

The Next Stage is a System: Writing Across the Curriculum and the New Knowledge Society

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With the "information age" has come a period of paradox. The more knowledge we have, the less secure we are—especially academics, those of us once considered the arbiters of knowledge—about its purpose and its permanence. "At the same time that knowledge has entered the limelight...its reliability has been questioned...more loudly than ever before" (2000, p.1) writes Peter Burke, summing up what many in academia have called "the crisis" of our knowledge society, when what is "intrinsic versus extrinsic" to the disciplines is completely uncertain (Klein, 1993, p.199). The university was once *the* home for making and assessing knowledge; now it is widely recognized as just one vehicle, and many debate whether or not it is the best engine to search for answers to the queries of our time. While popular culture turns out products aimed at the pursuit of meaning and knowledge—everything from reality television shows to best-selling versions of our most ancient scholarly fields—higher education turns in on itself, producing manifestos of panic.[1] As one disciplinary critic explains, the fear of irrelevance encourages scholars to turn self-reflexive at best and towards crisis narratives at worse (Klein, 1993, p. 199).

We are all familiar with such narratives, especially pervasive in the humanities: the academy is in "ruins," "under fire," "reforming," "rising," or "falling." [2] But even as we write about the past and the uncertain future, Compositionists, and, in particular, those of us working in Writing Across the Curriculum, are busy recreating and rebuilding the present through new educational programs. WAC programs, interdisciplinary initiatives aimed at understanding, questioning, teaching, and recreating deep-rooted beliefs about writing, rhetoric and knowledge, are poised to look at this moment of knowledge's "unreliability" with fresh eyes. For Writing Across the Curriculum initiatives are best positioned to suggest means of making sense of our new age and offer a space for seeing how the academy can act in this knowledge society.

In this essay, I aim to create that space by observing one newly emerging WAC program at my home university, the City University of New York. I offer an alternative approach to the traditional lens we use to look at disciplines or culture—textual or rhetorical analysis—and suggest systems theory as a way to observe Composition's unique relationship to knowledge. Systems theory suggests that knowledge is produced recursively and reflexively and requires paradox to proliferate. Such an approach suits new WAC programs, which use information from many subjects, persons, and professions to communicate new knowledge, all the while reflecting on the mode of communication and questioning the value and purpose of such modes for our particular time and place. In other words, WAC works with paradox, which, I will argue, may be the ticket to its possibilities.

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Beyond Stages: The Role of Systems Theory for WAC in the Present

In order to situate Composition and WAC as the discipline of the present we need to understand how we've seen our past in relation to the knowledge industry. For this, we turn to disciplinary histories. Such histories often reveal more of a field's identity in the present than its accomplishments of the past. Scholars of WAC have sought to define the last thirty years of their work by carving the field into stages, like literary periods. The "first stage" of Writing Across the Curriculum corresponds to the 1970s and early 1980s, and is described as concerned mostly with teaching writing for "greater access" and focused on "humanist concepts of process pedagogy" (Mahala and Swilky, 1994, p. 35). In WAC's "second phase," which corresponds to the late 1980's and 1990's, WAC is more attuned to the "social discourses" of writing. Programmatically it is invested in expansion, "proliferation" and what David Russell describes as the goal of fitting "firmly in the complex organizational structure of the university" (1987, p.191).

Things get more complicated in the third stage, which corresponds to the present day. In this stage, WAC and Composition work not as stages but as self-conscious layers of ideas and initiatives, attempting to be everything at once: progressive and progressing, expanding and reflective, locally relevant and globally important. While one description describes the current moment as concerned with the multi-meaning goal of "critical consciousness" (LeCourt, 1996) many other scholars define this stage as dictated by what Art Young calls the need to secure a "more or less permanent structure" in the academy—a security that still may not eradicate the "struggle" that WAC leaders face in today's academy (1990, p. 287). This struggle manifests itself in the economic hierarchies of the university structure but also plays out in the philosophical and educational positions of scholars who debate the persistent push for new programs. Daniel Mahala and Jody Swilky find that while "WAC advocates often speak about the shared purposes of postsecondary schooling" this talk often dissolves in the face of the divisive, compartmentalized structure of the university (1994, pp. 35-6). Betty Bamberg echoes this sentiment, writing that WAC programs are "being established as top-down administrative initiatives with unrealistic expectations" (2000, p. 5).

