WAC and Second Language Writing: Cross-field Research, Theory, and Program Development

Mapping the Gaps in Services for L2 Writers

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Abstract: Given complaints about preparation of international students for their writing-intensive courses, a director of first-year writing and an undergraduate researcher at a Midwestern research university conducted a needs assessment based on Kaufman's model. Instruments used included a survey, interviews, and analysis of commentary on sample papers. Findings suggest that there is a growing undergraduate second-language (L2) population, both locally and nationally, yet there continues to be a gap between L1 writing research and L2 writing research; there is also a gap between and among several university writing units. Recommendations include appeals to administrators for more teaching, tutoring, and faculty development resources. To refine the assessment in the future, an alternative needs assessment model, the Logic Model, is described.

> *Matt W get some money and donation his clothes Setemper 4,c2009 in the Black Bery Exchange.*
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> *He comes to the store with a bunch of clothes. He gives all cloths to a clerk. Niceie Davis who is working the store conunts the colthes. He brings total 17 items of clothes in the store. She calculates from his clothes to the money. She said, "You got total 18 dollars."*
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> — Excerpts from two MU Journalism Students' Stories

The two news stories above about Blackberry Exchange, a used-clothing store in our Midwest college town, exercised several journalism faculty enough that they went to the dean of Journalism, who picked up the phone and called the dean of Arts and Science, who issued an email to a dozen people from across campus, including the registrar, the director of the Intensive English Program, several writing-intensive faculty who share concerns about the quality of writing produced by their international students, and me, the director of the First-Year Writing Program and a former WAC administrator. The concern? A variation of the familiar complaint: "Johnny can't write." Instead of "Johnny," it's "Jianjun" or "Jagdeep" or "Jin-ho." Applied to first-year writing, the concern is that our program is failing to prepare international students to meet the demands of their writing-intensive classes.

The twist in the proverbial lament is beginning to be heard nationwide, for many U.S. institutions are facing rising enrollments of international students, especially at the undergraduate level and most notably among the Chinese (*Open Doors*, 2010). Well represented in the growing population of international students are young scholars who have survived a heavy academic vetting process in their home countries and who may be accomplished *readers* of English. Less well represented are students who are fluent *writers* of academic English. The writing challenge for international students and other second-language (L2) learners attending

U.S. colleges, then, is two-fold: 1) L2 learners need to learn to write fluently in English according to U.S. academic standards and 2) L2 learners need to learn to write in the languages of their respective disciplines, something that realistically cannot be accomplished in a single composition or writing-intensive course.[1] Unrealistic as the journalism professors' expectations may have been, the faculty were nonetheless justified in asking questions about the preparation of international students for writing-intensive (WI) classes, and their questions were well worth investigating. To do so, an undergraduate researcher and I decided to conduct a needs assessment, a systematic investigation of the gaps between what is happening in a program and what should be happening. Even though writing program administrators (WPAs) like me regularly conduct needs assessments informally, Linda Adler-Kassner (2008) encourages us in *The Activist WPA* to be even more strategic, intentional, and deliberate when we gather information. Similarly, Susan McLeod (1995) suggests that WPAs are more likely to be effective "change agents" when we systematically link ideals and strategies.

I suspect that needs assessments are most productive not only when they are undertaken systematically, but also when they are undertaken under the auspices of a grant, scholarship, or accrediting agency—not necessarily because *different* information is then collected, but because the information that is collected can be used more strategically, is less likely to be expedient and reactive, and is more likely to be taken seriously. The imprimatur of the grant, program, or funding agency and its deadlines contribute urgency and authority to whatever network of communication follows. Put another way, if complaints such as those rendered by the journalism professors constitute a "rhetorical situation," a problematic situation calling for a response, in Bitzer's words (1968), I suspect that the rhetorical situation can be addressed more effectively and less reactively if done so formally under the auspices of a grant, assessment design, or accrediting process.

My undergraduate researcher, Jessica Armstrong, and I took a modest first step in this direction by seeking and receiving funding from our institution's well-respected Undergraduate Mentorship Research Program to assess the services provided for L2 students making a transition from first-year writing to WI courses . However valuable it was to conduct a needs assessment, however, we could have improved the assessment by defining our objectives more precisely, by distinguishing more clearly between short and long term outcomes, and by having more measurable and concrete outputs, as we'll explain later in the article. Here we will describe and critique the needs assessment that we developed based on Kaufman's model and suggest ways we could have improved it, especially via a well-received variation known as the Logic Model.

Developing a Needs Assessment

As we discovered, Roger Kaufman (1978), the father of needs assessment, developed a model for needs assessment in educational settings that would expand the planner's notion of audience (not just an insider working on a local task), expand the levels of activity (including micro, macro, and mega levels), and shift the definition of "need," so that it would be understood as a gap in the results or consequences (or outputs), not a gap in the resources (or inputs). Kaufman believed that to assess need in terms of resources too often results in a circular argument, with conclusions drawn before the investigation. He also believed that confusion about ends (outputs) leads to poor selection of means (inputs—methods and procedures). As Kaufman says, "Many of our failures in education are not due to poor methods and procedures; they are due to selecting methods without carefully considering and determining the results, or outcomes of education" (p. 31). He laments, paraphrasing Einstein, that "we have a proliferation of means and a confusion of ends" (p. 9).

The needs analysis, then, is an attempt to clarify the ends first by articulating the gap between the actual and ideal ends (the needs), then by prioritizing the needs, and finally by using those priorities to guide selection of the best procedures or means for program development. In the last thirty years, Kaufman's model has been refined and tailored for various settings, especially educational and medical ones, but most needs assessments include the following steps (Altschuld & Witkin, 2000):

- Perform a gap analysis.
- Identify priorities and importance.
- Identify causes of performance problems and/or opportunities.
- Select solution strategies from among alternatives.
- Implement selected strategies.
- Determine performance effectiveness and revise as needed.

