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 Flata 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
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