge about writing in their fields and that our most powerful role is to help them articulate, refine, or further develop what they are already doing or wish to do more extensively.

This statement represents a transformation in the WAC Program’s conceptualization of faculty. That is, faculty are no longer viewed as novices in their own fields but are recognized as *experts* “possess[ing] a great deal of knowledge.” In addition, the role of WAC is transformed from “missionary” sent to convert the knowledge and practices of ignorant discipline-specific faculty (see Chapter 3). WAC representatives now recognize

their role as a *resource* to faculty, integrating their knowledge and practices into already existing faculty knowledge and classroom practices. Thus, rather than envisioning a WAC plan from the outside and imposing it on faculty, new practices emerged in which proposed WAC tools and activities integrated faculty knowledge and practices and were co-constructed with discipline-specific faculty. This approach can be contrasted with the initial WAC plan (to develop 7 to 8 writing assignments for each discipline-specific course) which was developed in the absence of any knowledge regarding faculty needs or preferences and without considering whether or not this made sense in terms of the existing structure or content of the course.

The authors then describe their varying levels of participation with faculty:

In some cases, we developed materials for one specific task in a classroom (improving the use of sources, for example), while in others, we formed ongoing relationships with faculty over several semesters to re-imagine and redesign the way writing could be used to enhance learning.

This statement represents a shift in power and authority with regard to the WAC Program participants. Initially, the University resolution granted power and authority over the WAC Program activities to WAC Program representatives and positioned discipline-specific faculty as recipients of WAC-defined and determined program proposals. In this new Faculty Resource conceptualization, it is discipline-specific faculty who are given the power and authority to determine the type and degree of their program participation.

In the following section, the authors further describe the underlying approach of the Faculty Resource Model and how it is reflected in the handbook:

In this handbook, we have paired general principles of writing instruction with discipline-specific materials that we created *collaboratively* with faculty in the content areas. In this way we have tried to integrate Writing Across the Curriculum—a set of general principles derived from decades of composition research—into a fruitful dialogue with Writing in the Disciplines, practices derived from particular content areas and classroom settings. For the sake of convenience, we will use the term Writing Across the Disciplines to include both approaches [italics added].

These statements further reinforce the transformation of initial WAC knowledge and approaches by again pointing out that WAC representatives (the handbook authors) worked “collaboratively” with faculty to produce writing tools. Additionally, the authors state explicitly that they have integrated two distinct bodies of knowledge—WAC and WID—to produce a transformed conceptualization of knowledge. They felt that this transformed knowledge was so distinct from original conceptualizations of WAC and WID that it was no longer accurately described by the former terms and needed a new label: Writing Across the Disciplines.⁵¹

The authors next describe the range of disciplines in which they had worked as well as the processes and practices they employed to accomplish their goals:

⁵¹ The decision to use this term grew out of a discussion among WFs and WAC Coordinators. The authors felt uneasy about using conventional terms to describe their approach because the knowledge in the handbook reflected a new approach that could not be appropriately be termed WAC, yet it was not exactly WID either. The WAC Coordinator was hesitant about calling the approach “Writing Across the Disciplines,” wondering if it was “legitimate” to use an invented term rather than the accepted terms, WAC or WID. This tension and hesitation illustrates the difficulty of introducing and instituting transformed, unconventional approaches in circles in which knowledge is already culturally-defined and accepted.

In the Faculty Resource Model, Writing Fellows, the WAC Coordinator, and Writing Center staff have worked with faculty in disciplines such as [chemistry, sociology, art, philosophy, and music] by offering them an *array of resources*. Discipline-specific projects often began with a general meeting in which faculty described their needs, concerns, and objectives with regard to writing in their classrooms. Using this information, Writing Fellows were faced with the task of *integrating* their knowledge into the classroom in a *concrete, meaningful* way. This was accomplished by meeting again with faculty and focusing on a particular assignment or series of assignments, observing classes, and becoming familiar with the content and conventions of writing in the course. Writing Fellows could then develop specific writing activities and tools for the course and revise them in collaboration with faculty and the WAC Coordinator [italics added].

These statements serve to illustrate the range of the disciplines in which WFs worked (ranging from the sciences to the social sciences to the humanities) and that WFs were able to tailor their work to meet the needs of these diverse disciplines by offering them “an array of resources.” Again, this can be contrasted to the one-size-fits-all conversion approach. In addition, the practice of the WFs is described as “*integrating* their knowledge into the classroom,” rather than imposing it on or transmitting it to faculty.

These statements also indicate that this was done in a “concrete, meaningful way.” The term “concrete” can be directly contrasted to the general, theoretical discussion approach of a workshop/training model as well as the laundry list of generic, “free-standing” WAC techniques that I was prepared to propose to the chemistry professor (see Chapter 3). Further, resources or tools offered to faculty were “meaningful” in that they developed

through participation in classroom activities in a way that allowed WFs to connect their WAC knowledge and practices to the professors' existing knowledge and practices.

Finally, the authors sum up their description of the Faculty Resource Model with the following statement:

WAC involves sharing a commitment across the disciplines to improving [Central College] students' writing abilities. *Innovative Teaching at [Central College]: A Writing Across the Disciplines Handbook for [Central College] Faculty* invites readers to consider their roles in light of the work [Central College] faculty have done in translating general principles of writing instruction into their specific courses.

In contrast to initial conceptualizations, the authors frame the writing issue as one which focuses on "improving...students' writing abilities." The authors do not focus on problems in faculty pedagogy which need to be fixed. In addition, these statements communicate to discipline-specific faculty that they do not have to drastically alter their knowledge or practices to use WAC approaches. Rather, it suggests that WAC approaches can be transformed (translat[ed]) to fit the specific content of their disciplines and structure of their courses. Finally, faculty are asked to reconceptualize their role as discipline-specific instructors in the strictest sense and to broaden their roles to focus on the teaching of writing in their courses.

Case Studies: Four Perspectives on Participation

The handbook also includes what the authors termed "case studies." In addition to illustrating the knowledge, tools, and practices developed by WFs and discipline-specific faculty, the authors wanted to give a more in-depth look at the *process of participation* from the perspective of several discipline-specific faculty who participated in the WAC Program.

These faculty were asked to write a brief statement describing their experience in the WAC Program. Because space in the handbook was limited, only three faculty were asked for statements to be included as case studies. WFs chose faculty who they felt would represent a range of disciplines as well as different degrees and types of participation. Thus, the discipline-specific WAC project case studies chosen for the handbook represented science (chemistry), social science (sociology), and the humanities (art). Degrees and types of participation represented in the case studies ranged from full collaboration and integration of WAC across the entire course (in chemistry)⁵² to the development of a writing tool and activity to address a single assignment (in art). Participation of the sociology faculty member fell somewhere in-between. In addition, a fourth professor from the history department submitted an unsolicited account of her experience in the program. She began participating in the program in the final semester of this study and was admitted to the WAC Program through the new application process which is described below.

Chemistry. One of the three chemistry professors with whom the WFs had worked, Dr. Harris, was asked to write a statement of his experience of participating in the WAC Program. His statement begins as follows:

Writing ability is often identified by employers and graduate programs as a trait they value highly and would like to see better developed in students graduating from college. However, in science departments, the importance of developing writing

⁵² Chemistry faculty participation involved two semesters of WF-faculty collaboration during which WFs attended all chemistry classes, met regularly with faculty, carried out weekly in-class writing activities, and developed tools that touched virtually all aspects of writing in the course. In addition, this work was carried out with two chemistry professors who were teaching the same course (see Chapter 4).

skills can often be undervalued in comparison learning the discipline's body of knowledge.

Here, Dr. Harris identifies his perspective on the purpose for trying to bolster students' writing abilities, that is, to ensure their success in future employment and graduate school. This perspective is in line with that stated in the initial Board of Trustees resolution (see Chapter 3). He also acknowledges, however, that he faces the problem of trying to balance writing instruction with the task of fully preparing students in the "body of knowledge" of his field (the "coverage" issue). Thus, despite having to face this issue, Dr. Harris did not reject the idea of increasing his focus on writing and on devoting time to developing students' writing abilities in addition to covering chemistry material.

Acknowledging the importance of writing ability, the [Chemistry] Department has for many years had one course in particular where practicing writing is a major component. A few years ago, however, we began to question whether this course, [Chemistry Lab I], was doing an adequate job of developing writing skills. For this and other reasons, we began revising it, along with the rest of the [Chemistry] Core Curriculum.

Thus, the Chemistry Department had already recognized the importance of teaching writing and had begun a process of transforming their knowledge and practices in the instruction of their discipline. They also recognized that they needed assistance in doing so:

We realized we needed help evaluating and improving the writing components of our courses, and the [Central College] Writing Fellows program provided us with the *resources* and *expertise* we needed.... We are, after all, trained as scientists, not writing instructors, and we are not as aware as those in the field of writing pedagogy

about which practices are considered to be most effective. The Writing Fellows served as *active links* between us and that body of expertise [italics added].

This statement illustrates that discipline-specific faculty did not possess all of the knowledge that they needed to accomplish their goal of improving students' writing in their discipline. It also reflects this faculty member's perception of the role of the WFs: that they were resources and experts. In addition, it suggests the importance of activity in the development of writing tools and practices: WFs were "active" participants in the professors' classrooms and, through this participation, developed connections ("links") between discipline-specific knowledge and practices and WAC knowledge and practices. WFs did not simply view the discipline from the outside and transmit their untransformed, unconnected WAC knowledge to faculty.⁵³

With the *help* of the Writing Fellows, we have been able to evaluate our writing pedagogy, *totally revise* it using approaches viewed by writing specialists to be most effective, and *test it in the classroom*. We now have a way to develop scientific writing skills in a systematic, progressive way in which students play a more active part, in which assignments and assessments are clearer, and in which instructors have better guidance and support [italics added].

By using the phrase, "With the *help* of the Writing Fellows," Dr. Harris reflects a position of continued power and authority over the process of participation in the WAC Program. In contrast, a less powerful position may have been reflected in a phrase such as "Under the direction of the WFs." However, Dr. Harris indicates that he has transformed his

⁵³ This conceptualization of the role of WFs can be contrasted with Sarah's report to the philosophy professor (presented in Chapter 3) in which her role is one of outside observer looking into the classroom and transmitting WAC recommendations.

conceptualization of writing pedagogy. With regard to the degree of transformation, Dr. Harris states that his writing pedagogy has been “totally revised:”

- Dr. Harris’ approach to writing pedagogy has become “systematic and progressive” (reflecting the WAC principle of sequencing and revision),
- Through his pedagogy, Dr. Harris conceptualizes students as having an active role in taking responsibility for their own writing skill development (this is a WAC principle reflected in the chemistry peer editing activity),
- He has made underlying instructor expectations transparent and explicit to students. i.e., “assignments and assessment are clearer” (this was accomplished through the use of WAC/WID techniques of using models, annotation, guidelines, and grading rubrics)

However, Dr. Harris frames this transformation in a way that reflects his ownership of these transformed practices and his continued authority in his discipline. This authority is reflected through framing this approach as *serving* the goals of his discipline (it does not direct or control his discipline). These transformed practices (1) serve as a way to develop “*scientific writing*” (not just writing skills in general); (2) they use “effective approaches” (i.e., they are improvements, not radical changes to instruction), and (3) they provide instructors with “guidance and support” (i.e., they do not control or direct instructors). In sum, these transformed practices do not radically alter chemistry professors’ discipline, their goals, their knowledge, or their practices as scientists or chemistry instructors. The discipline-specific professor is thus positioned in a role with power, ownership and authority over his or her discipline, knowledge, and practices.