To carry out our needs assessment, my collaborator and I began by asking ourselves some obvious practical questions: What is the purpose of the needs assessment? What are the objectives for conducting the assessment? What methodologies are best for collecting our information? What resources are needed and currently available for conducting this assessment? Do we need help to develop our instruments? Do we need help to collect and analyze our data? What is our timeline? We developed Table 1 below to help us frame the purposes, methods, audiences, and instruments for the needs assessment we planned to conduct.

Table 1. 2010 L2 Needs Assessment Instruments and Audiences

Instrument	**Target population or object**	**How instrument was used**
Statistical reports	Both national and local bodies of international students	Placed local statistics in national context
Online survey	Local international students	Developed via SurveyMonkey and distributed via email to entire IS student body with help of International Center
Interviews	Local administrators	Emailed & interviewed the following individuals: • Director, International Center • Director, Intensive English Program • Director, English Language Support Program • (Director, First-year Writing) • Dean, School of Journalism • Dean, College of Arts & Science
	Local faculty	• WI Faculty Member, Economics • WI Faculty Member, Journalism • WI Faulty Member, Theater • English Composition (IS) teacher (2 NTT s) • English Composition (IS) teacher (2 GTA s)
	Local international students	• International undergraduates who consented on survey (5)
Discourse Analysis	Local international student papers	(instead of analyzing student writing, we used papers and comments as discussion prompts in faculty interviews)

Of the half-dozen varieties of needs assessments described by Kaufman, ours was aligned most closely with what he calls the "alpha" model, a basic model that assumes few or no "givens" and is most clearly related to interaction with other units, in our case, units beyond our first-year writing program.

We began by developing our survey and interview questions for students and faculty, and then we submitted a plan to our Institutional Review Board to conduct research on human subjects. After gaining approval, we then worked with the assistant director of the International Center to send a web-based survey to all currently enrolled international students.[2] From the survey results, we were able to identify international students who had taken first-year composition and/or WI classes, some of whom were willing to be interviewed. Staff in the WAC program helped us send an email to all faculty teaching WI courses to solicit WI participants for our study. We identified and contacted teachers of first-year writing ourselves, from whom we collected commented-upon writing samples from international students, and we contacted selected university administrators directly.

Via the survey and interviews, we inquired about the writing teachers' goals, teaching situation, and internal and external constraints as well as the international students' expectations, frustrations, and writing competencies. We collected commented-upon writing samples from teachers of first year writing and found the samples especially useful when discussing commenting strategies with teachers during interviews.[3] We then compared our findings to the desired standards identified in the literature review in order to articulate the needs, that is, the gap between the current situation and desired outcomes. The needs, once identified, were prioritized within the context of new opportunities and realistic constraints so that we could articulate our recommendations. We planned to submit our recommendations for review by an expert in the field--Paul Kei Matsuda--whom we also planned to invite to lead a one-day workshop for teachers and administrators from across the disciplines at the end of the summer.

Reviewing the Literature on L2 Writing

We embarked on our needs assessment with a review of some of the L2 literature, in part to articulate the "ideals" against which we would be contrasting our present situation. We re-read articles and expanded upon our reading list as our investigation continued, and we will spiral back to them again as recommended readings for faculty attending future L2 writing workshops. The literature review for us, then, did not function so much as a discrete body of background information as it did a body of practices with which we were somewhat familiar but that we were coming to understand more fully and critically through our investigation.

As a former WAC administrator who had worked extensively with the natural and applied scientists, I had interacted with many L2 learners and was not entirely unfamiliar with L2 literature. Nonetheless, the fact that I was not more deeply informed about L2 issues points to one unfortunate consequence of the professionalization of both L2 teachers and college writing teachers in the last half of the twentieth century, something that this issue of *ATD* attempts to address: the absence of each other's voices at professional conferences and in each other's journals, resulting in a disciplinary division of labor (Matsuda, 1999). According to Matsuda's "Second Language Writing in the Twentieth Century: A Situated Historical Perspective" (2003), many L2 scholars had been heavily influenced by Charles Fries and Leonard Bloomfield and, for understandable reasons, tended to downplay writing instruction, focusing instead on speaking and on the writing of grammatically correct sentences. Certainly, some L2 researchers went on to address the writing process and larger units of discourse in context, especially Vivian Zamel (1976) and those researchers interested in contrastive rhetoric, English for Specific Purpose, English for Academic Purposes, and genre studies (Kaplan, 1966; Bloor & Bloor, 1986; Connor, 1987; Flowerdew, 1987; Swales, 1990; Freedman, 1999). Meanwhile, most U.S. college writing teachers tended to be radically under-informed about the needs of L2 students. Exacerbating this professional bifurcation was institutional isolation: Teachers with the most L2 training often worked (and still work) in English language teaching programs functioning independently or on the edges of the mainstream institution (Matsuda, 1999). Clearly, more dialogue between L2 scholars and English L1 compositionists was—and is—needed.

Among the most visible calls for engaging in dialogue across programs, including WAC programs, is the *CCCC Statement on Second-Language Writing and Writers* (2009), which offers standards for placement, teacher preparation, and assessment, among other things. We drew on the selected bibliography accompanying the statement for our initial literature review, including selections by Shanti Bruce (2009), Dana Ferris (2009), Rebecca Moore Howard (1995), Ilona Leki (2007), Paul Kei Matsuda (2003), Daniel Royer and Roger Gilles (2003), Tony Silva (1994), John Swales (1990), and Vivian Zamel and Ruth Spack (2003), among others. We also drew selections from *Second Language Writing in the Composition Classroom: A Critical Sourcebook*, edited by Paul Matsuda, Michelle Cox, Jay Jordan, and Christina Ortmeier-Hooper (2006) and from *Reinventing Identities in Second Language Writing,* edited by Michelle Cox, Jay Jordan, Christina Ortmeier-Hooper, and Gwen Gray (2010).