Historical categories often elude the reality of lived experience, but in the case of Composition and WAC, where the implementation of programs can't keep pace with prescribed periods, this is especially true. This is the core paradox of Composition in general and WAC in particular: we seek to contain knowledge about contingent realities of communication. Writing scholarship intends to freeze time, making permanent philosophies and pedagogies that, when enacted in our programs, change according to variances of our situations. Within the discipline of Composition, the WAC movement is perhaps the most dramatic performance of this paradox—WAC is both a structural, programmatic reality and a philosophical metonymy: a WAC Director's goal is to construct stable, whole programs as scholars deconstruct writing as disciplinary specific, partitioning out its meaning in the circumstances of production. Many disciplines operate with the duality—to codify and categorize knowledge while stressing the fundamentally contingent nature of its subject matter—but Composition enacts its dual mission in "real time": it embodies its philosophies in the practices of educational programs. [3] This is the second reason why Composition is poised to face the present—because WAC programs are a tool for disseminating knowledge to people both within and outside the academy. Finally, the way this field has responded to the "crisis" in academia offers an alternative to the often dichotomous discussions about the fate of higher education and the humanities and social sciences particularly. In the last ten years, Composition as a field and WAC as a "movement" have witnessed a rise in academic recognition and an influx of students to its newly minted programs and departments. Yet simultaneously, Composition has experienced a proliferation of self-analysis and reflection, most notably, in the field of disciplinary history. [4] In this way, Composition is growing and expanding, at the same time as it observes, reflects, and makes sense of its novelty.

The notion of "systems," often linked to fields such as cybernetics and artificial intelligence, helps to view the reflexive nature of WAC and Composition. Sociologists of knowledge and systems theorists use a combination of fields, including Communications, Information theory, Cybernetics, Biology and Mathematics to analyze the many processes that contribute to the construction of knowledge in our contemporary society. This approach eschews methodologies for reading texts and culture and avoids descriptions of the social world as "free-floating elements from the outside" (Schwanitz, 1995, p. 137). These theorists also reject the notion of disciplinary knowledge most common to Compositionists, the "paradigm" theory, made famous by Thomas Kuhn. While paradigms address knowledge change, they don't account for the "internal social organization" of change, or the way groups and communities respond to epistemological shifts (Fuchs, 1992, p. 103). Paradigm shifts lead us to think in stages, not in the reflective, reflexive layers of the present day knowledge society.

Instead, systems theory defines new knowledge networks as coming into being recursively and self-reflexively, "simultaneously via the reproduction of the system's internal differentiations" (Schwanitz, 1995, p.137). As Sociologist Niklas Luhmann writes, a social arena "uses the results of its own operations as the basis for further operations" (1990, p. 72). "Recursivity," a term that process theorists began using in "stage one" of WAC describes the non-linear process that both experienced and student writers used to compose thought into writing. Heuristics, like pre-writing and freewriting, were created to help make students conscious of the recursive processes of composing.[5] When we write, these researchers maintained, we use what compositionists call a "recursive" process of composing. For systems theorists, the process of recursivity is extended to all modes of communication and is termed "autopoietic." In "autopoietical" or self-referential systems, communication can never exist outside of the observer observing the communication and, in turn, systems are always communicating back to us, in a different way.

