

Approaches to Graduate Writing Pedagogy

Emerging from Writing Studies

2016 CGC Summer Institute

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Link to this PPT, my handout,
and related materials

<http://tinyurl.com/Cox-CGC-Institute-2016>



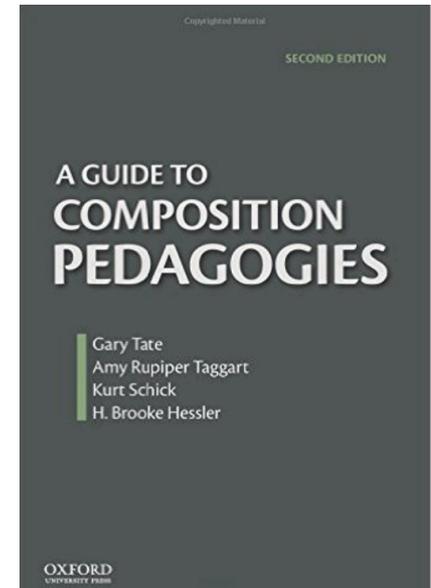
E. Shelly Reid (2007) in her review of books on FYC pedagogy poses the following framing questions for developing a pedagogy (p. 242):

- What do students *already* know and desire to know?
- What do they *need* to know (to accomplish personal and/or institutional goals)?
- What *can* they come to know in a single semester?
- What *ought* they to know (to enter into the discipline rather than remaining on the threshold)?

Definition of writing pedagogy:

Gary Tate, Amy Rupiper Taggart, Kurt Schick, and H. Brooke Hessler (2014):

“Composition pedagogy is a body of knowledge consisting of theories of and research on teaching, learning, literacy, writing, and rhetoric, and the related practices that emerge. It is the deliberate integration of theory, research, personal philosophy, and rhetorical praxis into composition instruction at all levels from the daily lesson plan to the writing program and the communities it serves” (p. 3).





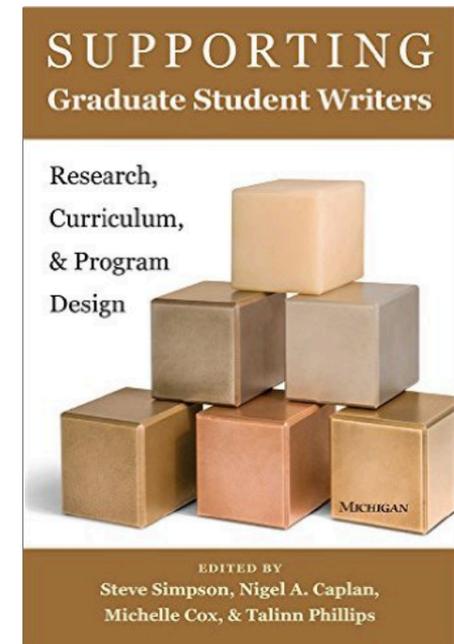
In US-based writing studies, pedagogy developed in relation to undergraduate students, primarily within 4 pedagogical contexts:

- Basic writing
- First-year writing
- Writing across the Curriculum/Writing in the Disciplines
- Writing centers

Graduate writing support is an emerging area in US-based Writing Studies

Driven by:

- Increasing student diversity at the graduate level (Simpson, 2016)
- Numbers of grad students seeking assistance from support from writing centers (Caplan & Cox, 2016)
- Calls on writing program directors and WAC directors to create support for graduate students (Caplan & Cox, 2016)



My approach

I used the 17 types of composition pedagogies described in Tate et al. to analyze course descriptions from:

- CGC Tip Sheet: Bibliography of Textbooks and Readings on Course and Materials Development, developed by Andrea Olinger and Nigel Caplan
- CGC bank of course syllabi, developed by Jin Kim

<https://gradconsortium.wordpress.com> under Resources

Syllabi and course descriptions analyzed for this talk:

Instructor/Author, University	Course title	Student demographic
Craig, Jennifer MIT	M.Eng Thesis Writing Seminar	Matriculated M.Eng international multilingual graduate students in distance education course
Fairbanks, Katya Claremont Graduate University	Foundations in Graduate Writing and Presenting	Pre-matriculated international multilingual graduate students
Fredericksen, Elaine and Mangelsdorf, Kate University of Texas, El Paso	Graduate Writing Workshop	Matriculated graduate students
Habib, Anna, Haan, Jennifer, and Mallett, Karyn Mallett George Mason University	Graduate Communication across the Disciplines III	Pre-matriculated international multilingual graduate students
Holt, Sheryl University of Minnesota	Graduate Writing	Matriculated international multilingual graduate students
O'Meara, Katherine Arizona State University	Academic Writing for International Graduate Students	Matriculated international multilingual graduate students
Simpson, Steve New Mexico Tech	Communication in the Sciences	Matriculated graduate students in science fields
Vorhies, Heather Blain University of Maryland	Graduate Writing	Matriculated graduate students
Wurr, Adrian University of Tulsa (Missy Watson Syracuse University)	Academic Writing for Graduate Students	Matriculated advanced international multilingual graduate students

What I found

- Expressivist pedagogy
- Writing process pedagogy
- Writer's workshop pedagogy
- WAC/WID pedagogy
- Researched writing pedagogy
- Rhetorical genre pedagogy

Expressivist pedagogy

- A focus on the student as an individual, with own writing/literacy history and identity
- Typical assignments include personal essays and literacy narratives

Expressivist examples

- Adrian Wurr: starts course with asking students to read literacy narratives by multilingual scholars and then discussing their own language and literacy histories
- Jennifer Craig: asks students to write short pieces of personal writing to get to know students better as writers and individuals
- Katherine O'Meara: first project is a literacy narrative on a personal experience entering a new discourse community

Writing process pedagogy

- Writing treated as a recursive process that involves activities related to invention, revision, and editing
- Typical assignments include drafts, reflections on the writing process used for a particular paper, and portfolios

Writing process examples:

- Heather Blain Vorhies includes this statement in her course description: “In order to improve your writing you must WRITE. Then, you must RE-WRITE over and over again.”
- Portfolio evaluation used in Vorhies and in Fredericksen & Mangelsdorf
- Many of the syllabi I read set deadlines for chunks or drafts of writing projects and laid out a process through scaffolding

Writer's workshop pedagogy

- Draws on pedagogies developed in creative writing
- Peer and instructor feedback highly valued
- Class time devoted to peer review

Writer's workshop examples

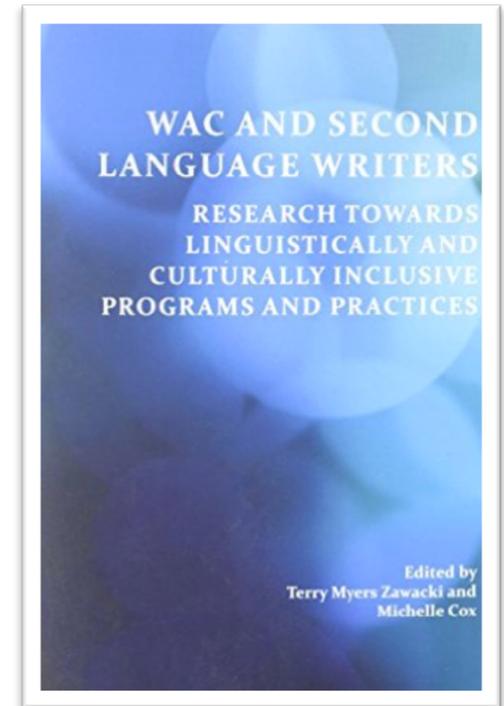
Elaine Fredericksen & Kate Mangelsdorf (2014)
course title is "Graduate Writing Workshop"

- students write contract at start of course laying out writing goals, defining writing tasks, and creating a writing schedule,
- Students are divided into two kinds of writing groups: disciplinary (for holistic feedback) and cross-disciplinary (for editing feedback)
- each week, students write 5 pages, share writing with peers, and meet for peer review

WAC/WID premises

From Cox and Zawacki (2014)

- Writing is a powerful mode of learning and communication, with writers' and teachers' goals for the writing calling for varied writing processes and teaching approaches.
- Writing is situated, with structural, rhetorical, epistemological, and discoursal features varying according to the context of the writing (discipline, profession, activity system).