Putting our Findings in National and Institutional Context: Numbers, Dollars, Isolation

As indicated in Table 1, we reviewed current research reports on international students to provide national and institutional contexts for our local survey and interview data. According to data from the U.S. Institute for International Education (IEE) 2010 *Open Doors* fact sheets, 200,000 of the 700,000 international students currently enrolled in U.S. colleges are undergraduates. Heavily represented in this growing population of undergraduates are students from just three countries: China, Korea, and India. The number of Chinese students, in particular, has skyrocketed: While the total number of international students in the U.S. increased *2.9%* over the previous year in 2009/2010, the number of Chinese students in the U.S. increased *29.9%* in the same time period. Accounting for some of the upsurge in enrollment is better staffing of consulates and ease of obtaining visas, according to an administrator in our university's International Center.

At our Midwestern university, international students in 2009 made up 5.2% of the student population: 1,615 of 31,314 students. As is the case nationwide, the most dramatic growth on our campus is in the number of Chinese, Indian, and Korean students, and we, too, are witnessing more international undergraduate students. In just two years, the number of international undergraduate students within the College of Arts and Science had grown from 100 students in 2007 to 179 students (Fast Facts, 2010). The assistant director of the International Center accounted for the shift this way: "In an era of declining graduate student enrollments, universities across the country are seeking more revenue from undergraduate students, particularly international undergraduates from China, India, and Korea." He went on to note one of the most unfortunate themes to emerge in our study: "Even though universities want the revenue from international students' tuition, few universities are positioned to invest in all of the services this growing body of students will need." This sentiment was echoed by both the director of the Intensive English program and the director of the English Language Support Program. According to the former, "We're actively soliciting international students as domestic enrollment—at least domestic graduate enrollment—drops. We're seeking the revenue, but we're not necessarily investing in the support needed to make success possible for these students." Even the *Open Doors* fact sheet is blunt about the degree to which international students benefit the U.S. economy (See also Silva, 1997).

While international graduate students at our university and elsewhere have tended to major in technical fields, the undergraduates most frequently major in business, accounting, economics, and journalism. To explain this, both the assistant director of the International Center and the assistant dean of the Journalism School claimed in our interviews that one individual faculty member might have a dramatic long-term impact on subsequent exchanges in a particular department. The International Center director named a Vietnamese professor whose impact is still measurable on our campus. The journalism dean remarked that "ten years ago, there might have been ten undergraduate international students, and that number has now tripled. We once had a Korean professor and many of the Korean students are here as a result of his influence. Another person responsible for attracting international students to [the university] is F--- from Shanghai, China." The journalism dean went on to note that his department is participating in a trial program in which students from China come as juniors with a partner university."

Although the assistant dean did not suggest that the trial program was motivated by revenue-seeking, the assistant director of the International Center did. That administrator went on to suggest that economic and political pressures for recruiting students affect test score cutoffs too, something that once again was echoed by both the director of the Intensive English program and the director of the English Language Support Program. According to the director of Intensive English, "Departments are not motivated to have high TOEFL scores because they want the students and the revenue dollars, but departments are not necessarily equipped to help students who lack a certain proficiency." Both of these directors went on to suggest that departments would be wise to maintain higher TOEFL cut-offs unless more university support is available to help students who lack the language and cultural skills to succeed.

The discussion of test scores turned to grammar on the TOEFL, which, the director of the language support program thought might no longer be "a separate subsection and, consequently, students are no longer studying grammar. While it is good that some of their writing is being assessed holistically, it's not so good that they're no longer held accountable for grammar." Both directors implied that testing has not only political and economic consequences, but also educational ones—testing standards can affect proficiency. Although the director of the Intensive English Program favored providing more attention to writing, she added that our university "should still assess students for grammar and usage via some sort of test. Their grammar proficiency is simply dropping off."

The assistant director of the International Center suggested that recruiting for revenue and adjusting TOEFL scores accordingly had contributed to the brouhaha that triggered the needs assessment. In addition to the unhappy journalism faculty, an economics professor of a WI course had complained that his international students were under prepared for his WI course. The International Center administer linked the complaint to test scores: "Well, there were a number of Chinese undergraduates who couldn't get into business administration because they didn't have the language scores, but they could get into econ, which had lower IELT or TOEFL score requirements." He implied that the economics faculty were getting what they asked for: more revenue dollars from international students who were less well prepared to read and write academic English.

Needed to support this growing body of L2 writers is a network of robust services. Not only are these services under-funded and staff under-prepared to serve the special needs of L2 students on our campus, there is little connection between and among campus units associated with teaching of writing. I naïvely expected the director of the International Center to have a bird's eye view of writing services across campus, but when asked to help me distinguish between the Intensive English Program and the English Language Support Program, he, too, floundered. He also openly acknowledged in our subsequent interview that he did not know much about L2 services in the first-year writing program, the WAC program, the writing center, and even the Asian Affairs Office next door. His job is heavily constrained by the need to evaluate student visas, meet government regulations, and so forth. Nor could any other campus director offer an adequate bird's eye view of L2 writing services campus-wide, although the directors of Intensive English Program and the English Language Support Program knew more about L2 writers than anyone else did.

