

June 28, 2020

Dear Dean Bizup,

The CAS Writing Program seeks an exemption from the Learn *from* Anywhere requirement for all classes its faculty will teach in fall 2020. The program believes that all WR teachers should be able to choose to teach their entire class remotely and that those who choose to come to campus should not be bound by the LfA hybrid rotation model. Attached are a variety of documents that make the case that an exemption will allow us to provide our students the best possible educational experience:

—An overview of pedagogical and other reasons that LfA is a deeply problematic choice for writing classes, along with a list of peer institutions that are taking a more flexible approach to the fall 2020 semester. **(pp 3-6)**

—A June 12 letter from Senior Lecturer Jessica Kent that shows how requiring our program to adopt the LfA pedagogy would undermine our community's shared values and violate the principles of BU's mission statement. **(7-11)**

—A June 5 letter from Senior Lecturers Pary Fassihi and Jason Prentice that shows that LfA is neither pedagogically appropriate nor technologically feasible for WR courses. **(12-16)**

—A May 25 letter endorsed by over 100 Writing Program teachers and administrators, calling, among other things, for the program to have “significant authority in developing the best delivery strategies to achieve their learning goals.” **(17-19)**

—Schematic illustrations of (1) the views that the teacher, classroom students, and remote students would have in the LfA synchronous hybrid learning (SHL) approach as well as (2) the views that the teacher, classroom students, and remote students would have in an all on-line class. These illustrations seek to show the many focal points that will compete for the attention of all participants in LfA course, in contrast to the much clearer focus and engagement enabled by an all-online classroom. What is not shown in these drawings, and harder to illustrate, is the even greater challenge of dealing with audio in an SHL writing classroom with students and teachers in masks; nor do these drawings capture the anxiety and frustration that participants in a discussion-based SHL class (both in the classroom and outside of it) will likely experience. **(20-21)**

—The “Joint Statement in Response to the Covid-19 Pandemic” from the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) and Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) which notes that, because writing classes “include significant levels of interaction, group work, and peer-to-peer discussion... holding classes on-line rather than in person is the safest instructional approach for reducing exposure to and circulation of the novel coronavirus”; and that “instructors should have agency to adjust their teaching context in order to better meet the needs of their students and to maintain a safe employment environment.” **(22-27)**

—A bibliography compiled by Senior Lecturer Jason Prentice that shows the rich research that can inform teaching writing on-line—in stark contrast to the limited published scholarship on synchronous hybrid learning, especially as it pertains to teaching writing. (28-42)

You will already have seen some of these documents, and will be familiar with many of the arguments being made here. A few of the claims, taken singly, can be countered, of course. The paucity of studies of SHL in writing seminars, for example, does not mean some elements of this approach will be useless in meeting current challenges—but we can use them effectively only if we are accorded the authority and agency called for in these documents, an authority and agency that Writing Program faculty have earned in our long history as pedagogical leaders who have repeatedly and successfully adapted our practices to the changing needs of our students and of the University. The most recent instance of this was our successful transition to on-line learning in March; the lessons from that experience are currently being refined by the fifteen members of the Writing Program’s Contingency Preparation Team, which is creating resources to ensure that our on-line teaching is even more effective this fall.

Taken together, and even setting aside the ethical problems with requiring teachers to be on campus, the arguments set forth in this application—considering pedagogical effectiveness and educational mission; faculty autonomy and morale; and technological feasibility—clearly show that the *Learn from Anywhere* approach is an inferior mode for teaching writing. President Brown himself noted at a June 15 Faculty Council meeting with him and Provost Morrison that discussion-type classes are unlikely to work well with the *LfA* model. Indeed, requiring WR classes to hold synchronous hybrid classes in rotations—the heart of *LfA* as we understand it—will severely erode our ability to help students achieve the learning outcomes of these courses.

Granting us an exemption from *LfA* will enable us to deploy the full talents of our faculty to meet the demands of the coming semester, and it will also renew the spirit of collaboration and shared enterprise that have helped the Writing Program become such an integral part of BU undergraduates’ experience. Our classes will be more essential than ever this year, and the Writing Program administration and its faculty are eager to work with CAS to continue making the WR experience a rich and vital one for our students.

Sincerely yours,



Chris Walsh
Director

OVERVIEW

- **The Writing Program's mission** is to teach our students processes, skills and habits of mind as well as knowledge, and central to that mission is constant peer review, small group discussions and guided workshops. Under LfA students and teacher cannot get within six feet of one another or exchange papers, so all of this will have to happen online via Google Docs or some other program. Small group discussions with masked, socially distanced students led by a masked socially distant teacher will not provide anything close to what is possible on-line. LfA is suited for large lecture courses where a moderator can manage the online technology and help an instructor engage questions or concerns from this cohort. In-person teaching of WR seminars will bring risk without reward.
- **A sense of community** is crucial for WR classes, and that requires students to develop bonds with one another and with a trusted faculty member. LfA will likely undercut such bonds. Some sections will have as few as four students able to attend a class at one time, and such students will be able to attend only once every two or even three weeks; few if any Writing Program courses will have rooms big enough for all their students. In addition to the lack of a shared experience by students in SHL, research indicates that both cohorts (in-person and on-line students) can feel neglected or excluded as a result of faculty trying to address particular concerns of a particular cohort.
- **Achieving equity** in LfA will be difficult for some of the same reasons cultivating community will be difficult. Furthermore, training in and use of technology will vary dramatically across students and teachers, and in-class group work in the LfA model would invariably segregate in-person and online students, leading to separate and unequal learning experiences.
- **Technology such as microphones will be of only limited use** in facilitating oral communication between in-person class members, on-line students, and instructor, and an added camera will have little impact on the problems associated with communicating orally.
- **Cognitive overload**, as Center for Teaching and Learning Director Dr. Deborah Breen noted several times in her CTL introduction of LfA, will occur routinely for both faculty and students because of the efforts required to manage multiple technologies simultaneously. [Research](#) shows that when students experience a stress response, their ability to create long-term memory is impaired. An online class will be consistent and will minimize factors that lead to stress, ensuring that students are best able to retain what they learn.

- **LfA will require significant additional time and labor** from faculty, since many activities will not work the same for both cohorts of students. Under LfA, the need to prepare distinct instruction and material for in-person, online synchronous, and online asynchronous delivery will dramatically increase the prep time for each lesson, expanding faculty workload beyond what faculty is compensated for. Additionally, the need to clean surfaces between classes will reduce teaching time, as will the time spent setting up and managing technology — multiple windows will be needed for online Zoom students, power point materials, readings or handouts projected to in-person students.

- **Research recommends moderators** to help manage technology in the SHL classroom, but (1) moderators are not available for seminar-size courses and (2), if moderators were permitted, an added person would further limit the number of actual students in the classes.

- **WR courses include many ESL students** who will have their own sets of challenges in a hybrid environment. Many of our international students will need to take their courses (ESL or non-ESL) remotely. ESL students often have difficulty participating in conversations during a regular in-person class; having to do so in an SHL class will make it even more challenging. This will put those students at an increased disadvantage compared to their peers. In addition, the ESL students who may physically be in class will likely have a difficult time communicating with the instructor and other students due to potential pronunciation issues, which become all the more challenging by wearing masks and sitting 6 feet apart.

- **Ethical arguments** against LfA have been repeatedly made, but our faculty would like to emphasize a few key points as well as some related considerations of **public, personal, and family health**. These points are not strictly pedagogical, but they nonetheless impinge upon our teachers' ability to do their job. Because high population density on campus provides risk of a COVID spike to the larger Boston area, as well as locations to which our students travel or return, moving more classes to remote delivery is the ethical choice for our own community (including essential staff) as well as for surrounding communities. While the University is taking extensive measures to minimize risks on campus, it has not provided data on air changes per hour (ACH) in classroom buildings, and it cannot do anything to protect faculty, students, or staff when they travel on public transportation. The role of Human Resources in reviewing medical records and deciding on accommodation is deeply troublesome, both in its intrusiveness and in its failure to consider mental health concerns and the fact that anxiety and stress related to teaching while fearful for one's physical safety will undermine pedagogy. Finally, childcare responsibilities and K-12 schools plans for rotations of school-age children will make regular in-person attendance impossible for some faculty to sustain; other faculty are primary caregivers for people who do not live in the home but who are at high risk of complications and death from COVID-19. Such situations have not been given due consideration in Learn *from* Anywhere planning.

Peer Institutions

The following is a sample of peer institutions with open urban campuses like BU's that have allowed greater flexibility to their faculty than BU has.

Emory University

“We want to stress that faculty, staff, and students will have options for returning to campus or interacting remotely. Our goal is for everyone to feel comfortable participating in the community and to have options that reflect your preferences for continuing your education, conducting research and teaching, or serving our students.”

<http://www.emory.edu/forward/on-campus/message-from-emory-leadership.html>

George Washington University

“We also recognize that some faculty will need to remain off campus and some will choose to do so.”

<https://campusadvisories.gwu.edu/first-look-fall-2020-back-campus-plan>

Northeastern University

“For those faculty and staff with a preference to work fully remotely, at least at the start of the fall semester, there are two routes to pursue. Faculty and staff who have a medical or mental health-related concern, diagnosis, or illness, or who are in a high-risk category per the [CDC guidelines](#), and wish to request to work remotely, should contact Shana Feggins at HRM_ADA@northeastern.edu in Human Resources Management. For faculty and staff wishing to work remotely for another COVID-19 related reason, requests will be considered on a case-by-case basis, and any reasonable request will be honored. The goal is that returning faculty and staff feel comfortable doing so.”

<https://news.northeastern.edu/coronavirus/university-messages/update-on-fall-2020-reopening-plans/>

Northwestern University

“As we have previously announced, the planned return of faculty and staff will be phased over the coming months, and we will continue to err on the side of flexibility. Although we plan to welcome students back in the fall, we anticipate that a significant portion of fall instruction will be conducted remotely. Our goal is to offer the most stable, high-quality curriculum possible, enabling students to make appropriate progress toward their degrees in the fall. In our message to students, we will emphasize that these decisions will be tailored to each discipline, school and department.

<https://www.northwestern.edu/coronavirus-covid-19-updates/developments/faculty-fall-2020-academic-update.html>

Syracuse University

“If a faculty or staff member has demonstrated the ability to perform productively remotely, supervisors or department leaders may consider extending such arrangements. These arrangements can be made in full or for partial days/weeks.”

<https://hr.syr.edu/return-to-campus-faculty-staff/staffing-and-alternative-work-arrangements>

University of Southern California

Will fall 2020 classes take place in person?

Our decisions for the fall semester require that we remain nimble, especially as COVID-19 cases in Southern California continue to rise. We do anticipate some in-person instruction, but reducing on-campus density in buildings, outdoor spaces and during activities is necessary to ensure everyone's safety and to comply with LA County's guidelines.

The semester will begin on Aug. 17, 2020, which is a week earlier than originally scheduled. All classes, including final exams, will end by Thanksgiving.

How will the university determine which classes will take place in person?

Each academic unit will determine the method of instruction while adhering to constraints based on the gathering size, physical distancing requirements and other relevant guidelines.”

<https://coronavirus.usc.edu/students/academics-frequently-asked-questions/>

[A Letter from Dr. Jessica Kent, Senior Lecturer 12 June 2020]

Dear Provost Morrison, Dean Sclaroff and Dean Bizup,

I write to you as a newly-promoted Senior Lecturer in the Writing Program, after five years of full time teaching in the department and an additional eight years teaching as a TF, GWF and part-time instructor of record. I have been a member of the Boston University community since 2005, earning my MA and PhD from the English Department. BU is my home. I am passionate about teaching, constantly pursuing professional development and departmental service to help improve my own pedagogy and that of my department; for example, I am finishing a two-year term as Curriculum Coordinator, have served on a Hub committee to redesign our foundational research course (WR 150), and I am currently a member of the Diversity Equity and Inclusion subcommittee on Curriculum and Policy in the WP.

I explain my background here because I must raise concerns about the *Learn from Anywhere* plan, and many of these concerns are driven by my experiences as a teacher and a member of the BU and WP community. It is my view that the *Learn from Anywhere* approach, as it has been presented to the faculty and larger community so far, is antithetical to the values and goals of Boston University, which I try to embody in my pedagogy every day.

The Writing Program letter that you received on May 15 (which I helped create) has already argued “academic units should have significant authority in developing the best delivery strategies to achieve their learning goals.” The June 5 letter from Pary Fassihi and Jason Prentice elaborated on this point, providing researched and well-reasoned support for the argument that *LfA* is not a good fit for the Writing Program, specifically. You will have also read the open letter from the BU ethics professors Russell Powell and Daniel Star, and I agree with their reasoning as well, though we should extend their argument to the ethics of exposing essential staff, as well as faculty, to a packed college campus. I suggest you also read the petition by the Accessible Campus Action Alliance if you have not already done so:
<https://sites.google.com/view/accesscampusalliance>.

