recognizes interactions of components with processes (e.g., collecting involves ideology), of process with process (e.g., to collect is also to disseminate), and of component with component. This matrix has guided our decisions on placement examinations, on teacher training, and on course guidelines.

Our experience with program evaluation guided by this matrix leads to several observations for writing-program evaluators:

1. Decisions are best guided by ongoing, systematic, internal evaluation.

2. Effective internal evaluation involves multiple stakeholders and multiple managers as program investigators.

3. Description requires attention to commonalities and differences across disciplines, with study of situational constraints.

4. Use of the interactive matrix will yield information which would otherwise be unlikely to guide decision-making.

HOLISTIC EVALUATION AS EMPOWERMENT

Diane McGee and Christine Starnes, John Abbott College, Montreal

The presenters discussed an adaptation of holistic evaluation that is innovative in several ways. It brings the responsibility for testing back to the teacher by testing in the classroom itself. In addition, it assesses the learning of specific content material across the curriculum rather than general writing ability. Importantly, two of the proposed models of holistic reading allow students to be directly involved in the evaluation process. Over all, this adaptation empowers both teachers and students by suggesting practical means of implementing writing across the curriculum at the same time that it increases collaboration among faculty.

The study that suggested these models was a 1987-88 project under Canada’s French Research Category in which 22 participants (representing 11 disciplines) holistically evaluated at least one assignment during a semester. The findings supported our hypothesis that holistic evaluation can be used to assess learning in content courses. The outcomes demonstrated how the use of such procedures in the classroom can empower both students and teachers. Students received a clearer sense of the purpose of writing, which led to better planning, clearer expression, and a deeper understanding of the topic. They also benefitted from the motivation resulting from more positive feedback and an understanding of the grading system. For teachers, the collaboration led to an articulation and validation of their own pedagogical values and practices, a deepened awareness of the processes of learning and writing, a less tedious marking task, and more congruence between teaching and testing.

We explained three elements of the models in detail: the relationship between the teachers involved, the preparation of the prompt and the scoring guide (concrete examples were distributed for analysis by the audience), and the procedures for reading and scoring the papers. We stressed models in which students were the second readers.

DESIGNING RISING JUNIOR WRITING ASSESSMENT PROGRAMS

Norbert Elliot, New Jersey Institute of Technology
Maximino Plata and Paul Zelhart, East Texas State University

With increased national emphasis on the evaluation of educational outcomes, faculty within a specific institution frequently find themselves charged with ensuring the writing competencies of undergraduate students. This presentation focused on the methods used by a rural university—East Texas State University—to conduct its rising junior writing assessment program.

If developers of assessment programs are to understand fully the issues and possibilities evoked when an institution undertakes evaluation of writing ability across the university, a comprehensive knowledge of the historical background of writing assessment is essential. In this program, therefore, East Texas
looked at the relation between their new program and the history of writing assessment. We gave special attention to early scales developed by Milo B. Hillegas and M.R. Trabue. We also examined the relation of holistic scoring to psychology and the issues involved in multicultural education.

We then presented data from the program at East Texas. The assessment had been taken by 4,573 students from the fall of 1984 to the spring of 1989. We provided data on the following populations: White, Black, Hispanics, Asian, international, and learning-disabled students. We also provided analysis of the relation of scores on the assessment to grade point average and grades in English courses. Emphasis was given to variation in prompt design and its relation to the success rate of individual populations.

The presentation closed with an analysis of the issues involved in administering locally developed writing assessment programs. Discussion centered on the institutional reporting and rewards structure, multicultural awareness, and directions for further research.

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THE ROLE OF THE WRITING CENTER IN THE ASSESSMENT OF WRITING

Christina Murphy, Texas Christian University

This session served as the introductory session to a panel on the role of writing centers in assessment. I began by discussing the history of writing centers, pointing out that they began in the 1930s and 40s as extensions of English departments and were set up exclusively to assist weaker students with their writing skills through individual tutorials. In the 1960s and 70s, the supposed "literacy crisis" placed writing centers and writing across the curriculum programs within the center of what Stanley Aronowitz and Henry Giroux in Education Under Siege have described as the conservative, liberal, and radical debate over schooling.

From the conservative perspective of literacy education, which emphasized the mastery of techniques as equivalent to academic progress, writing centers were to serve administrative aims and function as centers for diagnostic assessment and remediation of students' writing skills. From the liberal perspective, which defines education as a broad preparation for life with literacy education as its base or foundation, writing centers were to be a form of supplemental education that recognized the student as an individual learner, and that emphasized apprenticeship learning. From the radical perspective of feminist and Marxist critics, writing centers were to serve as agents of social change by respecting the multiplicity of literacies to be found amongst the whole range of students who would use a writing center's services. In addition to the powerful shaping influences of these three sociopolitical forces, writing centers in the 60s and 70s had to respond to the influx of technology designed for writing instruction and determine the role of technology within literacy education.

How should writing centers respond to these conflicting demands and what role, if any, should they serve in assessment? The other panelists—Joe Law, Dana Beckelman, and Margaret Morrison—discussed these questions.

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ASSESSING TRANSFER STUDENTS' READINESS FOR WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM: THE WRITING CENTER'S ROLE

Joe K. Law, Texas Christian University

This portion of the session reported on the Writing Center's involvement in writing assessment at Texas Christian University (TCU). TCU has recently implemented a Writing Across the Curriculum program, at the same time changing the core curriculum to require a freshman and a sophomore writing course instead of two freshman courses. TCU provides an opportunity for students to demonstrate that they have mastered the skills necessary to do well in a writing-intensive course, thus necessitating assessment of the writing skills of all students who wish to transfer credit for the second freshman course taken at another school. The staff of the Writing Center make this evaluation and they have developed a two-stage procedure that is flexible enough to be adapted to analogous situations, such as an English department exit