This institutional isolation of the units was mirrored to some degree by the professional training of language teachers. To illustrate the gap between composition and L2 training, for example, we witnessed tutors from the Asian Affairs office join a conversation with two English education professors. The tutors had years of experience teaching English abroad, either in Japan or Korea, and had extensive cultural and linguistic knowledge. However, they professed to know nothing about the writing process as featured in such documents as the "NCTE Beliefs about the Teaching of Writing" and found that document revelatory. They also were unfamiliar with the distinction between "higher-order concerns" and "lower-order concerns" and found novel the idea of addressing higher-order concerns first in most tutorials. Similarly, one of the English graduate teachers we interviewed who teaches IEP classes as well as first-year writing for international students insisted that most of his IEP colleagues have only the dimmest understanding of the importance of argumentation in college writing. On the other hand, our graduate instructors in English have had no formal instruction in L2 writing unless they had it elsewhere.

Understanding the Multiliterate and Talented L2 Writers in our Classrooms

As already indicated, we attempted to document our international L2 students' expectations, frustrations, and writing competencies through a survey and interviews; however, we had a light survey response[4]. Five of the eleven students who did respond to the survey, however, were eager to talk, as were most of the eighteen administrators and teachers whom we contacted, and their comments will be discussed momentarily. So what do our international L2 writers bring with them, according to our survey results and interviews? They were not remedial students; in fact, more often they were just the opposite, the academic *crème de la crème* in their home countries. Even if they did not sound like other native speakers of English on our home campus, neither do the native speakers of English at our institution sound like native speakers of English in Boston, New York, London, or Sydney. That is, there is not one, static form of English, and we can encourage L2 students to interrogate accents and registers and use these strategically for their own purposes. As A. Suresh Canagarajah (2006) notes, multilingual users of English have outnumbered "native" speakers of English for decades, which compels us to consider "English as a plural language that embodies multiple norms and standards" (p. 589).

The international English L2 students on our campus are multi-lingual in complex and varying ways, as evidenced by one of the survey questions asking them to assess their English language preparation. Specifically, students were asked "How would you evaluate your English language preparation in speaking, listening, reading, writing, and grammar?" and given a Likert scale with "1" representing "very prepared" and "5" representing "not prepared at all." No student responding to the survey selected "5" for any of the language areas, and only a few students selected "4" for speaking and listening. However, there was considerable variation otherwise. On the whole, more students felt more prepared to speak, listen, and read than to write, but any given student might be quite proficient in one area and less proficient in another. This variation is true, of course, of domestic students, too. Literacy is not a single domain[5].

To serve this growing population of L2 writers, our first-year writing program continues to designate a few sections of freshman composition as "international" (IS) and staffs these sections with experienced teachers who are keenly interested in working with international students. Seasoned and dedicated as these teachers are, few of them have special credentials in the teaching of English as a second language. And committed as they are, they have limited resources within our Department of English. For instance, there are no faculty members in our Department of English whose primary research focuses on the teaching of English as a foreign language. Meanwhile, L2 learners can self-select regular or IS sections of our first-year writing course since we offer directed self-placement. Of the students responding to the survey, 75% of them reported taking first-year composition at our institution, with 25% of them electing to take a "regular" section and 50% of them taking an IS section (note limited sampling, however). According to the director of the Intensive English Program and the assistant director of First-Year Writing, students often make choices based on availability and time rather than on course goals.

According to one of the graduate instructors we interviewed, L2 students might have additional complex and fluid reasons for selecting either an IS or "regular" composition courses. This instructor reported that one of the L2 writers in her "regular" section who had struggled probably had other issues. "I think he may have been learning disabled, although I don't know." She said she was convinced that L2 writers should have the right to make an informed choice about taking a designated IS class. "They need to be aware of reasons on both sides—on one hand, they might want to avoid the tracking or segregation; on the other hand, they might have other needs met in the specially designated classes." She described one student who first resisted and later appreciated taking an IS class. "At first he just thought it was racist, but he was hesitant to switch out for a whole bunch of reasons and ended up liking the course." She reported that most of her students prefer the IS sections "not only because they are recommended, but also because of word-of-mouth reputation."

The graduate instructor and other faculty we interviewed stressed the time it takes L2 writers to do what might seem like simple tasks. The graduate instructor noted that

> International students, by and large, are more confident and competent than typical domestic students, confident enough to risk coming to a strange country, but everything is harder—going out the door in the morning, going to the grocery store, taking the bus. It's easy for them to get lost in the shuffle, especially if they want to get lost in the shuffle to fit in.

She described the "ungodly layers of responsibilities" one student had who had black eyes and often slept in class. She reported calling him in, talking to him, filing Early Alerts on him (not necessarily punitive at our institution), and calling him in again, noting that he eventually made a remarkable turnaround. "He had to decide to do that, but at same time he was working three jobs—at an Asian grocery and two Asian restaurants—and was the head of the student Korean association and was, therefore, a political force on campus. He was disconnected socially but not politically." This teacher suggested that he, like many others, see themselves as ambassadors for their countries and have so much to do that the extra obligations sometimes increase their isolation rather than otherwise.

A journalism professor we interviewed voiced similar concerns. She had assigned her students to compare and contrast a week's worth of news in two local papers, the *Missourian* and *The Tribune*. The professor reported the following:

> Many students underestimate how much time this assignment takes, and international students find it particularly time-consuming. Time affects planning, reading, interviewing, quote selection, drafting, proofreading, and more. For instance, if an assignment requires quotations from four sources, it might take twelve interviews to get the right material. This is particularly hard for international students. The issue of time is then compounded by cultural challenges. Because it may seem rude to request interviews, international students may be more likely to procrastinate. Their body language may signal "say no to the interview," too, making it even more difficult to get the needed number. Introducing special equipment for the convergence multi-media project may exacerbate the issue even more.[6]

In both cases, the teachers described what they perceived as additional challenges confronting many L2 students, implying that other faculty should be sensitive to them. It would be beneficial for them to be given strategies to help them better address L2 students' needs.

