counterparts. Of interest, however, is the fact that the gap between black and white students narrowed on the NJHSPT, probably because this test, a prerequisite for high school graduation, motivated students to perform well and because the topic called for a narrative essay—an accessible format.

At this point in the study, Chaplin conducted a reliability study of the consistency of the reader responses, with resulting positive correlations of between 0.6 and 0.8. After the rubric had been tested in the preliminary reading, Chaplin used it in a solitary reading of several hundred additional essays by both black and white students. Using the rubric, she was able to identify race correctly in a substantial percentage of cases—ranging from 65% to 85%, depending on the test and writing mode.

According to Chaplin, there are several important implications of this study for curriculum development. To begin with, black writers need to learn logical reasoning skills (especially higher-level thinking patterns). They need to build upon their strong oral skills by learning to speak logically and then transferring this strategy to written work. Black students need to be taught to place the conversational mode in its proper context and not to confuse it with the appropriate strategies for formal written assignments. These goals can best be achieved in a structured classroom environment; however, there should not be so much structure that students are intimidated about participating and giving of themselves. Furthermore, an effective writing curriculum will minimize the "drill approach," since students generally have been exposed to a great deal of this type of instruction already, with little effect on writing proficiency.

Chaplin concluded by saying that although all writers need to be taught similar writing strategies, black writers may require specific emphasis and instructional techniques. This study will provide valuable information to help schools offer black students the writing instruction they need.

TEACHING AND TESTING WRITING ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

Speakers: Penny Dugan, Stockton State College, Pomona, N.J.
Jerome Paris, New Jersey Institute of Technology

Introductor/Recorder: Robert E. Lynch, New Jersey Institute of Technology

Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Programs are developed and shaped to match the history and structure of the institutions in which they operate. Methods for evaluating the impact of WAC programs on students, faculty, and curriculum must, therefore, be devised with an eye toward the specific characteristics of the institutions involved.

Penny Dugan emphasized the recent origin and experimental nature of Stockton State College in her discussion of Stockton's Writing Program, which she directs. Founded in 1971 as an "alternative" approach to public higher education, Stockton has no academic departments and places heavy emphasis on cross-disciplinary activities. Originally there was no required composition course at Stockton—in fact, no required course of any kind—and so from its very beginning Stockton has been committed to teaching and evaluating writing in a wide variety of content courses. Although College Writing has now become a requirement for all Stockton students, they are also required to choose two courses from a list of writing intensive courses and at least one course designated for Writing Across the Curriculum. Beyond this requirement, students are encouraged to take one course from either list each term.

Stockton has recently initiated a Junior Writing Test, which students must take after they complete 64 credits towards their degree. They are asked to choose one of four topics of current interest, all of an expository/persuasive nature, and are allowed two hours to write their essays. Faculty and staff members from programs across the college come together to review holistic assessment methods and to score the essays under Dugan's direction. Each essay is read by two readers using a scale of 1 to 6, with the two scores being added. When the scores are not identical or contiguous, additional readers become involved. Essays receiving combined scores of 8 to 12 are deemed proficient, those with 2 to 6 not proficient. Essays with a combined score of 7 are read by a third reader to determine proficiency. This year, about two-thirds of the essays were judged proficient. Students whose essays were judged not proficient are given the option of another testing within a few weeks. Unless the second test reverses the result of the first, these students are required to complete a Writing Intensive Course in the following semester.

Dugan stressed that although the college administration advocated the Junior Writing Test, presumably to guarantee proficient student writing in upper-division courses, it has been inconsistent in its support of the Writing Program. The impetus behind the Writing Program and the reason for the success of the writing test, she concluded, continues to be: the involvement of a large number of dedicated faculty from many disciplines.

Jerome Paris reviewed the progress of New Jersey Institute of Technology's two-year old program in Writing Across the Curriculum. NJIT is a public technological university best known for its engineering, computer science, and architecture curricula. A survey of faculty in 1984 indicated recognition of the importance of effective writing in the curricula and broad support for a cross-disciplinary writing program. In 1984, Paris applied for and received support for a Writing Across the Curriculum project at NJIT through the state's FICE program (Fund for the Improvement of Collegiate Education).

The program committee held a two-day, off-campus workshop in January, 1985, attended by thirty-five volunteer faculty representing every department of the university. In addition to allowing the participating faculty to share views on student writing and how best to improve it, the retreat atmosphere prompted frank discussions of other matters of common pedagogical concern, which tend to be overlooked.
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Dugan and Paris, continued from page 11

at least on a cross-disciplinary level, in the day-to-day press of campus activity. By the end of the workshop, all participants had developed a plan to incorporate student writing in their course, even for the most specialized technological subjects. At the end of the following semester, Paris surveyed the group to determine the degree to which they had been successful in implementing the ideas from the workshop. It was clear that although few individuals had unqualified success in their efforts, the experience had reinforced their commitment to writing as enhancing student learning in their courses.