After reading all of the available BU materials on *LfA*, along with scholarship on the subject, I am certain that I cannot apply hybrid flex learning to my discussion-based, group-work-intensive classes without lowering the quality of instruction. Under normal circumstances, these classes take full advantage of face to face classroom engagement, and my students bond as an intellectual community over the course of the semester. Under normal circumstances, each class period is made up of a combination of activities, including group presentations, short interactive lectures (some by students), and – most often and importantly – guided group work with their peers as they brainstorm, compose, and edit their writing. Each class period is different, with students moving around the classroom, shifting desks into different configurations (clusters, circles, two facing rows), writing together on the blackboard, gathering around papers scattered on the floor or posted on the walls, chatting with different partners. Writing Program classes are dynamic, personal, and highly interactive. My students often remark that their writing classes are their favorite class of the semester.

I wish that we could have this experience in Fall 2020, but as we all know, that is an impossibility. I can imagine some of the ways my classroom might look in September. I will be wearing a mask at all times, and I hope and pray that my students will as well. Students will not

be able to see my face at all, except perhaps in remote office hours. I may be wearing other PPE, as necessary, and perhaps I will be behind plexiglass. It will be difficult for us to hear and understand each other, and I imagine the synchronous remote students will have an even harder time following the in-class discussion. Students who speak English as a second language may find it harder to make themselves understood, putting them at a frustrating disadvantage. Even more upsetting, we cannot get within six feet of one another. My in-person platoons will not be able to get close enough to get into small groups and work quietly alongside other groups. At best, they can yell at each other across the room. It is highly likely that we will basically be holding remote lessons while we happen to be together in the same room. My in-class platoon will be editing Google Documents on screen to replace our typical face-to-face workshop formats. If this occurs, then there is no reason for us to be in the same room together. We are increasing our personal and community risk of contracting and spreading COVID-19, with absolutely no benefit to student learning.

In fact, a fully remote class will provide greater student engagement. We can laugh and bond together on a more equal footing. We can use technology creatively to share not only information and lessons but also humor, creativity and humanity. This is crucial during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is accompanied by higher visibility of the racial pandemic that continues to plague our nation. Let me be clear: I cannot wait to get back into the classroom with my students. I can't wait for us to pass our papers around in a circle doing round-robin editing. I can't wait to hear the raucous laughter as students play a version of musical chairs, delivering two-minute elevator pitches to one another. I love face to face teaching and all of the opportunities it affords. We will not have face to face teaching this fall. We are unlikely to have it this spring. Without this option, the next best choice is fully remote classes, at least for small seminars.

Without any reason to think the contrary, I have no choice but to assume that LfA is purely motivated by financial concerns. I too am extremely concerned about the university's financial future, not only insofar as it impacts me personally, but also as it affects part-time lecturers, funding for working-class and first-generation college students, and the continued ability of Boston University to perform its mission. Here is an excerpt from the BU mission statement:

Boston University is an international, comprehensive, private research university, committed to educating students to be reflective, resourceful individuals ready to live, adapt, and lead in an interconnected world. Boston University is committed to generating new knowledge to benefit society.

We remain dedicated to our founding principles: that higher education should be accessible to all and that research, scholarship, artistic creation, and professional practice should be conducted in the service of the wider community – local and international. These principles endure in the University's insistence on the value of diversity, in its tradition and standards of excellence, and in its dynamic engagement with the City of Boston and the world.

As I mentioned above, the Learn *from* Anywhere approach is antithetical to the values and goals of BU. I will briefly outline some of the reasons why, though this is not an exhaustive list.

1. Value: "traditions and standards of excellence"

The issues that fall under this value are at least three-fold. First, BU has presented *LfA* to faculty, students and the larger campus community without supporting their decision with evidence. The decision to return to campus life this fall, without a vaccine or treatment for COVID-19, is so impactful and has such widespread and serious implications that it must draw on deep, thoughtful interdisciplinary research in health and human services, medicine, education, ethics, business, engineering and many other fields. If BU has not had time to conduct interdisciplinary research, then we should by default teach remotely until such work can be completed. If it has conducted such research, then that research should be reflected in its communications to explain and justify the decision.

Second, BU is not directly addressing the counterarguments presented by opponents to *LfA*. I have attended numerous town halls this spring and summer including extensive conversation with my own department's administration. To date, no one has responded with any specific, convincing rebuttals to any of the concerns I have or have heard from others. The resounding chorus is "BU is a residential university" committed to "residential learning," and "we will look into" any concerns. This impenetrable wall of vagueness is troubling. Surely the working groups and task forces who have made this sweeping and universal choice have thought through all of these counterarguments and concerns, have they not? It would appear the answer is no, since no one is able to address them.

Third, BU is engaging in a large-scale experiment without the consent of the subjects. In response to their letter, Pary Fassihi and Jason Prentice received the feedback from upper administration that BU is participating in a "natural experiment" necessitated by these unprecedented circumstances. As you know, experiments with human subjects require approval from the IRB as well as informed consent from the subjects. Subjects also have the option to decline participation in any experiments.

In my experience as a student and as a faculty member, BU has always had very high "standards of excellence." I cannot imagine that individual faculty members or the university as a whole would approve of these practices in their students – unsubstantiated claims, lack of research, blindness to counterarguments, or unethical research practices. BU is in fact modeling a very troubling set of alternative values to its students this fall.

2. Value: "committed to educating students to be reflective, resourceful individuals"

Learn *from* Anywhere meets the needs and desires of our consumers, but it does not treat those consumers – hereafter I will call them "students" – with respect for their intellect and maturity. Students want a residential campus experience. Of course they do – so do I! However, with *LfA* or with remote classes, students will not be getting what they want. Forced adherence to *LfA* will lower the quality of instruction in some classes, and I fear the university will face a backlash.

If we are to treat students with respect and model how they can grow to be "reflective, resourceful individuals," then BU should be sharing all of the

information with them. They should have a good sense of what to expect when they come back to campus. They will not be able to gather together as they always have to study, participate in clubs, play sports, or rush Greek societies. They will not be able to party and socialize. They will not be able to hang out all night in one another's tiny dorm rooms. They will be sitting in strangely restricted and formal classroom environments, doing most of their work online anyway. They should understand that designing remote classes is more difficult than teaching in person, and that professors want to do so out of real pedagogical and ethical concern. They should also understand the health risks of returning to campus: to them, to their social networks, and to the faculty, staff and larger community.

While I share concern about the university's financial health, I worry that this oversight will backfire. BU should be educating students about the reality of the situation rather than assuming they simply want what they want and will not enroll without a residential component. If students have unreasonable expectations for this fall, and if students receive non-optimal teaching in a forced Learn *from* Anywhere setting, then BU is likely to face very real and very serious financial repercussions later.

3. Value: "research, scholarship, artistic creation and professional practice should be conducted in the service of the wider community – local and international"

The inconsistency of residential learning with this stated value is obvious and glaring. If BU's priority were service to the local and international community, then we would be minimizing density on campus in all possible ways. As my colleague Senior Lecturer Melanie Smith stated in her own letter, "Boston University is not a castle surrounded by a moat." By increasing density on campus with mandated classroom time, BU is also increasing the risk to surrounding communities as well as in any communities that our students may travel to or call home.

4. Value: "insistence on the value of diversity"

I will list four issues related to equity, although I am sure the list could be longer. The first relates to the point I made in #3: COVID-19 disproportionately affects majority-minority areas, both here in the greater Boston area and elsewhere. By disregarding BU's impact on the surrounding community, the university is declaring a lack of awareness and care for people of color. BU will require faculty to apply (and presumably provide documentation of "high risk status") for exemption from LfA; this practice also raises disparities. People of color face discrimination in medical spaces and may find it more difficult or time-consuming to receive a diagnosis than a white patient would. Therefore, requiring applications for exemptions may be disproportionately harmful to faculty and staff of color.

Second, LfA is disproportionately harmful to working class and contingent employees of BU. Many faculty and staff may feel that they cannot apply for a

needed exemption, whether because they cannot do without the income or because they fear for their job security.

Third, *LfA* raises concerns about how the university is treating community members with chronic illness or disabilities. If faculty must apply for exemption from residential teaching, BU is asking them to disclose private medical information about their health or ability status, which may put them at risk of bias (conscious or unconscious) from their supervisors, colleagues or students. Faculty must be able to choose remote teaching if they have a disability of any kind (visible or invisible) that makes residential teaching untenable, whether or not that disability is on the CDC's "high risk" list, and they should not have to disclose the details of that situation to BU administration. It is worth noting that the BU Student Health Center has stopped providing doctor's notes to justify student absences out of respect for their privacy; the university should extend the same respect to its faculty.

Fourth, Boston University's insistence on a return to residential learning this fall is insensitive to a number of mental-health concerns. To my knowledge, the university has not acknowledged that COVID-19 is an ongoing mass trauma that will have mental health repercussions for people in all stakeholder groups. Some with pre-existing conditions are adjusting their medications, a process that results in instability and side-effects. Others are seeking behavioral health treatment for the first time, struggling to find resources in an already stressed tele-health system. You must take these issues into account. Just as one faculty member cannot come to campus because they suffer from COPD, another faculty member should not be forced to come to campus if their mental health will be put at risk by the added stress of the complicated and labor-intensive *LfA* model, not to mention the added stress of exposing themselves and their close contacts to potential exposure every day they come to campus.

In light of these concerns and those expressed by my colleagues and others, I join my voice to the chorus calling for remote learning or, if that is not possible, for the autonomy of each faculty member to decide whether they will return to on-campus teaching this fall. Thank you very much for taking the time to read this.

Sincerely,

Jessica Kent, PhD
Senior Lecturer
Curriculum Coordinator
CAS Writing Program
Boston University

[From Senior Lecturers Pary Fassihi and Jason Prentice 5 June 2020]

Dear Dean Sclaroff, Dean Bizup, and Vice President Schroeder,

We write to express serious concern about the pedagogical value and technical feasibility of BU's Learn *from* Anywhere plan for Fall 2020, specifically in relation to the large number of courses taught in the CAS Writing Program. While our concerns are not isolated to pedagogical and technical matters -- we are far from persuaded that the current plan is either safe or ethical (our ethical concerns are addressed by BU ethics professors Star and Powell [here](#)) -- we restrict our comments in this letter to areas where we can speak from professional expertise and experience¹. Together, we have been among the leaders at BU in innovative and effective teaching with technology at the undergraduate level. We routinely provide assistance to faculty and academic staff within and beyond our program. Based on our experience, on our review of the scholarly literature, and on contingencies we anticipate for Fall 2020, we believe it will be impossible for faculty in the CAS Writing Program to teach effectively within BU's current LfA plan. Accordingly, we support the [Writing Program faculty's recent statement](#) (shared with Deans Sclaroff and Bizup on Tuesday, May 15) that "academic units should have significant authority in developing the best delivery strategies to achieve their learning goals." This letter expands on that specific point.

BU's Learn *from* Anywhere model is a form of what is generally called synchronous hybrid learning (SHL). Neither of us has direct experience with SHL. However, based on our review of the literature, we have numerous concerns:

- SHL is a new instructional/learning model -- even in comparison with purely online learning. According to the most recent comprehensive literature review, "there are few studies that have investigated its use and effectiveness," and research on this model is "in its infancy," with most studies dating back no farther than 2013 (Raes et al. 2019).
- This model of instruction requires more technologies and thus more technical know-how than either traditional in-person *or* purely online instruction -- for both instructors *and* students. Thus, the necessity of using multiple technologies simultaneously requires not only technical training for faculty and students, but also a comparable shift in pedagogy -- a shift that has been described as "radical" (Raes et al. 2019).
- Teachers of SHL courses must be able to deal with "a heavy mental load [. . .] simultaneously manag[ing] two cohorts of students, multiple streams of information and the technology, all while teaching the subject matter." (Raes et al. 2019) Frequently, "the

¹ Pary has extensive experience in implementing technology in education and working with CTL and various departments across BU. She is the CAS Faculty Consultant on Digital Learning Modules. In that capacity, she has been working closely with faculty members within the Writing Program and across the university and has led an \$87K multi-year grant focused on creating flipped learning modules for the Program and the University at large. Jason has led the development of three new courses that confer Hub units in Digital/Multimedia Expression and has developed and led multi-day faculty workshops that have served as models for more general workshops offered by CTL. For each of the past two years, he has served as DME Coordinator for CAS Writing and the Core Curriculum, and each of those years he has been nominated for the Gitner Award for Innovation in Teaching with Technology.

involvement of remote students [. . .] slow[s] down the lesson or interfere[s] with face-to-face students' interaction opportunities" (Bower 2014, p.5), and in-person students may feel "neglected when teacher[s] spent much time solving the technical problems" of online students (Huang 2018). Conversely, online students may feel "excluded from the chief class" (Huang 2018) and may struggle to participate in the most basic ways, particularly in seminar-style discussions. For several reasons, it may be challenging for online students to get the attention of those in the physical classroom: the video camera may be positioned so it captures only the front of the class and not the faces of in-person students (which, when visible, could provide cues about when to speak); there may be a lag in video and audio transmissions; and the voices of online students may be distorted when broadcast to the in-person classroom.

