

CHAPTER 4.

THE POLITICS OF BASIC WRITING REFORM: USING COLLECTIVE AGENCY TO CHALLENGE THE POWER DYNAMICS OF A FLAT ADMINISTRATION

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INTRODUCTION: THE IMPORTANCE OF DETERMINING ONE'S "COMPOSITIONAL SITUATION"

For more than twenty years, the Writing Studio model has provided compositionists with a theoretical framework for redefining basic writing instruction in the United States. Studio models move basic writing programs from skills-based remediation to process-driven pedagogy that “improve[s] both a student’s skill at and attitude toward writing” (Sutton, 2010, p. 32). In many studio approaches, basic writers are mainstreamed in traditional first-year writing courses but are encouraged to participate in additional courses or writing workshops that enable students to interrogate the expectations of college-level writing, discuss openly their affective stances toward writing, and challenge the traditional displacement most basic writers experience before college.

Of course, implementing such an approach is not always an easy feat, in part because a one-size-fits-all approach has never been appropriate for creating studio programs. To this end, Grego and Thompson (2008) urged compositionists to interrogate their own “compositional situations” by examining how one’s institutional location interacts with extra-institutional forces such as state legislatures, national accrediting bodies, and policymakers (p. 220). Such moves enable studio administrators to reconstitute basic writing instruction at the local

level appropriately and, thus, to contextualize programmatic success.

Studio scholars' attention to localized contexts as a necessary first step in studio design should come as no surprise to readers of this collection (Grego & Thompson, 1995; Grego & Thompson, 2008; Sutton, 2010; Tassoni & Lewiecki-Wilson 2005). A key element, however, of fully comprehending one's compositional situation—an element that runs tangential to space/place in the landmark studio texts—is that of timing. Not only must compositionists reflect on their own place/space, they must also reflect on how kairotic, or opportune, timing influences what is possible in their place/space, as well as whether or not Studio is the right approach (See Matzke and Garrett, this volume, for another example of how kairos informs studio development).

At our institution, Georgia Gwinnett College (GGC), we considered Grego and Thompson's (1995; 2008) advice carefully as we implemented the Segue Program: a concurrent, mainstream model that blends pedagogical strategies of Writing Studio with the structural design of the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) developed by Peter Adams at the Community College of Baltimore County. We had a distinct advantage in developing our program: In 2011, Georgia received a \$1 million grant from the Bill Gates Foundation through the Complete College America Initiative to transform developmental education. GGC received \$150,000 to transform developmental math, reading, and English courses.

As we created the Segue Program, we recognized the degree to which our program's success hinged upon the negotiation of several time-related factors: the national "crisis" of developmental education, Georgia's adoption of the Complete College America Initiative, GGC's mandate to transform developmental education, GGC's administrative structure, and problems associated with developing a writing program without an administrator. This confluence of national, state, and institutional demands presented us with kairotic political moments that, when combined with a determined faculty team, enabled the successful design and implementation of the Segue Program. In this volume, Cardinal's and Keown's chapter, "Story Changing Work for Studio Activists: Finding Points of Convergence," discusses the need to find places of convergence to "appropriate institutional arguments [in order to] redirect the argument by reframing the interests of the institution in ways that reflect Studio values." In other words, Cardinal and Keown argued that we must find multiple points of convergence among stakeholders as the basis of arguments supporting studio approaches, which we did in the creation of the Segue Program.

This chapter chronicles how we developed collective agency to appropriately negotiate various stakeholder demands in order to create a program that increased students' pass rates from an average of 55% to an average of 86%.

Throughout the program's development, collective agency yielded positive institutional change, enabling us to produce a model program for our state. For readers who are in the process of creating a studio program, particularly those participating in Complete College America Initiatives, or for those who are interested in learning more about the political dynamics of building a studio model, this chapter offers useful advice for balancing extra-institutional, institutional, and disciplinary agendas, as well as advice for anticipating potential political struggles faculty may face during studio implementation.

