

# 2017-2018 Annual Report

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<b>Summary/Highlights.....</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Introduction.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>WAC Program Features.....</b>	<b>4</b>
Department Writing Plans.....	4
Faculty Development Workshops .....	5
<b>Continued Initiatives .....</b>	<b>7</b>
Teaching Circle .....	7
National Day on Writing .....	7
Teaching of Writing Award.....	7
Jones White Student Writing Award.....	8
Punxsutawney Journaling Across the Curriculum.....	8
<b>New Initiatives .....</b>	<b>8</b>
WAC Podcast through CTE .....	8
<b>Funding/Budget.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Publicity/Promotion.....</b>	<b>9</b>
IUP Daily .....	9
Newsletter.....	9
WAC Website .....	9
<b>Assessment.....</b>	<b>11</b>
Department Assessment through DWPs .....	11
University-Wide Assessments .....	11

National Survey of Student Engagement .....	11
Collegiate Learning Assessment + .....	15
<b>Recommendations for WAC Sustainability.....</b>	<b>15</b>
Sustainability Indicators.....	15
Sustainability Challenges.....	17
<b>Appendix A: Evaluations of Liberal Studies 2-day May Writing Workshop .....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Appendix B: Results from Biennial WAC Survey of Seniors.....</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Appendix C: Summary of Findings, 2013 survey of IUP Faculty .....</b>	<b>25</b>
<b>Appendix D: WAC Budget Proposal.....</b>	<b>27</b>
Rationale.....	27
The Future of WAC at IUP .....	27
Current Program Initiatives .....	28
Campus Partnerships .....	28
Funding.....	29
Sustainability.....	29
Cost Estimate .....	29
<b>WAC Program Features.....</b>	<b>31</b>
Category 1: No Extra Dollar Cost.....	31
Category 2: Operating Budget .....	32
Category 3: Cost Shifts to Colleges (Deans).....	32
Category 4: Proposed Sustainability Initiatives.....	33

## Summary/Highlights

This page includes a summary of highlights; in-depth description and analysis of each topic can be found within the report.

### Department Writing Plans

Fourteen (up from nine last year) departments are currently working on Department Writing Plans, which will officially move them to a WAC model. Three departments (Anthropology, History, and Food and Nutrition) have completed plans. In 2017-18, all but one department in CHSS and several in CHHS were working on writing plans.

### Program Initiatives

The WAC director continued providing workshops for faculty. In conjunction with the Jones White Writing Center, a program was planned for the National Day on Writing for the sixth year in a row. Three other initiatives continued: a student writing award, a faculty teaching of writing award, and the Punxsutawney journaling across the co-curriculum project in conjunction with the Punxsy Writing Center.

### Assessment

University-wide assessments indicate that IUP students are struggling with writing. Students who take the NSSE report that they are not receiving enough feedback on drafts of writing assignments, they are not assigned enough drafting before having to submit final writing assignments, and in general, it appears that students are not assigned a lot of writing. High numbers of students do report, however, that IUP has contributed to their ability to write effectively and clearly.

Four years of CLA+ results show that first-year and seniors are writing at a “basic” level, indicating that at the end of four years of college, our students are writing at the same low level at which they entered IUP. Details below question the validity of the CLA+ results.

### Funding

In 2017-18, the program survived on a \$800 budget provided by the English Department and the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. Other initiatives were supported by the Jones White Writing Center.

### Sustainability

**Indicators** of program sustainability include (1) the embedded assessment that is part of every Department Writing Plan, which aligns with Middle States standards for assessment and integration of results into teaching and learning, (2) the WAC director’s relationships with well-established and respected faculty at the university, (3) discipline-specific ENGL202 courses as collaboration between expert writing faculty and discipline specialists, and (4) financial support from Liberal Studies.

**Challenges** to program sustainability include the (1) adoption and implementation in all colleges, (2) lack of dedicated WAC funding, (3) WAC positioning in the CHSS instead of the Provost’s office, and (4) lack of a WAC advisory board or council.

## Introduction

The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director, Bryna Siegel Finer, was hired in fall 2012 to create a WAC program in order to address growing concern about students' writing skills and to encourage a writing culture among faculty and students at the university. She spent that academic year collecting data from students and faculty across the university about the "state of writing" at IUP. She spent the next two years piloting various initiatives, gaining credibility among faculty, and meeting with administrators (the Provost, Provost's Associate, Director of Liberal Studies, and various Deans and department Chairs) and other university stakeholders (e.g., the Director of the Writing Center, the Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, University Libraries faculty), to make determinations about the mission and outcomes of the program, which culminated in a White Paper presented to the Provost in June 2015 (accessible at [iup.edu/wac](http://iup.edu/wac)).

What follows is a report of successes and challenges in the IUP Writing Across the Curriculum program during the 2017-18 academic year

## WAC Program Features

### Department Writing Plans

The cornerstone of the WAC program at IUP is the writing-enriched Department Writing Plan. The table below lists the departments currently or soon to be engaged in developing writing plans and their status. The WAC Director meets regularly (typically once every 3-4 weeks) with one or two appointed liaisons from each department that is actively involved in creating a writing plan, and they exchange drafts over email throughout the academic year and summer.

<b>Department</b>	<b>Status as of Fall 2018</b>	<b>Roll-out expected</b>
Anthropology	Complete	Fall 2017
Art	Drafting	tbd
Biology	Drafting	Fall 2019
English	Drafting	Fall 2019
Food and Nutrition	Complete	Fall 2016
Foreign Languages	Drafting	Spring 2019
Geography & Regional Planning	Drafting/ on hold	tbd
Geoscience	Drafting/ on hold	tbd
History	Complete	Spring 2018
Hospitality Management	Drafting	Spring 2019
Journalism & Public Relations	Drafting	Fall 2019
Mathematics	Drafting/on hold	tbd
Philosophy	Drafting	Spring 2019
Political Science	Drafting	Fall 2019

Psychology	Drafting	Fall 2019
Religious Studies	Drafting	Fall 2019
Sociology	Drafting	Fall 2019

As of the end of AY 2017-18, no departments from the College of Education or Eberly College of Business are represented. Despite multiple emails in summer 2015 to the Dean of the COE, no meeting time was negotiated. The Dean of Eberly was open to the idea of WAC and connected Siegel Finer to a department Chair who invited her to a faculty meeting. The department faculty were not receptive. With this year’s commitment to move all departments in CHSS to writing plans and more interest from departments in CHHS, there have been no outreach efforts to Eberly or the COE.

The pace of completion of DWPs is decidedly slower than described in the original White Paper (located online at iup.edu/wac), which indicates we expected eleven departments to roll-out their writing plans in fall 2016. In a meeting on March 27, 2014, Siegel Finer expressed concern about the speed of this timeline. Universities that move to the model we are using at IUP typically take up to or more than ten years to get every department on board, and those programs have funding to give release time to every department liaison and provide other types of support; the WAC director in those programs works with no more than 2-5 new programs per year because of the time-intensive nature of the work: creating a writing plan with embedded assessment, training faculty, piloting the plan, and then continually revising it based on what is learned from assessment.

### Faculty Development Workshops

In 2017-18, the WAC Director provided the following workshops (each twice in one week in different time slots). With this year’s commitment to move all departments in CHSS to writing plans, the WAC director offered on-demand workshops in the spring semester rather than pre-scheduled workshops, and instead she spent almost all of her time in meetings with department liaisons.

Table 1

Workshop	# of Attendees	Departments Represented
Introduction to Writing Plans	10+	On-demand for Biology Department
Introduction to Writing Plans	~5	On-demand for Political Science Department
Introduction to Writing Plans	~5	On-demand for Psychology
Introduction to Writing-to-Learn (Fall)	6	English, Physics, Biology, Education, Foreign Languages, Sociology
Annual Liberal Studies 2-day Writing Workshop (for W designation)	10	History, Student Affairs in Higher Education, Theater & Dance, Foreign Languages, Geography and Regional

		Planning, Sociology, Political Science, Professional Studies in Education
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Table 2

<b>Liaison</b>	<b>Department</b>	<b># of Meetings in AY 2017-18</b>
Tami Whited	History	9/6/17, 11/8/17
Oriana Gatta	English	9/6/17, 9/27/17, 11/1/17, 11/22/17, 2/19/18, 3/5/18
David Janetski	Biology	9/20/17
Hans Pederson	Philosophy	9/20/17, 11/15/17
Alison Downie	Religious Studies	9/20/17, 11/1/17, 12/5/17, 2/8/18
Nicole Buse	Hospitality Management	9/27/17, 1/24/18
Aleea Perry	Political Science	10/18/17
Marveta Ryan-Sams	Foreign Languages	10/31/17, 12/1/17, 6/28/18
David Loomis Laurie Miller	Journalism	11/1/17, 11/13/17, 1/31/18, 2/28/18, 4/16/18,
Jodie Siebold Nicole Clark	Food and Nutrition	12/7/17 (assessment update)
Stephanie Jozefowicz	Economics	2/28/18
Marissa McClure	Art	3/5/18

Despite posts in *The IUP Daily* and efforts to diversify offerings and times of day, workshop attendance is low. There is no incentive for faculty to attend workshops. If WAC workshops were tied to the Active/Active Plus Membership plan through CTE, perhaps that would incentivize attendance<sup>4</sup>. Or, if WAC participation were seen as valuable toward promotion and tenure, that too could motivate attendance (see Appendix C, which includes statements from faculty member regarding value of teaching writing).