- With the increased reliance on technology (at minimum, a room outfitted with at least one omnidirectional mic, a mounted video camera, video projection equipment, and tools such as video-/web-conferencing software and digital whiteboards of some sort), chances of technological failure increase. Technologically, the weakest link is the audio mic(s) in the physical classroom, which must pick up the voices of the instructor and in-person students and broadcast the voices of online students: "Capturing teacher and students' face-to-face discussions so that it can be broadcast to remote students, particularly without background noise, is difficult... If these conversations are not captured with adequate fidelity it will result in remote students not being able to follow discussions, quickly leading to disengagement" (Bower et al. 2014). The entire system can also be brought down in other ways, such as by faulty internet connections.
- The literature seems unanimous that SHL courses increase instructor workload (Raes et al. 2019, Wiles and Ball 2013). Therefore (according to the most extended study found), "adequate workload allowance needs to be provided to teachers teaching in blended synchronous mode to account for the extra time commitment it requires during preparation" (Bower et al. 2014).
- Because of the mental load the SHL instructor operates under during class and because of the tech-heavy set-up, instructors -- especially novice instructors -- should be assisted by a "room controller" who manages the hardware, troubleshoots technical difficulties as they arise, and deals with other issues unrelated to the course topic (Raes et al. 2019).

Even under ideal circumstances, the above considerations should give one pause before adopting the SHL model. However, this fall at BU, each of the challenges described above will almost certainly be magnified by contingencies beyond anyone's control:

- In addition to being a new and relatively untested instructional modality, SHL has for the most part been implemented in medium-sized lecture courses. In the scholarship we have read, all of the courses studied ran for at least 75 minutes, and most focused on skill-based or professionally oriented subject matter. For example, on the [Blended Synchronous Learning site](#), seven case studies are presented, including implementations in courses on healthcare, teacher training, statistics, foreign language instruction, and biology. Other sources describe SHL courses in engineering (Wiles and Ball 2013). Just one source that we found describes the model being applied to courses such as writing or humanities seminars (Snart 2015). Because it

has hardly been tested in discussion-based seminars such as Writing Program courses, virtually no specific models or online resources are available for adoption by WP instructors.

Additionally, many WP courses run for 50 minutes. Combined with the extended set-up required for each class session, 50-minute class meetings promise less class time focused on learning.

- The radical shift in pedagogy necessitated by the added technologies requires time for faculty professional development. Indeed, a normal process for developing SHL courses seems to entail first translating an in-person course to a fully online version, *then* transforming the online course according to the SHL model (Wiles and Ball 2013). Furthermore, among BU faculty, the comfort level with technology varies greatly. Some faculty members struggle with platforms such as Blackboard and DigiCation. Some avoid using AV equipment or even computers as much as possible during class. It is unrealistic to expect faculty at that level of technical ability to get trained and become proficient with multiple technologies in so short a time.
- The “heavy mental load” that instructors of SHL courses experience is certain to be heavier in Fall 2020 at BU. Motivating all students, maintaining an optimal pace, and facilitating collaboration among the in-person and online populations will be complicated by the necessity of all persons in the physical classroom wearing face masks and practicing social distancing. These factors will render communication more cumbersome, both among in-class participants and between in-class and online participants. When differences of language and culture (so pronounced among our diverse student body) are factored into the equation, it becomes clear that our international and ESL students (approximately one quarter of the overall undergraduate student population), who under normal circumstances often have a difficult time entering conversations due to language barriers, will be at an even higher disadvantage compared to their peers.
- With respect to the SHL model’s increased reliance on technology, while we appreciate the perpetual challenge of keeping classrooms technologically up-to-date², past experience warrants no reason for confidence in BU’s ability to properly outfit and maintain a sufficient number of rooms for SHL classes during the time afforded. If technical failures in SHL classrooms are sufficiently common under normal circumstances to warrant instructors needing alternate plans for both in-person and remote students (communicated in advance, just in case), we find it reasonable to expect increased disruptions when the model is massively scaled up on a campus that has previously struggled to keep standard classroom technology up-to-date and in working order. Finally, with respect to the key technological tool, the omnidirectional mic, it has been found that -- without social distancing -- a single mic is adequate for just 8 in-person students or fewer (Raes et al. 2019). If that is the case, then even small discussion classes, such as those taught in the Writing Program, may require more than one mic.
- The workload associated with Writing Program courses is already high for instructors due to the individualized approach in our classes, which is so necessary to acculturate first-year students to the norms of higher education. We must expect that, because of

² Pary serves on BU’s Classroom Renovation Committee; Jason serves on the Teaching and Learning Technologies Advisory Committee.

the various and still unfolding complications of life under COVID-19, many of our faculty will experience chronic stress, which affects overall physical health and certainly would impact the time and energy an affected instructor would have for their courses. Under the still new and very complicated circumstances of this pandemic, it is unrealistic to expect positive outcomes by mandating a new and complicated pedagogical model that will likely exacerbate chronic stress.

- While assistance from a “room operator” is considered optimal, especially for novice instructors of SHL courses, a recent [BU Today article](#) informs us that assistants will not be provided for classes of 20 or fewer students. In other words, they will not be provided for Writing Program classes. The same *BU Today* article quotes Associate Provost Kennedy as saying, “In small classes with fewer than 20 students, communication with remote students should happen relatively easily and naturally. [. . .] We’ve already seen that happen in the second half of the spring semester.” Setting aside whether in-class communication last spring happened with ease, we wish to point out that Kennedy is falsely equating a fully online course with an SHL course. The published scholarship does not support her optimism.

Overall, when we consider BU’s plan to shift to the SHL model, we are convinced it would be an overwhelmingly poor choice for Writing Program classes. It is clear that, even under the best circumstances -- e.g., having faculty who have sufficient experience and time to make drastic pedagogical changes and prepare for multiple scenarios, having the appropriate technology and support in place and tested, and everyone being able to participate in class without contracting a potentially life-altering or life-ending disease -- the shift to synchronous hybrid learning is a challenge. The contingencies that will almost certainly persist through Fall 2020 -- and, quite possibly, worsen -- would intensify the difficulty of that shift.

We especially wish to emphasize how much we expect the SHL model to undermine the active learning strategies that are essential to the success of WR courses. For instance, group/peer work will be greatly impacted by social distancing for both groups of students: having productive conversations in teams of 4-5 students -- while sitting six feet apart, wearing masks, and speaking loudly at each other -- will be cumbersome and perhaps impossible. Alternatively, would students conduct group work through their computers (e.g., on Zoom)? If that is the case, we wonder why students and faculty would risk their health to be in the physical classroom in the first place (indeed, wearing masks, which impede the functionality of headsets and bluetooth devices, would render even online communication in the physical classroom difficult). Group activities and peer reviews are the heart of WR courses. Writing seminars rely on frequently shifting the configuration of the group and on almost constant interaction. We fear that, because of the constraints built into the SHL model and the contingencies of Fall 2020, our courses will tilt toward the more static, lecture-based, less effective format afforded by the situation.

For the sake of delivering the highest possible quality of instruction and the best possible learning experiences, the Writing Program should be permitted to develop its own instructional/learning plans based on what we know works best for our students. We believe

that, under circumstances likely to persist through Fall 2020, Writing Program seminars could best be taught in a purely online format. Compared to SHL, online instruction is well established. The scholarship is robust, and tested models -- including models for online teaching and learning in first-year writing seminars -- offer a wealth of resources we would be able to draw from. Additionally, purely online instruction is in fact *less* technologically complex than SHL, and our faculty already have some experience teaching remotely; they can build on what they have learned. Within a purely online modality, all students will be on a more equal footing, all will rely on the same cues, norms, and tools for interaction, and non-verbal (e.g., gestural) communication will be more possible. At the same time, instructors will have a single field to focus on and can be expected to teach without regular assistance. Technological failures (inevitable wherever technology is employed) will in all likelihood be less frequent. Stress and fatigue will be minimized -- in part because, as everyone will realize, students and instructors will be safer.

While we believe faculty within each academic unit know what works best for their subject matter and their students, when we consider effective teaching and learning in Writing Program courses this fall, we see no contest between a hybrid and a purely online approach. Our faculty should be permitted to channel their limited time and energy this summer into developing first-rate online courses.

It is important to note that we are not opposed to synchronous hybrid learning altogether. Under normal circumstances, and with institutional buy-in and support, each of us would be eager to design and pilot such courses for BU. Also, we acknowledge the major financial loss BU expects in the coming year, as well as the importance (for all of us) of minimizing that loss. However, we hope you will share with President Brown and Provost Morrison our request that they reconsider how well Learn *from* Anywhere will serve the institution. A misguided, poorly implemented instructional/learning model will not increase student satisfaction or faculty morale. Nor will it enhance BU's hard-earned reputation.

Respectfully,

Pary Fassihi and Jason Prentice
Senior Lecturers, CAS Writing Program

[Letter drafted by a group of Writing Program teachers and endorsed by 102 WP faculty and administrators]

May 25, 2020

Dear Dean Sclaroff and Dean Bizup,

The Writing Program is the largest academic unit in CAS, and the seminars that we teach are crucial to students' first-semester experience and long-term academic success. First-year seminars like ours contribute to student retention and institutional loyalty, especially for underrepresented, first-generation, and international students, to whom BU has already demonstrated a strong commitment. We are, above all, dedicated teachers, and as a Program, we have already begun to explore various scenarios and strategies to create the most enriching educational experience for our Fall 2020 students. Historically, pedagogical approaches developed in the Writing Program have been adopted throughout the University. The following, then, are our chief concerns and proposals, all of which aim at goals shared by faculty and the administration for safe, equitable, and high-impact teaching practices that promote rich and engaging learning conditions.

Communication and Faculty Input

We recognize the challenges that administrators face as they weigh multiple factors in whether and how to reopen campus. Yet administrative communication with faculty members has not always been forthcoming, nor has our input been directly sought. Going forward, we ask that faculty members learn of workplace changes proposed by the upper administration before such changes are announced to the general public. In addition, and most significantly, we ask for an opportunity to weigh in on decisions that directly affect our working conditions. Communication, faculty input, and decision-making should be transparent and systematic.

Safety and Health

Even with the most ambitious disinfecting and physical distancing protocols in place, we are concerned about safety, since no learning environment can be successful if our community members feel unsafe. The characteristics that make BU a dynamic and productive place come with particular risks. To that end, we must accommodate faculty members who have health conditions that make them or their household members especially vulnerable to COVID-19 and its complications, including mental health conditions. We strongly believe that any faculty member who feels unsafe teaching on campus in Fall 2020 should be allowed to teach remotely at their discretion. At the Town Hall on May 20, Deans Bizup and Sclaroff acknowledged that this possibility is being given serious thought.

Should BU resume in-person instruction in the fall, we want to ensure that faculty members teach in only those classrooms that allow for safe social distancing and air filtration. We ask that a safety review of each classroom assigned to a faculty member be shared with them.

We also ask that BU recognize that faculty of color experience distinct challenges during the pandemic and provide them ample support. As decisions are being considered, it is crucial that we prioritize the retention of our faculty of color. Especially during this crisis, their pedagogical expertise in serving our diverse student body is vital to the overall health of BU.

Effective Teaching

One of Boston University's primary missions is to provide effective, evidence-based instruction to our students. We fully acknowledge the complexity of this moment and know that this mission needs to be balanced with attention to safety and financial sustainability. If we need to do a significant portion of our teaching online, we should take advantage of the affordances that online teaching offers, rather than attempt to reproduce a classroom experience with some part of the class present only on screens. The Writing Program has a long history of adapting pedagogical practices to the particular needs of our students: we know that rigid adherence to one mode of delivery or another is ineffective. For this reason, we believe academic units should have significant authority in developing the best delivery strategies to achieve their learning goals. Such strategies may in some cases prove incompatible with the proposed SRRT model and may mix, for example, "flipped" classroom asynchronous lessons with small synchronous workshop groups. This kind of flexibility especially benefits first-generation and underrepresented students, the very students most likely to face challenges associated with COVID-19.

A prudent instructional model is one that faculty can deliver. If faculty members for pandemic-related reasons cannot provide quality instruction -- for example, because of family circumstances such as daycare or K-12 school closures -- they should be allowed to adapt or change their teaching modality. This might mean shifting to an asynchronous format.