Fostering Faculty Awareness of the Needs of L2 Writers

It is rarely enough for WI teachers of L1 and L2 writers to understand best practices for teaching with writing; typically, they benefit from additional faculty development focused on L2 issues, too. That said, it is a cause for consternation when WI teachers of L2 writers fail to employ even the most basic WAC principles, such as those associated with assignment design, explicit teaching of expected conventions with examples and counter-examples, selective and text-specific feedback, and critical literacy and rhetorical awareness. When WI teachers of L2 writers fail to understand that it matters to articulate the standards for evaluation, for instance, we are reminded that faculty, like students, develop awareness over time and that they will benefit from repeated faculty development opportunities. It takes time to recognize the parallels between, say, the practices recommended in the *CCCC Statement on Second-Language Writing and Writers* and those recommended in John Bean's *Engaging Ideas* (1996) for faculty in the disciplines. A few of the teachers who chose to participate in the needs assessment of L2 writers described problems with evaluation of L2 student writing that were the same as those they had expressed years ago with evaluation of student writing in their WI classes (criteria need to be assignment specific and reflected in the assignment sheet, in peer review guides, and on faculty scoring guides). Again, this suggests that faculty development is seldom limited to a single intervention and that faculty, like students, benefit when general principles are reinforced in slightly new contexts.

One cultural issue requiring explicit discussion is the acceptable standard for textual borrowing, an issue that came up in interviews with directors, WI teachers, and teachers of first-year writing. As Rebecca Howard (1995) and others have argued, textual borrowing is a cultural issue and standards vary. John Flowerdew (2007) goes further, arguing that, "Indeed, plagiarism has been conceived of as a particularly Anglo-Saxon concept…." (p. 162). While in their interviews the directors of the English Language Support Program and Intensive English Program conceded that some Asian cultures simply have different standards for textual borrowing, they insisted that Asian cultures, especially the Chinese, also have a gaming culture and that many students are skilled at trying to game the system. When we interviewed them, they had just witnessed what they considered a blatant case of academic dishonesty. One of them had a student who had gone to the back of classroom to take a writing test. Noting this behavior, the director told me that he later searched and subsequently found a copy of the student's essay on a Chinese website (he contends that many Chinese websites sell essays on common topics intended to be copied in such settings). "When I confronted him, my student first denied getting help; then, when I showed him the web essay, he was angry that the friend he had texted in L.A. had sent him a web essay from a paper mill rather than something 'original.'"[7] To deal with the complexities of plagiarism, the two program directors claimed that it is important to *teach* paraphrasing skills and to design assignments that do not lend themselves to plagiarism, a point made by several other L2 teachers interviewed. The director of IEP claimed that he typically opens class each semester by going over academic dishonesty problems and showing examples and counterexamples of work. This, of course, is a best practice in any writing class, L2 or not.

Translation programs appear to exacerbate concerns about who is actually doing the writing. Some L2 students write an essay in one language, then have a computer translate it, then have an L1 student edit it. Again, several interviewees commented on the complexity of literacy and intellectual property rights in the digital age. One teacher of first-year writing for international students had just conferenced with a student from Saudi Arabia who described using several translation programs and texting friends at various sites to negotiate best translations in a very laborious process that seemed to keep the writer focused on sentence-level issues rather than larger discourse issues. "It's amazing," the teacher observed, "that within a generation Saudi Arabia has gone from a medieval oppressive society to one encouraging some degree of intellectual, economic, and social freedom, and that it's got to be tough to negotiate the demands of literacy in this rapidly-changing society." This teacher believes that L2 students represent more dramatically a problem that is also true for L1 writers in the digital age: It is challenging to move beyond extensive data collection to synthesis and analysis, a challenge that makes the job of teaching lower-division writing more important than ever. If the digital age is speeding up the flow of information, this seasoned first-year writing teacher believes that we need to help students slow down, unpack, decode, and interpret texts more than ever. He echoed the belief that assignment design really matters—especially to deter "plagiarism"—a principle relevant in all first-year writing and writing-intensive classes.

This teacher refrained from seeing all of his international students as carbon copies, however. He described one Chinese woman with a high level of reading comprehension "who was able to deal with multiple sources effectively" but "who had odd problems with fluency, including very limited use of transitions." The teacher claimed that another Chinese student could read and "talk a mile a minute" about the most significant sections of complex texts but "had difficulty with direct quotations and attributions." This view is consistent with literature that suggests L2 students bring with them a range of strengths and weaknesses and there is no simple definition of "beginner." Needed, then, are observant teachers who embrace multiplicity and multi-literacy and who can differentiate among particular students' needs to deliver explicit language support at the point of need.

Some of the teachers of international sections of first-year writing critiqued the textbooks they used. One, a creative writer with an MFA, noted that few style guides have enough examples of any given principle in context for an L2 student to understand how to apply the principle effectively. Needed are many more examples and counter-examples, some more subtle than others. In this teacher's view, neither L1 nor L2 teachers are likely to appreciate the advice offered in style guides because the advice is too general and a single sentence is inadequate to show how to use it. Another teacher of an international section of first-year writing, an ABD graduate student, lamented that argumentation is not stressed enough in textbooks intended for L2 writers.[8] Sensitive as many of the teachers we interviewed were about the needs of L2 writers, many of them worked in isolation and had limited support or contact with other L2 teachers.