Finally, Dr. Harris states plans for his future participation as well as participation of other members of his department:

As we spend the second term of this academic year further refining our methodology, we will also expand the scope of our efforts to other Core courses so that we have a consistent approach to writing throughout our curriculum.

This statement reflects the ongoing potential for transformation of previously-developed writing tools and activities through their implementation in the classroom (i.e., his reference to “further refining our methodology”). That is, each time WFs and chemistry professors carried out classroom activities involving the use of writing tools, whether for a first, second, or third time, they continued to use feedback (provided by students, other WFs, published knowledge in chemistry, English composition, education, psychology, and other applicable fields) to inform, transform, and improve their knowledge and practices. In addition, these statements reflect the vision of the chemistry project to expand and include a sequence of courses (“expand...our efforts to other Core courses”).

Both the ongoing transformation and projected expansion of the chemistry project illustrate the self-transforming, self-propagating *emergent* and *systemic* nature of the program which transcends the static, transmission approach of the conversion/training model as well as the *dyadic* faculty-WF interactions described in the Faculty Resource Model. Dr. Harris’ statements allude to the nature of interactions and outcomes in the chemistry project as including the group of WFs, students, and other departmental faculty members, as well as an

ongoing “conversation” with the research literature to inform, transform, and extend practices.⁵⁴

Art. The art professor with whom WFs worked, Dr. Devon, chose a more limited experience of participation in the WAC Program which she describes in her statement for the handbook:

Working with Writing Fellows was quite helpful for the student groups in my Art classes. Together with the fellows, we developed an exercise in which the students focused on the pivotal problem of writing an introduction to their analytical essays comparing two paintings at the [City Art Museum].

Dr. Devon’s description of his interaction with the WFs is redundant. It emphasizes the collaborative nature of the interaction through naming the participants in three different ways in succession (“Together with the fellows, we...”).

Through the exercise, the students discovered that they should not only be concerned with formal writing style, but also with the goals of the assignment (to analyze and discuss works of art).

Here, Dr. Devon points out the important balance between a focus on writing skills (“[concern] with formal writing style”) and the discipline (“analyz[ing] and discuss[ing] works of art”).

It was helpful for me, as the art instructor, to have pedagogical support from a team of writing professionals.

Dr. Devon recognizes the expertise of WFs as “writing professionals” but also describes it as “pedagogical *support*,” thus maintaining ownership of her discipline and her practices.

⁵⁴ A discussion reflecting the continued evolution of the WAC Program as reflective of a

In addition, overall, Dr. Devon's description of her participation in the program seems to frame students as the source of their problems with writing. In the first paragraph, she points out that WFs were "helpful for the *student[s]*" in assisting them in working on their "*problem* of writing an introduction to their...essays." Dr. Devon's description focuses much less on her role and responsibility in improving her writing pedagogy than does Dr. Harris' description and seems to locate the problem at the student level rather than the faculty level. Thus, faculty participant descriptions of the role of instructors in developing students' writing skills represent a variety of conceptualizations.

Sociology. At the time she wrote her statement, the sociology professor, Dr. Graham, had participated in the WAC Program for one semester. Her statement frames her work with WFs as a collaboration, however, she seems to place much more importance and influence on WFs' role than does Dr. Harris. She begins her statement by presenting a summary of the challenges she faces with regard to teaching writing skills:

One challenge is how to integrate writing instruction into the [sociology] content area reasonably without distracting unduly from the content that needs to be covered in a semester. A second challenge is how to provide feedback on writing that is manageable for me and meaningful for the students.

Dr. Graham presents the common issue of "coverage" as one of the difficulties she faced in her writing instruction. She also presents another problem that WFs had encountered with discipline-specific faculty which was the fear of an increased workload for faculty if they were to add new elements of writing pedagogy to their existing practices.

system rather than dyadic interactions is presented in the next chapter.

This semester I began teaching my courses determined to master these challenges. I planned to continue to stumble along on my own using my tried and not so “true” methods.

Here, Dr. Graham admits a lack of expertise in her approach to writing instruction.

However, I was “saved” by some brilliant and capable intervention on the part of the [Central College] Writing Fellows...[who] provided some really useful help in writing instruction.

Dr. Graham seems to reflect elements of a conversion model of WAC through her use of the word “saved.” In addition, she uses a term used by the two English Department WFs with whom she worked: intervention. This is another remnant of prior (English Department) conceptualizations of faculty being perceived as novices and inadequate writing instructors who needed an “intervention” to get them off the “wrong” path and going in the “right” direction. The term “classroom intervention” was coined by English Department WFs. They used this expression to label the WAC Program practice of going into the classroom with a WAC tool that WFs had developed and carrying out (modeling) the writing activity for the discipline-specific instructor. It is likely that, through working with these English Department WFs, the sociology professor came into contact with this term and began using it.

However, it is also likely that she did not perceive the situation entirely as a “conversion” as she proceeds to describe her interaction with WFs using such phrases as “WFs offered *assistance*,” “I needed a *boost*,” “*help* me teach writing,” “address [*my*] *needs*,” “what *I wanted*,” “what *I knew*,” and “what *I gain[ed]*.” In addition, she described WFs as a “wonderful resource” and as “consultant[s].” In this sense, the sociology

professor's experience is framed as more consistent with a Faculty Resource approach than a conversion approach.

The sociology professor summed up her participation in the WAC Program in the following way:

The Fellows and I worked together. However, the major work was primarily done by the Fellows to produce several products that I was able to use during the semester.

These included: (a) guidelines on how to write a literature review; (b) a peer assessment protocol; (c) a grading rubric for [sociology] reports. The Fellows interviewed me to find out what I wanted, what I knew, and what would be helpful and then turned these interviews into tools that I could use. This was relatively painless for me and just involved my reviewing them, modifying them slightly, and using them, VOILA! The solutions seemed magical to me.

Thus, as reflected in her discourse, the sociology's professor's experience of the program seemed to be a mix of conversion and participation. Use of the terms "saved," "intervention," and "solutions" frame the WAC approach as "fixing" the problem of the sociology professor's inadequate writing instruction while her description of the role of WFs as resources and consultants seems to emphasize the importance of the professor's knowledge and practices that are already in place and frames WF contributions as secondary to her expertise in her own field. In fact, the perception of the WFs who worked with this professor emphasizes the importance of the professor's contribution to the process, (though the professor may not have realized it). One of the WFs described his experience of working with this professor:

After a *long process* of listening, talking, sitting in on classes, and researching writing in sociology, we began to design individual tools for the professor to use with specific assignments....Like all the work we did, creating these materials took much longer than we would have imagined and required long negotiations with the professor. But these conversations were fruitful because they invited the instructor to think about what exactly she wanted the students to do, and what specific criteria she would use to evaluate their work [italics added].

Thus, although the English Department WFs may have communicated some underlying conversion approach to their interaction with the sociology professor, they did recognize and follow through on the need to gather a great deal of information from this professor (“long process”) so that the writing tools reflected her needs, practices, desires, and knowledge (“what *she wanted* the students to do,” “what *specific criteria she would use* to evaluate their work”). In essence, as was the case in the chemistry project, the tools developed for the sociology professor were explicit, systematic representations of the knowledge the professor already possessed about writing in her discipline and which she was already relaying to her students in some form. The writing tool in the context of the classroom activity provided additional *support* (rather than “intervention”) to “boost” the professor’s pedagogical practices.

This example may represent a transitional phase of participation for both WFs and the faculty member. At the end of the following semester, the English WFs who had worked with Dr. Graham noted that her participation became much more self-driven (more similar to that of the professors in the chemistry department). They described their subsequent work with Dr. Graham as follows:

After these [WAC materials] had been tested in two sections of the course and refined, we [WFs] started to think about how to integrate them into the rest of the course so that students could benefit from the pedagogy that the tools represented and to make things easier and more streamlined for both the students and the professor. We talked to [Dr. Graham] about sequencing all of the reading and writing in the course - a major project that would require a lot of thought and planning (and probably the elimination of at least some of the content), an idea that the professor did not seem to warm to immediately.

We thought we might let this one go. But then, without any further discussion (but with the assistance of some journal articles and sample materials that we had given her) the professor drew up an elaborate (but logical and easily followed) sequence for the major assignment of the course. It included not just the materials that we had created with her, but many of the things she was already doing in class, as well as some new tools and exercises that she planned to add. This was not a document that we [WFs] could have written, and, while it definitely was the result of time spent working on WAC (and observations that we made as visitors to her classroom), the sequence represented her own teaching practices and her knowledge about how learning takes place.

Thus, after having participated in the WAC Program for 2 semesters, the sociology professor surpassed the work done with the WFs and integrated WAC more fully into her course.

After discussing the idea of restructuring her course to sequence the reading and writing assignments ("consultation" with the WFs), Dr. Graham, on her own, drew up a plan to do so including tools and activities developed by the WFs, her own, previously used practices, and

new tools and activities that she had developed based on her experiences participating in the WAC Program and working with the WFs. Thus, the professor herself had become a source of WAC transformation of her course just as the chemistry professors had. Her role had become transformed from recipient of WAC expertise tailored to fit her needs (as described in the Faculty Resource Model) to creator of WAC expertise and tools that emerged as a result of her participation in the WAC Program.

The English Department WFs may have had a similar experience. That is, the vocabulary of the WFs during the semester preceding Dr. Graham's statement may have been reflective of a transitional stage in their concept of WF-faculty interaction from conversion to resource (i.e., their use of the term "classroom intervention"). While WFs had made a major change in terms of their practices, (acting as resources to serve faculty rather than trying to convert faculty), there was still some underlying belief or emphasis on the idea that faculty writing instruction was "wrong" and needed to be changed through an intervention rather than extended and supported through the use of tools.

History. The history professor had been participating in the WAC Program for one semester at the time that she wrote her statement. However, she began the program *after* the transformation had formally taken place, i.e., after the WFs had elaborated the formal statement describing the Faculty Resource Model in the WAC handbook and after the institutionalization of the application process which clearly defined the rules, roles, and requirements for Faculty Writing Fellow program participation. The history professor writes specifically about her experiences interacting with one of the WFs and addresses the letter to the WAC Coordinator:

Dear Steven,

I wanted to write about Michaela Rome. She is great! She is very personable and most importantly, she has the rare quality/talent to be able to listen, actually listen and hear and understand faculty needs, concerns and idiosyncrasies.

She has done a great job presenting the material (concisely and to the point), highlighting quickly and efficiently what she (rightly) discerned as my points of interest/priorities. She does listen. She gave me feedback but also flexibility and freedom.

She developed great tools for me, especially geared to me, adapted to my discipline and my personality. She made this a personal and enriching experience for me instead of a cold, mechanical process. She came to my class once and attended the entire lecture to get a better feel of who I was, how I taught, what I taught, and how I related to my students.

I do attribute part of my commitment to this program to Michaela. She is the WAC liaison and the ambassador of the program to me. If she had not been good at her role, I would not have gotten so involved.

Until the end, she helped me develop my WAC integration project for the fall, making suggestions on how to integrate and sequence the different materials and tools for the students within my own course curriculum and progression.

This statement emphasizes the integration of WAC knowledge and practices with discipline-specific knowledge and practices (“integrat[ion] and sequenc[ing] ...materials and tools for the students within my own course curriculum and progression.”) and illustrates the importance of the faculty member maintaining authority and control in her discipline and her

course through collaboration rather than transmission of knowledge (“she gave me feedback but also flexibility and freedom”).

In addition, this statement highlights the importance of addressing faculty interests, priorities, personalities, needs, concerns, and teaching styles. Further, it outlines desired qualities of a WF that led to a greater degree of participation and commitment to the program: ability to listen, concise, efficient, to the point, and personable. Thus, participation in the WAC Program was not simply a matter of exchanging expertise and knowledge. The degree of participation and type of outcomes *emerged* as a result of the nature and quality of the relationship that developed between faculty and WFs.