The success of Writing Program courses is particularly dependent on class size, which correlates with adequate time to prepare and offer feedback. A low faculty-student ratio is especially important for first-generation, under-represented, and international students. Any increase in cap size or teaching load would be detrimental to the quality

of instruction Writing Program lecturers provide the predominantly first-year students in our sections.

Technological Support

Even if BU plans to resume in-person instruction in the fall, we should all be prepared to move to a fully online format if state, local, or personal circumstances mandate it. Effective online teaching, however, is more than an incremental adjustment. It requires a significant investment of time and labor to learn about and implement a new set of best practices for a new modality. Dean Bizup acknowledged this at the Town Hall, and we are grateful that BU, in concert with the CTL, will offer teaching resources and coaching support. Seeking an extension of this support, we ask that BU provide sufficient technology to all faculty members (full- and part-time) who will teach from home, whether required by the University or personally chosen. This includes access to adequate computers, high-speed internet, cameras, and microphones. Currently, many full-time faculty members depend on older, insufficiently powerful laptops, while part-time instructors have never been provided this indispensable tool.

Concerns about Part-time Faculty

Even as all full-time BU employees have been required to make shared sacrifices, we are especially empathetic to the vulnerability of our part-time faculty members, many of whom have worked at BU for years, and all of whom contribute vital teaching and service to the University. Many already have extensive training and experience in online teaching. Their pedagogical and field expertise and their dedication to our students and academic units make them integral to BU's success. We hope that the University will make every effort to provide job security to our existing part-time instructors, including prioritizing them for possible new appointments, such as tutoring students or assuming the teaching responsibilities of those instructors unable to teach. We also ask that these instructors receive as much advance knowledge as possible about their appointments for the fall and spring semesters.

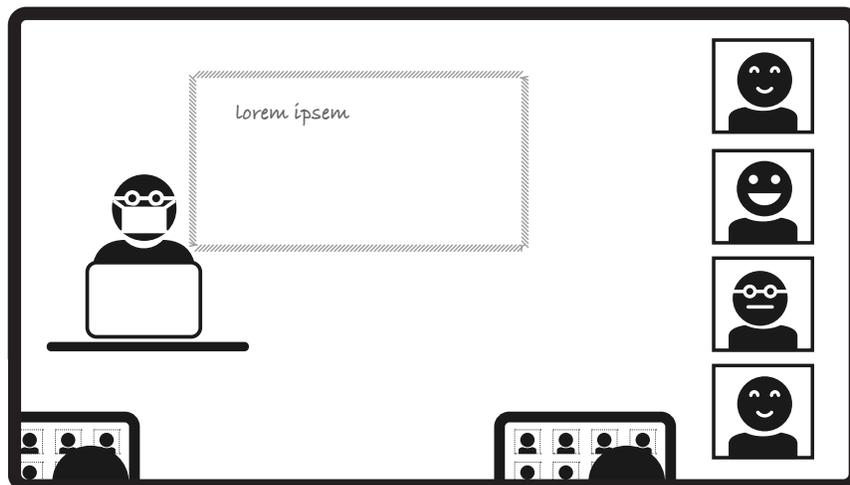
Respectfully,
CAS Writing Program instructors

1. Current LfA plan the teacher in class, mask on; 6 students w/masks on in classroom; 12 students w/o masks connecting individually through Zoom (12 screens).

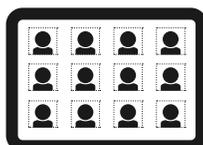


A In-class student's view

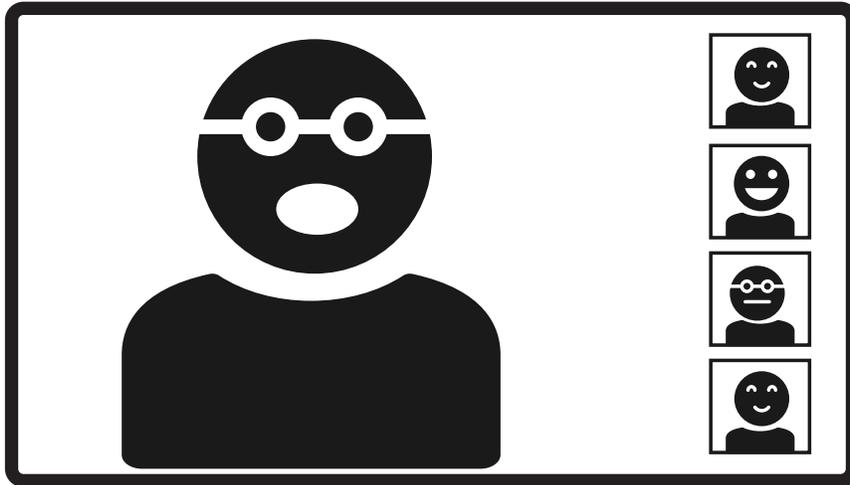
B ZOOM student's view of classroom



C Teacher's view of class

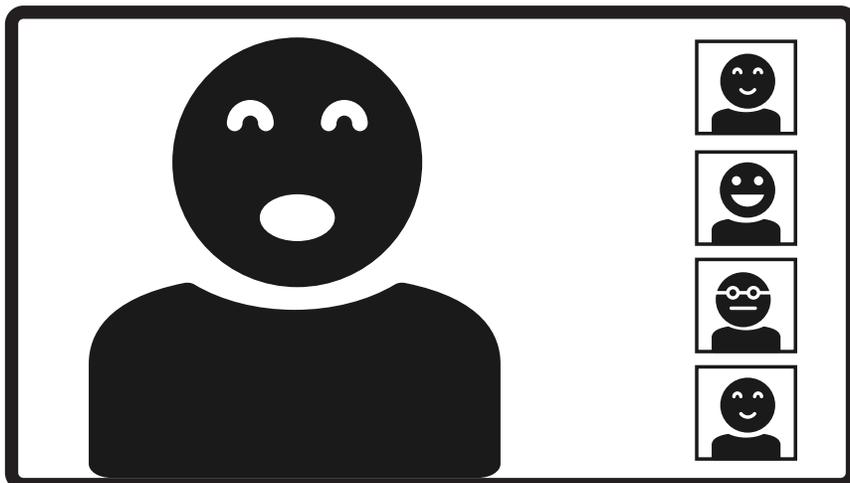
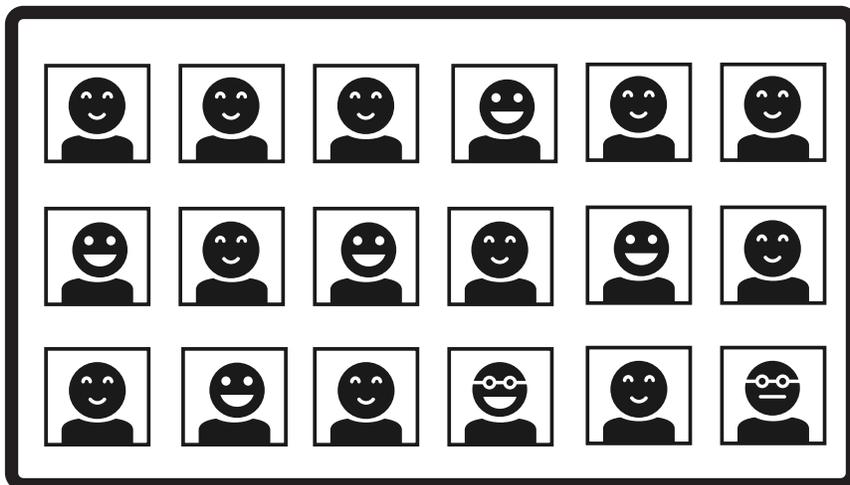


2. All on-line: Unmasked teacher and unmasked students, all connecting via Zoom



A Student's view of teacher

B Gallery view of maskless students



C Speaker view of maskless student

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CCCC and CWPA Joint Statement in Response to the COVID-19 Pandemic

June 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic has created not only an unprecedented public health crisis but also significant challenges for educators and educational institutions. In response, professionals must reassess current restrictions on assembly and mobility as well as imagine new means for meeting our goals. All our familiar educational routines—for example, meeting in classrooms—must be refigured as social distancing mandates direct us to remain isolated and to avoid public spaces where human contact is possible. Typically, writing courses have small class sizes and include significant levels of interaction, group work, and peer-to-peer discussion. For this reason, holding classes online rather than in person is the safest instructional approach for reducing exposure to and circulation of the novel coronavirus. That said, we recognize that each program will make its own judgments about how it plans to ensure the health, wellbeing, and safety of instructors and students, using institutional guidance specific to their local context. In any of those contexts, instructors and students should have the right to maintain their safety and thus have the ability to be accommodated with remote teaching and learning environments.

We acknowledge that no single document or statement can account for every institutional circumstance, and the goal of this statement is to provide guidance on effective pedagogy in this unique set of conditions. Drawing explicitly from professional statements, guidelines, and resources that have been produced by the National Council of Teachers of English and other professional organization, CCCC and CWPA offer the following guidance to best support students and instructors adapting to program and classroom changes in the coming year.

Core Principles of Effective Writing Instruction

Because guidance from experts and administrators may be absent or continuously evolving, it can be difficult to prioritize what to give the greatest consideration to among what can seem like endless competing priorities. Here, we offer core principles of effective writing instruction drawn from disciplinary research, and we have synthesized recommendations offered by organizational documents and scholarship in writing studies.

1. *Writing classes teach writing*: Principally, writing classes foreground writing itself as a complex, distributed activity premised upon sociality and community formation, processes and materials, flexibility, and ethical communication. Writing classes may involve participants in purposeful interpersonal interactions (discussions and conversations), writing-related activities (peer review, studying features in model texts), and interpreting texts (making meaning individually or together with others); however, the activity of writing itself continues to be central to what a writing class sponsors.

a. Supporting students

- i. Encourage discussions of habits, experiences, attitudes, and dispositions regarding writing at intervals throughout the course of study.
- ii. Invite reflection through which writers identify and articulate a relationship between class-related activities, their development of a particular composition, and their development as writers, generally.
- iii. Invite students to discuss and reflect on writing excerpts and models as a form of inquiry and discovery.

b. Supporting instructors

- i. Reaffirm instructors' (individual or collective) understanding of and comfort with the writing-oriented goals of class activities (such as discussion, reading and interpretation, or review within the context of remote or online instruction).
- ii. Suggest and model scaffolded writing projects that aid instructors in identifying connections (and discovering new connections together with students) across a number of defined activities as well as the arc of a project's development.
- iii. Advocate for making room within the class to write, urging writers to generate text incrementally, to document processes and materials, and to reflect openly upon decisions, gains, and struggles.

2. *Writers need readers*: In online classes, students signal their participation through writing, and one common concern about online classes is that students may feel disengaged from the instructor and their classmates. Writing classes can cultivate engagement by ensuring that students have readers for their writing who then respond in a variety of ways.

a. Supporting students

- i. Provide ample opportunities for students to read and respond to one another in a variety of informal and formal writing contexts at several stages of the writing process. Model how students can respond in meaningful ways.
- ii. Migrate effective practices of peer feedback on drafts into the online platform, devoting adequate time to the complex processes involved in giving and receiving feedback. Provide students with guidance on strategies for using annotation tools to read and respond to drafts. Link these practices with strategies for using feedback to improve student writing.
- iii. Provide regular feedback on student work in a timely manner. When possible, feedback could be delivered in audio or video formats as well as in writing if it meets the needs of the students and instructor.

b. Supporting instructors

- i. Provide instructors with resources on how to engage in effective, actionable feedback using digital annotation tools and other strategies.
- ii. Provide instructors with strategies for managing the workload of reading and responding to student writing, including affirming that they are not obligated to respond immediately to email at all hours and professional wellbeing includes setting firm limits for online availability beyond what is reasonable (e.g., no evening and weekend availability).
- iii. Provide guided opportunities for instructors to learn and use recommended platforms before using them with their students.

3. *Writing is a process*: As a long-established first principle for writing instruction, process emphasizes the ways complex composing tasks play out in relation to time. A process-based approach to writing signals occasions for writers to write iteratively (repeating steps or redrafting), incrementally (breaking large tasks into smaller pieces), and socially (giving and receiving feedback and making decisions about which feedback to heed). The privileging of process provides appropriate and sufficient time for writing and invites writers to interact with others while showing and sharing their in-progress work.

a. Supporting students

- i. Signal to writers estimates for time on task, both for longer projects (e.g., multi-week writing tasks) and for specific reading and writing activities (e.g., reading and annotating an article or developing a provisional draft).
- ii. Encourage writers to show their work, to pause to document moments when they made a choice; acknowledge the intersections of process with new (or changing) environments, platforms, and materials.
- iii. Establish occasions for reflection whereupon writers engage questions of self-awareness, messiness, decision and indecision, and the realization of self-set goals and/or course goals. Reflection serves broad goals of habit formation and attentiveness to development as recursive.

b. Supporting instructors

- i. Provide instructors with calendars annotated to include recommended timelines for peer review to ease workload and for their own reviewing and presenting of feedback to writers. Calendars calibrate appropriate time devoted to tasks, thereby

expressing benchmarks for timeliness, and acknowledging the relationship between academic calendars and labor for instructors and students.

ii. Model distinctions between commenting and grading practices; this guidance should, when possible, heed timeliness and responsiveness suited to the writing task and be cognizant of effective practices for “early and often” formative and summative assessments of students’ work.

iii. Reinforce with instructors the sufficiency of their literacy sponsorship in that the sum of writing in a writing course includes the complex, comprehensive range of artifacts involved: drafts and notes, communications with instructors and peers, and myriad related compositions. Put another way, in helping instructors conceptualize workload, encourage them to include all the literacy activities, formal and informal, that students will be producing in a course as they are planning learning activities.