Needing that conversation most of all were a number of WI teachers who struggled to distinguish between concepts of "equal" and "fair" when grading and who questioned the value of having a cap on the point value for "lower order concerns" relative to "higher order concerns." One theater professor claimed that "it is unethical to have grading criteria" and to design a scoring guide that identifies what is being valued in the assignment. The ongoing need for faculty development in WAC programs is simply intensified with L2 issues. The culminating workshops conducted by Paul Kei Matsuda as part of our needs assessment plan were a first step in offering much needed faculty development. His morning and afternoon workshops drew nearly 40 students, faculty, and administrators from a wide range of disciplines (animal science, business, civil engineering, computer science, education, English, geology, journalism, mechanical engineering, and theater) and a range of units (the Asian Affairs Program, the First-Year Writing Program, the Intensive English Program, the International Center, the writing center, and the WAC program).

Another opportunity to develop faculty and administrators' awareness occurred at the end of the summer when my collaborator shared results of the needs assessment at a special event for recipients of the Undergraduate Research Mentorship Scholarship, their mentors, and the dean (to whom I report as Director of First-Year Writing). Although the surface purpose of the event was to mentor an undergraduate in a professional activity, one stealth benefit was raising the dean's level of awareness of some of the L2 issues that he would be weighing in on in months to come, including the need for more resources for appropriate staffing of courses.[9] He had as well a preview of the gaps that we map below.

Mapping the Gaps

Our needs assessment, rooted in the Kaufman model, did enable us to draw some broad conclusions that largely affirmed what current literature already suggests: In spite of the growing undergraduate L2 population, there remains a gap between composition research focused on English L1 writers and L2 writing research. Moreover, our interviews with first year writing instructors and writing-intensive faculty indicated that they might be somewhat familiar with composition research focused on English L1 writers but are less familiar with L2 writing research.[10] Our interviews made evident that there is a need for faculty development in L2 across most units and that there is little coordination between and among units. A gap also remains between campus writing units serving L2 students. Table 2 below illustrates these gaps between the ideal and the reality in the university as a whole and in specific units.

Table 2. 2010 L2 Gap Analysis

Unit	Situation/Reality	Ideal	Gap
University as a whole	Growth in # of L2 undergrads, esp. from China, India, & Korea; Trend likely to continue; Not all L2 students are intn'l	If university is going to recruit more international students, university will serve them well (resources, teachers, tutors, # of sections, faculty development)	Money in from L2tuition exceeds money out for new L2 services; Native L2 students under-served
Intensive English Program and English Language Support Program	Well-trained instructors; Isolated; Autonomous budget; Technology both +/-	Well-trained staff is integrated into campus community; Has power to enforce teaching standards	Communication gap between L2 professionals/others (FYC, WI, WC, tech); Financial and political power to enforce standards
First-Year Writing Program	Growth in number of L2 students, esp. Chinese; Teachers have little L2 training; Demand> supply; Pressure to accept overrides; Extra time/teaching ; Technology +/-; Dim awareness of world Englishes	Well-trained staff; Demand=supply	Fewer well-trained L2 writing teachers than needed; Limited training (technology, plagiarism, assignment design, cultural awareness, L2 feedback strategies, evaluation strategies)
Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Program	Growth in number of L2 students, esp. Chinese; teachers have little L2 training	WAC workshops include L2 component; WI teachers have L2/WI tutors available; Clear priorities Realistic expectations	Fewer well-trained L2 writing teachers than needed
Writing Center	Heavily served by L2 students; Tutors wary of working w/ L2 students; Staff isolated	Demand=supply Tutors are well trained w L2 strategies; Staff well integrated on campus	Tutor training; Supply>demand
Other units (Asian Affairs)	Mature staff (even if not well trained in writing)	Staff as well trained in writing as in ESL	Inadequate interaction with other writing units
International students	More of them; Cultural differences; Isolation;	Concrete evidence of welcome; Adequate services	Inadequate tutorial and educational resources

	Extra time to do everything		

By conducting the needs assessment, we not only deepened our understanding of current conditions for L2 writers, but we also were inspired to speak with greater authority and to take action. In moving forward, we were able to build on our basic convictions as writing teachers to be observant and notice our students' needs and then to respond strategically and at the point of these particular students' needs. What, we asked, could we put into practice in the short term that might make a difference to L2 writers and the professionals who interact with them?

Selecting Short-term Priorities for Improving Conditions for L2 Writers

Based on the findings of our needs assessment, we were able to identify five do-able activities, described in Table 3 below.

Table 3. L2 2010 Needs Assessment Priorities

Target audience	**Activity**
Students	Post welcome signs in five languages all over campus
Faculty – IEP / ELSP Faculty – FYC Faculty – WI	Conduct conversations with FYC teachers Conduct FYC faculty development (in L2) workshops Conduct WI faculty development (in L2) workshops
Administration	Support IEP/ELSP placement decisions
Other	Provide inter-unit L2 brownbag conversations

How difficult would it be to have welcome signs and banners throughout campus written in five or six different languages? Such signage might be reassuring for L2 students but also would be a gentle way of raising L1 awareness of an L2 student population. Although this hasn not been accomplished, it is do-able in the short term. All of the other "do-able" priorities have been acted upon: More L2 writing brown bags and workshops have been scheduled for the first-year writing program and the WAC programs, and more are planned. Among the practices to be addressed in these workshops are those Paul Kei Matsuda stressed to teachers in his campus visit:

- Focus on course objectives, not language proficiency
- Provide information via multiple modes
- Clearly articulate expectations (be selective)
- Tap into students' multilingual and multicultural backgrounds
- Allow enough time

We have a growing bibliography and hope to develop web resources to be shared by writing units and campus libraries. Other cross-unit conversations have been occurring. The IEP and ELSP directors have been in steady contact with the director of first-year writing and the dean. One topic of conversation has been the need for permission forms for students wishing to enroll in English 1000 IS. Do-able as these five goals have been, we may need to go back to the drawing board to address more ambitious goals for closing the gaps we identified, as we discuss below.