The first half of this chapter outlines, in detail, how GGC responded to national and state demands, how we implemented the Segue Program, and how collective agency authorized us to produce a successful program. The second half of the chapter specifically addresses the political struggles we faced during the process, serving as an instructional tale for faculty at similar institutions who are in the beginning stages of creating a studio program. Finally, we offer the lessons we've learned at GGC and demonstrate the importance of recognizing how place, space, and timing can both constrain and open up possibilities for studio development.

NATIONAL AND STATE INFLUENCES: THE IMPETUS BEHIND THE SEGUE PROGRAM

The largest factor influencing our compositional situation at GGC began at the national level and filtered down to the state and local levels. In a February 24, 2009, address to a joint session of Congress, President Barack Obama called for a nationwide reinvestment in education and revealed his educational goal to "have the highest proportion of college graduates in the world" by 2020.

Alongside President Obama's call for increased participation in higher education, organizations such as Complete College America (CCA) began to study retention problems in post-secondary education. They found that educators have to effectively address the number of entering students in need of developmental courses in order to reach the nation's college graduation goals. According to a joint report written by the Charles A. Dana Center, Complete College America, Education Commission of the States, and Jobs for the Future (2012), "half of all students in postsecondary education tak[e] one or more developmental education courses" (p. ii). More problematic, students who are required to take developmental classes fail to graduate with degrees more often than those students who are not required to take such courses (Charles A. Dana Center, 2012, p. 2). Given the large number of students in need of developmental education nationally, educators cannot reach Obama's 2020 benchmark unless we effectively build programs that empower developmental students to graduate.

As noted by Jason Delaney and Pascael Beaudette (2013), half of all students admitted into four-year colleges and universities in the United States require developmental education, while 26% of students entering technical and two-year schools need developmental courses. The state of Georgia is congruent with these percentages. Further, the writers have claimed that the longer students spend in developmental classes, the less likely they are to graduate; in fact, only 24% of students entering four-year colleges and universities in Georgia will earn degrees within six years. Finally, Delaney and Beaudette recommended that Georgia improve college completion rates by accelerating and tailoring developmental programs to specific student needs. As a result of these findings, Georgia applied for and was awarded a \$1 million grant from CCA to transform developmental education in the state. The grant required that participating institutions pilot new models and report their findings to the Georgia Board of Regents (BOR). The BOR would then evaluate the results of pilot programs so that successful models could be implemented statewide.

Participating two-year schools were Athens Technical College and Piedmont Technical College. The two participating four-year colleges were the College of Coastal Georgia and GGC. At GGC, we were awarded \$150,000 to transform our developmental education initiatives in math, reading, and English. The CCA grant required a specific set of criteria: (1) the implementation of technology-based diagnostic assessments to determine the level of remediation needed for each student; (2) the development of modularized content remediation coursework appropriate to the level of the students as determined by diagnostic testing; (3) the option for the students to work at an accelerated rate using a mastery approach; (4) opportunities for the students who fall below the cut scores on the placement exam to concurrently enroll in a college-level course and to receive diagnostic-based learning support; and (5) student success skills offerings/support.

GGC administrators charged us to implement a developmental writing program that would fulfill these criteria. Even though we were given this charge, we did not actually author the grant, which was completed before our arrival. The call for modularized instruction and early exit opportunities for an at-risk population challenged our understandings of effective basic writing instruction. At the same time, we were given a unique opportunity to build a program with national funding and state-level support. During this process, it was imperative for us to consider how to meet President Obama's demand for increased college attendance and the governor's expectation for increased college completion. Further, we had to do so while upholding our pedagogical principles within an institution dedicated to serving the underprivileged population of Gwinnett County.

We had five months (from mid-August 2011 to early January 2012) to plan

and implement a pilot program. After numerous discussions, the group settled on a modified version of the Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) developed in 2007 by the Community College of Baltimore County (CCBC), Maryland. CCBC had conducted considerable research on the success of its ALP program by 2011, so we felt confident that we could adapt the model and integrate features of the studio model that would support our institutional context.