"First" and "second" order observation or cybernetics provides a way to distinguish this approach, and helps connect it to work with writing, especially new writing across the curriculum programs. "First-order observation" focuses primarily on the recursive nature of communication, the "capacity of circular causality to generate stability and systemic equilibrium" (Rasch and Wolfe, 2000, p.12). This approach to information, which took hold during the 1960's in America, corresponds to the first "stage" of WAC as it is represented in the literature: research and teaching the composing processes of writers. However, while the second "stage" of WAC and composition theory acknowledges the contingent and constructed nature of discourse in the social arena, it stops short of seeing how the complexity of this network interacts with and changes how texts and programs will not only be observed, but enacted and understood. "Second-order" observation or cybernetics addresses the dynamic interaction of observer and observed and acknowledges the paradox of first-order cybernetics. The world (or writing or writing programs) moves in a circular way: in "circular causality A and B are mutually cause and effect of each other" (Heims, in Rasch and Wolfe, 2000, p.11). With second-order observation, this situation is presented as a paradox of observation, of knowledge: representational systems are always referring back to something else. When we create WAC programs, we use pedagogies recursively, borrowing process pedagogies from the first stage of WAC in order to build on a new program for stage two, which will lead us into a new political climate of stage three. Systems and knowledge work recursively, unpredictably, self-referentially and, always, in paradox.

Another way to look at the workings of "systems" is through what the sociologist Randall Collins calls "intellectual networks" or "abstraction-reflexivity sequences." In his exhaustive history of intellectual thought, *The sociology of philosophies: A global theory of intellectual change* he sums up how knowledge is made with this pronouncement: "the history of philosophy is to a considerable extent the history of groups" (1998, p.3). In today's information age, he finds that new ideas are made and spread through these reflexive networks, which are highly communicable and complex-thinking groups that turn a saturation of information into self-conscious productions. Towards the end of his book, he discusses how intellectual groups participate in the creation of new knowledge, especially in our age of "meta-reflections." He writes that heightened reflexivity and self-consciousness occur "as the intergenerational sequence lengthens"

(p.788). The more dynamic the interaction among intellectual groups and the more that philosophies and programs are superimposed upon each other in "productive intellectual networks," the greater the possibility for recognizing emerging, new knowledges (p.788).

Systems theory provides a way to understand the interconnections that make up CUNY's WAC program and many others that are formed at this paradoxical moment in higher education: when philosophical and pragmatic programmatic goals intersect in ways that elude neat paradigms. The complexities of the CUNY-Composition Studies relationship is ripe for reanalysis, and the creation of a new WAC initiative at CUNY presents an opportunity to observe the performance of a third "stage" program working within first and second stage confines, at the cusp of our new information age. This initiative provides a structure that can turn historical and structural paradoxes into methodologies for observing knowledge and academic change.

The Case of CUNY: From Open Access and Basic Writing to Closed Admissions and Writing Across the Curriculum

It is worth pausing to consider the background of the CUNY/Composition connection, for this helps situate "stage three" of Composition and WAC as a new system. The City University of New York and Composition Studies have always shared a history and a mission: to make knowledge visible and accessible to students through writing pedagogy. In David Russell's description of WAC's (and Composition's) beginnings, he writes that the WAC movement was founded by a need for greater attention to literacy: "Cross-curricular writing programs were almost always a response to a perceived need for greater access, greater equity" (1997, p. 271). The growth of WAC, Russell writes, is "a response to the demands for writing instruction created by increasing student enrollment" (1992, p. 39). "Access" and "equity" are the cornerstones of CUNY's mission statement, which was rewritten in 1970, when it became one of the first universities to establish an open-admissions policy. In the 50th anniversary of the journal *College Composition and Communication*, Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson and Jeff Sommers argue for understanding "the teaching of writing in open admissions sites as central to the historical formation and continuing practice of composition studies" (1999, p. 440). Indeed almost every historian of Composition cites open-admissions in general and at CUNY in particular as essential to development of Basic Writing research, WAC programs and writing programs and majors.^[6] In addition to the ground-breaking work on error and Basic Writing that Mina Shaughnessey did at City College, researchers like Kenneth Bruffee (writing centers and peer-tutoring—Brooklyn College), Sondra Perl (composing process research—Lehman College), Charles Bazerman (rhetoric of the disciplines—Baruch College), Marie Ponsot and Janice Peritz (poetics and pedagogy, Writing Across the Curriculum—Queens College), Richard Larson (research writing and WAC—Lehman College), Ira Schor (working class pedagogies—Staten Island College), Barbara Gleason and Mary Soliday (assessment and mainstreaming basic writers—City College) among others—were (and many are still) doing work at CUNY.