Finally, the history professor attributes a number of roles to the WF: a source of knowledge (“she...present[ed]...material”), a mind reader or “empath” (i.e., someone who is sensitive, insightful, and perceptive: “she [rightly] *discerned*...my points of interest/priorities”), a therapist (“she was able to listen, actually listen and hear and understand...”), an intermediary between the professor and WAC administration (“WAC liaison”), and an “ambassador” representing the program.

Overall, the experiences of these four faculty seem to encompass the following characteristics:

- collaboration with WFs,
- integration of WAC knowledge and discipline-specific knowledge,
- the role of WFs as a resource or support,
- ultimate authority of faculty in their discipline and their classrooms and ownership of the writing tools and practices developed.

Integration of WAC Knowledge and Discipline-Specific Knowledge Through Activity

The organization of the knowledge presented in the handbook reflects the process through which it developed. That is, each topic (listed below) is addressed as a three-part series addressing (1) WAC knowledge and theory, (2) a discipline-specific context, and (3) a writing tool developed for the discipline.

First, general WAC theory and principles are introduced and described. The handbook includes the following WAC topics:

- Writing to Learn
- Creating Writing Assignments
- Classroom Collaboration
- Assignment Sequencing
- Responding to Student Writing
- Using Models

Following the general description and rationale for each topic is a section which the WFs entitled “Teaching in Action.” This section describes the discipline-specific context in which a writing assignment/activity was developed and includes such aspects as why it was developed (i.e., the writing difficulty it addressed), the rationale behind its use, and how it was implemented in the classroom. Following this contextualization of the general WAC principle (e.g., WAC classroom collaboration contextualized as a peer editing activity in chemistry), a copy of the writing tool is included (e.g., peer editing guidelines sheet for the introduction to a chemistry lab report). This three-part structure illustrates the processes underlying the transformed WAC conceptualization: WAC theory and practice (part 1) is

connected to and integrated in the discipline-specific context through classroom activity (part 2) through the use of a writing tool (part 3).

Thus, WFs did not merely create writing assignments, which was the initial WAC plan. Instead, they developed activities (practices) and tools which would *support completion* of writing assignments through supporting faculty in bolstering their already existing knowledge and practices regarding writing in their disciplines.

Defining a Structure and Process for Program Participation

As a result of what they learned about working with faculty in the disciplines during the first 3 semesters in the WAC Program, WFs and WAC Coordinators formalized and institutionalized the structure and process for program participation. They determined that the number of faculty with whom the 5 WFs could reasonably work was approximately 10 professors. In previous efforts, WAC Coordinators focused on recruiting faculty from disciplines (departments) which they thought would have most benefited from WAC (i.e., departments in which they thought there was the greatest need for faculty improvement in writing instruction). Additionally, they made random contacts with department chairs hoping to receive their approval and using the chair's influence to "encourage" faculty participation. Contacts were also made based on the underlying agenda of the WAC administrator and were based on reasons unknown to the WFs.

In the transformed, institutionalized practice, WAC representatives opened up the opportunity to *all* faculty, regardless of their discipline, whether or not they had departmental support, or whether or not there was any other underlying attribute that WAC administrators found appealing. The WAC Administrator used a portion of the college's WAC Program funding to offer faculty a stipend for participating, and faculty were required to submit an

application. A flyer describing the program was distributed to faculty across the campus.

The description included the following:

FACULTY WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

Faculty members are invited to apply for support for course innovations to improve their students' writing skills....Faculty members selected will receive \$2500 for their participation.

The program is framed to focus on improving students' writing skills, not on deficiencies in professors' pedagogy.

In addition, the roles, practices, and responsibilities for all participants (WFs and faculty) were outlined.

A maximum of ten faculty members will be selected to begin training and course development in Spring 199___. Pilot testing of new materials and procedures is expected in Fall 199___. Faculty participants will be designated as Faculty Writing Fellows and receive a certificate confirming their title and period of participation.

The following is the schedule of activities required for Fellows:

Spring 199___:

- Commit six to eight hours to converse with the Writing Fellows and their Faculty supervisors. Identify the course you wish to work on, and explain the current situation in the course and any attempts that have been made to introduce writing. The committed hours will include one group session/ workshop.
- Make available existing syllabus for the course.

- Develop preliminary ideas for writing-to-learn assignments that are specifically tailored to the course content.

Spring & Summer 199__:

Draft, edit and prepare new course materials that integrate writing activities in courses.

Fall 199__:

- Pilot test and evaluate new writing-focused activities and materials.
- Prepare and submit a 1-2 page report of the outcomes of their work.
- Share with Writing Fellows and supervisors revised syllabus and new course materials.
- Present a brief report of their work at a meeting of their home department faculty.

Interested faculty should complete the attached application form and return it to...

Rather than imposing a WAC plan with predefined, generic writing activities on participants,

this new approach outlines a *structure for participation* with a few basic general

requirements which include meeting with WFs and developing and implementing writing tools and activities in their classrooms "that are specifically tailored to the course content."

There are no specific, prescribed outcomes except for the very general outcome of

developing and implementing writing tools and activities. In addition, faculty participation is

presented as being a role with some degree of prestige. That is, it is part of an application

process, it is given a formal title ("Faculty Writing Fellow"), and it comes with a reward

(\$2500 stipend) and a certificate "confirming their title and...participation" in the program.

These requirements, activities, and incentives were developed through discussion among the

WAC Administrator, WAC Coordinators, and WFs based on the knowledge they had gained from participating in the program with faculty over 3 semesters (as well as general knowledge gleaned for participation in the university setting over a number of years).

Along with the flyer announcing the position and defining the roles and requirements of Faculty Writing Fellows was included a sheet describing the role of the doctoral student Writing Fellows, i.e., what they could and could not do in their role as WFs:

[CENTRAL COLLEGE] WRITING FELLOWS PROGRAM

Writing Fellows are [Northeast University doctoral] students from a variety of disciplines who have been trained in writing pedagogy at [Central College] and in the [doctoral programs at Northeast University]. Since the Fall 199__ semester, Writing Fellows have been working as faculty consultants in disciplines such as [chemistry, sociology, art, and history]. Writing Fellows work with [Central College] faculty to integrate and enhance reading and writing activities in their courses.

As a faculty resource, Writing Fellows can help:

- Research methods for teaching writing within a particular discipline.
- Build reading and writing activities into [faculty] syllabi without losing course content.
- Develop reading and writing assignments or assignment sequences.
- Create writing-to-learn and low-stakes reading and writing activities (for in-class and out-of-class).
- Model writing pedagogy by giving in-class workshops to students.

- Facilitate a connection between discipline specific courses and the [Central College] Writing Center through the use of in-class or Writing Center-based tutoring models.
- Develop and facilitate the creation of student publications.
- Build and facilitate the use of on-line course environments to enhance the reading and writing activities in a course.
- Participate in general workshops for teachers of a particular discipline who are interested in expanding the role of writing in their courses.

In addition, in order to avoid any potential faculty confusion regarding WF roles (as was the case with the initial WF-faculty interactions), this document also specified what the WFs *could not* do:

According to the terms of their contract, and the [Central College] Writing Across the Curriculum initiative, Writing Fellows are not allowed to tutor students, grade papers, teach courses, or act as teacher assistants (TAs). [Italics in original]

Actually, one point in this “disclaimer” is not entirely true. WFs were, in fact, allowed to tutor students. However, this practice did not fit into the Faculty Resource Model that WAC representatives had decided to adopt. Thus, although tutoring was officially sanctioned by the University resolution and the WF contract, WAC representatives at Central College chose to include it in the list of prohibited WF practices.⁵⁵ This is just one of many choices that was made by WAC Program participants throughout the two years of the program.

⁵⁵ The decision not to tutor students was actually made implicitly, early in the development of program practices and originated with the WAC Administrator’s choice to have WFs focus on faculty teaching practices rather than directly on students. Thus, this had been an unofficial WF policy as early as the first semester of the program but was made official in the third semester in the Faculty Writing Fellows document.

Additional participant choices and actions which led to transformation and emergent outcomes of the program were more fully discussed in the previous chapter. Below, I discuss a broader view of the Central College WAC Program as I conceptualize it. I describe it as a community of practice which extends beyond the Faculty Resource Model description of program knowledge, roles, and practices.

Surpassing the Faculty Resource Model: The Faculty Participation Model

The WAC program that evolved in this study would be more accurately described as a community of practice in which knowledge and expertise were distributed and exchanged across all program participants and were not confined within the WF-faculty interaction of a particular project (for example, the chemistry project). In contrast to expert/novice dyadic interactions, the process of participation in the WAC Program more closely resembled a *system* of linked interactions. The processes implied by the Faculty Resource Model are more analogous to discrete, side-by-side, closed, dyadic structures of interaction and do not accurately reflect the extent of systemic, cross-community interaction that occurred in the WAC Program.

Outcomes in the WAC Program developed as a result of a *system* of interactions in which knowledge and expertise were distributed across all participants. That is, the various participants contributed knowledge from a range of perspectives and knowledge bases which resulted in transformed knowledge and a self-developing program with emergent outcomes. In addition, this system was *open*. That is, new elements were brought into the system (new knowledge and perspectives such as research literature, knowledge gained through practices and tools that were developed and implemented, knowledge gained from bringing in new

faculty and WFs, feedback from students who participated in the writing activities, etc.) which further contributed to the program's continued self-development and transformation.⁵⁶

Intra- and Interdepartmental Faculty Interactions

The Faculty Resource Model, as described in the WAC handbook, focuses on the *dyadic* WF-faculty interaction and describes how it functions as well as the outcomes of the interaction. Passing reference is made to other participants—WAC Coordinators and Writing Center tutors—but they are described as peripheral to the primary WF-faculty interaction. This focus is also evident in the new participation structure institutionalized at the end of the third semester of the program (the faculty application process) which clarifies the roles and responsibilities for faculty and WFs, but not for other program participants.

There is brief mention of intradepartmental sharing of WAC in the Faculty Writing Fellows Program flyer (though not in the handbook) which states that faculty are required to:

- Present a brief report of their work at a meeting of their home department faculty.

This purpose of this requirement was to inform other faculty members about WAC in hopes that they would become interested in participating in the WAC Program. It did not specify if or how discipline-specific faculty would (or should) collaborate with each other on WAC activities. The purpose of the presentation was more for program recruitment and eventual WF-faculty collaboration than for faculty-faculty collaboration within the department.

⁵⁶ See Chapter 4 for a detailed example of how feedback and knowledge that was produced from tools and activities led to the production of new knowledge, tools, and activities in the chemistry project.

There is also mention of *interdepartmental* interaction in the flyer, but the underlying intention was for Faculty Writing Fellows to attend an interdepartmental WAC workshop, in the traditional sense of WAC training. The requirement listed on the flyer was as follows:

- The committed hours will include one group session/workshop.

This activity was included at the insistence of the Central College WAC administrator (supervisor of the WAC Coordinators) whose responsibility it was to report WAC accomplishments on his campus to the University-level WAC administrators. In previous semesters, he had insisted that WFs give general WAC workshops so that these concrete, easily quantifiable goals could be reported as WAC Program accomplishments.

In actuality, both intra- and interdepartmental faculty interactions occurred outside the bounds of these formal, WAC-defined activities.