To stimulate attendance in 2017-18, university-wide emails were sent rather than only posts in *The Daily*. Previously, workshops had been held in the Writing Center in Eicher Hall in order to create a connection between faculty teaching writing and student support for writing, but the decentralized location of the WC could have been detracting from attendance; in 2016, fall workshops were held in the HSS building. Because that did not improve attendance, we began offering workshops by request (on-demand) instead of at pre-scheduled times (see Table 1 above).

The May Liberal Studies writing workshop, required for faculty who want to obtain the W-designation to teach Writing-Intensive courses, was well-attended and the reception was positive (see Appendix A for faculty evaluations of the workshop). This year, almost all

faculty attended not to get the W-designation, but because they are serving as writing liaisons and creating writing plans for their departments. They chose to attend the two-day workshop (led by Siegel Finer and Liberal Studies Director, Dr. Edel Reilly) in order to learn more about WAC pedagogy and bring that back to their departments.

## Continued Initiatives

### Teaching Circle

Membership has declined in the “Issues and Ideas in Teaching Writing Across the Curriculum” Teaching Circle through the CTE.

	Membership
2012-13	4: English and Math
2013-14	2: Math
2014-15	1: Political Science
2015-16	0
2016-17	1: Accounting
2017-18	0

Nonetheless, the WAC Director will continue to promote it through CTE’s annual teaching circle meeting in the fall.

### National Day on Writing

For the sixth consecutive year, WAC and the Jones White Writing Center collaborated to celebrate the National Day on Writing (NDoW). October 20<sup>th</sup> is designated by Congress as the NDoW and is officially sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). IUP planned to celebrate with a writing carnival. Clubs, organizations, and classes from across the university proposed booths and activities related to writing. The university community was invited to participate in these activities as well as enjoy popcorn, candy, carnival music, and entertainment provided by a paper artist. The carnival was a huge success; it is safe to estimate that hundreds of students, faculty, and staff traversed the CHSS Building Atrium that day.

### Teaching of Writing Award

The Teaching of Writing Award is a \$500 award for faculty offered through the CTE along with their annual teaching awards, supported by the Kathleen Jones White Writing Center. The description explains, “Instructor demonstrates the teaching of writing in combination with the teaching of course content through writing as a mode of learning. This award is intended to recognize the thoughtful use and balance of writing-to-learn activities, writing-to-communicate assignments, and a commitment to improving students’ communication skills.” Christina Huhn, Associate Professor in the Department of Foreign Languages was the winner of the 2018 award. Huhn received a certificate and \$500 at the CTE Recognition

Dinner.

### **Jones White Student Writing Award**

In 2015-16, we asked a department participating in WAC to nominate a student who has demonstrated growth as a writer for the first annual Jones White Student Writing Award; the \$500 prize was funded by the Writing Center and awarded to a student in Food and Nutrition, our flagship WAC department. This year the prize was opened to any IUP student. Students who wanted to be considered were asked to submit a writing piece they had written for a class. Students were also required to have at least one tutoring session at the Jones White Writing Center before submitting their writing. Zahra Cepeda, a junior in the Biology department, was awarded this prize. Cepeda received a certificate and \$500 at the Liberal Studies English (LSE) Gallery of Writing Celebration in February 2017.

### **Punxsutawney Journaling Across the Curriculum**

In 2015-16, in collaboration with Dr. Lynn Shelly, the director of the writing center at the IUP Punxsutawney campus, Siegel Finer developed a journaling across the curriculum and co-curriculum at the regional campus. Faculty and staff participated in a day-long training by Siegel Finer and Shelly on how to use journals in various ways with students in courses, meetings, residence halls, and for self-sponsored writing. This program was discontinued in 2017-18 due to the reconfiguration of the Punxsutawney campus.

## **New Initiatives**

### **WAC Podcast through CTE**

In February 2018, the Center for Teaching Excellence hosted a discussion in their podcast series with the WAC Director, Dr. Bryna Siegel Finer; Mrs. Jodie Seybold, MS, RD, LND, Dietetic Internship Director, Instructor of Department of Food and Nutrition; and Marie Webb, second year Doctoral student in English Composition and Applied Linguistics, Graduate Assistant for Department of Food and Nutrition and Center for Teaching Excellence. The three talked about the history of WAC, as well as new developments and challenges with bridging relationships among faculty in a wide variety of disciplines. Dr. Siegel Finer addressed a common concern among teachers who are worried about grammar. She noted that positive changes are still happening with students' writing as they continue to develop language related skills.

## **Funding/Budget**

In 2017-18, the WAC director received three credits of course release in the fall and spring semesters, supported by the department of English and the CHSS. The CHSS also supported a discretionary fund (\$800), which was used for partially funding the National Day on Writing, the spring 2018 LSE Celebration of Writing, promotional materials with the WAC



logo and contact information (tote bags, pens, and notepads), newsletter and brochure printing.

In Fall 2017, the WAC Director submitted a \$19,000 proposal for the university Infrastructure Enhancement and Growth Grant based largely on the budget items presented here in Appendix D. Disappointingly, the proposal was not funded. Reviewer comments indicated, "Overall, an interesting project but not necessarily one with a huge impact on IUP's research infrastructure or the ability of our faculty and students to create original scholarship" and "The project does not fit well with the initiative. Poor potential for enhancement of infrastructure." Yet, one reviewer did note, "A number of goals in the university strategic plan are identified and met in the proposal," and another noted features like, "Cross-disciplinary; linked to multiple Strategic Plan tactics; timeline appears reasonable; faculty has scholarly record in this area to support future work."

## **Publicity/Promotion**

The Dean of CHSS and the Jones White Writing Center Director generously allow the secretary of the KJWC to devote five hours a week of time to work for WAC. Her responsibilities are all devoted to promoting WAC through the newsletter, website, Facebook page, Twitter feed, and IUP news feed.

### **IUP Daily**

In 2017-2018, the following posts were included in the *IUP Daily* as an effort to engage faculty in WAC programming (in addition to news posts announcing workshops):

- National Day on Writing Carnival Set for Friday, October 20
- McKinley and Siegel Finer Publish in WAC-GO
- Spring 2018 Writing Across the Curriculum Faculty Workshops
- Writing Across the Curriculum Faculty Workshop: Introduction Writing-to-Learn

### **Newsletter**

*The IUP WAC Newsletter* was published online (linked to the IUP WAC web page) in the spring for the fourth consecutive year; hard copies went to upper administration, college deans, and department chairs.

### **WAC Website**

The following resources were added to the WAC webpage in the past year

([www.iup.edu/wac/](http://www.iup.edu/wac/)):

- Additional resources added to the information page on how to develop Department Writing Plans.
- We added a page linking directly to downloadable completed writing plans. Currently that page contains links to Anthropology, History, and the Food and Nutrition writing plan.

- A “Reports” link was added where faculty can find annual reports and other large documents.

## Assessment

### Department Assessment through DWPs

Departments creating DWPs develop embedded assessment in their own programs, typically through capstone or 400-level courses. So far, we have baseline results from three departments: Anthropology, History, and Hospitality Management. We should have more baseline data from other departments in fall 2018, as well as data to use for comparison and assessment purposes in spring 2019 from Anthropology.

### University-Wide Assessments

University-wide assessments facilitated through the Provost's Associate's office that include questions about writing provide the following data:

### National Survey of Student Engagement

The Partnership for the Study of College Writing (between the Council of Writing Program Administrators and the National Survey of Student Engagement) was created in 2007 and has since been providing a 27-question set available to NSSE participants that are intended to illuminate the connection between writing and student engagement. IUP students respond to the writing-related questions asked in the standard question set; they do not respond to the writing consortium set (NSSE allows participants to add two topic modules, consortium, or system sets; IUP students respond to the "diverse perspectives" topical module and the PASSHE system set).