While open-admissions at CUNY helped turn the practice of teaching writing into the discipline of Composition Studies, there is not much mention of CUNY in the scholarship produced during the 1980's, the decade of growth for this new field. The post-Shaughnessey decade produced considerable change—a new graduate program in Composition and Rhetoric, improved writing centers and tutoring programs, professionalized its first-year writing programs—but none of these advances, while significant locally, had the effect on the discipline that Basic Writing did during the first years of open-admissions. It is not until the height of the so-called "second stage" of WAC, when open-admissions returns as a major concern for CUNY, do issues of writing at the CUNY colleges return to the pages of Composition journals. In the early 1990's, in response to lowered test scores and a falling graduate rate, Mayor Giuliani, the Republican Mayor of New York City at the time, commissioned a group to study what was seen as excesses of open-admissions. The committee summed up its findings as follows: "Access and excellence are CUNY's historical goals. But over the past 30 years, the 'access' portion of the mission has overwhelmed the university, at the expense of

excellence" (6). After a long battle with administration and city government, the Board of Trustees voted, in May of 1998, to rid the four year schools of remediation. As of 2000, students seeking to enter one of CUNY's eleven four year colleges must pass new admissions exams in Math, reading and writing. The end of remediation at the four year schools effectively closed the Basic Writing programs developed by the Composition pioneers of the late 1970's—the faculty who put CUNY's writing programs on the map.[7]

The rise and fall of these literacy programs is part of a larger story of New York City politics and economics in the 1970's and 1990's. The Vietnam War, the Civil Rights movement, feminism, and various other student-led movements paved the way for a radical shift in education policies in New York City during the late 1960's and 1970's. During the 1980's, a city-wide budget cut affected the programs for all the city's public schools. CUNY began charging tuition for the first time and enrollment lowered. Decreased enrollment encouraged a change in testing policies and the GPA became the qualification for admissions, rather than standardized test scores, which were viewed by many as unfair to minority and ESL students. The changing population at CUNY and the increased demands of employers created a controversy about the role of remediation at the four year schools. In response, the Board of Trustees issued a mandate that required additional admission and graduation standards. These "standards" focused on test scores in writing, reading and Math. The conservative government (Giuliani as Mayor and Pataki as Governor), pushed for a "return" to the pre-open admissions standards. This government, together with the fall of the stock market and the economic crisis before, and most dramatically after September 11th 2001 combined to promote a change in CUNY's mission, at least how the mission was depicted in the popular and academic press.

In the popular press, CUNY was depicted as a university that lost its way in promoting "excellence" and that the way "back" was, again, to focus on literacy. Instead of "Basic Writing," which defined composition and, in a sense, public higher education in New York City in the 1970's, Writing Across the Curriculum was charged with creating the conditions to change the culture of public higher education.

WAC Faculty Development Unfolded: A Workshop in Emerging Knowledges

Although WAC was thirty years old in the United States when CUNY administrators tapped into this "movement," its manifestation as an answer to the many changes facing the city was new to CUNY. The end of remediation brought a range of scholarly interest back into CUNY and Composition but WAC was brought to the forefront of intellectual and political life at CUNY by the Board of Trustees. [8] In 1998 the Board of Trustees issued a mandate that writing would create a "uniformed" standard of literacy: "henceforth each college intensify and expand its programmatic efforts to strengthen the teaching of writing in courses across the curriculum and that such efforts ensure that quality writing skill are fostered in all disciplinary areas." [9] All seventeen campuses, senior and community colleges, received funding for local campus implementation of this university program.