Intradepartmental Interactions. In one instance, one of the professors with whom WFs had worked, independent of the Faculty Writing Fellow requirement, shared his work with other faculty at one of his departmental meetings. This prompted program participation of a faculty member from his department. In addition, this new faculty member's participation was transformed as a result of his interaction with the veteran WAC faculty member, even before entering the program. In her narrative account of her WAC Program experiences, one of the WFs describes the event as follows:

Following this professor's presentation at a...department[al] meeting, a junior faculty member ...signed up as a WAC faculty partner. Our first meeting with the new professor marked another important turning point in the project. In contrast to the initial meetings with our first faculty partners—in which we often spent hours

clearing the way for the real work and diplomatically redefining the participants' roles—this partnership began where our work with his colleague had left off.

Our new faculty partner came to us not only with teaching and research expertise, but with two things that would make our work with him much more productive in much less time: he knew exactly what he wanted our help with, and he knew a lot about what we had done with his colleague in the [research course]. He came to the meeting with a copy of his syllabus and writing assignments and a carefully thought-out description of his students' writing abilities and limitations. If anything, this professor had too much information and wanted to do too many things at once. He knew about the in-class exercises and response guidelines we had created with other faculty, and the link that we could provide to the Writing Center.

Therefore, we could quickly move to selecting and then targeting his most pressing concerns about writing, and then develop a plan for working with him long-term....

Thus, outside of the WF-faculty collaboration that took place with this professor, there was an important sharing of knowledge and practices between discipline-specific professors.

This professor came to the WF-faculty interaction with knowledge that was transformed *prior* to any contact with WFs. That is, knowledge of WAC and its practices had already been shared by his colleague and had resulted in an initial rethinking of his own course writing activities *before* he met with WFs. In addition, the roles of WFs and faculty participants had been defined for this new faculty partner before he entered the WAC Program. That is, clear and precise community norms and practices regarding roles, activities, and participation had been established through interaction with the veteran faculty partner and passed on to the new faculty partner.

Other instances of intradepartmental faculty collaboration also occurred. For example, in the chemistry project, the two WAC Program chemistry faculty members met with each other weekly to discuss the WAC component of their course in the context of a larger discussion regarding the chemistry content; a history professor in the WAC Program told the WF with whom she worked that she had shared the WAC activities that had been developed for her course with one of her colleagues; finally, it is possible that there were additional occurrences of intradepartmental sharing of WAC materials of which WFs were not aware.

Interdepartmental Interaction. In the example described above, community norms and practices of the WAC Program were *communicated* to a new faculty member through interaction with a departmental colleague. In contrast, an interdepartmental gathering of WAC faculty participants served as a context for faculty to co-construct *their own* community norms and values.

The Faculty Writing Fellow “group session/workshop” (which was initially intended to be a training workshop) became a context in which interdepartmental faculty shared ideas and practices developed through their participation in the WAC Program. However, additionally, they shared their thoughts and concerns about their role as “WAC professors” and how this might merge meaningfully and realistically with their role as faculty members in discipline-specific departments. Faculty members used the forum of the group session to discuss a variety of concerns: How do I cover everything I want and need to cover if I include more writing in my course? How do I deal with the increased workload of adding writing activities when I am already overburdened with too many students and not enough

teaching assistance? How do I deal with student resistance to more writing?⁵⁷ How can I single-handedly (without participation from other members of my department) be expected to address student writing difficulties and improve their writing skills in the one semester that I teach them? How do I handle objections from my department to my spending time on non-discipline specific activities? As a university professor, how can I devote so much time to improving my teaching when it is not valued in comparison to my research and publications? As a junior faculty member, how can I assert myself and defy departmental practices and still manage to get tenure?

WFs had encountered such questions in their interactions with discipline-specific faculty prior to this group meeting. One of the WFs describes her experience in working with two junior faculty:

We met with a history professor who explained that she is under attack in her department because she spends so much time on teaching and asks her students to write considerably more (and with higher standards) than other professors in her department. Her anxiety was shared by another junior faculty member in psychology, who noted her as-yet-untured status during one of our first discussions, presumably implying that there were only so many risks she could take.

The history professor, specifically, voiced her concerns regarding lack of departmental support as early as during the application process. In her application she writes the following:

⁵⁷ Faculty reported that students often object to writing assignments in their discipline-specific courses, protesting (as many discipline-specific faculty do) that “this is not a writing course.”

One dilemma that I have had is the extent of editing I should do in my writing assignments. My colleagues have always told me that I am NOT an English professor and therefore should not correct the grammar the syntax or the vocabulary in my students' homework. But I can't help it. I think someone HAS to tell them that you cannot say "more riskier" or that written and spoken languages are different (i.e., what is accepted in verbal communication may not be appropriate in writing).

WFs attempted to address faculty concerns when they were brought up, but their continued need to discuss these issues with their discipline-specific colleagues seemed to suggest that WFs had not sufficiently done so. Thus, the importance of an interdepartmental WAC community addressing the *institutional* needs of the professors became apparent. A model positing a simple dyadic exchange of knowledge intended to improve faculty writing pedagogy is not sufficient. In order for a WAC Program to be successful, it must address faculty issues, concerns, and needs which go above and beyond the assignment-related support offered by WFs and the WAC program.

In fact, two WAC Program professors wound up leaving Central College, at least in part, because of a lack of departmental support of their non-traditional teaching practices. One professor was a junior faculty member who realized that he could not institute non-traditional teaching practices into his classroom against the will of his department and still get tenure. Another professor, who had worked with a WF throughout an entire semester to develop a sequence of writing-to-learn exercises for the introductory course in his discipline, was not scheduled to teach that course the following semester because faculty were opposed to instituting this type of pedagogy in their department. This professor decided to retire before the start of the following semester although she had already been scheduled to teach (a

different course). A third professor, after having worked with a WF for a semester to develop WAC activities for his class, presented his ideas to his department. According to the WF he worked with, his ideas were “put down” by his colleagues, and he and subsequently dropped from the WAC Program at least partially because of his status as a non-tenured professor.

WF Interactions

In contrast to the newly-emerging intra- and interdepartmental interactions among faculty, WFs developed a collaborative community much earlier in the program so that it was well-defined by the end of the two years of the program described in this study.⁵⁸ As per their request, WFs always worked collaboratively with their faculty partners, that is, there were always at least two WFs assigned to work with a single discipline-specific professor. In addition, WFs consulted each other when developing writing tools, even outside of the two-person WF team assigned to develop the tool. This was done either when the other team member was not available or if expertise outside of the established WF team was desired. WFs instituted agreed upon overlapping schedules and meetings and made these and other decisions based on group discussion, negotiation, and eventual consensus. This is not meant to imply that WFs always agreed or had similar perspectives. Rather, it demonstrates that decisions were not made by directive of any single WF. This collaborative decision-making process occurred, at least in part, because all WFs had the same “official” status. At times the status of a certain WFs was elevated as a result of his or her expertise (for example, in the case of the editing of the WAC handbook, the English Department WFs presented their plan

⁵⁸ The processes which led to the development of this community of practice are more fully-described in Chapter 5.

and were not challenged because of their expertise), but, officially, no single WF was “in charge” of the others.

WFs also met regularly to update one another on their projects. Many of the writing tools developed initially for one professor were shared and redeveloped to meet the needs of another professor (for example, writing guidelines and peer editing tools and activities developed initially in chemistry were transformed and used in sociology). Tools developed in one semester were reviewed, revised, and improved by new WFs even after they had already been implemented in the classroom.

Finally, the ultimate collaboration of the WAC Program was the production of the WAC handbook which was a result of the participation, knowledge, and experiences of every WF and every discipline-specific faculty member who participated in the program from the beginning of the program through the third semester. Thus, rather than the initial conceptualization of the WAC Program as a top-down transmission of knowledge with pre-defined and fixed “sources” of knowledge (see Figures 1 and 2 in Appendix), the WAC Program at Central College transformed into a collaborative community in which all participants contributed valuable knowledge and experience and in which the activities that were carried out and the tools that were produced contributed to the ongoing emergence of new knowledge, tools, and activities (see Figures 3 and 4 in Appendix).

Chapter 7 Discussion: Positions, Identities, Practices, Agency, and Emergence in Knowledge Development

This dissertation is, at its basic level, an attempt to describe processes of knowledge development. However, much of the dissertation is devoted to a discussion of positions, identities, practices, and (resistance to) participation in socially organized activities. These positions, identities, and practices are developed at the intersection of institutional and personal histories (Scribner, 1985) and make up a framework for understanding development. Using this framework, I have sought to (1) move beyond individual “in the head” accounts of knowledge development by describing it in interactional/ relational and distributed terms, (2) broaden accounts of developmental processes to extend beyond a focus on cognitive processes to include historical, institutional, and personal aspects of development, (3) describe individuals’ agency in transforming their environments, and (4) describe knowledge development as an emergent process resulting from goal-oriented activity in context involving transformation rather than transmission or acquisition of knowledge.

In previous chapters, I presented a description of a particular context—the WAC Program at Central College—and the interactions that occurred which resulted in the transformation of the knowledge, practices, identities, and positions of participants.

In Chapter 3, I described the pre-defined knowledge, practices, identities, and positions of participants and how they guided the initial interactions among participants and the development of relationships and practices in the context of the Central College WAC Program. The initial structure of the WAC Program represented a top-down hierarchy in which knowledgeable WAC “experts” transmitted their knowledge and practices to program

participants identified (implicitly) as “novices” who needed to be educated in the “correct” way of teaching writing. These novices were the WAC Program WFs. In turn, WFs became the “experts” (under the close supervision of WAC Coordinator experts) who then transmitted WAC knowledge and practices to discipline-specific faculty. Thus, the model of knowledge development was one in which knowledge, practices, positions, and identities were pre-defined at the outset of the program. The process of development was conceptualized as transmission of knowledge and practices to less knowledgeable individuals who would, ultimately, *adapt* their existing knowledge and practices to conform to knowledge and practices that were presented by the experts as correct. In this view, program participants are conceptualized (positioned) as novices “acquiring” knowledge but not “contributing” to (and thus transforming) knowledge (Stetsenko, under review).

At the end of Chapter 3, I presented an example of how the initial transmission conceptualization of knowledge development (implicit in the hierarchical positions and initial interactions of participants) began to be transformed through participant agency. This change involved a transformation in the pre-defined expert/ novice positions which eventually resulted in a transformation of the processes of knowledge development. Knowledge development was transformed from a uni-directional, top-down process involving pre-defined, static expert knowledge to a multi-directional process involving mutual transformation of knowledge and practices through the participation of all participants who contributed their expertise (as well as their goals, values, priorities, and desires; see discussion below).

In Chapter 4, I presented an in-depth account of one of the WAC projects (the chemistry project) and how knowledge and practices were developed based on new

relationships among participants which were based on transformed conceptualizations of knowledge, identities, and positions. In this chapter, I focused on the generative and mediational nature of tools in knowledge development as well as the role of activity in knowledge development. That is, I described knowledge, identities, and practices as *emerging* through activity and the use of tools. This conceptualization of knowledge as emergent rather than fixed represents a departure from teleological descriptions of knowledge development.

In Chapters 5 and 6, I described some of the ways in which knowledge, practices, identities, and positions were transformed through participants' activity and agency in a number of different WAC projects and other contexts within the WAC Program as well as how community norms were developed. These chapters illustrate how variability (personal histories and trajectories [Stetsenko, 2002] including goals, values, priorities, and desires) within organizational structure can lead to innovation and transformation of prevailing norms. In addition, the examples in these chapters illustrate how social, institutional, and action constraints limit transformation of practices and identities. That is, prevailing norms are not infinitely transformable through participant agency.