What follows are tables of data for each writing-related question across years for which we have data. Below each table is a summary of notable trends.

	2013 ---SEN	2014 ---SEN	2016 -SEN	2018-SEN
Perceived gains in writing clearly and effectively	69%	73%	76%	79%

These numbers have been going up consistently each time the NSSE is given. The first WAC plans were beginning to be developed in AY 2013-14; part of developing the plans includes an overall revision to messaging to students about the value

and importance of writing in the disciplines. It is possible that students are perceiving that message; it is also possible that writing instruction is improving at IUP despite what the CLA+ results show (see below, page 15).

		2009 FY	2009 SEN	2010 FY	2010 SEN	2013 FY	2013 SEN	2014 FY	2014 SEN	2016 FY	2016 SEN	2018 -FY	2018 -SEN
How much as your experience at IUP contributed to your knowledge, skills and development in writing clearly and effectively.	Very little	5%	2%	5%	6%	8%	6%	5%	7%	5%	6%	6%	3%
	Some	20%	19%	24%	16%	26%	25%	25%	21%	24%	18%	23%	18%
	Quite a bit	47%	42%	44%	42%	42%	34%	43%	37%	45%	47%	49%	47%
	Very much	28%	37%	27%	36%	24%	35%	26%	35%	26%	29%	23%	32%
	<b>QaV/VeryMu</b>	<b>75%</b>	<b>77%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>78%</b>	<b>66%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>69%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>71%</b>	<b>76%</b>	<b>72%</b>	<b>79%</b>

Trends: Seniors identify IUP as contributing more to their ability to writing clearly and effectively than first-year students do. Although the majority of first-years and seniors report that IUP has contributed to their ability to write clearly and effectively, the figure has not changed significantly over seven years for first-year students; it has, however, gone up for seniors, from 69% in 2013 to 79% in 2018. As WAC spreads, hopefully this number will continue to go up, particularly with seniors.

		2013 ---FY	2013 ---SEN	2014 ---FY	2014 ---SEN	2016 - FY	2016 -SEN	2018 - FY	2018 -SEN
During the current school year, to what extent have your instructors provided feedback on a draft or work in progress.	Very little	9%	12%	8%	9%	9%	9%	6%	8%
	Some	33%	34%	29%	29%	28%	28%	27%	29%
	Quite a bit	34%	30%	33%	35%	34%	36%	39%	37%
	Very much	25%	24%	29%	26%	29%	27%	28%	26%
	<b>QaB/Very Much</b>	<b>59%</b>	<b>54%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>51%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>63%</b>	<b>67%</b>	<b>63%</b>

Trends: Seniors appear to receive less feedback than first-years; it is possible that faculty perceive more experiences students as needing less feedback, although that is not usually the case. Ideally, 100% of students should indicate that they receive quite a bit or very much feedback on drafts of writing assignments, and we hope to see this number go up as more departments embrace WAC.

		2009 FY	2009 SEN	2010 FY	2010 SEN	2013 FY	2013 SEN	2014 FY	2014 SEN	2016 FY	2016 SEN	2018 FY	2018 SEN
During the current school year, about how often have you prepared two or more drafts of a paper or assignment before turning it in.	Never	13%	17%	3%	14%	17%	8%	14%	25%	19%	26%	18%	21%
	Sometimes	29%	42%	35%	42%	37%	29%	31%	43%	34%	40%	36%	39%
	Often	35%	25%	39%	28%	30%	33%	33%	19%	29%	22%	29%	26%
	Very Often	23%	16%	23%	16%	16%	29%	23%	14%	18%	13%	17%	13%
	<b>Oft/VO</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>58%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>44%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>62%</b>	<b>56%</b>	<b>33%</b>	<b>47%</b>	<b>35%</b>	<b>46%</b>	<b>39%</b>

Trends: Figures between first-year and senior year are erratic; it is difficult to tell if preparing drafts is a standard practice for our students in either their first or senior year. A particularly troubling result is that twenty-six percent of seniors in 2016 and twenty-one percent of seniors in 2018 report they never prepared a draft before submitting an assignment (across the board, seniors report “never” at a higher rate than first year students).

The NSSE also asks several questions to determine the number of pages students are typically writing in their first year and in their senior year. While research in Writing Studies shows that students who write more will typically become more effective writers, evidence shows that this is more often because of the type of writing students are asked to do than because of the actual number of pages. Nonetheless, data is reported here because it is the only other NSSE data related explicitly to writing.

Trends for individual questions are below their respective tables, but overall the data indicates that *both first-years and seniors report that they are writing very few papers at every page-length, in most cases no more than 5 papers in one year at any length.*

		2009 FY	2009 SEN	2010 FY	2010 SEN	2013 FY	2013 SEN	2014 FY	2014 SEN	2016 FY	2016 SEN	2018 -FY	2018 -SEN
Number of written papers or reports of fewer than 5 pages.	None	2%	8%	2%	7%	7%	5%	5%	3%	5%	5%	8%	4%
	1-5	32%	46%	31%	46%	55%	42%	55%	44%	56%	46%	53%	4%
	6-10	30%	30%	33%	30%	18%	22%	24%	21%	20%	21%	19%	22%
	11-20	22%	11%	19%	12%	15%	21%	0%	20%	14%	18%	15%	15%
	More than 20	13%	27%	14%	5%	5%	11%	0%	12%	5%	10%	6%	11%

Trends: Most first-year students and seniors report writing 1-5 papers that are fewer than 5 pages in length. This number has remained relatively consistent for all reporting years.

		2009 FY	2009 SEN	2010 FY	2010 SEN	2013 FY	2013 SEN	2014 FY	2014 SEN	2016 FY	2016 SEN	2018 -FY	2018 -SEN
Number of written papers or reports of between 6 and 10 pages.	None	18%	2%	19%	3%	44%	20%	45%	22%	41%	24%	44%	23%
	1-5	56%	28%	55%	23%	50%	59%	50%	64%	51%	61%	48%	58%
	6-10	21%	24%	20%	31%	5%	14%	5%	11%	5%	10%	5%	11%
	11-20	4%	24%	5%	24%	1%	6%	0%	3%	2%	4%	0%	7%
	20+	1%	22%	1%	19%	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%

Trends: Most first-year students and seniors report writing 1-5 papers that are between 5-10 pages in length. It should be noted that very few seniors are reporting writing papers of this length; senior year is when we would hope to see students writing at least one paper in each of their courses of between 5-10 pages to develop and demonstrate skills in sustained inquiry.

The largest page length reported for the last four years is 11 pages or more. In previous years, the NSSE collected data about papers of 20 pages or more.

		2013 – FY	2013 – SEN	2014 - FY	2014 - SEN	2016 - FY	2016 - SEN	2018 -FY	2018 -SEN
During the current school year, about how many papers, reports, or other writing tasks of 11 pages or more have you been assigned?	None	78%	42%	75%	41%	79%	47%	79%	44%
	1-2	16%	39%	20%	41%	14%	35%	12%	38%
	3-5	3%	12%	2%	14%	3%	13%	4%	11%
	6-10	1%	4%	1%	1%	2%	2%	2%	3%
	11-15	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	<b>2%</b>
	16-20	0%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	1%
	More than 20	0%	1%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	2%

Trends: First-year students report writing no papers at this length at significantly higher proportions than seniors; first-year students typically should not be writing 11+ page papers. Overall, these numbers seem realistic if not slightly low. The largest percentage of seniors report writing at least 1 or 2 11+ page papers; we might hope to see this number rise into the 3-5 range, but only if Department Writing Plans indicate that disciplines require more sustained inquiry.

## Collegiate Learning Assessment +

The CLA+ has two primary uses, one of which is to help “institutions estimate their contribution to students’ higher-order thinking skills”; one way this is measured is through “evidence of students’ competency in written communication” (CLA+, 2016, p. 2). Students have an hour to write an essay; the mean score of students taking the test is then assigned a level: Below Basic, Basic, Proficient, Accomplished, or Advanced. Percentiles demonstrate the percent of other schools taking the CLA+ to which IUP students score equal or better than.

### Mean Scores on Performance Task (written essay)

The Performance Task (PT) measures “written communication,” defined by CAE as “Constructing organized and logically cohesive arguments. Strengthening the writer's position by providing elaboration on facts or ideas (e.g., explaining how evidence bears on the problem, providing examples, and emphasizing especially convincing evidence.”