4. *Writing classes are communities*: The small, discussion- and workshop-based pedagogies characteristic of writing classes can and ought to be adapted for remote learning environments. We draw here from NCTE’s [Guiding Principles](#) for Understanding and Teaching Writing: “Writers grow in a culture/community of feedback” and the CCC’s [position statement on OWI](#): “Students’ motivation as learners often is improved by a sense of interpersonal connectedness to others within a course.” Any shift to new classroom formats should retain the small class sizes necessary to foster the frequent student–student and student–teacher interactions that are integral to writing instruction.

a. Supporting students: Because of the high levels of interaction between student and instructor, writing classrooms—especially first-year composition classrooms—are often the primary sites in which students develop a sense of belonging to extended academic communities. Therefore, every effort must be made to sustain and even increase the opportunities students have to interact with each other and their instructors, whether these classes are held in socially distanced classrooms or online.

i. Provide students with multiple ways to interact with each other for a variety of distinct, interrelated purposes: to build and sustain a classroom community; to co-construct knowledge; to exchange and test ideas; to give and receive feedback on each other’s work; and to hone their communication skills in digital, public spaces

ii. Provide students with more than one way to interact with the instructor and to access and discuss feedback: email, phone, discussion boards, announcements, conferencing tools, etc. Use language that provides a clear timeframe within which the instructor is available or when students can expect responses to questions.

iii. Provide students with more than one way to view or access critical content (web pages, uploaded documents, short videos with transcripts, etc.) and regularly solicit student feedback to ensure content and materials are accessible and usable.

b. Supporting instructors: Current campus closures, limited future reopenings, and limited in-person work means that instructors are learning to teach remotely while isolated from their colleagues, departments, and professional networks. The overlapping affective burdens, pedagogical challenges, and professional anxieties instructors face in this moment cannot be overstated. Therefore, every effort must be made to keep instructors connected to each other to maintain their sense of belonging to their institutional communities and ensure that they have access to adequate hardware and software for their professional responsibilities as well as pedagogical mentoring, technological training, and professional support.

i. Create frequent opportunities for instructors to interact with each other through one or more of the following:

1. composition faculty support groups of 5–8 instructors that meet virtually and exchange resources through accessible electronic channels
2. virtual office hours, meetings, or town halls for specific populations like graduate instructors and NTT faculty with program and department leadership
3. department-wide assemblies that provide regular updates and answers to faculty concerns or questions

ii. Provide access to a variety of opportunities for instructors to develop their online teaching skills. These opportunities should be available both synchronously and asynchronously and could include the following:

1. department training programs designed for OWI
2. campus-based online teaching training programs focused on online pedagogy, not technology

3. workshops and webinars to assist instructors with technology
4. an online repository of curated resources, including a place for faculty to share their own teaching resources
5. drop-in support with instructional designers
6. information about external workshops and trainings sponsored by professional organizations

iii. Solicit feedback regularly from instructors to ensure that instructors' needs are being met as adequately as possible through low-stakes forums, such as focus groups and anonymized polls, Google Forms, Google Docs (a "scratch pad" of ongoing issues), and surveys. Feedback requests should be sensitive to existing workloads.

5. *Flexibility*: Writers, teachers, and students all use flexibility in their roles. We draw here from the definition of flexibility found in the [Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing](#): "the ability to adapt to situations, expectations, or demand." In periods of crisis, flexibility is even more important in order to adapt to rapidly changing circumstances. We encourage habits of mind on the part of both students and instructors (and program decision-makers) that will make it possible for everyone learning in a virtual classroom to do their best work.

a. Supporting students

- i. Provide students with multiple ways to interact with the instructor and to access and discuss feedback as instructors' comfort level allows. This can range from email, phone calls, video conferencing tools (as wide a range as feasible within personal or institutional constraints), whole-class discussion boards, individual LMS conversation spaces (asynchronous or synchronous), etc.
- ii. Provide students with multiple ways to view or access critical content (web pages, uploaded documents, short videos), and include tutorials or explanations in order to help them learn which ways they are most proficient so they can request assistance in the areas they struggle. Instructors should ensure class activities can be accessed by students at a later time. In asynchronous online classes, also consider that students may be in a time zone different from the instructor; instructors should be aware of the need to adjust deadlines or course material availability in response to this.
- iii. Prioritize self-assessment models for students—that is, assessment strategies that allow students to make room for risk, disruptions, and the affordances of discoveries—such as cover letters, author's notes, online journals in an LMS or Google Docs, reflective writing, or self-assessment discussion threads.

b. Supporting instructors

- i. Allow for flexibility where appropriate so that instructors can engage with the course material according to their interests, expertise, or preferences in programs where instructors are teaching with a course template.
- ii. Give instructors the freedom to recognize when the course may not be going according to plan. Provide a forum for instructors to share challenges and crowdsource ideas for modifications, one that is both stable and accessible by all instructors in the department.
- iii. Understand that not every instructor will be comfortable in the digital learning environment, so provide patience and guidance when discomfort is expressed

6. *Fairness/ethical practices*: Throughout the shift to responsive learning that must adjust to a range of circumstances, instructors and department leaders should consider the fairness and ethics of their decisions. Recognizing that fairness is not the same as equity and also recognizing there are no consequence-free decisions that can be made during this time, we encourage literacy educators and writing program administrators to use some of the following principles to help them navigate and work through the implications of particular decisions with colleagues:

a. Relevant to supporting students and instructors

- i. Create clear guidelines around accessibility, technological expectations, and other core requirements of online and remote learning so that all students and instructors are aware of what will be needed (and can request support in advance of a crisis situation).
- ii. Be mindful of how courses might be designed so that they function effectively with low bandwidth, are able to be accessed in alternative formats, and have flexible

deadlines for assignments when possible. Students and instructors face material circumstances during the pandemic that might include limited access to technology or stable internet, shared family computers, and increased caregiving responsibilities.

iii. Use a broad set of assessment practices that are agile, flexible, and responsive to the needs of students, instructors, and programs, particularly in the current moment, when our usual approaches are disrupted.

b. Supporting students

i. Consider the range of material circumstances within which students will be accessing their learning and build in curriculum or assessment options that will account for varying situations. For example, policies that allow for dropping an assignment or task from evaluated work, a “late pass” that all students can use a specified number of times in the semester, or student choice in assignments and assignment topics that allows students to work from their strengths and with the materials at hand.

ii. Consider extending due dates or expanding the eligibility for incompletes given the increased instability of and disruption to their schooling that students who are taking multiple courses remotely and managing many deadlines may be experiencing.

iii. Provide multiple paths to meeting course-learning outcomes and flexible deadlines so that students who may have trouble accessing remote classes or the university’s servers are able to achieve course goals.

c. Supporting instructors

i. Recognize that writing instruction requires small group interactions, emotional labor, and coaching that functions differently than some other disciplines. Provide resources so that instructors can both create boundaries around this work and offer resources to students (for example, importable resources that can be automatically added to course sections within an institution’s learning management system [LMS] rather than created from scratch by each instructor).

ii. Consider ways to document and make the work of instructors visible in their professional materials so that it can be accounted for in the evaluation and renewal process.

iii. Ensure all instructors have access to adequate technology to support their work.

Policy and Program Decision Considerations

1. Nearly all college students take a first-year writing course, one that can serve as a “gatekeeper” for access to other courses across the curriculum, to upper-division writing course requirements, to graduation, or to other curricular options. **Program decisions should be acutely sensitive to the way that they may affect any of the following:**

- a. Student retention to higher education (for example, deadlines for dropping or withdrawing from courses)
- b. Satisfactory Academic Progress
- c. Financial Aid
- d. Transfer articulation agreements

2. All instructors who are translating and redesigning courses to a remote, online, HyFlex, blended, or other model will be spending additional hours of labor on this work. Instructors should be fairly compensated for this labor; compensation might include stipends, release time, streamlined workloads, or professional credit for this work which requires training, professional learning, and additional expertise. We encourage decision-makers to use creative and logical strategies for recognizing the labor of course redesigns in new modes.

3. Instructors should **have agency** to adjust their teaching context in order to better meet the needs of their students and to maintain a safe employment environment.

4. In the case that instructors receive compensation from their institution for developing online course materials, the expectation of **joint ownership** should be the standard. Instructors retain the rights to their **intellectual property**, and in the case that the institution uses materials in other contexts, permission should be received and credit should be given to the individual faculty member who has created those materials.

5. Departments, colleges, or institutional policies **should not impose mandates about what percentage of** **CS WRITING PROGRAM LA EXEMPTION APPLICATION** **discipline and**

institution has diverse needs that should acknowledge the pedagogical content knowledge that instructors bring to their classrooms and allow them to make judgments about how and whether synchronous meetings are required, optional, or not a component of the course. In whatever situation, students should be made aware at the outset of the commitment they are making to synchronous instruction.

6. Above all, assessments and pedagogical choices should prioritize learning and students' successful demonstration of stated course objectives and learning outcomes, not time spent in an LMS or behavioral measures that may reflect access to material resources (e.g., technology, space, time) more than achievement of course goals.

Further Resources

AAUP: American Association of University Professors

- [AAUP Principles and Standards for the COVID-19 Crisis](#)

CCCC: Conference on College Composition and Communication

- [Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing](#)
- [Writing Assessment: A Position Statement](#)
- [Statement of Professional Guidance for New Faculty Members](#)
- [Disability Studies in Composition: Position Statement on Policy and Best Practices](#)
- [CCCC Statement on Preparing Teachers of College Writing](#)
- [CCCC Statement on Working Conditions for Non-Tenure-Track Writing Faculty](#)

CWPA: Council of Writing Program Administrators

- [WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition \(3.0\), Approved July 17, 2014](#)
- [WPA Position Statements and Resolutions](#)

GSOLE: Global Society of Online Literacy Educators

- [Online? . . . Just in Time!](#)
- [GSOLE – Home](#)

NCTE: National Council of Teachers of English

- [Understanding and Teaching Writing: Guiding Principles](#)
- [Definition of Literacy in a Digital Age](#)
- [Statement on the Opportunity to Learn](#)
- [Statement on Academic Freedom \(Revised\)](#)

TYCA: Two-Year College English Association

- [TYCA Position Statements](#)

Work group members:

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- David Green, Howard University
- Holly Hassel, North Dakota State University
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Reviewed and approved by the CCCC Executive Committee and the CWPA Executive Board, June 2020.

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A BIBLIOGRAPHY OF SCHOLARSHIP ON ONLINE WRITING INSTRUCTION

Introductory Note

Unlike synchronous hybrid learning (SHL—an instructional/learning modality in which online and in-person cohorts of students are taught simultaneously), purely online instruction (a modality in which all students in a class are taught online) has been extensively tested and researched. This distinction becomes more striking when these modalities are considered with respect to teaching college writing. In college writing courses, SHL has been implemented and studied hardly at all. In contrast, online writing instruction is sufficiently established to have its own discipline-specific acronym: OWI.

To illustrate the quantity and range of scholarship on OWI, the following bibliography was created on 6/21/20 by doing a single search in a peer-reviewed scholarly journal: *Computers and Composition*. The term “online learning” yielded 705 hits. When the first 100 titles were read, it was found that 41 seemed to focus on OWI. These articles are included in the bibliography below. The remainder of the articles seemed to focus on aspects of OWI that could just as easily pertain to F2F courses.

In contrast, a search in the same journal, using the term “synchronous hybrid learning,” yielded 47 hits. Reading both the titles and the abstracts suggested that not one of these sources focused on SHL.¹ A second search, using the term “hybrid,” yielded 200 hits. However, a reading of the first 100 titles suggested that, again, not a single source focused on SHL. A search for “HyFlex” yielded zero hits.