Identity, Activity, and Distributed Cognition

Instead of conceptualizing knowledge development as an individual process of either acquiring knowledge that has been transmitted or of discovering knowledge that is present in the environment, I described development as relational, interactional, and distributed. Specifically, I described how individuals were positioned in relation to one another within a social system within an institutional context. These positions offered certain identities for individuals which guided their participation in social contexts. That is, as presented in the

current study, identity is not a phenomenon that occurs “within” the individual and is “carried” from context to context; it is *socially* produced, negotiated, accepted, or resisted through interaction (within socially constructed practices) between individuals (e.g., Lave, 1988). Identity is also *discursively* produced, negotiated, accepted, or resisted (e.g., Linehan and McCarthy, 2000, 2001; Walkerdine, 1997) in interaction through the exchange of signs (e.g., in the current study, through formal and informal conversations, emails, memos, reports, etc). To sum up, identities develop through individuals’ interactions within discourse and social practices. In addition, these interactions are dependent on how individuals are related—positioned—within a social system.

Participants in the WAC Program were positioned and identified as experts or novices, victims or responsible agents, ignorant or knowledgeable, transmitters of knowledge or collaborators, and so on. In turn, these identities and positions played a crucial role in shaping *which* practices were constructed and *how* they were constructed. Further, these practices shaped what knowledge was developed. This conceptualization of knowledge as developing as a result of how an individual is positioned and identified within a social system presents a challenge to teleological conceptualizations of development which predefine trajectories and endpoints of development and do not account for diversity in developmental outcomes (e.g., the development of Piaget’s “little scientists”). Thus, in describing and explaining the process of knowledge development, one must consider these factors which extend beyond individual cognitive processes and are part of the relational (and often hierarchical) social system.

In the current study, I described a shift in WFs’ position from novice to expert as well as a shift in the position of discipline-specific faculty from novice to expert. This shift in

position for chemistry faculty resulted in outcomes that were different from outcomes observed with the philosophy professors (see Chapter 3) who were positioned as novices in comparison to WAC experts. In the initial conceptualization of the WAC Program, value was placed on WAC knowledge and practices; thus, those participants who “possessed” WAC knowledge were considered experts (according to program designers). A shift in positions actually represents a shift in ideas regarding whose knowledge is considered valuable and legitimate.

Interactions with philosophy professors took place within a framework of conflicting conceptualizations of whose knowledge was valued and thus of who was considered the expert (and who was considered the novice) in the interaction. In other settings in which development is studied, the roles of expert and novice are confounded with issues of power and control. That is, teachers, parents, masters, and managers are experts and have authority and control over the actions of students, children, apprentices, and workers. In the context of the WAC Program, the pre-defined novices—college professors—have ultimate authority and control of their classrooms (academic freedom) and are thus free to challenge outside “experts,” especially those who are lower in status (i.e., doctoral student WFs). Thus, conflicting values regarding legitimate knowledge (and, by extension, regarding who was expert and who was novice in the interactions) resulted in adversarial interactions between WFs and philosophy professors and the eventual withdrawal of these faculty from the WAC Program. However, unlike other contexts (such as schools) in which individuals may reject certain identities and knowledge, in the context of the WAC Program, professors’ suffered no harmful consequences by rejecting WAC “expert” knowledge. Thus, the context of this study is unique in that faculty participants (those who were to be “educated”) were free to

follow their own values and to accept or reject the knowledge, practices, and identities that were constructed for them.

In the chemistry project, WFs valued the knowledge and practices of chemistry faculty, and chemistry faculty valued the knowledge and practices of WFs. That is, because both WFs and discipline-specific faculty were positioned as experts in the context of the chemistry project, both WF and discipline-specific knowledge and practices were given legitimacy. In fact, WFs used chemistry professors' existing knowledge and practices as a basis on which to develop and transform WAC knowledge—a practice that was not envisioned by program designers who implemented a top-down, transmission model of development. The result of the dual expertise (or Engestrom's [1995] "multivoicedness in expertise") in the chemistry project was a partnership in which participants collaborated to develop tools and practices that *integrated* WAC knowledge and practices with discipline-specific knowledge and practices (a "coordination of systems" [Glick, 1995]).

This coordination of systems may take different forms, depending how the new system is used, i.e., how individuals integrate this system into their practice (Glick, 1995). The new system can be either a "tool" which mediates activity or a "source of top-down control" (Glick, 1995, p. 376). In the context of the WAC Program, this new system of WAC knowledge was introduced to philosophy faculty as a source of top-down control. That is, these faculty were asked to *replace* their existing systems (for example, grading system) with a WAC system. Such a process results in a very limited view of development. That is, based on this top-down conceptualization, an individual develops the knowledge and practices that are transmitted. In contrast, in the chemistry project, WAC knowledge was used as a tool to support and enhance existing knowledge and practices (for example, using

the peer editing guidelines and activity to support their teaching of the lab report). Using new knowledge as a tool (rather than as a source of top-down control) represents a view of knowledge development as *emergent* rather than pre-determined and fixed.

Thus, the positions and identities of participants in relation to one another (e.g., adversarial or collaborative; expert or novice, and so on) in the WAC Program guided interactions among participants which, in turn, determined *what* knowledge and practices were developed. In one instance, development could be defined as successfully replacing one's old (incorrect or deficient) knowledge system with a new knowledge system. Using a different conceptualization, development could be defined as transforming and expanding one's existing knowledge and practices through the use of new knowledge (tools). Thus, development can take different forms depending on the positions and identities (and their related activities or "structure of opportunity," Glick, 1995, p. 377) which are constructed for and by individuals within an organizational structure.

Historical, Institutional, and Personal Aspects of Knowledge Development

In the previous section, I described how positioning and identity are related to knowledge development through the activities that are associated with these identities. These positions and identities had historical, institutional, and ideological roots which pre-dated the implementation of the WAC Program. That is, positions and identities for WAC Program participants did not develop from "out of nowhere" simply based on initial participant interactions. Rather, positions and identities for participants were pre-defined based on the history and social practices of WAC and on the history and practices of the University as an

institution.⁵⁹ This is evident in the discourse of the University resolution (Chapter 3) which frames students as well as faculty as having specific roles and goals and places them in particular positions within the institutional context. In addition, the WAC Program training for WFs was based in the history of WAC during which particular social practices were developed (e.g., workshops) which gave legitimacy to certain knowledge (i.e., English composition knowledge). Based on these social practices, discipline-specific WFs as well as discipline-specific faculty were placed in the position of novice.

While these historical and institutional aspects of the program guided participant interactions, they did not determine them. Participants' personal histories also played a role in the interactions (and ultimately, the knowledge) that developed as part of the WAC Program (Scribner, 1985). Individuals' personal histories involve knowledge, experiences, values, beliefs, ideologies, points of view, priorities, desires, and goals. Thus, within institutional, social, and action constraints, individuals follow personal paths of development (Stetsenko, 2002). Throughout the activities of the WAC Program, individuals acted in ways that reflected both institutional and personal *histories*. In addition, activities were guided by the moment-to-moment lived interactions which took place in the *present* and were directed towards *future* goals (Leont'ev's goal-directed activity). Difficulties arose when participant interactions involved a gap or conflict between participants' goals and desires (Pea, 1993). Engestrom (1995) describes these conflicts as "latent confrontations" which he proposes have their origin in participants' varying definitions or "preconstructed" objects of activity

⁵⁹ WAC as well as University practices can be further located in sociopolitical ideologies which are briefly discussed in the introduction. However, a complete discussion of these ideologies is beyond the scope of this dissertation.

systems. I suggest that these object “preconstructions” are based in individuals’ personal histories, including their goals and desires.

In the WAC Program, some of the “objects” to be negotiated included knowledge regarding the function of writing, the teaching of writing, the learning of writing, and the process of writing: Is writing a general skill to be applied to various disciplines (e.g., knowing how to write an argument and doing so in chemistry, history, or sociology)? Is writing a practice which varies depending on the norms and conventions of a particular disciplinary community? Is writing a form of personal expression? Is writing subordinate to (a vehicle of) the content of a discipline? Who is responsible for the problems with student writing, instructors or students? What is the best way to teach writing? What is the role of instructors? What is the role of WFs?

The answers to these questions varied—and often conflicted—for participants in the WAC Program, depending on their personal histories. Thus, a negotiation or reframing of personal goals was necessary in order for WFs and discipline-specific faculty to work together. In some cases, conflicting goals and desires among participants led to the dissolution of faculty partnerships and the withdrawal of certain participants (both WFs and faculty) from the WAC Program. In other instances, participants were able to alter the “latent confrontation” and negotiate a shared goal. These negotiations involved various processes (discussed in Chapter 5) which led to transformation in the knowledge, practices, and identities of program participants. The transformation which led to the biggest changes was a transformation in the conceptualization of participants from “resistors” to “contributors.” That is, initially, faculty (and WFs) were conceptualized as deficient and in need of being educated. They were viewed as “resistant” if they questioned or chose not to

accept outside knowledge and practices. This conceptualization was transformed and faculty were viewed instead as “resources” to be developed. Their comments, questions, suggestions, experiences, priorities, and goals were viewed as valuable contributions which guided the knowledge and practices that were being developed. It became clear that, in order to successfully negotiate a shared object, it was important that faculty have a certain degree of control in defining the object. And, ultimately, this control resulted in faculty ownership of the knowledge and practices that were produced. Issues of control and ownership are crucial aspects of participant interaction which will shape the emergence of outcomes. That is, the way in which participants negotiate control over the meaning of the object will determine if, what, and how knowledge and practices are developed through interaction.

In sum, these personal aspects of development are not separate “phenomena” to be studied but are integrated into the activity, relationships, and interactions which developed among participants in the WAC Program. In conceptualizations of knowledge development as interactional and relational, these personal aspects are important in that they contribute to the *quality of the relationships* that develop (see case studies in Chapter 6) which has a bearing on how interactions among participants develop, and, ultimately, on how and what knowledge emerges as a result of these interactions and relationships. An important theme that became evident in regarding the various personal aspects of participation was the desire for control and ownership of knowledge, tools, and practices.

Community Normative Practices and Individual Variation: Conceptualizing the Community as a System of Dynamic, Lived Interactions

Certain accounts of communities of practice describe participants’ agency as it occurs within the *normative practices* of the community. That is, individuals are described as active

participants who contribute to their own development *within* the prescribed positions, identities, and practices of the community. However, the norms (knowledge, practices, values, beliefs, and so on) are fixed (e.g., Rogoff, 2001). Other accounts of participation in communities of practice describe how participant activity may deviate from community norms and practices (e.g., Lave, 1997; Lave & Wenger, 1991; Greeno et al., 1998). However, the focus is still on *adaptation* to community norms (even if it is through subversive means as described, for example, in Lave's [1997] account of third graders' classroom math practices [see Chapter 1]). That is, primacy is accorded to the *community* which is conceptualized as contextualizing and shaping individuals' activities and interactions (though these interactions may be either harmonious or conflictual in relation to community standards [e.g., Lave and Wenger, 1991]). My focus was to describe how participants create and transform normative community practices (including positions, identities, and knowledge produced through discourse and practices). In the Central College WAC Program, at times, participant agency and resistance to community norms and practices resulted in conflict which led to community tensions, subversive practices, and/or withdrawal from program participation. However, participant agency also led to transformed conceptualizations of participant identities (e.g., from ignorant to knowledgeable), to transformed practices (e.g., from top-down transmission to collaboration), and to transformed positions (e.g., from novice to expert). These transformations in identities, practices, and positions in turn resulted in the emergence of knowledge that was not pre-defined by the community but emerged as a result of these reconceptualized positions and practices.