	First-Year	FY Percentile	Senior	SEN Percentile
2018	1002 = Basic (51% report they put in a lot or best effort)	36%	983 = Basic (43% report they put in a lot or best effort)	4%
2016	1041 = Basic (56% report they put in a lot or best effort)	53%	1053= Basic (52% report they put in a lot or best effort)	20%
2015	1032 = Basic (71% report they put in a lot or best effort)	49%	1035= Basic (52% report they put in a lot or best effort)	15%
2014	1074 = Basic (61% report they put in a lot or best effort)	74%	1137= Proficient (68% report they put in a lot or best effort)	49%

Trends: It is reasonable that students entering IUP, an open-access university, should be at the Basic level; however, when they are near graduation, we should definitely see more growth. The fact that seniors are still at Basic is a clear indication that students are not writing enough beyond their first and possibly second year at IUP. A Writing Across the Curriculum program, where writing is taught at all levels in every program, is necessary if we want to see these scores go up. Notably as well, student self-reported effort in performing this task has gone down considerably over the past four years, which makes the reliability of this testing suspect.

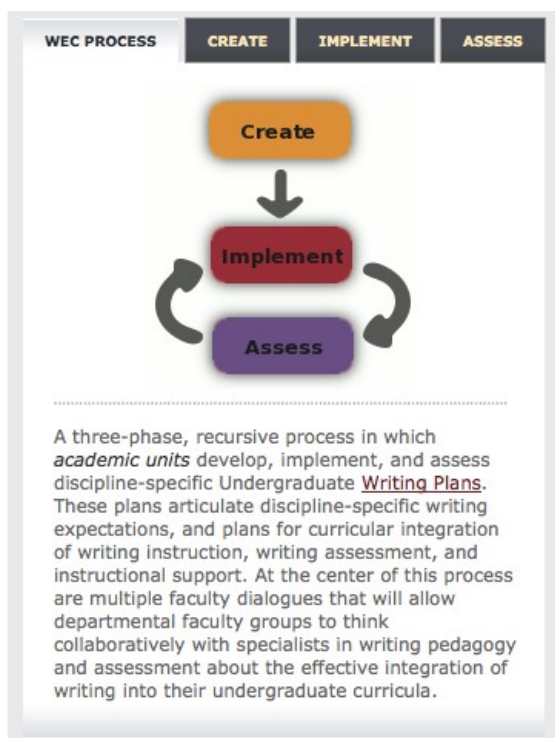
## Recommendations for WAC Sustainability

### Sustainability Indicators

1. What makes the WAC program as currently conceived most sustainable is the assessment piece incorporated into every Department Writing Plan. In IUPs self-study, approved by all major stakeholders at the university, we indicated our commitment to Middle States 2006 standards 7, 12, and 14 (see Dec. 2015 IUP Self-Study, pg. 27) regarding assessment (revised in 2015 as standard 5). The cyclical nature of Department Writing Plans means that departments will more automatically close the loop between what is learned from assessment and how that knowledge is turned into instruction and

curriculum revision.

Our WAC program, the cornerstone of which is the Department Writing Plan, based on the writing-enriched curriculum model by the University of Minnesota (pictured below), maintains a constant cycle of implementation and assessment after the initial creation of the plan (2006 standards 7 and 14, 2015 standard 5). In this way, each program will have data every two years to continually improve its curriculum, and the university will as well have data in order to know if programs are meeting their responsibility toward the Liberal Studies Empowered Learner EUSLO for effective written communication.



Discussions during the 2016 site-visit from the Middle States Commission and a general movement by accreditors nationally indicate that our accrediting body will recommend that IUP increase its use of embedded assessments to measure student outcomes, as well as demonstrate clear evidence of “closing the loop” to ensure that what we learn from assessment is used to improve teaching and learning. Department Writing Plans, which evidence the cyclical loop-closing as pictured above, could be one way to demonstrate evidence of direct measures of learning outcomes in programs and Liberal Studies.

2. The WAC Director has forged relationships with faculty and departments across the university. While this has taken a lot of time, it has been important for Siegel Finer to make connections, particularly with professors who are well-established as respected at the

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<sup>1</sup> <http://wec.umn.edu/process.html>



university. Drs. Beth Mabry (SOC), Karen Rose Cercone (GEOS), Teresa Shellenbarger (NURS), Dr. Laura Delbrugge (FNLG), and Edel Reilly (MATH), are only a few of the people who have important presences in the university and with whom Siegel Finer has developed professional and collegial collaborative relationships.

3. Because of her position as WAC Director and Liberal Studies English Director, Siegel Finer has been able to work with departments that are interested in seeing ENGL202, a researched writing course, meet their disciplinary needs more specifically. While ENGL202 meets the needs of most students at IUP and provides many transferable skills, members of the English department are able to offer some specialized sections. The English department has offered ENGL202 for computer science majors, and in spring 2017 offered a section for nursing and allied health majors in collaboration with faculty from nursing. These types of courses position the WAC program for sustainability by establishing relationships between expert writing faculty and other disciplinary faculty who can mutually serve students' needs.

4. Liberal Studies, under the direction of Edel Reilly, has generously funded WAC initiatives. Dr. Reilly provided funding for WAC assessment in Spring 2016. Liberal Studies supported technology for the assessment of over 450 writing samples from Composition I students, as well as professional development for writing assessment in the departments of Hospitality Management and Anthropology as they move toward completion of their department writing plans. LS also provided copies of John Bean's book, *Engaging Ideas: The Professor's Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom*, to all participants of the May 2017 and May 2018 teaching writing workshop as well as any WAC department liaisons who wanted a copy.

### Sustainability Challenges

1. As mentioned in prior iterations of this report, the most significant challenge to the sustainability of WAC is adoption and implementation. Two of six colleges (almost 50% of the university undergraduate enrollment) have expressed no interest in having their departments develop WAC plans. CLA+ scores demonstrate that no value is added in terms of writing between the time students get here and the time they leave, and some of our students perceive that their writing gets worse while they are here. This problem is being ignored by almost the entire university campus, save a small handful of small departments and one committed dean.

2. As mentioned in prior iterations of this report, the WAC program currently receives funding only from the department of English and the Dean of CHSS, and that funding is minimal. Knowing how much our students struggle with writing (based on last year's WAC report, in addition to university-wide assessments that are reported to the Provost's office), the administration would be neglectful if it chooses to continue not to fund this program.

To ensure sustainability, the program needs funding from the Provost's office, as other faculty development programs like the CTE receive; this sends the message that the

university administration supports training in WAC for all of its faculty. This funding should include:

- Release time for WAC liaisons to work on department writing plans
- Stipends for attendance at writing pedagogy workshops
- Incentives for participation in research and assessment
- Guaranteed funding for the director and WAC department liaisons to travel to the IWAC conference every two years (separate from department travel funding)
- Consulting from external WAC/WEC expert or Council of Writing Program Administrator Consultant Evaluator Service
- Messaging that teaching WAC is valued in decisions regarding tenure and promotion
- Various other initiatives as described in Appendix D.

3. While WAC does not have an office per se, WAC is currently housed in the department of English, sending the message that the department of English manages the teaching of writing across the university, is responsible for that mission (its success or failure), and will fund that mission. When Siegel Finer presents a WAC workshop, she presents herself as the Director of WAC rather than a professor in the English department. Nonetheless, these workshops have occasionally devolved into accusatory sessions in which faculty want to know why the English department is not “fixing” student writing before students get to their majors courses. In many universities, the WAC program is housed in the Provost’s office and/or run through a Center for Teaching and Learning or other faculty development entity. If IUP’s WAC program were part of the Center for Teaching Excellence, it would be positioned more accurately as faculty development, as a mission of the university, and as funded by the university Provost. As mentioned in prior iterations of this report, WAC could be taken more seriously across campus were this positioning to occur.

4. WAC leadership consists solely of the WAC director. Faculty who have been working as WAC liaisons or other university stakeholders (e.g., CTE director, Liberal Studies director, Writing Center director) should be invited to serve as Disciplinary Writing Co-Directors, reporting to the WAC director, but functioning much like CTE Reflective Practice Co-Directors. The roles of this group would be to:

- help the WAC director articulate the goals of WAC to stakeholders in the university (e.g., Senate, APSCUF, student government),
- work with department liaisons to develop DWPs,
- and facilitate professional development workshops, retreats, and other sessions.

The way the program exists now, the WAC director herself is the only mechanism in place sustaining the program. A group like this would act as a mechanism to ensure that others are knowledgeable of the initiatives, practices, and mission should the WAC director be assigned to other university responsibilities or for whatever reason be unable to continue in the position. This committee would also be in a strong position to hire a future WAC director. Members of groups like these also tend to travel to conferences to present on research and curriculum initiatives at the university related to WAC.