Revising our Planning and Needs Assessment Model

While our pioneering effort at conducting a needs assessment certainly generated much needed local dialogue, the assessment could have been conducted more methodically, with a better-informed selection and development of instruments and activities, especially if the dialogue were to include more distant and powerful audiences and be sustained for a longer time with more secure funding. And, while the loose and qualitative assessment we conducted sufficed for local purposes and affirmed the existence of major gaps between L1 writing research and L2 writing research and gaps between and among campus units associated with writing, it did not provide us with a baseline of institution-specific data that could be used to tailor faculty development workshops and to measure growth and impact quantitatively, something that might be provided by use of a Logic Model.[11] This is not to deny the wisdom of Einstein's quip that "Not everything that counts can be counted, and not everything that can be counted counts."[12] However, if we had measurable short-term products and concrete medium-term outputs or results, as suggested by the Logic Model, we could better gauge changes from year to year and, perhaps, more effectively persuade outside constituents of the need to provide more resources for teaching, tutoring, and faculty development. Moreover, if we had used the Logic Model, we would have had to more clearly articulate distinctions between outputs and outcomes. Too often needs assessments such as the one we designed describe outputs (activities) and evaluate them but stop short of evaluating outcomes (impact). The Logic Model asks us to answer "so what?" and to describe with both quantitative and qualitative indicators what the long-term consequences or impacts are (see Table 4 below).[13]

We had to start somewhere and make no apologies for diving in, but we now know enough to pose some quantifiable questions that might elicit some of the evidence needed to persuade deans and outside agents that our programs need more robust funding and attention. We might, for instance, ask instructors of IS courses about course load, number of requests for overrides, and number of requests for overrides granted; we might survey FYC teachers, WI teachers, and writing center tutors, asking them to rank on Likert scales their perceptions and expectations, for example, about the likeliness that there will be some L2 learners in every class. We might ask specific questions about assignment design (Do your prompts require familiarity with the cultural or historical background not covered in the course? Do you provide options?) We might ask specific questions about text-borrowing statements on the syllabus, in introductory class discussions, and on assignments. We might ask whether examples and counter-examples of acceptable standards for text-borrowing were provided. Essentially, we could design questions that convert standards articulated in the CCCC position statement into scalable measures ("Do you…? with Likert-scale responses) and then use that data to design workshops, to measure what is learned by faculty and students, to measure what is put into practice, and to measure with what effect.

Ideally, there would be both quantifiable and qualitative indicators for each of the Logic Model categories (inputs, outputs, and short-, medium-, and long-term outcomes). Quantifiable indicators for inputs might include the number of staff, the number of dollars used, and the number of partners. Indicators for outputs might include if new curricula were designed for workshops and classes, the number of workshops offered, when workshops were delivered, the number of participants, the number of certificates (if designed). Indicators for short term outcomes might include the number of participants with increased knowledge according to standards identified in the CCCC position paper. Indicators for medium term outcomes might include the number of students, tutors, FYC instructors, and WI faculty applying or practicing skills, again according to the standards specified in the CCCC L2 position statement. Indicators for long term outcomes might include the number of L2 learners better served by the plan introduced in faculty workshops as measured by a few standards. Arguably, data from a few well-focused measures might be more useful than vague data from a number of vague terms. Other long term indicators might include the number of writing units implementing a plan, the quality of the plan given set of standards , retention numbers for L2 students, and graduation rates. A more concrete and quantifiable question set might not only elicit the information needed to persuade administrators of the need to provide more funding, but also provide teachers and directors with feedback and signal areas for future workshops as well as provide a baseline for comparison if the needs assessment is repeated. Figure 5 below maps the inputs, outputs (in terms of activities and participation), and outcomes (in terms of short, medium, and long term impact).

Table 4. Template for Future L2 Logic Model

Inputs	Outputs		Outcomes Impact		
	Activities	Participation	Short Term	Medium Term	Long Term
L2 Student Needs (specified)	Could build on last needs assesment		(measurable product)	(concrete output)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)
IEP/ELSP Program Needs (specified)			(measurable product—maybe within class)	(concrete output—on campus but beyond class)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)
FYC Program Needs (specified)			(measurable product—maybe within class)	(concrete output—on campus but beyond class)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)
WAC Program Needs (specified)			(measurable product—maybe within class)	(concrete output—on campus but beyond class)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)
Writing Center Needs (specified)			(measurable product—maybe within center)	(concrete output—on campus but beyond center)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)
International Center Needs (specified)			(measurable product-maybe within center)	(concrete output—on campus but beyond center)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)
Campus-wide Needs (specified)			(measurable product-maybe w/in administer.)	(concrete output—on campus)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)

Other (specified)			(measurable if possible)	(concrete output—on campus)	(extramural social or professional outcomes)

Conclusion

Our needs assessment, rooted in the Kaufman model, functioned as a tool to jumpstart a conversation and to foster a healthy self-consciousness about issues that might otherwise recede into the background. The very act of engaging in dialogue and reflecting on and addressing interview questions, is a practice that helps faculty to be mindful of important issues. Above all, our assessment affirmed Paul Kei Matsuda's observation that what is most needed to improve conditions for L2 learners may improve conditions for all learners, even though it is important to prioritize and strategically focus on particular goals in each learning context. Talk helps faculty be conscious of both cross-disciplinary design principles and particular context-specific issues.

Indeed, my interview with the dean of journalism indicates that he had reflected at length about the issues that started the conversation. Is first-year writing failing to prepare international students for writing-intensive courses in journalism? Simply raising questions about L2 writing led him to reassess the criteria for admission to the program. Rather than judging students by TOEFL scores and performance in face-to-face interviews that privilege spoken English skills, the J-school has implemented a timed writing test. Moreover, without being prompted, the dean graciously acknowledged the significantly different purposes for argumentative writing in first-year composition and doing deadline-driven, factual reporting for news stories.