Both the ALP and studio models focus on completion of English composition by students who need more support for their writing and for affective issues than they would receive without them. One important difference between Studio and ALP is that ALP teachers take on the role of both the studio teacher and the teacher of English composition. Another is that the focus of the collaboration is somewhat different. The Studio model is described as “outside but alongside” (Grego & Thompson, 2008, p. 65) a composition course, while ALP may be described as “*inside* and alongside”—a different model that gives more power to individual teachers to shape a complementary experience for developmental students.

Taking both models into account, we developed a concurrent enrollment sequence, in which each of us would teach two sections of first-year writing and one section of developmental writing. Within each instructor’s first-year writing classes (ENGL 1101), eight developmental students were enrolled; later in the day, the same two groups of eight students met with the same instructor in a basic writing class (ENGL 099) (Davis et al., 2014). We also integrated the following Studio and ALP pedagogical methods: (1) individuated instruction with faculty conferences; (2) scaffolded assignments that top-load assignment instructions and divide them into manageable chunks or tasks; (3) student-driven instruction that practices inquiry-based learning; (4) activities and discussions that address community building and affective issues; and (5) a process-oriented approach that includes multiple draft sequences.

This approach matched well with GGC’s mission of providing education to a broad range of students with a broad range of needs. The studio component of our adapted ALP model provides one-on-one instruction with the instructor, and it is a big part of why our students and the program succeed. However, we recognize the extent to which the national call for college completion and the timing of the grant itself served as productive catalysts for developing the Segue Program.

INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT: GGC’S FLAT STRUCTURE

Located outside of Atlanta, GGC is a new open access, non-tenure institution in the University System of Georgia. GGC opened in 2006 with 118 students and

grew to 8,000 in the fall of 2011. The institution's ethnically and economically diverse student population includes a high percentage of first-generation college students. Based on student data, nearly 50% of incoming students place into at least one developmental course (basic writing, math, and/or reading), making GGC an ideal place to transform developmental education. Our exponential growth alone, from 4,000 to 8,000 students in AY 2011–2012, enables GGC to function more like an organization than an institution, the latter of which is typically characterized by its sense of timelessness. In contrast to the adage that institutional change is “glacial,” new programs at GGC are created every day, and faculty—often junior faculty—are responsible for their development.

While good, our “newness” presents challenges, compounded by the “flat structure” adapted by GGC's Inaugural president Daniel Kaufman. By definition, a flat structure limits the number of middle management positions; translated to an academic institution, this structure displaces the traditional departmental structure and omits the position of department chair altogether. Faculty report to the dean of the schools to which they are assigned and coordinate information and workload through their discipline's “Point of Contact” (POC), who serves without the authority of a chair. The only administrator with power to mitigate faculty grievances is a dean who may have limited knowledge of a given faculty's discipline. Further, this structure provides very real hindrances to faculty governance and programmatic development because no single academic unit on campus has power to institute changes without the “permission” of a dean, which in turn requires the permission of the Vice-President for Academic and Student Affairs, which requires the permission of the President.

The omission of middle management at GGC also means that the institution has no official writing program or writing program administrator. Further, GGC's writing courses occupy an interesting institutional location: First-Year Writing (English 1101 and 1102) is housed in the School of Liberal Arts (SLA), and English faculty are responsible for the design and assessment of those courses. Developmental English (English 099), however, is taught and assessed by English Discipline faculty, but is housed in the School of Transitional Studies (STS), which also oversees developmental math and reading. Structurally speaking, English 099 is subject to the policies and procedures of the STS, not the English Discipline. In this way, the politics of transforming developmental English become complicated because faculty in “charge” of overseeing the courses must report to two deans who sometimes have competing interests.

