

To: Julie Husband  
From: David M. Grant  
Re: Writing Coordination Summary  
Date: December 4, 2014

As you requested in our meeting today, I am providing you with a brief summary of my observations as Writing Program Coordinator and a sketch of what I anticipate will be the major projects upon my return in Fall 2015. I hope this can be helpful to you and any possible faculty member who may serve as interim coordinator this spring.

This fall, I observed and mentored our three teaching assistants (Elizabeth Collins, Jordan Ludwig, and Marci Swank) as well as four of our instructors, Corrine Holke-Farnam, Caroline Ledebor, Jon Stull, and Deb Young. For comparison, last spring I observed Mason Beets, Kim Groninga, Bill Koch, Travis Landhuis, Heather Patrick, Nick Roos, and Vicki Simpson. So, seven seems to be a good number of observations per semester. Each observation involved direct discussion with the instructor before hand, an explicit request for that lesson's goals and objectives, and a written response to each instructor that describes what was observed and any suggestions or feedback. All of these, with the exception of Ms. Ludwig's ENGL 1002 course, were for ENGL 1005. I made it clear to instructors teaching UNIV 1000 that the Department has no real interest in observing those courses at this time.

Looking ahead, I think it is important that we focus on assessment. With Jim O'Loughlin proposing an electronic portfolio system for Critical Writing About Literature, we might use that data set to begin our investigation. It could begin with some comparison to our 2013 College Writing & Research assessment, though it may also go beyond that since the course is rather different, has slightly different purposes, etc. I think it would be appropriate for the Department Writing Committee to begin this conversation and begin planning. This may also help us make a distinction between composition *qua* composition and composition serving literary analysis. As we have discussed, I think this may help us better talk to students, advisors, and administrators about the importance of LAC 1A and facilitating writing in various contexts.

This could, perhaps, lead to faculty development in this area. I have attempted to note in my observations where instructors tend to over-rely on literature and literary analysis as well as in staff meetings. As I believe I have mentioned to you, Deanne Gute has hired students from across the colleges to staff the Writing Center because English students were not conversant in the kinds of genres coming in. I have talked about this with staff, though I am not yet sure of what, if any, impact that has had. It is still too early to tell!

Another areas for faculty development could include ESL writing and/ or working with international students. I would like to see some collaboration between CIEP and the writing staff on this. And I have attached to this memo a statement from the *Conference on College Composition and Communication* regarding administration, coordination, and teaching students whose first language is not English. There is an excellent source list at the end of that I hope you might share with Jolene and Travis.

A third development area might be about creating “themes” for composition courses. Some instructors do so, but most do not. Themes could help signal greater inclusion with the university community, ways we address varied student interests, and that we meet the more practical, day-to-day needs of students.

Finally, as I mentioned, we may be reaping the whirlwind of our decision to create writing-enhanced sections of Introduction to Literature. That was done in response to a backlog of students needing LAC 1A, but we have gone from feast to famine!

If you need any further information from me, please let me know.

Dvd