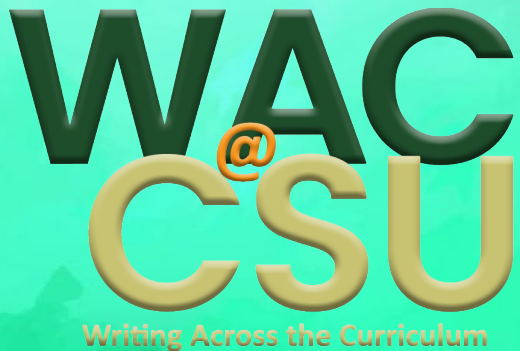


Talking About WAC

Recorded Workshops on Writing
Across the Curriculum

AI as an Object of Inquiry

Chris Basgier
Auburn University



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Integrating AI as an Object of (Critical) Inquiry

Christopher Basgier, Ph.D.

November 2024

Materials available at <https://aub.ie/csuai>

Follow me at <https://christopherbasgier.substack.com>

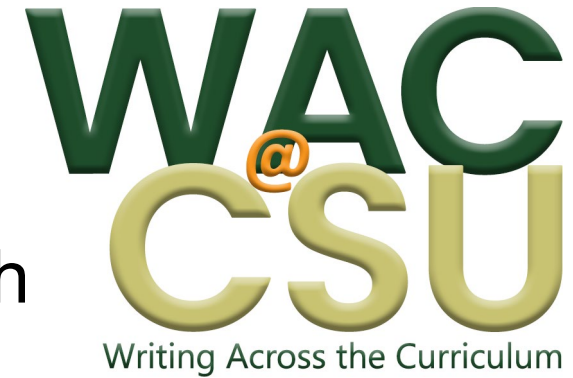


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Welcome to WAC Week

All of our workshops will be available online in the coming weeks.

Learn more at writingcenter.colostate.edu/wac.



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Welcome to WAC Week

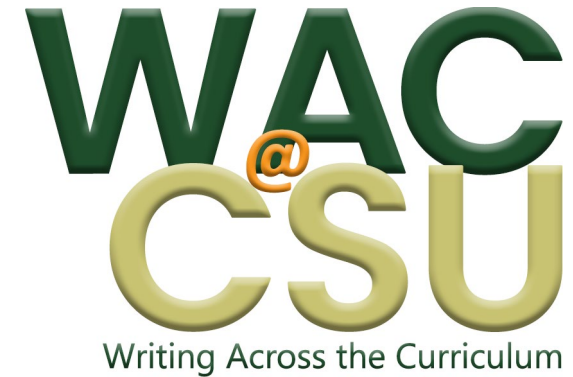
Small Grant Applications

Goal: Develop one or more writing activities or assignments

Support:

- Consultation with an experienced writing instructor
- Materials development
- Outcomes assessment appropriate for demonstration of teaching effectiveness

Learn more at writingcenter.colostate.edu/wac/grants.



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Overview

- Defining Critical AI Literacy
- Three WAC Pedagogies
- Generative AI as a Tool for Communicating
- Turning Generative AI into an Object of Inquiry



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Critical AI Literacy



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Critical AI Literacy

- Not rejecting, not embracing, but **engaging AI**
- The ability to examine the risks and benefits of generative AI technologies for learning, engagement, and communication, with attention to effects on individuals, organizations, communities, and cultures.
- Not the responsibility of any one instructor, course, or department
- A little bit goes a long way!

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Three WAC Pedagogies



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WTL, WTE, WTC

- Writing-to-learn (WTL): help students remember and understand new material; low stakes and informal
- Writing-to-engage (WTE): deepen students' learning in the discipline/profession through reflection, application, and analysis; low stakes or mid-stakes and still informal
- Writing-to-communicate (WTC): Culminating representation of knowledge, skills, and abilities to create and communicate new thinking with authentic audiences; high stakes and formal

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WTC with AI as Tool

- Assign AI a role and a goal
- Offer constraints to prevent it from acting unexpectedly
- Give step-by-step instructions
- Explain your reasoning so it understands the purpose of a specific goal
- Iterate: refine your prompt and correct responses to improve the final product

(Adapted from Mollick, 2023)

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AI as Tool: Writing Center Example

- **Role & Goal:** I am a peer consultant for a writing center, and I want your help to conduct a consulting session with my client. You will act as a writing expert who will provide me questions to ask of my client.
- **Reasoning:** You should understand that these questions should help us engage the client and lead them to improve their written piece.
- **Constraints:** I will provide you with the answers that the client gives in response to your questions, but I cannot provide the actual written piece. We need to ensure that the feedback given to the writer is specific to the academic discipline of [insert discipline].

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AI as Tool: Example, cont'd

- Step 1: I am a peer consultant for a writing center and have received a [genre] about [topic]. Your first task is to **provide me with questions to better understand the [genre]**. After I answer those questions, proceed to the next step.
- Step 2: Your second task is to **provide me with questions to better understand [the topic]**. After I answer those questions, proceed to the next step.
- Step 3: Your third task is to **guide me through questions about higher order concerns**, such as organization, ideas, and evidence, one at a time. For example, “What does the writer know about the typical organization of this kind of document?”
- Step 4: Your final task is to **guide me through questions about lower order concerns**, such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, and citation. For example, “What citation style should this document use?” Again, go one step at a time. You will be rewarded if you guide me in a friendly, conversational manner. You will be penalized if you simply provide me with a list of questions to ask. We need to make sure that value is being given to the client by helping them to improve their writing in response to their answers.
- Step 5: **Indicate that you understand your tasks** by summarizing them to me. Then, proceed to Step 1.

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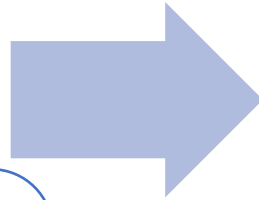


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Reframing Our Focus: WTL & WTE w/AI

AI as Tool

- Used to create a specific product or follow a determined process
- “Do the work for me” → “Help me do the work”



AI as Object of Inquiry

- Tools are our disciplinary concepts
- Examine code, interface, output, use cases, etc.
- “What do I know? What do I see? What did I learn?”

“Sticky” Concepts



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Naming “Sticky” Concepts

- A concept that can be difficult for students to learn (they get “stuck”), but that you hope will “stick” with them moving forward.
- Examples:
 - Opportunity cost (economics)
 - History as constructed from competing narratives (history)
 - Experimental uncertainty (physics)
- Name one or two of your “sticky” concepts in the chat

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Designing AI-Engaged Activities



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Sample AI-Engaged Activities

- Student as expert
- Critique AI
- Research paper scaffolding
- AI as debate opponent
- AI as theorist
- Additional examples on Box, shared with permission (Aerospace Engineering, First-Year Composition, Human Development & Family Science, Political Science)

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Example: AI as Theorist



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Q&A



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