Despite these challenges, the “flat structure” at GGC gave us the opportunity to engage in what Michelle Miley (this volume) refers to as countermonumentalism, which in a sense denies the ideals of an authority and creates a situation that is counter to tradition. Even though GGC is a fairly new institution

and had not had the time to develop its own traditions, those in authoritative positions had brought with them from their previous institutions traditions, constraints, and ideals about what programs should be and should look like. We had to work within these sometimes competing ideals to develop our own countermonument, which Miley describes as a “metaphor for the structural risks necessary for innovation.” She explains that self-assessment, self-reflection, and a commitment to sharing and combining expertise are key for the “construction of identity,” and that once created, “countermonuments provide new angles of vision necessary for creating innovative environments.”

In order to circumvent hierarchical problems associated with a “flat structure,” the English Discipline created its own internal governance system by establishing a traditional committee structure. As the Segue Six, we had to create our own countermonument to this structure, as even with committees in place, the English Discipline operated according to a consensus-building model, which meant that all faculty—regardless of concentration within English Studies—created, revised, and voted on curricular design related to writing program instruction. Also, all faculty taught developmental and first-year composition. However, the degree to which faculty in this program are afforded professional development and/or direct training in the teaching of writing is somewhat limited. There is no guarantee that all English faculty at GGC have had exposure to the theoretical foundations that support writing instruction; however, as Miley (this collection) demonstrates, collaborating with someone who may not have the same pedagogical training and recognizing one’s own limits in communicating can open up new ways of communicating.

Oddly enough, the complexity of our institutional structure appears congruent with other open admission institutions. As Cynthia Lewiecki-Wilson and Jeff Sommers (1999) explain in “Professing at the Fault Lines: Composition at Open Admissions Institutions,” the difference between open-admission institutions and traditional comprehensive research institutions is “the impact of local histories and conditions” (p. 443). More importantly, Lewiecki-Wilson and Sommers (1999) note that faculty in open-admission institutions “often conduct [their] professional work outside of an English department buffer zone, in an interdisciplinary department perhaps, which can very often put [them] in the middle of the political fray—whether campus-wide or community-wide” (p. 443). Reporting to two different deans of two different schools at GGC put us in such political fray, as the number of stakeholders invested in developmental education is, at best, challenging to navigate and, at worst, impossible to predict. Further, GGC’s short history and lack of programmatic structure for writing affected the range of influence we could have as compositionists, both across the curriculum and at the state level.

THE NEED FOR THEORY: CREATING COLLECTIVE AGENCY

We had a seemingly insurmountable task: to carry out a large grant written before we were hired but which we were asked to implement, to accept a state-mandated charge to transform developmental education within an institutional structure lacking a writing program and writing program administrator, and to roll out this model to over forty faculty from various subfields within English Studies. In addition, while the other participating colleges in Georgia learned of the grant requirements in the spring of 2011 and were able to secure outside support, no one in the English Discipline was informed about the grant until the following semester. Luckily, we had over 70 years of combined pedagogical experience to guide us. In addition, five of us have Ph.D.s in rhetoric and composition, and one of us earned an MA in rhetoric and composition and a Ph.D. in educational psychology. We realized immediately that, in order to make this transformation successful, we had to harness our individual strengths and equitably divide our workloads.

The kind of collective agency we formed for the Segue Program is well documented in our field, specifically through the work of Marc Bousquet (2002) and Carmen Werder (2000), both of whom claim that collective action is the most successful approach to administering writing programs. As Bousquet (2002) argues in “Composition as Management Science,” an ideal writing program does not make use of traditional hierarchical structures; instead, Bousquet advocates for “a *labor* theory of agency and a rhetoric of solidarity, aimed at constituting, nurturing, and empowering collective action by persons in groups” (p. 494).

While Bousquet has received criticism for his oversimplification of rhetoric and composition’s disciplinary history, he makes a valid point: The work of a writing program, and the power distributions within it, should not be designated to a figurehead. Instead, all members working within a writing program should be invited to participate in the development of the program, with the expectation that shared governance will lead to a more ethical approach to program administration.