While our needs assessment did address many of the broad issues identified in the CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers, in the future, a Logic Model might help us focus these important issues so that we can better measure growth and change from year to year in our specific institution.

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Notes

[1] In their introduction to the *Second-language writing in the composition classroom: A critical sourcebook*, Matsuda, Cox, Jordan, and Ortmeier-Hooper acknowledge the many terms (ESL, ELL, L2, among others) used to refer to multilingual writers, the limitation of various terms, and the limitations of their term of choice, "L2." They acknowledge that "many second-language writers are indeed third and fourth language speakers and writers" and

that, in addition to international visa students, L2 writers include refugees, permanent residents, naturalized and native-born citizens of the U.S. and Canada (p. 4). For others making the argument that L2 is an inclusive term, see Valdes, 1992; Reid, 1998; and Chiang and Schmida, 1999.

[2] We acknowledge that the terms "L2 learner" and "international student" are not synonymous and that we may well have missed some immigrants, refugees, and native-born L2 students, but we were unable to identify L2 learners who were not international visa students. Neither the university registrar nor staff in the Office of Student Life and Multicultural Affairs could supply us with statistics or email addresses for L2 students who were not international visa students.

[3] Jessica Armsstrong entered the survey questions into SurveyMonkey and kept an eye on results; she also conducted some of her own interviews. Other than these items, we performed all tasks together.

[4] This might be attributed to delays getting a full email list of international students, the time of year (between spring and summer sessions), and my lapse in prompting my collaborator to send multiple invitations.

[5] The point is that writers, L2 or not, have a variety of linguistic abilities and might have problems in one area and excel in another. Our students' needs are various. That said, Joy Reid (1998) reminds us that L2 students can be especially diverse. Moreover, L2 students who graduated from U.S. high schools are likely to be "ear learners" who are orally fluent but who have added problems with inflection, vocabulary, and capitalization, while international student writers tend to be "eye learners" who have some mastery of vocabulary, verb forms, and language rules but who may be less proficient speaking and writing in units beyond the sentence.

[6] The "convergence" curriculum requires young reporters to make use of a variety of traditional and non-traditional media (including phone- and web-based media). According to the "About Convergence at MU" website, it is assumed that "the audience for news and information is less passive than it used to be (http://174.37.47.227/~converge/wordpress/?page_id=2) . Many people, especially younger people, want to create, respond to and remix media. Increasingly they have the tools and skills to do so. Full-time journalists need to accept this power shift and take advantage of the opportunities it presents." The associate professor of journalism was suggesting that this power shift has cultural implications that can present added challenges for international students.

[7] Both directors have worked with international students for over twenty years and are familiar with cultural differences for standards of textual borrowing. Nonetheless, they believe they are seeing more incidents of more non-standard (by U.S. standards) textual borrowing. What they attribute to a "gaming culture" in China, Xiaoye You (2010) attributes instead to a strong testing culture. You claims that "when facing one of the hurdles for graduation, some students found ways to cheat on the test, such as paying someone to take the test for them, stealing test papers, and receiving answers from someone through electronic devices. Occasionally, students boycotted the test or committed suicide after failing the test" (p. 149).

[8] The first year writing program at MU permits instructors to select their own textbooks, including style guides and rhetorics, and we did not ask which texts were used. However, both teachers lamented the superficial coverage in textbooks and called for more in-depth, culture-specific teaching. Jay Jordan raises more questions about cultural aspects of textbooks in "Between and Beyond the Covers: Local Cultural Questions and the Limits of Textbook Curricula." *College Composition and Communication* 61.2 (2009).

[9] Undergraduate researchers presented their projects individually, even though faculty mentors were in the audience and, in most cases, had outlined and shaped the presentations.

[10] This needs assessment affirmed what I suggested in "Research or Faculty Development? A Study of WI Faculty Commenting": Faculty often gain insight and develop as teachers simply by participating in research studies and thinking about the questions put to them. A stealth byproduct of pedagogical studies is faculty development.

[11]The Logic Model, first developed by Carl Weiss (1972) and subsequently refined by Ellen Taylor-Powell et al (2003), among others, has been adopted by agencies ranging from the United Way to the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and the W. K. Kellogg Foundation. Enhancing Program Performance with Logic Models by Ellen Taylor-Powell et al (2003) is an invaluable resource; although not specific to WPA work, it is designed for a broad range of educators, community organizers, and organizational leaders with very specific examples and counter-examples to guide the development of the inputs, outputs, and outcomes needed for the Logic

Model, with appropriate indicators and thoughtful consideration of underlying assumptions and external constraints. If I had been familiar with the Logic Model earlier, I would have used it for this project.

[12] This quotation allegedly was on a sign posted in Albert Einstein's Princeton office. 6 June 2011 http://stanford.edu/~cheshire/EinsteinQuotes.html

[13] My recommendation for using the Logic Model has been informed partly by WPA discussions about regional accrediting agencies such as SACS and NEACS, partly by discussion of disciplinary accrediting agencies such as ABET in engineering, and partly by observing which assessment models tend to be featured in successful NSF grants. In a WPA discussion of writing assessment, for instance, experts insisted that most accrediting agencies will honor an institution's own goals but will hold the institution accountable for articulating its goals and identifying its tools for measuring compliance. As Nick Carbone (2010) said "Agencies (SACS, NEACS, etc.) don't dictate the terms of assessment, but they look to see that a program is meeting terms it has set for itself." I believe that the Logic Model offers a useful framework for articulating those terms.

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