## **Appendix A:**

# **Evaluations of Liberal Studies 2-day May Writing Workshop**

May 16-17, 2018

### 1. What did you like best about this workshop?

- The book & multiple group work & activities
- The various ideas presented for using writing in my classes
- Learning about WTL methods (toolkit)
- Reviewing writing process
- Learning about writing center
- Book is an excellent resource
- Hands-on activities first day
- Free writing
- Timing, everything flowed nicely. Several new areas-writing Center Thesis/Dissertation reviews, various writing assignments.
- Everything! The friendly atmosphere from the leaders and the participants, the room, the food, the people who were responsible for preparing the food, the materials provided and the book! Thank you so much for doing this for us.
- Interaction with other participants. Active assignments: writing, problem solving, application. Knowledgeable presenters-Ben Rafoth was also very helpful. Good food!
- Discussions and tips from other faculty
- The information on how to approach using writing to focus on learning outcomes, how assignment can be scaffolded, understanding the difference between WTL and WTC, having the Writing Center come in and explain their approach to helping students and how we can help them by providing clear writing assignment handouts
- I like that it focused on practical ideas of implementing writing, providing effective feedback, etc. rather than just focusing on theory. I felt I learned actual strategies I can implement. Most helpful workshop I've attended at IUP!
- The food! Honestly I really enjoyed learning about different activities and assignments I can use to facilitate thinking and writing. I plan to try out many of them in the coming semesters.
- The text – Engaging Ideas – as a permanent resource; I came away with 1) excellent ideas/assignments for next fall's courses and 2) and the need to focus to apply/integrate them in existing courses; workshop leaders presented well & could add so much context to points laid out in Bean. (I'm going to risk not assigning number of pages and sources to assignments!); interaction with other faculty-learning about writing assignments in hard sources

### 2. What did you like least? That is, what needs to be improved in this workshop?

- Loved it all
- N/A (The entire workshop was worthwhile.)

- N/A
- None, some just better than other, but all good
- There is no good time, but this week is especially exhausting. Perhaps the week following the week grades are due, or maybe Thursday/Friday rather than Wednesday/Thursday
- Nothing
- Had to sit for so long! Could it be done in one day?
- Sitting for long periods
- I would like some feedback on our practice – perhaps a peer review? The discussions are helpful, but when we practiced writing feedback, I would have liked more feedback on whether I was being effective or how I could improve further.
- It was sometimes difficult for me to apply the discussion to my own classes because a culminating writing assignment is not a large component of my classes (but small, independent activities are!)
- Not sure – nothing stands out

3. Please rate the following using the scale indicated:

(4 = superb; 3 = good; 2 = OK; 1 = unacceptable)

		4	3	2	1
a.	Workshop leaders	13			
b.	Handouts	9	3	1	
c.	Physical facilities (room, set up, etc.)	13			

4. Will you use some of the strategies/ideas discussed during the workshop? Which specific strategies are you most likely to use?

- Yes, scaffolding assignments and variety of gallery walk options
- Yes, admit/exit slips, mathography, add items to assignment descriptions & syllabus statement
- Yes, sketch book; writing up/down/across
- Yes!
- Split method form, free writes, less focus on punctuation and grammar
- Definitely, double entry journal, read-write-speak (someone mentioned this at the very end of the workshop), write up/down
- WTL sketch book strategies, scaffolding, WTL to move on to WTC activities, journals, gallery walks
- Scaffolding writing through semester, how to create writing assignments to link to learning outcomes
- Yes! Several – new=muddy points, admit slips, double entry, paragraph template, improving areas I already use to make more effective-article critique, mathography, proofreading, more effective feedback, assignment instructions, etc.
- Absolutely. I've learned the value of WTL and have numerous strategies and assignment ideas that I am really excited to try.
- Absolutely! Peer proofreading; a variation of Drenk's "thesis support" arguments introduced at 3 strategic points in my PLSC 260 course; assigning page length and

word counts (I'll try that on the first two assignments, at least); I am resolved to take very seriously Ben's lecture that quality of writing assignment counts more than quantity of writing.

5. What types of follow-up session(s) would be useful to you?

- Specific types of rubrics/evaluation/feedback options
- More technical options for online classes & writing
- Reviewing student work samples from my course and discussing techniques
- Example of successful approaches (best practices)
- More discussion of assessment methods WTL & WTC
- Discipline-specific writing assignment sessions
- More about department WAC
- An email
- Short poll on what strategies I've tried and what has worked or how it worked
- How to breakdown writing assignments over a semester to conclude in a semester project/writing assignment
- Peer review of writing assignments
- Discussion & workshop on challenges faced while implementing the new assignments
- How to design a course with writing (to learn and communicate) as a priority
- The October meeting to "share" sounds fine for the moment.

6. Additional comments:

- Well done & enjoyable
- Good workshop!
- First day, rather than binary "me as writer/student as writer", use Venn diagram
- Invite back previous participants who have changed their writing activities for a "Steal My Idea" session.
- Excellent job to all, definitely include Sharon
- Thank you so much for the workshop. This is a very excellent workshop that helps me learn the techniques of how to be a better writing teacher. Also, I am now aware of what expectations professors from other faculties have about the subject I will teach in the future.
- Give us the folder with pad of paper on the first day so we can take notes in it! Thank you for packing the leftover food to take with us. I would be ashamed to waste all that food.
- This was so much better than I expected.
- Need the slides to take notes on and keep for reference.
- Plenty of food and drink

## Appendix B: Results from Biennial WAC Survey of Seniors

The purposes of this survey are to (1) discover if current seniors feel they've become better writers as a result of the current IUP writing-intensive curriculum (2) determine what resources have helped students become better writers, and (3) determine what curricular and programmatic changes can be made to make the teaching of writing more effective at IUP.

Percentage of Respondents	2013	2015	2017
Writing skills are stronger since they've been at IUP	94%	96%	97% (+3)
Feel prepared to write in their chosen career field	96%	95%	98% (+2)
ENGL 101 helped them become better writers	81%	86%	92% (+11)
ENGL 202 helped them become better writers	87%	91%	90% (+3)
Writing intensive courses in their major helped them become better writers	92%	92%	95% (+3)

Student perceptions of writing continues to grow and are, in all areas, the highest they have been since 2013 when the WAC program began. While causation cannot be concluded, we hope that initiatives such as faculty development workshops, the National Day on Writing celebration, and improved mentoring and teacher training for graduate students teaching English 101, are helping students to see the value and importance of writing.

### 2017 surveys of seniors

Respondents: 383/2613 (15%), mostly equally divided among colleges

- **97%** feel their writing skills are stronger since they've been at IUP (+1%)
- **98%** feel prepared to write in their chosen career field (+3%)
- **92%** feel that ENGL 101 helped them become better writers (+6%)
- **90%** feel that ENGL 202 helped them become better writers (-1%)
- **95%** feel that writing-intensive courses in their major helped them become better writers (+3%)

Important points from open-ended responses:

- Students would like more information and advertisements for the writing center as well as more tutors and hours to be available. The writing center was also praised frequently.
- Students would like more consistency in how ENGL 101 and ENGL 202 are taught and assignments are graded.

- Students would like more discipline specific writing instruction and support in their LSE courses and from university resources.
- Students would like more one-on-one writing help from professors as well as more specific feedback.
- **Students expressed that the writing in their discipline specific courses was beneficial to them.**

### 2015 surveys of seniors

Respondents: 476/3067 (16%), mostly equally divided among colleges

- **96%** feel their writing skills are stronger since they've been at IUP (+2%)
- **95%** feel prepared to write in their chosen career field (-1%)
- **86%** feel that ENGL 101 helped them become better writers (+5%)
- **91%** feel that ENGL 202 helped them become better writers (+4%)
- **92%** feel that writing-intensive courses in their major helped them become better writers (+0%)

Important points from open-ended responses:

- Students prefer assignments that prepare them for writing in the real world. That is, assignments should be more discipline-specific, and feedback could be more holistic instead of focusing just on grammar or just on content. Both are important in professional writing.
- Students want their professors to better emphasize resources like the Writing Center, workshops, writing groups, etc.
- In the disciplines, students feel they need more time for revision and more constructive feedback.
- **Students want more writing intensive courses (said 4 students explicitly), and they more writing in their majors courses.**
- Students want feedback specific to their writing needs and levels. Some students need to be pushed harder, while others need the individualized attention that small class sizes can bring.

Quotes

- "I had a greater time learning in my writing intensive major classes where there was a smaller amount of people and the professors were more knowledgeable of what they were teaching. I learned a ton from them and am thankful for those classes. **I recommend smaller class sizes.**"
- "Have specific classes that are writing intensive for majors, on what type of documents they will be writing in their future careers."