Though not entirely concerned with ethics, Bousquet’s WPA-less writing program is precisely the kind of program we created at GGC for our studio initiative. We enacted, as best we could, what Carmen Werder (2000) terms “rhetorical agency,” an approach to administration that reorients traditional concepts of power, authority, and influence to a collective shared ethos and thus a “shared agency” (p. 19). For Werder (2000), WPA work is “not about controlling others; it’s about understanding our common needs. It’s not about forcing others; it’s about choosing with them from an array of perspectives available. It’s not about managing others; it’s about analyzing a situation and figuring it out—together” (p. 12). As a result,

our institutional limitations—no WPA, no writing program, courses “owned” by different schools—actually enabled us to be ethical collaborators who developed “shared agency” in order to offer GGC students a first-rate educational experience.

We banded together collectively because we realized the power we could wield as a solidified team. Each of us spearheaded projects most closely aligned with her expertise. We designated a point person to communicate with our deans and to organize meetings; a tutor facilitator who hired and trained part-time faculty tutors; a resource facilitator who investigated content management systems, textbooks, and classroom materials; a grant compliance and budget representative who completed our purchasing requests and represented us to the BOR; a liaison who guided us through the IRB approval process and interfaced with Admissions and Testing; and, finally, a researcher who reviewed disciplinary models, including Studio, stretch, mainstreaming, and bridge courses. Yet these roles were flexible, and we filled in for each other when needed. We met weekly—sometimes twice a week—to report on our progress, to discuss new developments, and to troubleshoot. We quickly became a collective with one focus.

Even though we did not author the CCA grant proposal, we had the rhetorical positioning and pedagogical expertise to leverage the grant and to create an innovative program; however, like most institutions engaging in such transformation and/or redesign efforts, we faced specific challenges that were, at times, political. In our efforts to negotiate with various stakeholders, we learned valuable lessons about the hindrances one may face while developing a program and how collective agency can serve as a panacea to potential setbacks.

POLITICS AND CHALLENGES OF THE SEGUE PROGRAM

Studio scholarship is rife with stories of success *and* failure. At GGC, we consider Segue a measurable success, but we cannot pretend that the implementation process was seamless. Often, transformation efforts are met with resistance: sometimes from faculty, sometimes from administrators, sometimes from students. Most often, such resistance is motivated by personal and political conflicts preceding the moment of transformation. When new initiatives filter through institutional pipelines, they enter into a complex web of relationships, practices, and policies, and it is often faculty who must mitigate these complexities as they respond to administrative charges to change curricula. In fact, even Werder’s (2000) sincere optimism in “Rhetorical Agency: The Ethics of It All” is calculated, as she notes:

[T]here will always be some people who choose to perceive us exclusively as threats to their own power. . . . Not only are they sometimes unable to conceptualize relationships based on mu-

tual agency, they are unwilling to do so because it means that they would have to give up control of others. (p. 20)

Such obstacles are unavoidable when campus-wide curricular change is afoot. For us, negotiating the complexities of our stakeholders, the grant criteria, testing practices, flat structure, and disciplinary communication presented us with challenges that we could only allay through collective agency and consistent messaging. Our work on the Segue Program demonstrates the importance of finding points of convergence among stakeholders, particularly a large variety of stakeholders with differing ideas and levels of power (Cardinal & Keown, this volume).