WAC/WID pedagogies

WAC:

- A focus on writing-to-learn strategies
- A focus on strategies for becoming aware of differences among communication practices/cultures within different discourse communities/activity systems/disciplines

WID:

- An emphasis on discipline-specific writing processes, practices, values, discourses, and genres
- An awareness of the fact that all readers read through disciplinary lens

WAC/WID examples

- Katherine O'Meara: students read a text by a mentor/colleague at ASU and interview him/her about the research process and also about being a scholar in his/her field
- Adrian Wurr: students must purchase a writing guide specific to their discipline and gather sample journal articles from their discipline
- Sheryl Holt: student must identify a mentor from their field who will read and comment on all of their papers for the course "to get content-specific and style-specific feedback on your writing"

Researched Writing

Rebecca Moore Howard & Sandra Jamieson (2014) emphasize *research practices*:

- Alternatives to full research paper such as projects that focus on “component strategies” (like information retrieval and note-taking)
- A focus on engagement rather than mechanics (inquiry, critical engagement with sources)
- Collaboration with librarians to integrate information literacy pedagogies into writing pedagogy
- Teaching citation practices as entering the conversation of the field

Researched writing examples

From Katya Fairbanks' Foundations in Graduate Writing and Presenting:

- Students learn active reading and note-taking strategies
- Students meet with subject librarian to learn database strategies
- Students write a journal article critique, with the invention process scaffolded (*"What are 3 points you could criticize and 3 points you could praise in the article? What evidence do you have for the praise or criticism? For which points do you have the strongest evidence?"*)

Rhetorical genre studies

From Amy J. Devitt (2014):

- “sees genres as rhetorical acts rather than textual conventions” (p. 146); as “typified rhetorical actions based on recurrent situations” (Miller, 1984)
- Identifies three genre pedagogies:
 - Teaching particular genres
 - Teaching genre awareness
 - Teaching genre critique

Rhetorical genre examples

Habib, Haan & Mallett (2015, p. 5):

Graduate Student Writer Handbook project:
Students “engage in rhetorical and formal analyses of academic journals and journal articles. To deepen their analysis and extend it beyond a report of fixed rhetorical and formal features, the GSWH project required students to design an online graduate writer’s handbook for other international students in their graduate program, introducing these imagined future peers to the disciplinary discourse community, its values, epistemologies, rituals, and conventions”



Bridging Writing Studies and Applied Linguistics in Graduate Writing Pedagogy

Several examples from the literature:

- Craig (2014)
- Fredericksen & Mangelsdorf (2014)
- Habib, Haan & Mallett (2015)

We are also attempting to bridge these pedagogies in the English Language Support Office (ELSO) at Cornell.

ELSO Writing Courses

- **Writing, Revising and Editing:** introduces students to writing process approaches, library resources, and strategies for writing into new genres
- **Learning to Write for Your Field:** introduces strategies for learning discipline-specific writing processes, genres, and discourses
- **Writing with Sources:** introduces students to note-taking strategies, citation practices, and approaches for entering the scholarly conversation
- **Strategies for Self-Editing:** introduces students to strategies for editing their own writing at a variety of levels, leading to greater control over and confidence in writing.

What else may WS contribute?

- Critical pedagogy approaches, which may assist graduate students in thinking through issues of power, access, and equity in relation to graduate writing
- A critical view of the ability of a single writing course to meet the needs of all grad writers, across disciplines
- Approaches to writing assessment and writing program assessment
- Approaches to designing writing pedagogies that meet the needs of both L1 and L2 students

What else may WS contribute?

- Approaches to increasing program sustainability, through strategic integration into the university system
- Models for collaborating with faculty across the disciplines to support student writers
- Models for thinking beyond courses to programs, creating multiple types of writing support that work together to support students across their degree programs
- Models for thinking beyond programs, to institutional culture

WAC/WID premises

Cox and Zawacki (2014):

- Writing is a powerful mode of learning and communication, with writers' and teachers' goals for the writing calling for varied writing processes and teaching approaches.
- Writing is situated, with structural, rhetorical, epistemological, and discoursal features varying according to the context of the writing (discipline, profession, activity system). These differences need to be taught and respected (i.e. writing across the curriculum is not writing-as-an-English-major across the curriculum).
- By promoting a paradigm shift in how writing is valued, understood, and taught, WAC programs can have transformative and widespread effects on pedagogy and wider campus cultures around teaching and learning. (16-17)



Graduate communication specialists as

Change agents (McLeod, 1995) –

Advocating for graduate writers and promoting a shift in the culture of graduate education

A return to the framing questions (Reid, 2007, p. 242):

- What do students *already* know and desire to know?
- What do they *need* to know (to accomplish personal and/or institutional goals)?
- What *can* they come to know in a single semester?
- What *ought* they to know (to enter into the discipline rather than remaining on the threshold)?
- And how can we draw from both writing studies and applied linguistics as we seek answers to these questions?