### 2013 surveys of seniors

Respondents: 475/3196 (15%), mostly equally divided among colleges

- 94% feel their writing skills are stronger since they've been at IUP
- 96% feel prepared to write in their chosen career field
- 81% feel that ENGL101 helped them become better writers
- 87% feel that ENGL202 helped them become better writers
- 92% feel that writing-intensive courses in their major helped them become better writers

Important points from open-ended responses:

- they want more/better/detailed/one-on-one feedback on their writing from all faculty
- displeasure with graduate students teaching 101 and 202 (either not challenging enough or too challenging)
- comp courses should be more discipline-specific
- they want more grammar instruction
- lack of consistency in the W curriculum

Quotes

- **“Too often assignments focus on quantity, not quality, of written work...noticed my writing growing worse as a result of this type of curriculum.”**
- “A ‘writing intensive’ course often has students writing 2-3 papers between 5-10pgs. **I do not consider that writing intensive whatsoever.** At a university level, students should be capable of writing 5pg papers easily, it is way too easy for students to be accepted into higher education with inadequate writingskills.”
- **“Have a value of quality over quantity.”**
- “I think all professors should give feedback on writing. Simply assigning a percentage on a paper but not being able to explain why is unacceptable.”
- “Offer ways to grow as a writer aside from writing academic papers! I've been working for an editor for a year who has been able to provide me with the criticisms and evaluations that have truly helped me grow as a writer, and have been applicable in ALL forms of writing. Sticking people in a strictly academic format which is only used by academics is not helpful, especially when a majority of the school does not go on to graduate or doctoral programs.”



## Appendix C: Summary of Findings, 2013 survey of IUP Faculty

This survey will be repeated every five years (next facilitation in spring 2018).

The purposes of this study are to (1) discover the perceptions of faculty about students as writers (2) learn about the writing assignments given by faculty, and (3) determine what curricular and programmatic changes can be made to make the teaching of writing more effective at IUP.

Respondents: 188/823 (23%), 43% in CHSS, 75% T/TT

- 93% provide an assignment sheet
- 60% provide feedback on rough drafts (57% allow revising for a better grade)
- 35% are disappointed with student writing (58% feel it's grammatically poor, 42% feel it's underdeveloped)
- 51% think students should be better writers and wonder what goes on in composition courses
- 94% say teaching writing to students in their discipline is important in their department
- 31% would attend workshops on methods of teaching writing

Important points from open-ended responses:

- don't understand why grammar is not taught in the English department; perception that overall, teaching writing is the responsibility of the English department
- teaching w-intensive courses needs to be compensated or incentivized
- class sizes are too big to teach writing

Quotes from open-ended responses:

- **"There is already disincentive enough to agree to teach a W-course given the ever increasing class size issues.** If anyone is considering forcing W-instructors to mandatorily attend "refresher" workshops in order to stay certified, then that's a great way for you to have virtually NO one able to teach W-courses by default, because I just won't attend the refresher workshop, and then I'll be off the hook for having to continue to teach W courses!!! As it is I'm one of only 2-3 in my department who is certified in the first place, so **I'm continuing to be stuck bearing a far greater burden of the official W-instruction.**"
- "I'd like to see those who teach writing intensive courses should be compensated to some degree in work load; I enjoy the content of my course but I KNOW I spend more time grading than other colleagues. I feel some stay away from these courses due to the increased workload of grading writing as I never seem to have any "competition" to teach this course. **Student evals can often be more harsh if they struggle as writers; they perceive the course to be more difficult and more work (and it is).**
- **"I have no time to teach writing in my discipline.** There are courses, such as research writing, that should be preparing the student. I have them use writing in

my courses as often as I can but I am severely restricted by time constraints. I would rather have writing in my classes be a vehicle for the student to show me what they have learned. I inform them that we use formal writing for our writing assignments. Although I "correct" their papers, they do not get these back. They are invited to come to my office at any time to see their paper and discuss my comments and ways for them to improve their writing and results. Not many students take advantage of my invitation to come to my office for help, encouragement, direction, etc. I cannot use class time to do that ---- **someone else is supposed to be doing that.**"

- "It is difficult to WANT to teach WI courses knowing that students are underprepared upon admission to IUP or completion of basic writing courses. Also, difficult to want to teach writing knowing that across campus and within departments **faculty have varying requirements and standards.** It is not easy to be a junior faculty member teaching WI courses that are tougher than those of senior faculty pushovers and knowing that student evals are so critical."

## Appendix D: WAC Budget Proposal

### Rationale

This document provides a rationale for large-scale enhancements and a dedicated budget line for the Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)<sup>2</sup> program at IUP.

University-wide assessments indicate that IUP students struggle with writing and communication overall. Students who take the NSSE report that they are not receiving enough feedback on draft of writing assignments, they are not assigned enough drafting before having to submit writing assignments, and overall, it appears that students are not assigned a lot of writing. Three years of CLA+ results show that first-year and seniors are writing at a “basic” level, indicating that after four years of college, our students are writing at the same low level at which they entered IUP (see Appendix A for all referenced assessment data). IUP’s strategic plan indicates a tactic to prepare students for success in work and life, in addition to academic success, is the expansion of “IUP’s use of recognized ‘high impact practices’ to increase undergraduate student engagement and retention” (Goal 2, Strategy 1, Tactic 3).<sup>3</sup> The Association of American Colleges and Universities<sup>4</sup> lists writing across the curriculum as one of ten widely tested teaching and learning strategies they consider to be a High Impact Practices (HIP); the association recommends these practices for student engagement and active learning be implemented in *systematic and cumulative ways* so as to see the most benefit. ***The implementation of a robust WAC program is aligned with the university’s strategic plan, the Middle States Commission standards for assessment of student learning<sup>5</sup>, and recommendations by the AAC&U, and it is clearly essential to improving education at IUP.***

WAC is already in motion at IUP; many departments are currently developing writing plans that map out how writing is taught and assessed in their courses. With approval from Liberal Studies, students who major in these departments soon will not need to meet the writing-intensive requirement. Instead of one or two courses including writing “intensively,” all of their courses will include writing in a variety of ways. The director of Liberal Studies, the Provost’s Associate, and the Dean of Humanities and Social Sciences are in the process of bringing the WAC program plan to the Council of Chairs, Council of Deans, the UWUCC, and University Senate. However, even with vocal support from faculty and administration, the program will need financial backing to serve its constituents and be sustainable.

### The Future of WAC at IUP

The mission of the WAC program at IUP is to provide support for faculty university-wide in implementing writing into their courses and sustain a community of writers and writing teachers;

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<sup>2</sup> Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) pedagogy is based on the principle that teaching writing is the responsibility of all members of a university faculty in all parts of a student’s curriculum. Students cannot be taught foundational skills in a first-year composition course and then be expected to develop those skills without further vertical writing practice; skills must be fostered throughout their college career. The staple of WAC is *writing-to-learn pedagogy*, which encourages faculty to use ungraded/low-stakes exploratory writing as a mode of teaching rather than only a tool for assessing. Students write to think through ideas, process course content, and discover what they know and need to learn. Writing instruction focuses on process in addition to product.

<sup>3</sup> <http://www.iup.edu/strategic-planning/faq/goal-2/#1>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.aacu.org/leap/hips>

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.msche.org/publications/CHX-2011-WEB.pdf>

our motto is “Teach. Write. Teach Writing.” To achieve this mission, we envision a multi-faceted program that provides faculty development, maintains a robust research and assessment agenda, and builds and maintains relationships across the IUP community.

WAC programs at universities across the country are ranked nationally in publications like *US News and World Report*. Programs like those at George Mason University, University of Minnesota, and Elon University are ranked highly because they are multi-faceted: they engage faculty and students in multiple ways, provide ample resources to support faculty in teaching writing in their disciplines, and implement programming that makes writing a central part of the university culture. With adequate support, IUP can develop a comparable program.

The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) Director, Bryna Siegel Finer<sup>6</sup>, was hired in fall 2012 to develop a program that would help faculty address growing concern about students’ writing skills and to encourage a writing culture among faculty and students at the university. Siegel Finer spent that academic year collecting data from students and faculty across the university about their perceptions of writing education at IUP. She spent the next two years piloting various initiatives, gaining credibility among colleagues, and meeting with administrators (Provost Moerland, then Provost’s Associate Laura Delbrugge, then Director of Liberal Studies David Pistole, and various Deans and department Chairs) and other university stakeholders (e.g., Director of the Writing Center, Director of the Center for Teaching Excellence, University Libraries faculty), to make determinations about the mission and outcomes of the program, which culminated in a White Paper presented to the Provost in June 2015 (located online at [www.iup.edu/wac](http://www.iup.edu/wac) under “Reports.”).