CHALLENGE 1: MULTIPLE STAKEHOLDERS

Georgia's participation in the CCA Initiative immediately positioned GGC's transformation effort as a top-down initiative, filtering from the Georgia BOR to four colleges in the state. We had to negotiate relationships and convince our stakeholders that the Segue model would work—that it could lower attrition rates and be adapted in other institutional contexts across the state. Luckily for us, Peter Adams' ALP model yielded impressive quantitative data demonstrating that students moved through the program faster and were retained at higher rates than students in traditional basic writing classes. Attrition rates, retention, and accelerated progress were all major concerns for CCA and the State of Georgia. As our team was becoming convinced that a modified version of the ALP would best serve GGC, the Dean of the STS attended a conference where Adams presented, and afterwards, supported our recommendation and invited Adams to our campus. With the support of the Dean of the STS, we were better able to convince campus-wide stakeholders to endorse the model. The timing of these events—our Dean's attendance at Adams' talk coupled with the national conversations about developmental education—was instrumental in our transformation efforts.

Additionally, we gained support for Segue because we created credit-bearing courses. Our stakeholders—CCA, Georgia's BOR, and GGC's deans—wanted a model that helped developmental students enroll in credit-bearing courses as quickly as possible. Because the Segue model allows students to enroll in developmental English and first-year composition during the same semester, it did just that. Our collective messaging about Segue focused on this aspect and has since won us advocates all over campus. In fact, when discussing GGC's mission to not only grant students access to higher education but also to support student success, GGC's President has mentioned the Segue Program in particular as an example.

CHALLENGE 2: THE COMPLETE COLLEGE AMERICA GRANT

One of our major concerns about the CCA grant was its imperative to modularize instruction. We agreed that a purely modularized approach was not pedagogically sound for diverse students from the working class or those from impoverished homes because these students generally have less access to and experience with technology. None of us wanted technology to become a new stumbling block for student success. The question became: How could we satisfy the dictates of the grant while providing pedagogically sound courses?

We came up with a creative solution: We included a series of exercises and quizzes for grammar instruction, in which students completed modularized instruction on their own time and at their own pace. Doing so allowed us to meet this grant requirement while enabling us to spend class time on global writing issues. Our decision to offload grammar instruction and to use in-class time for global issues was an easy, collective choice to make. We will also add that our common training helped us build collectivity; it was not difficult to agree on enacting similar pedagogical practices and to share our approaches with others.

CHALLENGE 3: DISRUPTING TESTING PRACTICES

One of our goals was to modify how standardized tests were used at GGC to assess student writing. Prior to our program implementation, the ACT Compass exam determined students' placement in English, reading, and math. If students were placed in developmental English, reading, or math, they were also required to pass the Compass exam at the end of each course. This added hurdle meant students could pass the basic writing course, but if they did not satisfy the Compass exit requirement, they would be required to repeat the entire course.

We wanted two changes to testing that were supported by the grant: to include multiple measures for writing placement and to dispose of the Compass exam as an exit measure. For placement, we chose the E-Write exam, in combination with the Compass, to gain a better sense of students' writing abilities and to create a more accurate placement system. Disposing of the Compass as an exit requirement was a more difficult matter, in part because of communication difficulties among the SLA, the STS, and the Office of Testing Services, all of which interpreted the grant differently.

To manage the uncertainty over the Compass exit, we presented our stakeholders with a non-punitive exit measure that would more accurately assess students' exit abilities, and we were granted permission to implement it. We created a standard in-class writing prompt for students to complete during the last week of classes, and we all administered the prompt in the same manner, with the same

time limit. In order to assure objectivity when evaluating the essays, we conducted a holistic blind scoring, a practice we have continued. In this instance, our common training in best practices for writing instruction provided us with the support we needed to revise a punitive exit measure, a success we are proud of.

CHALLENGE 4: GGC'S FLAT STRUCTURE

Within a flat structure, an uncommon hierarchy exists, one that omits traditional means of transmitting information. Without the administrative support of either a WPA or a writing program, our efforts to implement the Segue Program were sometimes stymied by institutional idiosyncrasies. Part of the struggle lay with identifying the key administrators and staff to assist us during Segue's implementation; we were new to the institution and unfamiliar with the offices and people needed to make the pilot a success. In addition, before our contracts started, a number of returning personnel moved into different positions within the institution, further complicating our progress. Often, we realized we had neglected to inform someone important of our activities only when a new problem came to light.