While the Trustees mandated the program, the compositionists put the program into practice. The experienced Compositionists from all over CUNY came together to structure a master plan for the program involving five groups of people—CUNY faculty, old and new, consultants from the school-based New York City Writing Project, advanced graduate students from across the disciplines, faculty from across the disciplines, and undergraduate students. The graduate students or "Writing Fellows" would serve as writing consultants for faculty across the curriculum. The faculty would slowly transform their courses into WAC-enhanced or Writing Intensive, and, in turn, the undergraduates at CUNY would approach learning and literacy differently. Since 1999, the program has expanded to include six or seven writing fellows attached to all undergraduate campuses, funding for WAC coordinators to pursue related projects, and personnel for assessment projects. In addition, Curriculum Committees at most campuses have adopted new writing requirements and created or expanded their Writing Intensive course offerings to accommodate the new writing and communication centered curriculum.

The creators of this new self-conscious and multi-dimensional group decided that rather than dictate what writing at CUNY would look like, it would create a group that would, by its diversity, *ask* what writing at CUNY could look like. A core group of Compositionists determined that faculty and Writing Fellow summer Institutes would be team taught, with one CUNY faculty member and one experienced New York City Writing Project (NYCWP) member leading workshops over four days. Because the New York City Writing Project works within the Institute for Literacy Studies, which is housed at Lehman College, one of the four-year schools of CUNY, a close relationship between CUNY faculty and NYCWP teachers was established. This was reinforced by the "Looking Both Ways" program, which brings together public school teachers with CUNY faculty to engage in cross-curricular seminars and workshops.^[10] CUNY faculty involved in both programs felt that the teachers from the Project understood the dynamics of consulting and could enhance the training of faculty and graduate students.

On the surface, this consultant-faculty-student structure resembles the layout of many WAC programs. But a closer look at this arrangement, and, especially, the approach taken to professional development, reveals the way the configuration of people, politics, and pedagogies from this program not only yielded an interesting workshop but produced a new network of knowledge production. Both workshops mix tried and true features from the New York and National Writing Project philosophy and techniques generated from the two generations of CUNY faculty and the graduate students contributing to the initiative. Two examples from each workshop reveal this layered approach. In the workshop for faculty, we begin with a workshop common to WAC proponents—we ask faculty to share with a group of interdisciplinary faculty, a piece of writing they admire from their field and a piece of writing they admire from their "non-professional" reading. Each faculty member is to bring copies of the text and to compose a brief statement about the writing. This statement is then shared in smaller groups.

In the tradition of "process pedagogy," articulated by Bruffee and others, these groups promoted collaborative learning as a liberating pedagogy to stimulate literacy. As recorded in much of the literature of second stage WAC, many in the program critiqued the exercise and its reflective component, questioning the goals and possibilities of collaborative learning in light of the local realities of CUNY students and city politics. And some participants' concerns represented a mixture of each of these stages. For example, one faculty member in Health Services remarked that she "liked" the activity because it revealed her "unconscious perceptions" about how she placed value on different genres, but she also acknowledged a desire to "see, to really know how understanding my biases contributes to improved literacy among my students." One of the workshop leaders expressed the belief that students at CUNY have too much "groupthink" to start with, and wondered whether the creation of the WAC program would encourage a more unformed approach to instruction. Each groups' opinions are presented to the larger group and recorded by the workshop leaders. The critiques are filtered back into the remaining three days of activities and discussions.

This opening session was suggested by the Writing Project leaders who argued for its beneficial "community-building" features. Experienced faculty also sought to create a working community, but were uncertain if this could be accomplished, considering the polarized politics and experiences of the faculty and their relationship to literacy. Some of the newly hired Compositionists pushed the rhetorical element of the exercise, and what it could reveal about the constructedness of value. The different goals and hopes for this exercise were presented to the group, and used as part of the discussion which ensues after the exercise. This discussion provided the material for a workshop the following day, on using reflections for revising ideas. Each group participated in the creation of new material for understanding writing, curriculum, and knowledge, and such material emerged out of their experiences with the initiative. In this way, the workshop becomes about more than the abstract goals of Composition pedagogy or the local program concerns of CUNY. It is both of these and it is an exercise in making visible the processes of producing interdisciplinary, reflexive knowledge. The autopoiesis, or self-referentiality of this system, sets the stage for something new.