These results indicate the standing of OWI and SHL within the field of rhetoric and composition more broadly. For example, in 2013 CCCC published a [position statement supportive of OWI](#). It has no statement on SHL. Similarly, the book publisher WAC Clearinghouse has three titles on OWI: Warnock’s *Teaching Writing Online: How & Why* (2009), Hewett and DePew’s *Foundational Practices of Online Writing Instruction* (2015), and Borgman and McArdle’s *Personal, Accessible, Responsive, Strategic: Resources and Strategies for Online Writing Instructors* (2019). This publisher has no titles on SHL. Finally, in summer 2020, the Council of Writing Program Administrators is sponsoring a [two-day workshop](#) on best practices for OWI. CWPA is offering no workshop on SHL.

In sum, SHL is a relatively untested, scarcely studied modality—especially with respect to teaching college writing. OWI is mainstream and tested²—especially for teaching first-year writing.³ If pedagogy is the chief concern, it is difficult to imagine a credible argument in favor of SHL and against OWI.

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¹ It is important to keep in mind that not all hybrid learning/instruction is *synchronous* hybrid learning/instruction. There is significantly more scholarship on *asynchronous* hybrid learning/instruction than on synchronous hybrid learning/instruction. For example, the search mentioned above did yield a single article with a focus on hybrid instruction. However, a reading of the full article by no means suggests that the hybrid courses discussed were synchronous hybrid courses.

² Regarding research on the efficacy of OWI, the literature review in [this article](#) by Bouelle et al. provides a good summary.

³ In fact, at least one scholar argues that OWI may be in some ways superior to F2F writing instruction. In [the introduction to his book on OWI](#), Warnock argues that “online writing instruction provides the opportunity for not just a different approach, but a progressive approach to the way teachers teach writing—an evolution of sorts in writing instruction” (x-xi). He goes on to say, “I see the possibilities of a progressive step toward, perhaps, a ‘better’ composition class, and I expand on this premise throughout the book” (xi).

Bibliography

Kristine Blair, Cheryl Hoy, "Paying attention to adult learners online: The pedagogy and politics of community," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 23, Issue 1, 2006, Pages 32-48, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.12.006>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000824>)

Abstract: Our article profiles the evolution of a fully online writing course designed for adult learners in our university's Prior Learning Assessment Program. Based on our own observations and experiences teaching adult learners online, we question if the virtual learning environment presents different challenges and prospects for the adult learner versus the traditional student learner, along with an extension and complication of the more social metaphors of "virtual community." Moreover, because of the changing demographic from traditional to adult students, we argue that this change also fosters a change in the relationship between teachers and students. In chronicling this relationship, we note problems when the labor of adult education becomes invisible to those supervising online instructors. Because of these "invisible" labor issues, we argue that successful online instruction must include a range of interactions between students and instructors that extend the more public concept of community to better acknowledge the importance of personal, private interaction. Thus, we conclude with a call to rethink our online writing pedagogies to be more flexible to adult learner needs and learning styles, simultaneously recognizing the impact of adult online education on faculty workload.

Keywords: Academic labor; Adult education; Faculty workload; Online learning; Portfolio assessment; Prior learning assessment

Kristine L. Blair, Elizabeth A. Monske, "Cui bono?: Revisiting the promises and perils of online learning," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 20, Issue 4, 2003, Pages 441-453, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2003.08.016>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461503000720>)

Abstract: We chronicle—in both an historical and bibliographic framework—the discussion of rhetorics of empowerment and disempowerment throughout the last 15 years, and we also examine the promises and perils of current trends in online teaching and learning, with a special emphasis on the role of universities in promoting distance education. This article addresses the question *cui bono?*, or who benefits, from the rush to technologize teaching and learning? We address the extent to which the continued rush to technologize teaching and learning is a perilous return to a rhetoric of empowerment that as compositionists we must continue to interrogate critically; we question how, in an era of 24/7 learning, students may or may not benefit and also how teachers may lose out, based on the increased workload and course management surrounding online learning.

Keywords: Distance education; Electronic networks; Faculty workload; Online learning; Virtual community

Jane Blakelock, Tracy E. Smith, "Distance learning: From multiple snapshots, a composite portrait," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 23, Issue 1, 2006, Pages 139-161, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.12.008>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000836>)

Abstract: This article discusses the current state of distance learning in composition by reporting on and interpreting a 2005 survey that assesses trends and workload conditions in distance learning. Areas examined in the article include attitudes of faculty and administration, faculty

demographics, student demographics, online course and program development, course caps, course delivery and management tools, technology support, course design freedom, impact on writing pedagogy, and institutional DE profile. The article concludes by summarizing the current DL picture, identifying areas of need, and providing research recommendations for the future.

Keywords: Distance learning; DL incentives; DL platforms; Degree completion programs; Course caps; DL politics; Online learning; Online courses; Composition; Pedagogy; Assessment

Stuart Blythe, "Designing online courses: user-centered practices," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 329-346, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00066-4](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00066-4). (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461501000664>)

Abstract: Teachers who develop Web-based courses must learn to act like designers; however, the type of design practice one undertakes has more than pedagogical implications. It can have political and ethical implications as well. In this article, I compare two models for design—systems and user-centered—each of which embodies different values. I argue that models of technology design can be applied to the development of Web-based courses and that various forms of user-centered design embody the values most compatible with writing instruction. While acknowledging the difficulties of enacting such models when developing Web-based courses, I present strategies for adopting a user-centered design paradigm in distance learning.

Keywords: Course design; Distance learning; Internet; Participation; User-centered design; World Wide Web

Jessie Borgman, Jason Dockter, "Considerations of Access and Design in the Online Writing Classroom," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 49, 2018, Pages 94-105, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2018.05.001>. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461518300367>)

Abstract: This article argues that writing programs have an opportunity to create a new playing field in their online composition courses. A playing field that conceives of students and content differently than does a typical iteration of an online course (a course that traditionally migrates materials and practices from a f2f context and reimagines them for an online setting). The focus of this article emphasizes how readers can use user-centered design in their online courses to accommodate all students with varying learning styles. Readers will gain a better understanding of how significant user-centered design can be for maintaining student enrollments, promoting learning and avoiding attrition. Further readers will understand that specific moves made by the instructor will have very real repercussions on whether or not a course, or even elements of a course, are accessible by all.

Keywords: User-centered design; Access; Online writing instruction; Diversity; Accommodations; Accessibility; Inclusion

Andrew Bouelle, Tiffany Bouelle, Anna V. Knutson, Stephanie Spong, "Sites of multimodal literacy: Comparing student learning in online and face-to-face environments," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 39, 2016, Pages 55-70, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2015.11.003>. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461515000912>)

Abstract: This case study explores the efficacy of online environments for the teaching and learning of multimodal literacies. In our research, we seek to explore student learning between two groups who had experienced similar first-year composition curricula, one online and one face-to-face (f2f). Through an assessment of a pilot online curriculum taught at the University of

New Mexico, which we call eComp, we explore the affordances and constraints of online and f2f learning environments for the development of multimodal literacies in first-year composition.

Keywords: Multimodal literacy; Online education; Face-to-face instruction; Assessment; First-year composition; Digital literacy.

Tiffany Bourelle, Andrew Bourelle, Sherry Rankins-Robertson, "Teaching with Instructional Assistants: Enhancing Student Learning in Online Classes," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 37, 2015, Pages 90-103, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2015.06.007>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461515000523>)

Abstract: This article details a pilot project incorporating instructional assistants (IAs), or upper-level undergraduate writing tutors, embedded in the courses of an online writing program at a large land-grant university. The curriculum, called the Writers' Studio, focused on heavy process and portfolio assessment. Students were asked to create multimodal projects for public audiences in an effort to prepare them to participate as literate citizens beyond higher education. As a result of the multimodal emphasis and process-centered curriculum, the students needed additional instructional support to successfully demonstrate understanding of the learning outcomes for the course. Recognizing that digital writing environments can increase workload, the instructional team had to reconsider ways to manage the instructors' and students' needs. The answer was the incorporation of undergraduate teaching assistants, or instructional assistants. In online classes where students write several drafts for each project, instructor feedback on multiple drafts was simply not possible with the number of students assigned to the teacher, no matter how she managed her time. The use of IAs provided what instructors could not: a chance for students to receive feedback on their writing throughout the actual process of writing. Although students still maintained interaction with the instructors, the IAs gave them additional individualized attention. In this article, we provide an in-depth look at the pilot project, including a detailed description of our IA training practices, as well as comments from students about the benefit of the instructional assistants.

Keywords: Online writing instruction; First-year composition; Tutoring; Multimodality; Writing process; Peer review

Patricia Webb Boyd, "Analyzing Students' Perceptions of Their Learning in Online and Hybrid First-Year Composition Courses," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 25, Issue 2, 2008, Pages 224-243, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2008.01.002>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461508000236>)

Abstract: This article presents a study of first-year composition (fyc) courses that were taught in both online and hybrid formats in order to determine students' perceptions on how much they learned in them. The students' responses to an extensive survey, in which they analyzed their experiences in their courses, point to larger questions about our individual pedagogical assumptions as well as larger issues related to the structures of first-year composition courses and their required status.

Keywords: Hybrid; Online; First-year composition; Student perceptions

Lee-Ann M Kastman Breuch, Sam J Racine, "Developing sound tutor training for online writing centers: creating productive peer reviewers," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 17, Issue 3, 2000, Pages 245-263, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(00\)00034-7](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(00)00034-7).
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461500000347>)

Abstract: It is our experience that tutors trained for face-to-face writing centers are not adequately prepared for the challenges they encounter working with online writing centers. The purpose of our article is to provide an overview—especially for administrators, developers, and tutors new to electronic tutoring environments—of the issues and considerations unique to online tutoring that training programs need to address. In our discussion, we hope to engender enthusiasm for online tutoring by discussing three aspects of online tutoring: appreciating text-only environments, developing procedures for responding online, and creating appropriate roles for online tutors. We offer suggestions about how to address these three aspects in online tutor training, and we suggest that addressing these issues leads to an understanding of the online tutor as a productive peer reviewer.

Keywords: online tutoring; online writing centers; peer review; tutor training; writing centers

Joanne Buckley, "The invisible audience and the disembodied voice: Online teaching and the loss of body image," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 14, Issue 2, 1997, Pages 179-187, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(97\)90019-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(97)90019-0).

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461597900190>)

Abstract: Teaching online, because it occurs outside the physical classroom, can be advantageous to a teacher with a physical disability. First, it frees one from the constraints of traditional classrooms, which contain many barriers for a teacher who cannot easily walk or stand. Second, psychological barriers that may interfere with the teacher's ability to engage students in the learning process, including students' biases and preconceptions about disabled people, may be bypassed. The teacher's written voice may have more authority than the physical voice without the interference of students' perceptions of the teacher's physical body. Experience teaching online writing courses shows that both teachers and students can benefit from the freedom from concern about appearance and its effect on others.

Keywords: audience; body image; composition; disembodiment; online teaching; physical disability; voice

Kevin Eric DePew, Heather Lettner-Rust, "Mediating Power: Distance Learning Interfaces, Classroom Epistemology, and the Gaze," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 26, Issue 3, 2009, Pages 174-189, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2009.05.002>.

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461509000371>)

Abstract: Distance learning's interfaces—from corresponding through the postal service to the televised talking head—have traditionally been designed from the top down, supporting banking models of learning or, in writing instruction, current-traditional rhetoric pedagogies. Due to temporal and spatial constraints, these interface designs often support (or encourage) one-way communication from the instructor to the student. Students mostly interact with the instructor by asking questions or submitting work, and they tend to have little correspondence with other peers. These methods clearly privilege the instructor's knowledge and evaluation. Furthermore, these interface designs empower the instructor to gaze upon the students and assess them—often not as a corporeal body but as a corpus of texts. Thus, each interface adopted for distance learning sets up a power dynamic in which the capability to share the roles of creating knowledge is juxtaposed with the instructor's capability to normalize the students and reify their own authority through their gaze. In this article we examine the traditional classroom interface through the correspondence course interface, the simulated classroom interface, and the synchronous video interface to raise questions about the infrastructures of distance learning and their implications for student learning.

Keywords: Distance learning; Interface; Correspondence course; Courseware; Chatware; Writing centers; Video

Jason Dockter, "The Problem of Teaching Presence in Transactional Theories of Distance Education," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 40, 2016, Pages 73-86, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2016.03.009>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461516300305>)

Abstract: This article explores the challenges online teachers face in establishing a teaching persona. While many online teachers believe that they create and control their teaching presence, drawing on transactional distance theory and relational distance theory, this paper argues that such an assumption can result in increased distance between teacher and students. This increased distance makes it more difficult for online students to accurately sense who their teacher is. Problematically, this sense of who the teacher is can be a powerful element to help online students succeed within the course. To help students to perceive, more clearly, who the teacher of the course is, the article recommends frequent and varied communication between teacher and students, the utilization of multimodal communication methods to provide differing opportunities for students to make meaning, for teachers to share who they are with students, and to proactively encourage the formation of relationships between course participants through course design.