### **Current Program Initiatives**

Seventeen departments are currently working on Department Writing Plans (see below), which will move them from writing-intensive to a writing enriched curriculum<sup>7</sup>. As WAC Director, Siegel Finer meets with one or two liaisons from each department once every 3-4 weeks to review plan progress; when plans are complete, she works with departments to maintain an assessment and curriculum revision cycle. Siegel Finer also provides scheduled and on-demand workshops for all university faculty. WAC supports a faculty teaching of writing award, the Punxsutawney journaling across the co-curriculum project in conjunction with the Punxsy Writing Center, publishes an annual newsletter, maintains a website of resources, a Facebook page, and a Twitter feed. The WAC Director also speaks on behalf of the program at New Faculty Orientation, in various other administrative venues and meetings, and has an important role in the Liberal Studies assessment mandate.

### **Campus Partnerships**

One of the strengths of the WAC program is the collaborative relationship with the Jones White Writing Center. While the writing center directly supports students, the WAC program focuses on faculty professional development. Together, the program directors and the writing center tutoring staff collaborate annually on the National Day on Writing event on campus. The Jones White Writing Center supports a student writing award for writing across the curriculum. The Writing Center shares a portion of its secretarial support with the WAC director. The two programs also hope to collaborate on a new writing fellows program, as described below. WAC benefits greatly from the support of the writing center, not only financially, but by the expertise and experience of

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<sup>6</sup> Siegel Finer has a PhD in Composition and Rhetoric; she teaches courses in the English department and directs Liberal Studies English in addition to WAC.

<sup>7</sup> <http://wec.umn.edu/>

the Writing Center Director.

WAC has also offered a Teaching of Writing award through the Center for Teaching Excellence and a Teaching Circle through Reflective Practice. The WAC Director envisions other ways to partner with CTE as well.

## Funding

In 2015-16, the program survived on a \$1500 budget provided by the Chair of the English Department and the Dean of the College of Humanities and Social Sciences. In 2016-17, the budget was \$1000. The Jones White Writing Center and the Punxsutawney campus have supported some initiatives.

## Sustainability

Indicators of program sustainability include (1) embedded assessment as part of every Department Writing Plan, which aligns with Middle States standards for assessment and integration of results into teaching and learning, (2) the WAC director's relationships with well-established and respected faculty at the university, and (3) discipline-specific ENGL202 sections as collaboration between expert writing faculty and content specialists.

Challenges to program sustainability include (1) the current Liberal Studies Writing-Intensive requirement, (2) the perceived connection between WAC as directed by the English department, (3) the lack of a WAC advisory board or council, and (4) ***lack of dedicated and consistent funding.***

## Cost Estimate<sup>8</sup>

To create a culture at IUP where writing is valued not only in individual departments but is understood as a way to connect students and faculty in the joint venture of improving students' education, the WAC program needs dedicated funding to support the following new and continued initiatives detailed in this document. As the following table demonstrates, at very minimal cost, we can expand the program's foundation so that WAC becomes an integral part of the IUP undergraduate curriculum infrastructure. This means that best practices in the teaching of writing will be far reaching to all faculty, as well as best practices in assessing that writing. Our students will be the benefactors of those practices, as will the university in achieving its strategic goals and accreditation requirements.

Item #	Program	Cost
<b>Category 1: No Extra Dollar Cost</b>		
1	Department WAC Fellow	One semester course release for one or two faculty depending on size of department and sophistication of curriculum
2	University-Wide Writing Committee	\$0

<sup>8</sup> All initiatives in this table are fully described below by item number.

3	WAC Teaching Circle	\$0
4	Writing Fellows Consultancy Course	One semester course release for permanent faculty member in English to teach the course
5	Faculty Development Workshops	\$0
<b>Subtotal Category One:</b>		<b>\$0</b>
<b>Category 2: Operating Budget (CHSS and English Dept)</b>		
6	Annual Spring Newsletter	\$150
7	National Day on Writing celebration	\$0-\$500
8	Marketing (copying, novelty items like pens and notepads with WAC logo, office supplies, brochure printing)	\$1000
<b>Subtotal Category Two:</b>		<b>Up to \$1650</b>
<b>Category 3: Cost to Colleges (Deans)</b>		
9	Faculty Teaching of Writing Award	\$500 per college
10	Grants for WAC research initiatives	up to \$5,000 per college
11	Department writing plan assessment	up to \$2000 per college
12	Writing Fellows, 2-4 per year (cost for one fellow in one section of a course for one semester is \$510)	\$2040-\$4080 per college
<b>Subtotal Category Three:</b>		<b>Up to \$12,000</b>
<b>Category 4: Proposed Sustainability Initiatives (Provost)</b>		
13	Annual faculty writing and research retreat for department liaisons	\$5000
14	Annual speaker series	\$2500-5000
15	Program Assistant/Clerical Support	\$7000
16	Student Writing Award	\$250 - \$500
17	Faculty Grants to travel to Writing-Enriched Curriculum (WEC) Conference and International Writing Across the Curriculum (IWAC) Conference	\$5000
18	WAC Program Assessment	\$3000
19	Director's Professional Development: guaranteed funding for IWAC conference attendance, WEC conference attendance, or Writing Program Administrators (WPA) conference attendance, separate from department travel	\$2500
<b>Subtotal Category 4:</b>		<b>Up to \$28,000</b>

## **WAC Program Features**

### **Category 1: No Extra Dollar Cost**

#### **1. Department WAC Fellow(s) for writing plan development**

The cornerstone of the WAC program at IUP is the Department Writing Plan<sup>9</sup>. The DWP is a curriculum development template used to identify where writing is and isn't in the curriculum as well as where and how to purposefully integrate writing into existing coursework. It asks faculty to consider how writing is valued in the department as an academic discipline and as a career field, how writing is defined both in academia and professionally, what students should be expected to know and accomplish as writers throughout their time in the major, and how writing can help students as learners in their coursework. The DWP asks faculty to examine all department syllabi and major milestone assignments for places where writing can be integrated and to develop a protocol to assess the writing of graduating seniors. The most important aspects of this proposal are: departments define what writing is in their discipline, departments define how writing will be taught in their majors, departments have ownership over the DWP creation process and maintenance. The WAC Director meets regularly (typically every 3-4 weeks) with one or two liaisons from each department that is actively involved in creating a writing plan.

In spring 2017, Dean Asamoah agreed to support a course release for one faculty liaison in each CHSS department to begin drafting a DWP; by reassigning permanent faculty time, this is not costing the college money. The WAC director anticipates this will speed up completion of writing plans in each of these departments. For the university to move to a full-scale WAC model in every department in a reasonable amount of time, every department needs to have at least one department liaison who has at least one course release at the beginning of the DWP process to get it off the ground.

#### **2. University WAC committee**

Currently, WAC leadership consists solely of the WAC director. WAC would be more sustainable and have more clout (possibly engaging more departments) if there were a small committee of university stakeholders representing the program. These stakeholders would be recommended or nominated by the WAC director and approved by the Provost; they would include faculty who have been serving as WAC liaisons and other university stakeholders such as the CTE director, Liberal Studies director, Writing Center director, and a member of the Council of Chairs, Council of Deans, University Senate, and APSCUF. The WAC director would serve as chair, but this type of membership would ensure that WAC is integrated into the university infrastructure.

#### **3. WAC Teaching Circle**

The WAC Director hosts the "Issues and Ideas in Teaching Writing Across the Curriculum" Teaching Circle through the CTE each year. Funding we have needed for a book or other item we have secured through reflective practice mini-grants, and we can continue to do so.

#### **4. Writing Fellows Consultancy Course**

This one-credit course to train and support Writing Fellows (see below #11) will be taught by a permanent member of the English department as reassigned time or on a summer contract for an online course.

## **5. Faculty Development Workshops**

The WAC Director gives one-hour long workshops twice per month or at an on-demand schedule for groups or departments as part of her course release for directing the program. There are occasional incidental costs (see #8 below). As WAC assessment develops (see item #18), faculty development workshops would be driven by results from the assessments.

## **Category 2: Operating Budget**

### **6. Annual Spring Newsletter**

*The IUP WAC Newsletter* is published each spring online through issu.com, as a PDF on our website, and hard copies are sent to the mailboxes of upper administration, college deans, department chairs, and department WAC liaisons. CHSS and the Department of English have previously paid for printing.

### **7. National Day on Writing celebration**

Each year, WAC and the Jones White Writing Center collaborate to celebrate the National Day on Writing. October 20<sup>th</sup> is designated by Congress as the NDoW and is officially sponsored by the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). We have celebrated with an Instagram contest, a Tweetathon, a Writing Carnival, and an open-mic reading. We award prizes and other incentives to get students and faculty involved in the event. The Writing Center, English Department, and CHSS have previously paid all associated costs. The collaboration with the Writing Center is successful and should be continued, but WAC should have its own funding to contribute to supporting the event.