Thus, my account of the development of the WAC Program emphasizes the importance of conceptualizing the *diversity* within communities as well as the norms. By

defining an individual's participation in a community in terms of overarching, community-wide accepted norms, one risks overlooking the nuances within community and the possibilities for *community* transformation that exist (in addition to *participant* transformation). My focus is on communities as they exist in the concrete, lived interactions (relationships) of particular individuals in specific contexts. Thus, in addition to the conceptualization of a community as defined by dominant norms, practices, knowledge, values, and beliefs, I propose a complementary conceptualization of community which focuses on system instability and transformation.

My interpretation of system instability and transformation can be understood in relation Engestrom's (1995) notions of activity systems in interaction which result in solution, trajectory, and/or systems innovations. I propose that it is useful to focus on the specific participants *within* the community and to envision their interactions as a dynamic, unstable social system which presents the possibility of continually emerging and transforming knowledge, roles, and practices through each instance of participant interaction. I define an "instability" as a gap between participant objects and desires (after Engestrom, 1995 and Pea, 1993), or a gap between objects and desires based in community-defined knowledge and practices in relation to those based in personal knowledge and practices. As discussed above, participant negotiations around an object can result in transformation of knowledge and practices. In addition, because participants are viewed as a *system*, it is possible for interactions between particular participants at one point in time to result in transformations that can potentially transform the entire system.

For example, although all WFs did not participate directly in the chemistry project, transformations that occurred in the chemistry project context affected and transformed other

WFs' knowledge and practices although they were not involved in the primary interaction. That is, WFs who were directly involved in the chemistry project interactions shared knowledge and practices with other WFs and WAC Coordinators through meetings, reports, memos, requests for assistance, informal conversations, etc. Thus, an instability which occurs initially in one part of the system (e.g., in interactions among participants in the chemistry project) resulted in an immediate transformation (of knowledge, practices, etc., see Chapter 4). However, this initial instability (related to what I will call "primary interactions") which occurred in the context of a specific classroom *activity* in the chemistry project, was recreated in interactions among chemistry project WFs, English composition WFs, and WAC Coordinators (see Chapter 4). Interactions among these participants resulted in additional instabilities which continued to transform other parts of the system through what I will call secondary and tertiary interactions (and so on). That is, WFs' transformed knowledge and practices (resulting from primary interactions) had an effect on their further interactions with discipline-specific faculty in other WAC projects (e.g., Carey's interactions with the sociology professor in which she developed writing tools similar to those developed in the chemistry project, see Chapter 5). In addition, initial instabilities that were created through WF/ faculty interactions often led to further transformations in faculty practices which occurred without further WF/ faculty interactions (see Chapter 5 which provides examples of how faculty transformed tools and practices without the direct participation of WFs). These transformations are evidence of the *emergent* nature of knowledge that develops when transformed knowledge and practices are resituated in new contexts.

Within the Central College WAC Program, there was an initial community conceptualization that discipline-specific faculty were ignorant with regard to the teaching of

writing and needed to be “converted” to using WAC-defined expert practices (see Chapter 3). As the result of three semesters of WAC Coordinator/ WF / discipline-specific faculty interactions, this community conceptualization was *transformed* to a conceptualization of faculty as knowledgeable in their fields and as resources to be developed (rather than as problems to be fixed). Having said this, I admit that these statements overcharacterize WAC Program norms as all-encompassing, but I do this based on the need to describe the community as a whole.⁶⁰ In fact, the transformations that occurred would likely not have occurred had there been all-encompassing conceptualizations of participant identities on either the WAC side or the discipline-specific side. In fact, there were *variations* in conceptualizations which were the result of individuals’ personal histories (see discussion above) and a willingness on the part of participants to act on, accept, and negotiate around these variations.

In the context of the WAC Program, variations became manifest in participants’ interactions and presented a variety of possibilities for identities and participation. For example, I rejected the submissive position and novice participant identity that was defined for me within the WAC Program training practices and which became evident in interactions with the WAC Coordinator. In contrast, the chemistry professors with whom I worked presented me with the possibility of an expert identity and a position of authority. However, rather than choosing to act within the community norms (i.e., adopting the WAC role of outside expert and authority) and imposing the WAC Coordinator’s proposal on the chemistry professor, I chose to draw on practices from my psychology background as a

⁶⁰ This critique of overcharacterization also applies to the WAC Program conceptualization of the Faculty Resource Model as well as my conceptualization of the Faculty Participation Model.

means of participating in the community. Specifically, I used these psychology practices in my initial participation in the classroom activities of the chemistry lab course. As outlined in Chapter 4, this choice, (which was made possible by the choice of other community members—the chemistry faculty—to accept me as an expert), led to the emergence of a number of tools and practices which led to the development of knowledge that was not predicted at the outset of the design and development of the WAC Program. It also led to eventual changes in community norms.

In addition, the WAC Coordinator was open to my act of non-compliance to community practices and accepted the transformed norms of participation (e.g., greater autonomy for WFs) and knowledge (e.g., integration of WAC and WID) which developed as a result of this act. These interactions among participants which occurred in the context of the chemistry project created an instability within the WAC Program system, i.e., a gap between community-accepted (or, more accurately, *community-dominant*) and variant knowledge and practices. This instability as well as a willingness of the part of participants to be open to negotiation of community norms (objects and goals) allowed for transformations in WAC Program knowledge, roles, and practices. That is, there was a transformation in the overall system which extended beyond a single solution innovation (e.g., implementation of the peer editing guidelines to help students write a methods section).

In Chapter 4, I described instabilities within the system of interactions that occurred during the enactment of writing tools within classrooms which began as solution innovations and evolved into a trajectory innovation (i.e., making underlying chemistry writing conventions explicit for students). During the classroom writing activities, interactions with students led to moments of instability in instances in which students introduced their

perspectives and knowledge into the pre-existing WF/ professor practices and knowledge regarding the writing tool and the activity.

For example, during the chemistry peer editing activities, students introduced new elements into the activity regarding purpose and audience that had not previously been considered by the professor or the WF. In another section of the chemistry class, students objected to the peer editing activity thus prompting a discussion of the process of writing and the development of a transformed conceptualization of writing. Both of these moments of instability (i.e., gaps in understandings of the object as well as gaps between participant goals) resulted in the emergence of new knowledge, tools, and/or practices and represent the dynamic and emergent nature of community knowledge and practices as resulting from particular interactions and variation among participants. These examples also demonstrate the mediational and generative nature of tools as they are used in a goal-directed activity (e.g., Vygotsky 1978, 1994; Engestrom, 1995) and result in emergent knowledge and practices.

However, my account of the development of the WAC Program does not suggest that communities are (or should be) infinitely transformable. That is, in some instances, participants were unable to transform program roles and practices and chose instead to withdraw from the program. This was the case for two of the philosophy professors who wanted WFs to act as tutors or graders, for Sarah, the English Department WF who wanted to act as outside composition expert, and for the discipline-specific WF who chose not to coordinate his schedule and priorities to match the norms that were established and accepted

by the community.⁶¹ In other cases, discipline-specific faculty established boundaries regarding their participation which resulted in varying levels of participation for different community members (although WFs may have wanted to do additional work with these faculty). Thus, I do not suggest dismissing the conceptualizations of community of practice that have been described by others. Rather, I suggest that a focus on the gaps between community norms and individual variations can be useful in understanding the complexity of processes of knowledge development by emphasizing the dynamic nature of specific interactions and relationships that occur within communities. In addition, studying the knowledge, roles, and practices that are constructed as these gaps are negotiated and bridged is a useful means of attempting to explain the emergence of knowledge and the transformation of community norms over time.

Conclusion

As described in the current study, knowledge development is a complex process involving historical, institutional, as well as personal aspects (Scribner, 1985). Rather than conceptualizing knowledge as an individual possession, I conceptualize knowledge as distributed across participants as well as tools (spoken discourse as well as material artifacts) (e.g., Engestrom, 1995; Glick, 1995; Salomon, 1993). In addition, I argue that knowledge development is not a purely cognitive process but depends on relational aspects of interactions (i.e., participant positions and identities which are constructed both historically and institutionally as well as through moment-to-moment, lived interactions). Interactions among participants occur within specific context and are defined by institutional, social, and

⁶¹ Additionally, it is certainly the case that there was *conformity* to community norms and accepted practices (for example, working with faculty as opposed to working at the student level), but this is not the focus of the dissertation.

activity constraints. However, these constraints are not static and immutable from context to context, nor are they fixed within a single context. Rather, these constraints (including participant positions and identities) are negotiated among participants through discourse and activity and are open to transformation. Thus, knowledge and practices (and therefore development) are not fixed. Rather, negotiations among participants in an activity system can lead to transformation in the knowledge and practices that are constructed and, ultimately, to innovations which can transform the overall activity system.

In this sense, knowledge is negotiated, distributed, and emergent and results from the lived interactions (activities and discourses) of participants which occur at the intersection of institutional and personal histories which are mutually transforming.