In addition, a flat structure requires faculty to absorb much of the administrative workload, most of which is conducted within work groups, committees, and other taskforces throughout campus. One of the difficulties in working within "GGC time" is that two very different decisions about one issue may be simultaneously made by two different committees, or one committee's decision can unknowingly impact or even contradict the choices made by another. In order to minimize miscommunication, each member of the group re-appropriated all her non-teaching time to implementing the program and worked diligently to identify and contact committees or administration needed to make the program work. Each member acquired multiple assignments to relevant work groups, taskforces, and committees to support the program.

In essence, placement in various groups became key to the success of the Segue Program because, within a flat structure, connections were, in some ways, more possible than they would have been in a more traditional structure. For example, one of us served on a college-wide committee called First-Year Matters. This committee was comprised of administrators, including the Vice-President of Academics and Student Affairs, the Associate Provost for Academic Affairs, Associate Vice-President for Quality Enhancement Programs and Institutional Policy, the Dean of the STS, and the Associate Vice-President of Public Affairs. Our colleague's membership on the committee helped the group stay abreast of changes to tutoring on campus, the college's orientation process, and issues of public relations, all relevant to Segue.

Further, these connections helped the group ameliorate political questions regarding where the Segue Program and its faculty should reside. At the same time, the STS and the English Discipline wanted to protect their interests and investments in the courses taught, and we were often put in the midst of the political foray when power and authority were uncertain. For example, classroom assignments became difficult because the STS claims control of several small rooms appropriate for Segue classes. From an outside perspective, it appeared that Segue faculty obtained better teaching assignments. We, however, made connections to the key people and groups on campus, effectively establishing Segue as belonging to both the STS and the SLA and allowing classroom assignments appropriate to class size, which also helped to dispel concerns in the English Discipline. We have kept appointments in English but continue to work closely alongside the STS, including faculty involved with the newly developmental basic math program, Access Math. We also forged a program with reading faculty in AY 2014–2015.

Importantly, we found that GGC's institutional structure may actually help reinforce the notion that developmental education is the work of the entire college, not just one discipline or group. In a sense, then, the Segue Program allowed us to make structural vulnerabilities that impede GGC's mission more visible and paved the way for more open collaborations among faculty and schools within the institution.

CHALLENGE 5: DISCIPLINARY CONFLICT AND PROTOCOL

The structural peculiarities of GGC created conflicts within the English Discipline primarily with regard to communication and protocol. First, because GGC essentially doubled its student population (from 4,000 to 8,000 students) in the fall of 2011, a change which forced personnel positions to shift the previous summer, it was initially unclear who had the authority to enact the curricular changes required for the Segue Program. Since its inception, the English Discipline managed its own curricular changes, but because Georgia's BOR awarded GGC the grant, its purview extended beyond the discipline. As a result, neither the SLA nor the English Discipline had an established protocol for delegating tasks assigned by the BOR because neither unit understood the extent to which the BOR could intervene in curricular matters.

In fact, the process revealed that the BOR absolutely has the power to dictate curricular matters, but the lack of established protocol led some English Discipline faculty to question whether the grant violated GGC's accreditation since it was a top-down administrative directive, as opposed to a faculty-driven initiative. The unorthodox curricular process surrounding the creation of the Segue Program pro-

vided many opportunities to review institutional practices and to develop stronger protocol to protect new faculty and maintain curricular integrity.