### **8. Marketing**

Other annual costs include copying, pens and notepads with WAC logo, miscellaneous supplies, and brochure printing.

## **Category 3: Cost Shifts to Colleges (Deans)**

### **9. Faculty Teaching of Writing Award**

The Center for Teaching Excellence offers \$500 teaching awards each year. For the last two years, the Dean of CHSS has provided \$500 for a Teaching of Writing Award, which “is intended to recognize the thoughtful use and balance of writing-to-learn activities, writing-to-communicate assignments, and a commitment to improving students’ communication skills.” To allow CTE to continue offering this award, it should be paid for by the respective dean of the faculty winner.

### **10. Grants for WAC research initiatives and course development**

The WAC Director already assists faculty with research projects related to the teaching of writing in their classes. Faculty could be motivated to develop research projects in the scholarship of teaching and learning with a focus on the teaching of writing if provided with the chance to compete for research grants in their own colleges. Faculty could also be motivated to develop new courses with an emphasis on writing, in which they could design research projects for eventual publication. Having funding for research and course development grants allows the WAC Director to partner with college deans in creating criteria for awards and evaluating submissions. Published research projects, of course, circulate IUPs name in a variety of disciplinary communities and raise the university’s level of scholarly prestige.

### **11. Department Writing Plan (DWP) assessment**



Departments creating DWPs develop embedded assessment plans in their own programs, typically through capstone or 400-level courses. What makes the WAC program as currently conceived most sustainable is the assessment piece incorporated into every Department Writing Plan. IUP's self-study, approved by all major stakeholders at the university, indicates a commitment to Middle States standard 5 regarding assessment. Because an assessment cycle is written into each Department Writing Plan and that assessment is to be reported in five-year program reviews, programs will more automatically close the loop between what is learned from assessment and how that knowledge is turned into instruction and curriculum revision.

To maintain the cycle of assessment, raters need to be trained and then read writing samples, usually over the summer, every two years. Any department with a DWP should have dedicated funding to perform these assessments supported by the Provost. Costs vary depending on how many writing samples a department needs to rate in order to have confidence they are assessing a representative sample of their graduating student population. Some departments may be able to do this for little or no cost if they have a very small class of seniors, their sampling size is small, and faculty are willing to do the rating themselves. In all cases, the WAC director would train faculty or graduate student assessment raters as part of her WAC release time.

## **12. Writing Fellows**

Undergraduate students currently have the opportunity to serve as peer tutors in the Writing Center. A Writing Fellows program extends that concept to give students the chance to work directly with an instructor in a class in the student's major. Exemplary students, typically juniors or seniors and nominated by faculty in departments with writing plans, will take a one-credit seminar in peer tutoring methods in the semester before they serve as a fellow. They will then assist those faculty by coming to classes on days when students are working on major writing assignments; they will conference with individual students, work with students in small groups, and offer tutoring hours out of class. This alleviates some of the burden of grading writing for the faculty member whose time is already stretched; the fellow will discuss early drafts with students and provide feedback toward revision before students' writing is graded by the faculty member. This provides a mutually beneficial situation for the faculty member, the students in the class, and the Writing Fellow<sup>10</sup>. To ensure that the peer tutor is not exploited and that the faculty Collective Bargaining Agreement is followed, the student fellow will be paid at the student employee rate of \$7.25 an hour. A typical fellow would work about five hours a week for the semester, which includes attending the class, meeting with the instructor, and holding tutoring hours for the students (\$507.50 for one fellow).

## **Category 4: Proposed Sustainability Initiatives**

### **13. Annual faculty writing and research retreat**

As departments move to DWPs and away from Writing Intensive courses, the 2-day Liberal Studies workshop intended to certify instructors to teach W courses would be converted to a 3-day retreat for faculty interested in WAC as a way to improve student learning and communication skills. This retreat would serve three purposes: (1) provide professional development in the pedagogy of writing across disciplines, (2) help faculty develop plans for research projects that study how they teaching writing to their students, and (3) provide time and strategies for faculty to enhance their

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<sup>10</sup> For more information on in-class peer tutoring, see Spigelman, Candace and Laurie Grobman. *On Location: Theory and Practice in Classroom-Based Writing Tutoring* or the March 2008 special issue of *Across the Disciplines* on Writing Fellows as Agents of Change.

own writing and research skills.

The three-day retreat, led by the WAC Director and co-led by a member(s) of the university WAC Committee (see #2 above) will take place at the IUP college ski hut each August. Each day will consist of a mix of individual and group reading, writing, and presenting, along with a seminar provided by a mindfulness expert and a writing assessment expert. Activities will be designed toward the goals of developing faculty members' knowledge of WAC pedagogies and teaching writing-to-learn, enhancing faculty members' own writing skills, and helping faculty develop research projects where they will study their own students' writing and communication skills.

As WAC assessment develops (see item #18), faculty development workshops would be driven by results from the assessments.

#### **14. Annual speaker series**

In fall 2016, Mike Palmquist, founder and editor of the WAC Clearinghouse, came to IUP to talk about WAC and how writing across the curriculum pedagogy helps students improve critical thinking skills. Hosting an annual speaker on a topic related to teaching writing – whether discipline-specific or of general interest to the whole university – can help bring the university faculty and administrators together around a mutual interest. While on campus, a speaker could also do a small workshop with interested faculty, meet with graduate students in an educative session, or meet with administrators as a consultant. Costs include an honorarium and travel expenses.

#### **15. Program Assistant/Clerical Support**

The Jones White Writing Center Clerk Typist 2 job description includes 25% of the hours to be dedicated to the WAC program (the total cost for all hours is approximately \$28,000). Responsibilities include promoting WAC through the newsletter, website, Facebook page, Twitter feed, and IUP news feed; maintaining a database of faculty who attend workshops; sending thank you notes to faculty after workshops; booking and preparing space for workshops and other events including catering and maintenance requests; handling the event calendar; creating reports of collected data and creating surveys using Qualtrics. This position is jointly supported by the Provost and CHSS. Dedicated funding for a part-time assistant should be available as part of the WAC budget to ensure that if the current position becomes vacant, or if the position changes in any way, the WAC program has the funds to secure its own clerical support.

#### **16. Student Writing Award**

An award of \$500 has been given to a student in a department with a writing plan to motivate students writing in various disciplines and to reward departments that are taking the initiative to write these plans with a chance to boast about their students' achievements. This award has been funded by the Jones White Writing Center. As a student award, the collaboration between the Writing Center and WAC should be continued, but at least half of this cost should be part of a dedicated WAC budget to make the program sustainable and encourage faculty to work with their students as teachers of writing toward entering to win the award.

#### **17. Travel Grants**

Attending conferences fuels faculty energy, provides networking opportunities, and helps our program grow stronger by having the chance to get feedback on our work and hear about the work of others. Faculty in departments that have writing plans would have the opportunity to compete for travel funding to attend the Writing Enriched Curriculum (WEC) conference held sporadically at

the University of Minnesota or the International Writing Across the Curriculum conference, which is held in a different US location every two years. When our faculty who attend conferences like these, especially in a group, they can bring back to IUP what they've learned and share it with their colleagues in order to enhance our WAC work here. Having a dedicated budget to provide these travel grants would allow the WAC director to create a network of WAC supporters at IUP; funding could be used to match department funds, USRC grants, and other funding available to faculty elsewhere on campus.

### **18. University-Wide Writing Assessment**

Departments will use embedded assessments to determine how their writing plans are working; however, programmatic assessment is necessary as well. To understand the effects of various program initiatives, standardized university assessments, and in order to know when and how to make changes to the program, WAC program assessment must be implemented. This would involve a range of studies including surveys, interviews, focus groups, as well as rated assessment of student writing. Data from rated assessment of student writing could potentially be used for Liberal Studies assessment and other university assessment mandates. Costs would include training and paying raters, transcription, other data analysis, and incentives for students to participate.

### **19. Continuous Program Innovation / Enhancement**

To keep the program pedagogically and theoretically current, the university should ensure the program is always in a state of continuous improvement so that it reflects changes in the field. The Director must participate in discipline-specific professional development. The director should have guaranteed funding to attend the International Writing Across the Curriculum conference (held every two years in a different location), the Writing-Enriched Curriculum conference (held at the University of Minnesota on a sporadic basis), or the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) conference held annually in a different US location. This guarantees networking with other program directors and spreading the word about the program at IUP. This funding should be separate from department travel funding the director uses to present research projects at other conferences.