Continued funding allowed for a second WAC workshop in September, 1986. Whereas some of the original workshop faculty returned to help conduct sessions, most of the participants were new to the program. As a component of program evaluation, Paris surveyed the students who had been in the classes of those teachers during the term. The results showed that student resistance to writing is often superficial, especially when the course writing projects are directly related to overall course goals and objectives. He discussed conducting or planning WAC programs not only to rely on pre- and post-tests of student writing to evaluate the success of their efforts (since evidence of writing improvement is difficult to detect over short periods of time), but to include the more affective elements, such as changed attitudes toward writing, as well.

It was clear from this workshop that Dugan and Paris have effectively formed an on-campus network of dedicated teachers who are dedicated to good writing as an end in itself and as a tool for learning in all disciplines.

Assessing the effectiveness of writing-across-the-curriculum programs focused, in this workshop, on two questions: How did students perceive the effectiveness of writing within their courses? How effective are writing-across-the-curriculum programs?

Eight years ago, the English Department at William Paterson College began a "writing as process" workshop for teachers during the summer. Over the years, seventy faculty have taken an intensive four-day course (9 a.m. - 5 p.m.) in May, with no remuneration. Faculty from all schools and from most departments within the college have participated in these courses. Out of their experience, faculty at William Paterson College have published On Writing Well: A Faculty Guidebook for Improving Student Writing in All Disciplines (1985).

Donna Perry (English Department), Director of the Writing-Across-the-Curriculum Project, explained that assessment has been a part of their program from the beginning, because they felt that assessment was useful in developing the program. They sent out an anonymous questionnaire to faculty in the humanities and sciences, to discover how much and what kind of writing assignments teachers were already making in their courses. They also sent questionnaires to anonymous students who were already taking the writing workshop. They discovered that faculty were using journals, essay exams (in-class and take-home), lab reports, reviews, and short and long papers. They also asked faculty for anonymous questionnaires that included questions that were in the writing program. After giving a profile of the 8,500 students at her college, Perry explained that the students were asked to fill out anonymous questionnaires to assess students' attitudes toward writing. Next, Perry explained that assessment of the writing program not only satisfied the terms of the grant, but also demonstrated the value of the program (and led to internal funding). She also added that the writing program was working, and that it gave faculty the opportunity to improve the program.

Perry recommended "writing roundtables," informal discussions held three times a semester during which faculty, students, and staff met to talk about writing. These roundtables gave high visibility to the writing-across-the-curriculum program at low cost. Especially successful was a roundtable organized to allow students to speak out on writing-across-the-curriculum program. In addition, the program sponsored two or three formal presentations each semester, with keynote speakers. Assessment of the program included counting the number of people who attended the writing roundtables and formal lectures, as well as interviewing faculty and students. Donating faculty and student questionnaires, and counting the number of telephone inquiries about the writing program.

Guinver Satar (History Department) explained the design of their student questionnaire. She stressed that the questionnaire she used was the outcome of a team effort, with different disciplines represented. Using the University of Minnesota questionnaire as a model, they modified it with questions submitted by faculty colleagues and with a six-point evaluative scale (ranging from "strongly disagree" to "strongly agree"). The questionnaire had four parts: the first applied to all disciplines, the second gave students a chance to write responses to open-ended questions, the third

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**Evaluating the Effectiveness of Writing in Content Area Courses**

**Speakers:** Donna Perry, Katarina Edinger, Sharon Hanks, John Peterman, Gunvar Satar, Marcia Schlofmitz, William Paterson College, N.J.

**Introducer/Recorder:** Judith Johnston, Rider College, New Jersey

Sharon Hanks (Biology Department) and John Peterman (Philosophy Department) began the workshop with a five-minute writing exercise on the topic, "What does it mean for writing to be effective in your content area?" Participants' responses, as volunteered orally and written on a blackboard, revealed a common set of general criteria: effective writing is clear, organized, correct, complete, creative, effective for the intended audience, cohesive, expresses significant subject-related thought, contains support for the significant idea, explains the significance of the facts, expresses a personal voice, and translates numbers into words (quantitative analysis). Both participants and presenters represented a range of content areas, including science and technology as well as the humanities. Throughout the workshop, questions from participants and reports from the presenters made the basic assumption that student writing assists in the process of learning, in all content areas.