The Workshop for the graduate students, what we call the "Writing Fellows Institute," provides another example of how CUNY's "third-stage" WAC program contains the self-conscious layering that reveals a different template for knowledge production in higher education. The planning committee for this institute was comprised of two new faculty members in Composition and Rhetoric, both of whom were directors of WAC, three New York City Writing Project Consultants (who were retired New York City public school teachers) and three experienced Compositionists, who each contributed to the Basic Writing revolution that characterized the first stage of Composition Studies and CUNY's writing history. The centerpiece of the Institute, it was decided, was to be a text that the graduate students would compose throughout their four days in the workshop. Inspired by a long tradition in the New York City Writing Project workshops, the Institute leaders asked students to compose this text from the "ground up." This task has encouraged fierce debates among the program planners and has produced an opportunity for reflection on the reflective and recursive nature of knowledge.

In the first two years of the Institute, students and workshop leaders were instructed to write about anything at all. Prewriting and drafting was built into the activities of the workshop and continued drafting would take place at home, with the "final" draft ready for presentation at the end of the week, in the form of a "read-around." But among the newer faculty, who are closer in age and in education to the graduate students, there was a sense that this writing was forced. Some graduate students refused to participate, indicating that doing so would "simulate" writing and not actually be a productive means towards creating new texts or new knowledge about writing. The idea that process activities was conceived of as dogmatic and tiring rather than liberating and pragmatic (and true to the reality of writers) was met with surprise by many Writing Project leaders, and some experienced faculty. Writing Project leaders saw the text as an opportunity to enact an activity, the creation of an "essay" that is at the center of the undergraduate education. While some of the newer Compositionists agreed with the Writing Fellows, that walking through the stages of a text is not equivalent to what we really do when we write, the workshop leaders decided to keep the activity, because it drew this uncertainty and controversy.

This debate over writing process pedagogies is well documented in the Composition and WAC literature, and often encapsulated by the writing-to-learn and learning-to-write debate, or the WAC/WID split. In the particular case of CUNY, such issues elicited the initiative's unique structure of program making and knowledge. In the second year of the Institute, we passed around some of the texts and the critiques of the activity that were written by graduate students the previous year, and asked Fellows to use this writing as a topic for their texts. Much of the discussion centered on whether going through the "process" of writing a text was useful, or, as one graduate student put it "mere representation" or simulation. The fact that the debate centered on the "reality" or authenticity versus "simulation" of the workshop brought up a useful and provocative discussion, one that occupies our culture at this moment. The questions raised about the WAC program—"How do we value knowledge and communication?" "What is the basis for determining what is 'real' information and genuine work?" are the questions of our age.

Understanding the difference between reality and simulation, fact and fiction, information and knowledge is key to addressing the new realities of the information society. Producing a text within the confines of one kind of methodology or a particular community can reveal this. So can the existence of the three generations of teachers running the programs—each group representing a system and generation of philosophies and pedagogies. When CUNY's Writing Fellows move on to work in other institutions, certainly they will represent another "intellectual network" or "reflexivity sequence" that could help make visible the changes of that new time and different place.

The Next Stage is a System: Writing Across Change

CUNY's WAC program has been created from discarded drafts of old programs and then revised again, based on the observations and contributions of new scholars whose contact with the history of the discipline

and the current political climate reinterprets what writing means and does. In the CUNY WAC program, the trans-historical stages of philosophies and politics create the material to make visible the complexity of knowledge production today. Workshops for faculty and fellows are conducted with an eye towards highlighting the diverse groupings that brought this program into place. The "movements" of writing travel in multiple directions; they are what cultural critics Adam Muller and Paisley Livingston describe as "the multiple and changing modalities of the social, textual, and ideological construction of knowledge" (1995, p. 15).