Appendix

**Figure 1: Initial Institutional Structure:
Top-Down Transmission
Conversion Model**

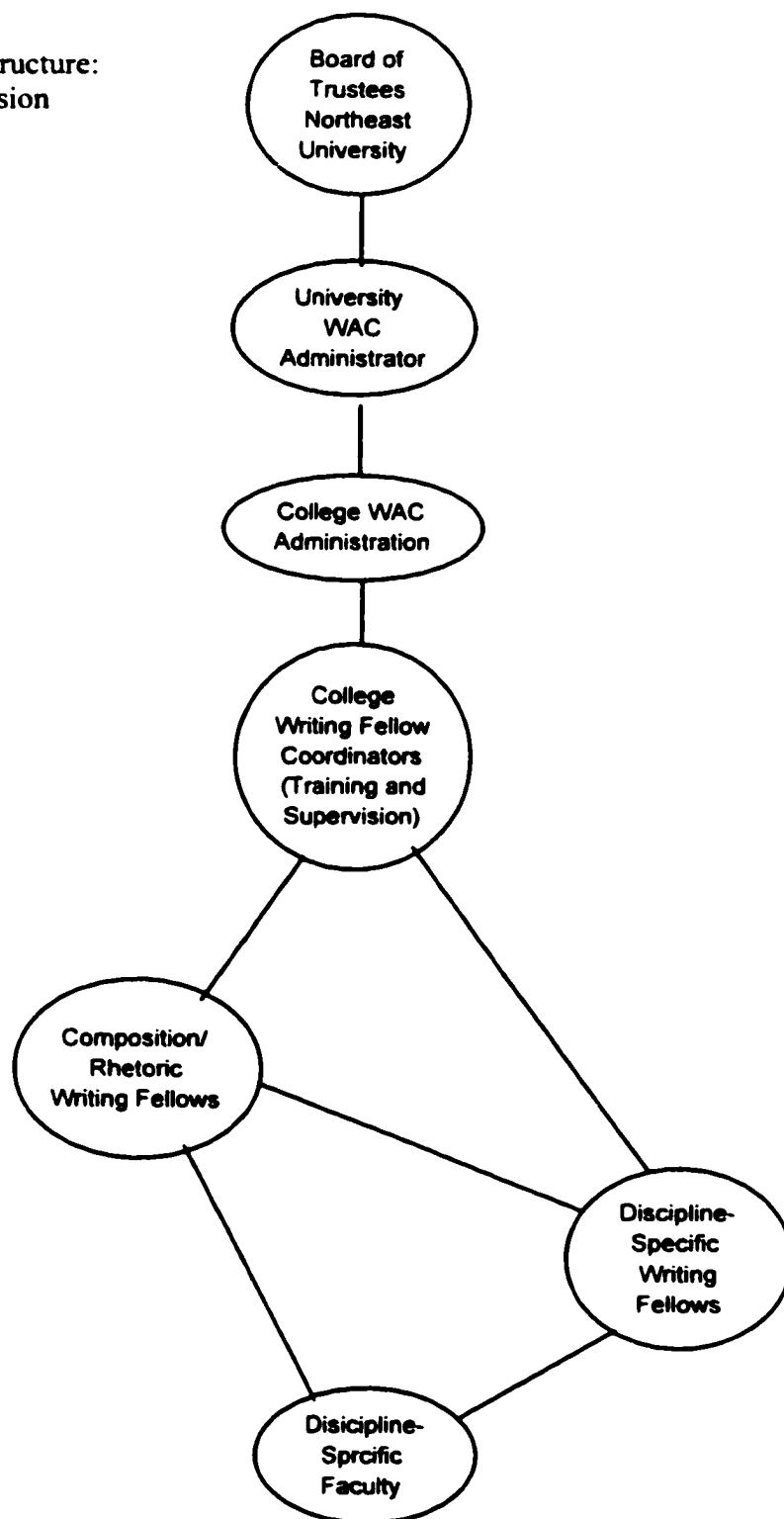
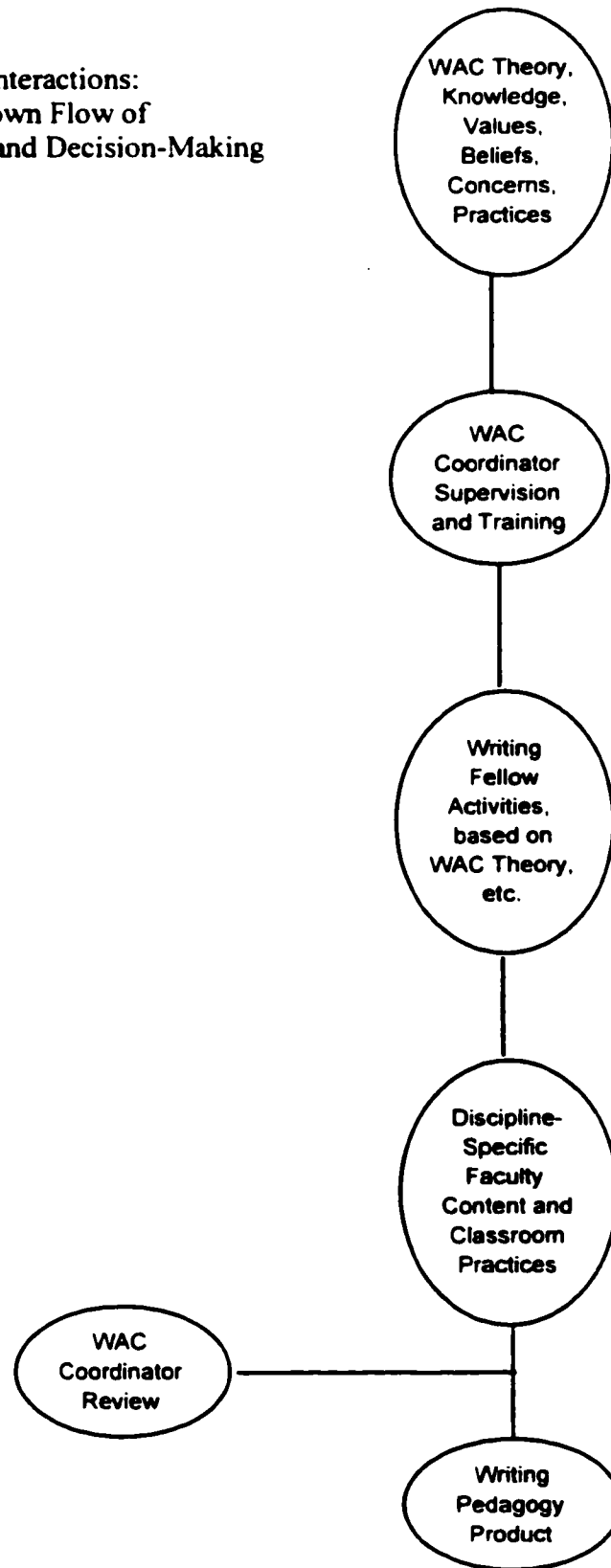


**Figure 2: Initial Interactions:
Top-Down Flow of
Power and Decision-Making**



Institutional and Personal Aspects of Development
Intersecting Through Goal-Oriented Activity

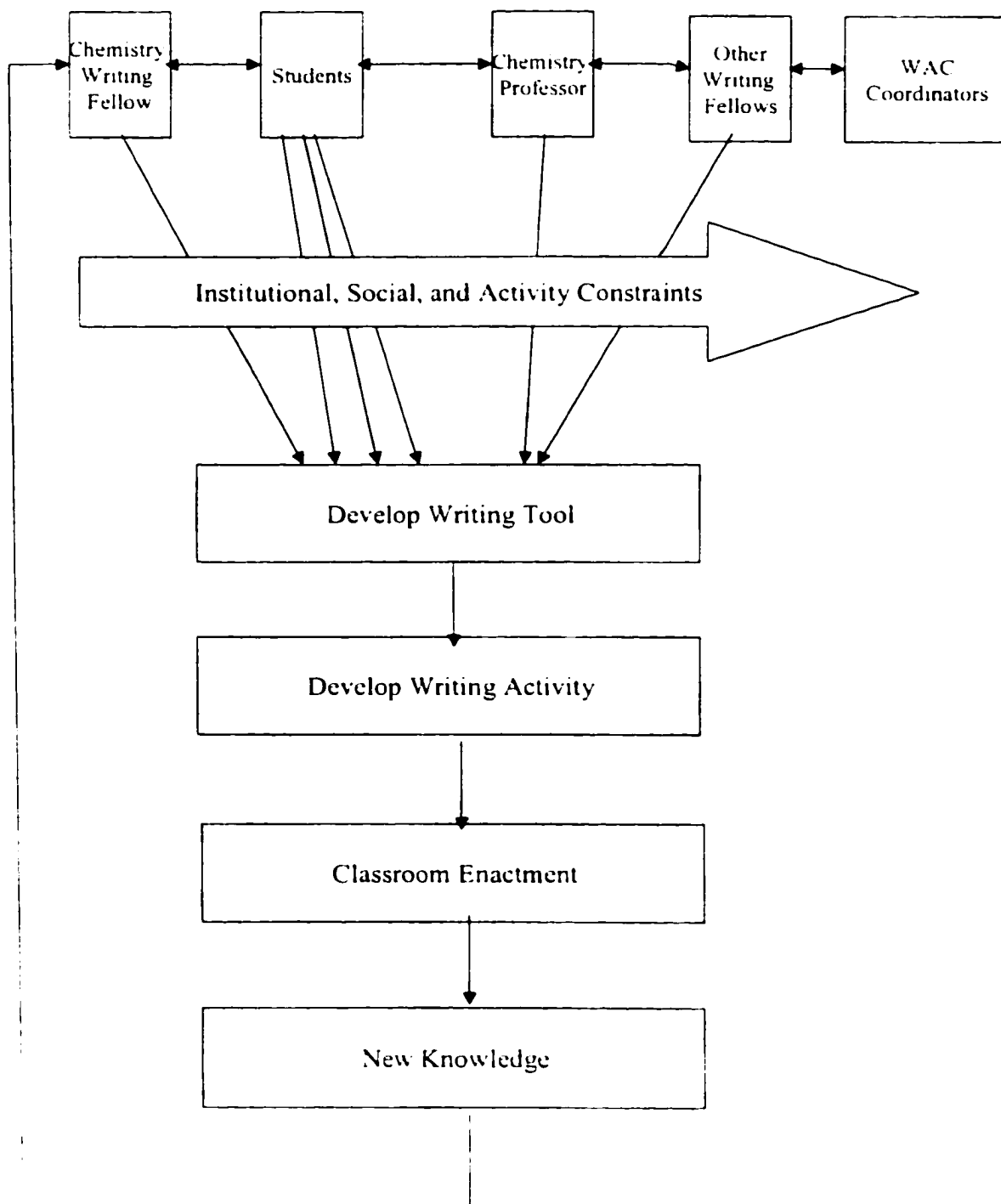
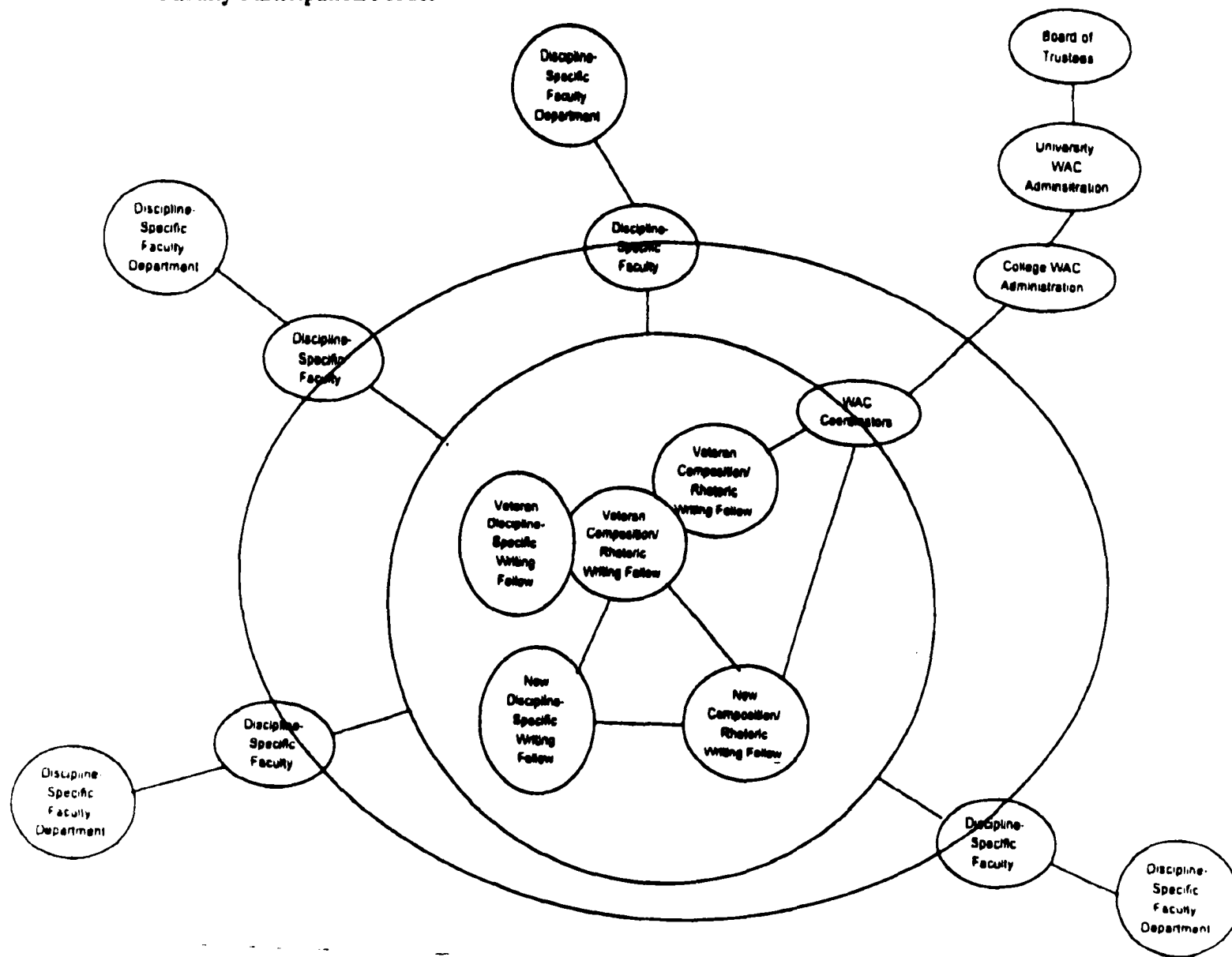


Figure 4: Transformed Structure:
Faculty Participation Model



Peer-Editing Feedback Checklist for Methods Section of Lab Report:

___ Is the aim/purpose stated at the beginning of the methods section?

___ Is enough detail given to adequately describe what was done in the experiment? If not, what is missing and why is it important to include?