Keywords: Online Education; Teaching Presence; Teacher Presence; Online Presence; Distance Learning; Student-Teacher Interaction; Learning Transaction

Heather Fielding, "'Any Time, Any Place': The Myth of Universal Access and the Semiprivate Space of Online Education," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 40, 2016, Pages 103-114, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2016.03.002>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461516300238>)

Abstract: The rhetoric surrounding distance education emphasizes that it allows students to complete courses in an abstract "any time," and thus improves access to higher education. This essay critiques that discourse and argues that teachers and scholars need to build critical consideration of students' lived negotiations of time into the work of online courses. Social media provide a useful site for this work: students can mark the time of the course and critically reflect on their experience of the course's location in public or private space. Using Ellen Rooney's concept of the semiprivate, the essay theorizes how students in one first-year composition course described, on social media, the time and space of the online course. While the policy discourse surrounding online education imagines that its neutral relationship to time is a way to create universal access to higher education, the concept of the semiprivate emphasizes costs and barriers that are generated as students struggle to fit online courses into the specific realities of their lives.

Keywords: online education; ecological theories of composition; public and private; social media

Kristie S. Fleckenstein, "Faceless students, virtual places: Emergence and communal accountability in online classrooms," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 22, Issue 2, 2005, Pages 149-176, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.02.003>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000137>)

Abstract: A pedagogical problem growing out of virtual classrooms is the temptation to act without communal accountability, the reciprocal commitment among individuals to maintain the health of their interconnections. Drawing on an ethnographic study of a fully online

composition class, I argue that teachers can encourage accountability within virtual sites by conceiving of the online classroom as an emergent phenomenon. The relationships and activities among language, physical reality, and interpretant provide the matrix out of which place organizes itself. This ecological orientation provides local and systemic strategies for fostering communal health. I begin my exploration of online place by describing the value of complex systems theory and emergence for conceptualizing place. Next, I describe the roles of language, physical reality, and interpretant, pointing out the contribution of each to the configuration of virtual place and to communal accountability. Then, I focus on the emergence of place, which reorganizes language, reality, and interpretant, opening up a new dimension to communal accountability.

Keywords: Accountability; Classroom; Community; Complex systems; Ecology; Emergent place; Online; Virtual environments

Ken Gillam, Shannon R. Wooden, "Re-embodiment Online Composition: Ecologies of Writing in Unreal Time and Space," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 30, Issue 1, 2013, Pages 24-36, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2012.11.001>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461512000618>)

Abstract: Using the ecological theories of writing proposed by Marilyn Cooper's "The Ecology of Writing" (1986) and Margaret Syverson's *The Wealth of Reality: An Ecology of Composition* (1999), this article describes a multi-step assignment sequence designed to engage online first year composition students across the ecological breadth of their writing and learning environments. The goal of the project is twofold: enriching students' writing processes with a sophisticated understanding of the social situatedness of knowledge and rhetoric, we can simultaneously create high-functioning learning communities in an otherwise disembodied online learning space, not by upgrading our technological tools but by pedagogically guiding learners toward ecological and productively collaborative interactions with one another.

Keywords: Distance education; Ecological theory; Online learning; First-year composition; Assignment sequence

Michael Greer, Heidi Skurat Harris, "User-Centered Design as a Foundation for Effective Online Writing Instruction," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 49, 2018, Pages 14-24, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2018.05.006>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461518300264>)

Abstract: The CCCC Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction can be viewed as a set of principles for user-centered design in online writing classrooms. However, operationalizing the principles and practices can be overwhelming. Our article identifies a set of principles that we introduce to new online writing instructors. We describe how we build a user-experience mindset into the foundation of online writing instruction using the CCCC Position Statement as well as principles from UX and user-centered design; we draw on work by key figures in UX and usability, including Goodwin (2009), Klein (2016), and Buley (2013; see also Howard & Greer, 2011). Our article describes how we introduce basic principles of user-centered design to new instructors, apply those principles to core topics in online writing instruction, and model a process of student feedback to promote an iterative design philosophy for online courses.

Keywords: Online writing instruction; User-centered design; UX; Usability; Course design; Professional development

David E. Hailey, Keith Grant-Davie, Christine A. Hult, "Online education horror stories worthy of HALLOWEEN: a short list of problems and solutions in online instruction," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 387-397, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00070-6](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00070-6).
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461501000706>)

Abstract: This article examines many surprising problems that arise in the process of distance education using the Internet and describes ways in which instructors and administrators can solve these problems. The information in the article is based largely on the experience of educators at Utah State University who have been exploring distance education for the past six years by teaching a wide range of online courses via the Internet. As a result of this varied online teaching, we have encountered a broad spectrum of challenges to which we have tried to respond and from which we have tried to learn. The solutions described are generalizable to other programs using online delivery for instruction.

Keywords: Adult learning; Computers and writing education; Computer-mediated communication; Distance learning; Online education

Dave Healy, "From place to space: Perceptual and administrative issues in the online writing center," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 12, Issue 2, 1995, Pages 183-193, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/8755-4615\(95\)90006-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/8755-4615(95)90006-3).
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/8755461595900063>)

Abstract: Online conferencing, including both synchronous and asynchronous exchanges, started in the composition classroom and moved to the writing center. Writing centers, no longer limited to face-to-face encounters, have begun exploring the potential of electronic conferencing. So far, most discussions of online conferencing have focused on how conference dynamics are affected by the computer. This article explores other implications of online writing centers, specifically the effects of electronically decentralizing the center and how such a move might affect tutors and writing center directors. For directors, asynchronous conferencing promises to simplify scheduling but complicate supervision, while its potential effects on workplace ethos are more difficult to predict. The potential for information technology to preserve conference talk is explored, as are some of its darker implications, such as threats of Big Brother and panopticism. The author concludes that a writing center's autonomy within the institution is potentially both enhanced and threatened by introducing online conferencing.

Keywords: asynchronous; informational technology; scheduling; autonomy; online conferencing; supervision; decentralization; panopticism; work place ethos

Beth L. Hewett, Rebecca Hallman Martini, "Educating Online Writing Instructors Using the Jungian Personality Types," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 47, 2018, Pages 34-58, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2017.12.007>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461517300531>)

Abstract: While the field of composition studies has recognized that online writing instructors need professional development, less is known about what to educate teachers and administrators to do or how to do so. To better understand both who online writing instructors are and what they need, this study investigated to what extent the Jungian personality types might reveal what online writing instructors need and want in training and professional development. To research these questions, we developed a mixed-methods study using a nationwide survey of online instructor and administrator preferences and professional development needs, searching for potential patterns among participants; we requested that

participants take and self-report data from the Jungian Typology Test (JTT), a variant of the Myers Briggs Type Indicator (MBTI). Our findings indicated significantly high percentages of Introverted types, iNtuitive types, and iNtuitive-Feeling types compared with the general population. Further, we found that Introversion and Extraversion may make a difference between enjoying and disliking online writing instruction (OWI), being an iNtuitive-Thinker and an iNtuitive Feeler may lead to preferring different OWI teaching strategies, and that educating OWI teachers and WPAs by harnessing their Jungian personality preferences may help with developing targeted, practical professional development.

Keywords: Online writing instruction; OWI; Personality; WPA; Learning style; Professional development; Meyers-Briggs type indicator; MBTI; Jungian Typology Test; Institutional support

Allison Hutchison, "Technological Efficiency in The Learning Management System: A Wicked Problem with Sustainability for Online Writing Instruction," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 54, 2019, 102510, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2019.102510>. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461518300550>)

Abstract: Many online writing instructors are forced to use their institution's learning management system (LMS) as a result of interstate agreements for online course accreditation and a correlated requirement to create course shells. This situation presents a wicked problem for online writing instruction (OWI): the necessity to teach with/through an LMS, despite a well-developed scholarship tradition of technological critique in the computers and composition field. Using a framework comprised of problem, need, and solution, I highlight this problem's effects by conducting a literature review of critiques on technologies associated with the teaching of writing; uphold the argument that technological efficiency partially causes the problem; show how some writing teachers are attempting to solve the problem; and trace the outline of a solution using Thomas Rickert's (2013) theory of ambient rhetoric as it relates to efficiency and sufficiency in order to keep OWI a sustainable practice.

Keywords: online writing instruction; OWI; learning management system; LMS; efficiency; sufficiency

Susan Lang, "Who owns the course? Online composition courses in an era of changing intellectual property policies," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 15, Issue 2, 1998, Pages 215-228, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(98\)90055-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(98)90055-X). (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S875546159890055X>)

Abstract: This article examines existing copyright law, the ambiguous case law concerning copyrightable material and educators, university policies toward patent and copyright law, and the changing nature of educational institutions in the 1990s to consider the question of who "owns" an online composition course, or any course for that matter, in the late twentieth century. I argue that composition instructors need to consider the following issues as they design and revise courses with a significant online component. Who has historically and contractually controlled course materials created by faculty members? Who owns course materials developed for particular courses? Why should the transition to networked computing environments change the nature of course materials ownership? Are there substantive differences between materials created for a traditional composition course and an online course? The answers to these questions may fundamentally change the ways instructors create and use instructional materials.

Keywords: copyright and patent policy curriculum-legal issues instructional materials intellectual property online courses

Lisa M. Litterio, "Uncovering Student Perceptions of a First-Year Online Writing Course," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 47, 2018, Pages 1-13, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2017.12.006>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461517300099>)

Abstract: This article examined student perceptions of the Writing Program Administrators (WPA) learning outcomes for first-year writing through a fully online first-year writing course. A second research question explored how the course content focused on technology, visual rhetoric, and social media impacted students' overall perceptions about their learning. The method used in this study is qualitative in nature, based on a Likert-scale survey and end of semester open-ended surveys with students. The findings indicate that students perceived their abilities to improve not only in the four areas delineated by the WPA outcomes, but also through the ability to see writing as the primary method of communication and have more time to reflect in an online environment. Findings also suggest that instructor feedback and relevant course content both positively impact student perceptions of an online course. This article concludes with encouragement for additional research and studies relating to first-year writing courses in an online environment.

Keywords: First-year writing; Online course; WPA outcomes

David Charles Maynard, *Computers and Composition*, Volume 42, 2016, Pages 59-65, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2016.08.001>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461516300627>)

Susan Miller, "How near and yet how far? Theorizing distance teaching," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 321-328, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00065-2](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00065-2). (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461501000652>)

Abstract: This article theoretically maps out the larger principles that we must consider when thinking about distance learning. I explore the ways in which students' and teachers' identities must shift in these new contexts. Pointing to the changes that will or could occur when we move writing courses online, I make the overarching argument that Composition Studies needs "a theorized preparation for shifts in pedagogy that distance courses make visible."

Keywords: Distance education; Distance learning; Distance teaching; Pedagogic theory

Susan K. Miller-Cochran, Rochelle L. Rodrigo, "Determining effective distance learning designs through usability testing," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 23, Issue 1, 2006, Pages 91-107, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.12.002>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000873>)

Abstract: To add to the developing understanding of Web-based writing instruction, we conducted usability testing to assess the design of our online first-year composition courses at a large community college in the Southwest. Beyond the course-specific results, this study offers two primary contributions. First, it offers a model for conducting usability testing of Web-based writing classes to diagnose potential design problems in a course. This includes providing an indication of what kinds of results and data teachers should expect to gather, how to interpret that data, where to go for assistance, whom to involve in the testing process, and what to do with the results. Second, this study provides an initial understanding of guidelines for course design using Web-based technologies. These guidelines were developed by examining writing classes in the study and then comparing the results with already established principles of design from usability engineering.

Keywords: Usability testing; Web-based distance learning; Course assessment; Course design principles; Community college writing instruction; Course management systems

L.E.Sujo de Montes, Sally M. Oran, Elizabeth M. Willis, "Power, language, and identity: Voices from an online course," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 19, Issue 3, 2002, Pages 251-271, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(02\)00127-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(02)00127-5).

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461502001275>)

Abstract: Distance learning, especially in computer-mediated environments, is the new trend in education. Universities fear that they will be left behind or even become extinct if they do not offer online courses (Roblyer, 1999). Very little is known about effective pedagogy in online environments, much less the power, authority, and control relationships that occur when conversations are not face-to-face. The course described in this article is a bilingual education course in which participants were involved in extensive writing and publishing of their ideas on the Web. Through bulletin board postings, power relationships between majority and minority students became evident during the semester. Students described their struggles with living and working in a society that, in many cases, institutionalizes racism. Included in this article is a discussion of how the race factor is usually turned "off" (Kolko, Nakamura, & Rodman, 2000) or is in its "default," White mode (Lockard, 2000) in online environments. Finally, the authors offer implications for interactions between instructors and students and student peers in online environments.