Further complicating matters was the fact that the grant award was announced in August, before most faculty returned to campus. The Dean of the SLA approached us during orientation, before we became acquainted with our English colleagues, the Discipline's structure, and the curricular processes the discipline created. Our agreement to participate in a major curricular revision outside of the discipline's processes created obstacles for achieving immediate buy-in from our English colleagues. Ultimately, these obstacles were significant enough to place us in a vulnerable position between the Dean's Office and the English Discipline. Because the Dean had broken English Discipline communication protocol by approaching us directly, Segue became a "Dean's Taskforce" and worked outside of the discipline's committee structure. Hence, we were under no obligation to communicate the purpose and work of the taskforce to the Discipline. The Dean's approach to delegating the grant responsibilities led to conflicts over communication, power, and decision-making, conflicts that called into question the very structure of the discipline, as well as the relationship between the English Discipline and the Dean's Office. One of the results was our inability to cast the Segue Program as discipline-specific work in keeping with the English Discipline Constitution.

Moreover, some English faculty members had limited knowledge of Segue's existence, even one year after the program began, and/or were unsure about how the model worked. Finally, the implementation of Segue highlighted an additional tension concerning the location of Segue courses as part of the SLA or the STS, which led us to question whether English faculty believed that developmental education should be the work of the English Discipline at all.

Understandably, tension mounted. The English Discipline felt alienated from the Segue Program and was afraid that the Dean's breach of discipline protocol would set an unfavorable precedent for future faculty. For us, this tension created obstacles for productive communication. It was also difficult to communicate the nuance of the Segue Program in the limited time allotted in discipline meetings. Leach et al. (this volume) notes that their conversations too were also brief and in hallways, but they did have the shared space of department workrooms that a flat structure like GGC's cannot provide. Without a departmental structure in place, and having little face-to-face time for communication, English faculty members were expected to use a discipline-only Google Group to have more in-depth discussions about Segue. Sometimes, these discussions were fruitful, but other times, misunderstandings occurred. Despite these challenges, the Segue Program is one example of a program on GGC's campus that, while messy, navigated the flat structure for the benefit of students.

THE FUTURE OF SEGUE

The political challenges faced by the group all led directly to the need for collective agency. As a result of our efforts, faculty and administrators have also learned from the experience of Segue, and several new initiatives are now in place to ensure that our transformation of developmental education continues to prosper. First, one year after Segue's implementation, GGC created The Council to Advise Transitional Studies, a collaborative unit that brings faculty from across campus together to discuss issues related to developmental education. Second, GGC's next project was to develop a new course that combines developmental reading and writing, typically offered as two classes, into one course. The course, English 0989, was created by a collaborative committee of English and reading faculty, in conjunction with the Dean of the STS. In other words, faculty from the SLA, the School of Education (where reading is housed), and the STS developed the curriculum for the course during the 2014–2015 AY. The collaboration and ensuing course suffered from far fewer difficulties during its creation and implementation than did the Segue Program. The course will be available in the fall of 2015 when the new guidelines for developmental courses in the State of Georgia take effect.

LESSONS LEARNED

Developing the Segue Program taught us valuable lessons about studio implementation, and while many of GGC's institutional features are non-traditional, we have some generalizable takeaways applicable to range of institutions. As faculty, administrators, and staff begin the planning phases of studio implementation, they should work collaboratively to

1. Characterize their compositional situation, with attention to the extra-institutional, institutional, and disciplinary stakeholders that will invest in the model.
2. Take advantage of timing and recognizing potential opportunities afforded by campus strategic priorities, statewide initiatives, and internal and external grants.
3. Identify allies across disciplines through committee or taskforce work.
4. Leverage collective agency wisely so that studio implementation is a concerted effort.
5. Structure productive communication opportunities by providing campus-wide workshops and events to educate faculty and administrators about the benefits of Studio.
6. Develop clear communication protocols among academic units and un-

derstand the channels required for programmatic development.

7. Recognize that studio implementation will generate institutional critique.

While not exhaustive, these lessons serve as first steps in considering who will be served by Studio, what resources are required for implementation, and what institutional pieces must collaborate. We invite—and welcome—other novice studio designers to contribute to our discussion by sharing their compositional situations and revealing other factors that lead to successful studio design and implementation. Such stories are helpful and can provide immeasurable guidance; we need to hear them.

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