MATERIALS

___ Is all necessary equipment listed? If not, what's missing?

___ Is any unnecessary equipment included in the list? What?

___ Are the items described in a specific enough manner? If not, what details are missing?

PROCEDURES

___ Are the procedures described in complete sentences?

___ Are the instructions presented in sequence (in the right order)?

___ Are all necessary steps described? If not, what's missing?

___ Are any unnecessary steps described? What?

___ Are the instructions described in your lab partners own words (paraphrased) or are they copied exactly from the lab manual?

___ If you hadn't already carried out this experiment and didn't know anything about it, could you use the information as described in this methods section to replicate (carry out in exactly the same way) this experiment? If not, why not?

CALCULATIONS

___ Are all necessary formulas provided (if any)?

STATISTICAL TESTS

___ Are statistical tests described (if they will be used)?

Writing Syllabus for Chemistry Lab I

Week	In-class exercise	Handouts	Assignment	Due date
1	Introducing lab reports: What do chemists do?	• Lyons & Shaw paper • Sheet on what chemists do	Graph of PO ₂ vs temperature (not graded)	Week 2
2	• <i>How to write an Introduction</i> • Peer review of quiz	• Model of Introduction • Peer review guidelines for Introduction • Peer review sheet and model quiz	Introduction first draft (not graded)	Week 3/4
3/4	Peer review of Introduction	• Peer review guidelines for Introduction* • Description of assignment and style sheets for APA format and web sources	• Library research for sources on metabolism • List of sources (not graded)	Week 5
5	Using references and how to write a Literature Cited section	• Models for citing sources • Citing sources exercise	Introduction final draft with citations (references) and Literature Cited section (GRADED)	Week 6
6	How to write a Methods section	• Model of Methods • Peer review guidelines for Methods	Methods first draft (not graded)	Week 7
7	Peer review of Methods	Peer review guidelines for Methods*	Methods final draft (GRADED)	Week 8
8	Data presentation and how to write a Results section	• Raw data chart • Model of Results • Peer review guidelines for Results	Results first draft (not graded)	Week 9
9	Peer review of Results section	Peer review guidelines for Results*	Results final draft (GRADED)	Week 10
10	How to write a Discussion section	• Model of Discussion • Peer review guidelines for Discussion	Discussion first draft (not graded)	Week 11
11	Peer review of Discussion section	Peer review guidelines for Discussion*	• Discussion final draft (GRADED) • Read Lyons and Shaw paper and answer questions	Week 12
12	Integrating sections of a lab report	Diagram of how sections of report are related		
13			Complete paper on designed experiment (all sections) (GRADED)	Week 14
14	How to present findings orally	Guidelines on oral presentation	• Oral presentation • On-line writing questions (EXTRA CREDIT)	Week 15

References

- Argyris, C., & Schon, D. A. (1978). *Organizational learning: A theory of action perspective*. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley.
- Berry, J. (1976). *Ecology and cultural style*. New York: Sage-Halstead.
- Bock, P. (1988). *Rethinking psychological anthropology*. New York: Freeman.
- Cole, M. and Engestrom, Y. (1993). A cultural-historical approach to distributed cognition. In G. Salomon (Ed.), *Distributed cognitions: Psychological and educational considerations*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Dodgson, M. (1991). *The management of technological learning: Lessons from a biotechnology company*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter.
- Engestrom, Y. (1987). *Learning by expanding: An activity-theoretical approach to developmental research*. Helsinki: Orienta-Konsultit.
- Engestrom, Y. (1995). Innovative organizational learning in medical and legal settings. In L. M. W. Martin, K. Nelson, and E. Tobach (Eds.), *Sociocultural psychology: Theory and practice of doing and knowing*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Fine, M. (1994). Dis-stance and other stances: Negotiations of power inside feminist research. In A. Gitlin, (Ed.) *Power and method*. New York: Routledge, 13-35.
- Freire, P. (1996). *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. New York: Continuum.
- Fulwiler, T. (1981). Writing Across the Curriculum at Michigan Tech, *Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators*, 4, 15-20.
- Garratt, B. (1990). *Creating a learning organization: A guide to leadership, learning and development*. Cambridge, MA: Director Books.
- Gaventa, J. & Cornwall, A. (2001). Power and knowledge. In, P. Reason and H. Bradbury (Eds.), *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Glick, J. (1995). Intellectual and manual labor: Implications for developmental theory. In L. M. W. Martin, K. Nelson, and E. Tobach (Eds.), *Sociocultural psychology: Theory and practice of doing and knowing*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Goodnow, J.J. (1990). The socialization of cognition: What's involved? In J.W. Stigler, R.A. Shweder, and G. Herdt (Eds.) *Cultural Psychology: Essays on comparative human development*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

- Greeno, J. G. & Middle School Mathematics Through Applications Project Group (1998). The situativity of knowing, learning, and research, *American Psychologist*, 53, 5-26.
- Henriques, J., Hollway, W., Urwin, C., Venn, C., and Walkerdine, V. (1984). (Eds.). *Changing the subject: Psychology, social regulation and subjectivity*. London: Methuen and Co.
- Lave, J. (1988). *Cognition in practice: Mind, mathematics, and culture in everyday life*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Lave, J. (1993). The practice of learning. In S. Chaiklin & J. Lave (Eds.), *Understanding practice: Perspectives on activity and context*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Lave, J. (1997). The culture of acquisition and practice of understanding. In K. Kirshner and J.A. Whitson (Eds.), *Situated cognition: Social, semiotic, and psychological perspectives* (pp. 57-70). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Lave, J. & Wenger, E. (1991). *Situated learning: Legitimate peripheral participation*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Leont'ev, a. (1978). *Activity, consciousness, and personality*. Englewood Cliffs, NJ: Prentice Hall.
- Linehan, C. & McCarthy, J. (2000). Positioning in practice: Understanding participation in the social world, *Journal for the Theory of Social Behaviour*, 30, 435-453.
- Linehan, C. & McCarthy, J. (2001). Reviewing the "community of practice" metaphor: An analysis of control relations in a primary school classroom, *Mind, Culture, and Activity*, 8, 129-147.
- Maimon, E. (2000). Preface. In S. H. McLeod & E. Maimon, (Eds.), *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*. <http://aw.colostate.edu/books/>. Originally published by Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992.
- McLeod, S. H. & Maimon, E. (2000). Clearing the Air: WAC Myths and Realities. *College English*, 62(5), 573-583.
- McLeod, S. H. & Soven, M. (2000). *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*. <http://aw.colostate.edu/books/>. Originally published by Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992.
- Miles, M.B. and Huberman, A.M. (1984). *Qualitative data analysis: A sourcebook of new methods*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage.

- Nelson, K. (1995). From spontaneous to scientific concepts: Continuities and discontinuities from childhood to adulthood. In L. M. W. Martin, K. Nelson, and E. Tobach (Eds.), *Sociocultural psychology: Theory and practice of doing and knowing*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Newman, D., Griffin, P., and Cole, M. (1989). *The construction zone: Working for cognitive change in school*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.
- Pea, R.D. (1993). Practices of distributed intelligence and designs for education. In L. M. W. Martin, K. Nelson, and E. Tobach (Eds.), *Sociocultural psychology: Theory and practice of doing and knowing*. NY: Cambridge University Press.
- Reason, P. & Bradbury, H. (2001). *Handbook of Action Research: Participative Inquiry and Practice*. London: Sage Publications.
- Rittenberg, W. (1985). Mary; patient as emergent symbol on a pediatric ward: The objectification of meaning in social process. In R. A. Hahn & A. D. Gaines (Eds.), *Physicians of western medicine: Anthropological approaches to theory and practice*. Dordrecht: Reidel.
- Rogoff, B. (1990). *Apprenticeship in thinking: Cognitive development in social context*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Rogoff, B., Turkkanis, C. G., & Bartlett, L. (2001). *Learning together: Children and adults in a school community*. MA: Oxford University Press.
- Rosaldo, R. (1989). *Culture and truth: The re-making of social analysis*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Russell, D. R. (1991). *Writing in the academic disciplines, 1870-1990: A curricular history*. IL: Southern Illinois University Press.
- Schwartz, T. (1978). The size and shape of culture. In F. Barth (Ed.), *Scale and social organization*. Oslo: Universitetsforlaget.
- Schwartz, T. (1990). The structure of national cultures. In P. Funke (Ed.), *Understanding the USA*. Tübingen: Gunter Narr.
- Scribner, S. (1985). Vygotsky's uses of history. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *Culture, communication, and cognition: Vygotskian perspectives*. Cambridge, UK: Cambridge University Press.
- Senge, P. M. (1990). *The fifth discipline: The art and practice of the learning organization*. New York: Doubleday.

- Spellmeyer, K. (1989). A common ground: The essay in the Academy, *College English*, 3, 266.
- Solis, J. (2002). The (trans)formation of illegality as an identity: A study of the organization of undocumented Mexican immigrants and their children in New York City. Unpublished doctoral dissertation.
- Stetsenko, A. (2002). Knowledge as activity: The lessons of participating in a collaborative project. In D. Robbins and A. Stetsenko (Eds.), *Voices within Vygotsky's Non-classical psychology: Past, present, future*. NY: Nova Science Publishers, Inc.
- Stetsenko, A. (under review). The self in cultural-historical activity theory: Reclaiming the unity of social and individual dimensions.
- Stocking, G. (1968). *Race, culture, and evolution*. New York: Free Press.
- Thaiss, C (1998). *The Harcourt-Brace Guide to Writing Across the Curriculum*. New York: Harcourt-Brace.
- Strauss, A.L. and Corbin, J.M. (1997). *Grounded theory in practice*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Valsiner, J. (1987). Culture and the development of children's action: A cultural-historical theory of developmental psychology. NY: Wiley.
- Valsiner, J. (1997). Constructing the personal through the cultural: Redundant organization of psychological development. In E. Amsel and K. A. Renninger (Eds.), *Change and Development: Issues of Theory, Method, and Application*. Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1978). *Mind in society*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- Vygotsky, L. S. (1981). The genesis of higher mental functions. In J. V. Wertsch (Ed.), *The concept of activity in Soviet psychology*. Armonk, NY: M. E. Sharpe.
- Vygotsky, L. S. & Luria, A. (1994). Tool and symbol in child development. In R. van der Veer and J Valsiner (Eds.), *The Vygotsky reader*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell Publishers.
- Walkerdine, V. (1997). Redefining the subject in situated cognition theory. In K. Kirshner & J.A. Whitson (Eds.), *Situated cognition: Social, semiotic, and psychological perspectives* (pp. 57-70). Mahwah, NJ: Lawrence Erlbaum Associates, Inc.
- Walvoord, B. E. (2000). Getting started. In S. H. McLeod & E. Maimon, (Eds.), *Writing Across the Curriculum: A Guide to Developing Programs*.

<http://aw.colostate.edu/books/>. Originally published by Newbury Park, CA: Sage, 1992.

Wenger, E. (1998). *Communities of practice*. Cambridge, England: Cambridge University Press.

Young, A. & Fulwiler, T. (Eds.) (1986). *Writing Across the Disciplines: Research into Practice*. Portsmouth, NH: Boynton.