Working in this program, at this time, can provide a very real visualization of how theory and practice work together, how knowledge works in a recursive manner, how the pedagogies we teach for "learning to write" are contingent on the structural patterns put in place for programming writing at the university, how the role of "observer" or critic or theorist is not someone who looks in from the outside, nor is it someone looking out from the inside. Rather it is a group of persons, like my WAC colleagues, or a network of influence, like this essay, or any other document created in and from the WAC program, that is part of an open and closed political system, an expanding and shrinking educational system, and new and previous paradigms of thought. The future of WAC and the academy may depend on our thinking not in stages but in systems, where paradox marks its great potential.

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Notes

[1] Gladwell's bestselling book *The Tipping Point* (2000) draws on research in Sociology and Psychology, Steven Pinker made language theory readable for the national bestseller *The Language Instinct* (1994) and Dennett's *Darwin's Dangerous Idea* (1996), a National Book Award Finalist, took questions of evolution out of the physicist's lab and into the realm of the popular.

[2] In literary studies, for example, the proliferation of disciplinary manifestoes is unprecedented, becoming an MLA and PMLA subspecialty on par with more traditional research subjects. The Sociology of Knowledge is an area devoted almost exclusively to writing about knowledge making and debating the methodologies and meaning of new disciplinary constructs. Indeed one can look to the subject of this journal's volume, Cultural Studies, as a kind of "meta-field," devoted to the critique of traditional disciplinary knowledge. Scholes, (1998) *The Rise and Fall of English*, Richard Miller, (1998), *As if Learning Mattered: Reforming Higher Education*, and Reading (1996), *The University in Ruins* are just three examples of the crisis literature that pervades academia.

[3] Certainly other disciplines seek scholarly permanence even as they enact their philosophies in the practical moment of the present. Education, for example, is built on the premise that it is, above all, about practices of real persons in specific contexts of learning—in schools—and Anthropology or Sociology generates theories based on the specific and changing contingencies of real-world communities (see Hoskin (1993) and Fuchs (1992)). However Writing Across the Curriculum programs are spaces for practice, theory, and reflection: they act as embodiments of

theories, as tools for questioning and reworking disciplinary subject matter and theories of learning, and as places to practice new skills.

[4] Miller's (1997) "Foreword" in *Publishing in Rhetoric and Composition* and Gephardt and Gebhardt's (1996) *Academic Advancement in Composition Studies* describes Composition's boom . For a discussion of Composition Studies' approach to reflection, see Yood (2003).

[5] For a thorough history of the "process movement" in Composition studies, see Crowley (1998).

[6] See Lewiecki-Wilson and Sommers (1999) as well as North (1998) and Berlin (1985) for the link between work with Basic Writing at CUNY and the "movement" for creating Composition as a discipline.

[7] To read the Board of Trustees report about the fate of remediation and open admissions at CUNY, see <http://www.nyc.gov/html/cuny/home.html>. The section entitled "A Framework for Assessing Outcomes" is particularly informative, as it outlines what the trustees see as the failure of CUNY's open admission policy, to be "an independent system of education" committed to "academic excellence and to the provision of equal access and opportunity for students, faculty, and staff from all ethnic and racial groups and from both sexes".

[8] For an explanation of and potential consequences of ending open-admissions at CUNY, see Arenson (1998) and Greenberg (1998).

[9] See the full text of the report online at http://www.cuny.edu/event/press/mplan_IIC.html on the World Wide Web. Retrieved April 22, 2004.

[10] See <http://www.lbw.cuny.edu> and <http://www.lehman.cuny.edu/litstudies/nycwrtproj.htm> for more information about these projects. Several leaders of the Looking Both Ways program teach and work with WAC at CUNY, including Sondra Perl, Marcie Wolfe, and Peter Gray.

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