Keywords: Asynchronous communication; Ethnicity; Online education; Power; Race

Liesbeth Opdenacker, Luuk Van Waes, "Implementing an open process approach to a multilingual online writing center: The case of Calliope," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 24, Issue 3, 2007, Pages 247-265, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2007.05.003>.

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S875546150700045X>)

Abstract: This paper briefly describes the main characteristics of Calliope, a Belgian online writing center. Calliope began with the collaborative development of a theoretical framework based on a process approach to writing with a recognition of differences in learning and writing profiles. In this paper, we describe our theoretical framework, how it was developed, and how it is used in our classes (blended learning). Starting from a description of the content model, we also describe three key components of the multilingual online writing center: (a) the Feedback Editor, (b) the collaborative writing environment, *Escribamos*, and (c) the e-portfolio tool. We conclude the paper with a discussion on technical and content-related problems we encountered during Calliope's development process.

Keywords: Online writing center; Online writing lab; Learning styles; Writing styles; Blended learning

Patricia Webb Peterson, "The debate about online learning: key issues for writing teachers," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 359-370, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00068-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00068-8).

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461501000688>)

Abstract: This article addresses faculty members' fears about how they and students in their classes will change as distance-education courses are introduced into university curricula. I ask readers to consider three especially important areas of change: teacher roles, education goals, and student learning. While debunking several common faculty fears, I point to theoretical

issues to which all faculty—even those not interested in teaching online—should pay attention. The article then turns to practical applications.

Keywords: Distance education; Distance learning; Online education; Online learning

Patricia Webb Peterson, Wilhelmina Savenye, “Letter from the guest editors: distance education: promises and perils of teaching and learning online,” *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 319-320, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00064-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00064-0). (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461501000640>)

Tillman J. Ragan, Patricia R. White, “What we have here is a failure to communicate: the criticality of writing in online instruction,” *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 399-409, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00071-8](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00071-8). (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461501000718>)

Abstract: This article addresses how online instructors can improve their email communications with students. The characteristics and demands of online instruction are described and characterized as depending on the instructor’s ability to communicate in writing. A model to guide instructors in their online communications, the Golden Triangles of Online Communication, is presented. The first triangle underscores the criticality of considering (a) the online learning environment context, (b) the learner, and (c) the learning task. The second triangle presents three critical questions that instructors using online communications must quickly answer (a) What is this about? (b) Why should I care? and (c) What am I supposed to do? The Golden Triangles represent an effort to provide assistance to instructors in the difficult task of providing high quality instruction with high student satisfaction in online learning. In the final analysis, we underscore the importance of instructors’ writing skills in effective and appealing online in teaching.

Keywords: Communication; Distance education; Online instruction; Teacher writing skills; Writing

David A. Reinheimer, “Teaching composition online: Whose side is time on?,” *Computers and Composition*, Volume 22, Issue 4, 2005, Pages 459-470, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.08.004>. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000617>)

Abstract: Although online education is at times envisioned as a time-saving enterprise, a recent, mostly anecdotal consensus indicates that, in fact, online education is more labor intensive for the instructor, if not for the student as well. Previous studies both confirm and deny this consensus because they examine different design paradigms that resist comparison. This study compares the workload for a student-centered paradigm in one face-to-face (F2F) and three online sections of the same composition course, and finds that teaching composition online takes almost twice as much time as face-to-face teaching. The major causes of this disparity appear to be hardware and applications, instructional design, and student learner characteristics.

Keywords: Computers and writing education; Distance education; Distance learning; Instructor workload; Online education

Merry Rendahl, Lee-Ann Kastman Breuch, “Toward a Complexity of Online Learning: Learners in Online First-Year Writing,” *Computers and Composition*, Volume 30, Issue 4, 2013, Pages 297-314, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2013.10.002>. (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461513000571>)

Abstract: In response to the growing presence of online first-year writing courses, this paper describes a case study of two online first-year writing courses and addresses the questions: What do students in an online first-year writing course perceive as good study habits, and what helps them succeed? Data includes surveys, online discussions, course management statistics, and selected interviews. The study is supported by social cognitive theory described by psychologist Albert Bandura; this methodology allows for examination of internal, external, and behavioral characteristics of participating students. Results of the study indicate that students who rated themselves as making good use of study time also succeeded in the course. Insights from students include information about study activities, management of study time, access to technology, and attitudes about online courses. A surprising result of the study was that students did not consider communication with peers as a productive study activity, despite a deliberate attempt by instructors to build peer interaction into the course. Yet students also reported high levels of engagement and positive attitudes about online learning. The social cognitive lens provides helpful insights about these complex findings by examining the external, internal, and behavioral aspects of online first-year writing students in this study.

Keywords: Online learning; First-year writing; Online writing instruction; Composition; Engagement; Social cognitive theory; Study time; Case study; Writing pedagogy

David Alan Sapp, James Simon, "Comparing grades in online and face-to-face writing courses: Interpersonal accountability and institutional commitment," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 22, Issue 4, 2005, Pages 471-489, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.08.005>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000629>)

Abstract: In spite of benefits surrounding distance education programs, many online writing courses suffer from low student completion rates. Student retention has been identified as a concern in a number of studies of online education. We extend this discussion by examining the relationship of assessment of student work to retention, and comparing the grades students receive in online and face-to-face undergraduate writing courses. Our data point to what we call the "thrive or dive" phenomenon for student performance in online writing courses, which describes the disproportionately high percentage of students who fail or do not complete online courses compared to conventional, face-to-face courses. We extend this discussion on challenges related to student retention and propose instructional approaches for online learning that include the interpersonal accountability between teachers and students, as well as the institutional commitment necessary to ensure that students can succeed in online writing courses and programs.

Keywords: Assessment; Distance education; Grading; Online course development; Retention; Student and faculty support; Technology; Writing instruction

Sarah Rilling, "The development of an ESL OWL, or learning how to tutor writing online," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 22, Issue 3, 2005, Pages 357-374, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2005.05.006>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461505000381>)

Abstract: This essay describes the development of an ESL OWL by grounding practices in language and literacy pedagogy theory. An initial discussion explores OWLs emulating physical writing center spaces. Two areas of concern are then addressed in meeting the needs of second language writers as they relate to practices and training for online tutoring: error correction—an area of frequent concern to second language writers—and increased interactivity—meeting

second language writer expectations and creating autonomous learners. Issues of plagiarism by second language writers are discussed as related to the type of feedback OWL tutors can provide. Highlighted throughout are samples of interactions between tutors and writers that show a process of learning how to create dialogue rather than dictations from the tutor to clean up a single essay.

Keywords: Error correction; Online tutoring; OWL; Plagiarism; Second language writers

Lauren E. Salisbury, "Just a Tool: Instructors' Attitudes and Use of Course Management Systems for Online Writing Instruction," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 48, 2018, Pages 1-17, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2018.03.004>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461517300567>)

Abstract: This study uses interview and observation data from first-year composition instructors to determine how instructors' experiences with course management systems (CMSs) influence their teaching practices within those spaces. I determine that although instructors recognize the potential significance of CMSs, there is still a great disparity between instructors' practices in face-to-face and CMS spaces with many instructors failing to see their use of CMSs as part of their pedagogical practice.

Keywords: Online writing instruction; OWI; Online education; Course management systems; CMS; Learning management systems; LMS; Writing pedagogy; Professional development; Online learning environments; OLE

Wilhelmina C. Savenye, Zane Olina, Mary Niemczyk, "So you are going to be an online writing instructor: issues in designing, developing, and delivering an online course," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 18, Issue 4, 2001, Pages 371-385, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(01\)00069-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(01)00069-X). (<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S875546150100069X>)

Abstract: Online education is increasing exponentially in colleges and universities. In this article, writing instructors are introduced to theories of instructional design that form the foundation to support effective student learning. We present a series of guidelines, derived from these theories and our research and teaching, that writing instructors may use to design, develop and deliver their online courses. We present considerations for instructors such as the need for the course, an analysis of the learners, appropriateness of the course for online delivery, pedagogical concerns, and resources. We then discuss how best to support students in online environments. We conclude with suggestions for faculty support and training for online course delivery.

Keywords: Distance learning; Electronic learning; Instructional design and development; Online course development; Online education; Student and faculty support

David Stacey, Sharon Goodman, Teresa Diane Stubbs, "The new distance learning: Students, teachers, and texts in cross-cultural electronic communication," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 13, Issue 3, 1996, Pages 293-302, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(96\)90018-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(96)90018-3).
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461596900183>)

Abstract: This is a story about two students, a teacher, and a computer. A chance meeting on the Internet led to a transatlantic collaborative learning and teaching project, using a means of communication that allowed a shift in traditional teacher-student relationships. Each participant describes and reflects on the experience.

Keywords: absence of social and nonverbal clues; critical linguistics; distance learning; e-mail; English language composition; internet; writing

Julie Stella, Michael Corry, "Intervention in Online Writing Instruction: An Action-theoretical Perspective," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 40, 2016, Pages 164-174, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2016.03.010>.

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461516300317>)

Abstract: This analysis argues for an interwoven perspective of motivation, engagement, agency, and action in Online Writing Instruction (OWI) compiled from shared elements of empirical research in online education, writing instruction, and especially student academic engagement in traditional classrooms, where the research domain is comparatively mature. Engagement is the common element shared by these domains. In online education research, engagement is sometimes understood through intentional student actions. In writing instruction, engagement is commonly understood through human agency. In academic settings, engagement can be seen as a foundational part of Self-Determination Theory, which is comprised of cognitive, behavioral, and emotional engagement (Deci and Ryan, 1985). Educators often find measures of engagement valuable because they are reliable predictors of student outcomes, and they suggest a reasonable point of intervention for struggling students. A measure of agentic engagement, which describes the extent to which a student exerts agency to personalize a learning experience, could add value to measures of engagement, especially in OWI where actions and agency are integral to student success. In addition, a focus on engagement and intervention/remediation may offer an opportunity for students to succeed in learning online, not just in OWI, which is a valued skill in the workplace.

Keywords: Online Writing Instruction; OWI; Online Education; Distance Education; Engagement; Self Determination Theory; Agency; Writing Pedagogy

Mary K. Stewart, "The Community of Inquiry Survey: An Assessment Instrument for Online Writing Courses," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 52, 2019, Pages 37-52, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2019.01.001>.

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461517300518>)

Abstract: The Community of Inquiry (CoI) Survey (Arbaugh et al., 2008) has been thoroughly validated as a measurement of the extent to which students engage in collaborative learning online. However, despite a strong alignment between composition pedagogy and the theory that grounds the survey, we have not yet employed the survey as an assessment instrument for online writing courses. This article shares the results of a study that delivered a modified version of the CoI Survey to four online sections of second-year composition at a four-year institution in the Mid-Atlantic. Despite the small sample size (n=32), the findings indicate that the CoI Survey is a valid assessment instrument for the specific context of online writing courses. This article recommends that writing instructors and program administrators incorporate the CoI Survey into their assessment practices, and calls for further research on the ways in which writing courses function as communities of inquiry.

Keywords: community of inquiry; CoI Survey; online writing instruction; first-year composition; assessment

Craig Stroupe, "Making distance presence: The compositional voice in online learning," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 20, Issue 3, 2003, Pages 255-275, ISSN 8755-4615, [https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615\(03\)00035-5](https://doi.org/10.1016/S8755-4615(03)00035-5).

(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461503000355>)

Abstract: This article enacts a dialogue between my experience as a full-time, online course designer and my background in composition and English studies. It proposes and theorizes a more conscious and extensive use of a compositional or third voice in online classes as an alternative to the combination of instructional and conversational voices typically available to students and teachers. This article argues that teaching and learning in online classes need to be recognized and articulated as aesthetic, linguistic, and performative processes, for which the literary methodologies and compositional pedagogies of English provide critical tools.

Keywords: Aesthetic; Bakhtin; Compositional voice; Dialogism; Distance education; Genre; Instructional design; Online course design; Online learning; Pedagogy; Presence; Rhetoric; Third voice

Stephanie Vie, "Effective Social Media Use in Online Writing Classes through Universal Design for Learning (UDL) Principles," *Computers and Composition*, Volume 49, 2018, Pages 61-70, ISSN 8755-4615, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compcom.2018.05.005>.
(<http://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S8755461518300288>)

Abstract: This article explores how universal design for learning (UDL) principles can be used to effectively scaffold social media in online writing courses. It offers proposed best practices for user-centered design in online environments when using social media. These include offering alternative assignments, using accessible social media technologies, and encouraging students to critique social media's affordances and constraints. Thus, readers may take away from this article some practical suggested approaches that can help support technologically enhanced classroom environments involving social media.

Keywords: Universal design for learning; Social media; Social networking; Online writing courses; Online pedagogy; Usability; Accessibility