of effectiveness. Specifically, the visitations characterized: (1) program administration; (2) policies and procedures; (3) remedial curriculum; (4) remedial pedagogy; (5) faculty development; (6) instructional support; (7) student support; and (8) local program evaluations. The overall emphasis of this approach is equally upon product, process, and program, and through its multiple perspectives, it comes close to giving an accurate assessment of writing programs.

ASSESSING WRITING PROFICIENCY IN THE PROFESSIONS

Speaker: William Lutz, Rutgers University, Camden, N.J.

Introducer/Recorder: Louise Silverman, Ocean County College, N.J.

William Lutz, who is a lawyer as well as an English professor, emphasized that law students usually do only minimal amounts of legal writing while they are in law school. Because of the high student-teacher ratio in law schools, law students are only required to write a few papers, final exams, and moot court briefs.

The audience for legal writing tends to be the legal community. Although, in theory, lawyers write for clients or for the general public, in reality, they write for an audience of other lawyers or for judges, who expect legal jargon in legal documents. Use of legal jargon gives access to the "sacred priesthood" of lawyers, but the use of jargon may prevent clients from understanding the content of a legal document. In addition to jargon, legal prose often contains multiple negatives, imbeddings, and prepositional phrases, as well as passive construction, Latin or Middle English phrases, and formal, ritualistic phrases. While special reading strategies are needed for reading legal documents, obscure, ambiguous prose is potentially misleading and harmful.

According to Lutz, legal writing should be the writing used in everyday affairs, with the usual attention to audience, purpose, and context. Law students' writing, therefore, should be assessed by lawyers for form and content. Simplicity and clarity should be the primary concerns in legal writing; a classic example of such simplicity and clarity is Justice Brandeis' dictum: "Danger cries out for rescue." While primary trait scoring can be used for legal writing assessment, Lutz prefers holistic scoring or portfolio assessment. Students can be trained through the reading of models of clear, legal prose; however, topics must test legal knowledge as well as writing skills.

EXPLORING WRITING ASSESSMENT IN ANOTHER CULTURE: CHINA AND AMERICA

Speaker: Marie Jean Lederman, LaGuardia Community College, CUNY

This session's premise was that the values of a culture are revealed through its examination system or systems. As she discussed writing assessment in both ancient and contemporary China, Marie Jean Lederman invited participants to examine similar issues in their own testing programs.

Lederman began by describing China's ancient Imperial Examination System, which lasted some 1,300 years. This first attempt to create a merit system for government positions was the earliest writing assessment program in the world (Sui Dynasty, 589 A.D.-618 A.D.). Candidates wrote essays explicating the writings of Confucius, a body of material which set forth the moral and ethical basis of society. These examinations were given on three levels, culminating in the capital examination in the Forbidden City in Beijing for the top three hundred candidates.

Among the issues which examiners faced was reader reliability, and so the procedure of using two independent readers and a third in case of disagreement was developed. Other issues were the problem of the relationship between the fixed form of the examinations and the creativity of the examinees, test policies, the control of cheating, and equity. These problems are reflected in literature widely separated in both time and space: the novel The Scholars, written by Ching-Tzu Wu around 1750 and John Hersey's The Call.

Lederman briefly traced the imperial examinations through 1905, when they were finally abolished in China. She then focused on the period immediately following the Cultural Revolution when the National Unified Entrance Examination for Institutions of Higher Education began (1977). The last years of the Cultural Revolution were a time of great educational ferment, centering on college admissions standards and entrance examinations. What types of assessments should be used? Who would be included and excluded? Who should be in the universities? This controversy was also reflected in the popular media, evidenced in the emotionally-charged Chinese film called Breaking with Old Ideas (1975).

The question was resolved in favor of the academically demanding university entrance examination which has become more stringent every year since 1977. It includes a section on Chinese language and literature—one half of which is an essay. Lederman distributed a Review Syllabus for the Chinese language and literature section, and participants noted similarities and differences between the demands of writing assessments in China and the United States. The discussion focused not only on criteria for writing but on what these criteria imply about the values in both cultures.