Rendering the Idea of a Writing Program: A Look at Six Two-Year Colleges

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By offering an annotated image of a half-dozen two-year college writing "programs," this essay seeks to raise awareness of the challenges facing those who promote, work in, work toward, or participate in the development of two-year college writing programs and to consider how the "idea" of a writing program plays out in shaping those challenges.

The word *idea* assumed special meaning in composition studies when Stephen M. North, in "The Idea of a Writing Center," showed how an idea can evoke and ignite intense expectations and aversions surrounding literacy instruction. In particular, North lamented the "false sense of knowing" (433) that made getting a message through (in this case, about what a writing center really does) so difficult. In another seminal essay, "Inventing the University," David Bartholomae argues that the idea of the university that student writers invent when they "sit down to write for us" creates a set of expectations that deeply influences those students' writing performance (134). In both cases, the "idea" precedes and deeply influences the perceptions, interactions, and performances of those involved in the activity—either interacting with a writing center or writing a placement essay.

So what idea does the phrase "writing program" evoke? To what effect? Each practitioner in composition, no doubt, has an answer to that—however inchoate—yet, as far as we know, there is no widely accepted definition of the term. And when the term is applied to or used in the context of a two-year college, what happens? Is the idea, originating as we believe it does in the context of a four-year college or, more likely, a university setting, merely transferred to the new context and the new context interpreted (and evaluated) in that light? Or is the idea shaped by what is observed at two-year colleges dialogically, thus rendering a new idea? Or is there some third or even fourth alternative?

The purpose of this essay is not necessarily to answer these questions—in our view, this cannot be done definitively—but rather, first, to raise awareness of the challenges facing those who promote, work in, work toward, or participate in the development of two-year college writing programs and, second, to consider how the "idea" of a writing program plays out in shaping those challenges. To do

this, we offer an annotated image of a half-dozen two-year college writing "programs"—however loosely defined.

Context and History

In 2008, as president of the Council of Writing Program Administrators, Joe first established an ad-hoc committee with the aim to describe "writing programs" at two-year colleges. The committee, consisting of five two-year college faculty (Jeff among them) and one from a university (Joe), was aware that much important work had already been done and much was still in progress. In particular, the work of Helon Howell Raines informed our thinking. In her important 1990 article "Is There a Writing Program in This College?" Raines presents her analysis of 236 survey responses from two-year college English faculty and states (famously): "[E]ven though I began with no hypothesis to prove, I did hope to find a pattern, to see some model of community-college writing programs emerge. None did. In fact, as I interpret the situation, two-year schools are, in many respects, as different from one another as they are alike" (152).

Tim N. Taylor, in "Writing Program Administration at the Two-Year College: Ghosts in the Machine," reports on his attempt to replicate Raines's study nearly twenty years later. Though receiving a very small number of responses in contrast to Raines, Taylor analyzed the results in an attempt to understand the differences Raines noted. While recognizing the constraints of his study, Taylor suggests that two-year college writing programs realize a "post-masculinist" and "de-centered" approach to program development (121). He calls this a "paradox," since, in his view, two-year colleges are "yearning for a traditional WPA to hold it all together and exert power within institutions" (121). More recently, Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt, TYCA Chair, effectively supports Taylor's conclusions, noting in "Writing Programs without Administrators: Frameworks for Successful Writing Programs in the Two-Year College" that program development is a loose term when applied to activities at two-year colleges since so much work is done collaboratively via ad-hoc committees (125–26).

Calhoon-Dillahunt recognizes the diversity of not only the student body but also the purposes of the college, recognizing that pressure from diverse directions—dual enrollment, vocational/professional education, developmental education, ESL/ELL students (see Tinberg and Nadeau)—"complicates the objectives" of the two-year college writing program (121). Nonetheless, much important work does get done. Likening this to a community of practice, we can see a need arising and a community forming around the goal of meeting that need.

At the same time, the TYCA Research Initiative (*Research*) surveyed and interviewed members in an attempt to understand what was actually going on in two-year college English departments. Their results were similar to what earlier researchers found: for example, variety is the norm, and "best practices" or models are not to be found for assessment and placement (Sullivan 8). The TYCA Research Initiative did not directly address the shape of writing program work at the cur-

ricular level, though the research looked at the integration of technology (online courses, digital portfolios, multimodal composition, etc.), and the role of WAC/WID programs and writing centers. The results provided a very broad view of a wide variety of initiatives for teaching writing effectively at two-year colleges.

What the committee recognized from all this was both a need and a challenge: "writing programs" were perceived to exist in whatever form at two-year colleges, and while they might encompass WAC/WID and writing centers, the core seemed still to be composition courses (see Raines; Nist and Raines; Holmstein). Yet the survey work of Raines and Taylor did not provide a detailed view of what might be happening at the level of program development that focused on composition courses. Calhoon-Dillahunt provides a very accurate view of ad-hoc work that meshes with Taylor's "post-masculinist" or "de-centered" view of program work, and yet when a program director does exist, what happens? Is the program developed there similar to or different from other programs; how and to what effect? Our interviews sought to answer those questions; this article seeks to interpret the results and extend the conversation.

Our sample is far from exhaustive—only six colleges—nor would we claim it to be truly representative.[1] We interviewed people whom we knew and thus were active in the field, and we focused on colleges where we knew programmatic work of the kind in which we were interested was going on, about half the time under the direction of a writing program director or administrator (three of the six colleges have someone designated to such a position). Thus, we sought a more focused description of a few two-year college "writing programs" where we knew explicit movement toward "having" a writing program, rather than "a collection of writing classes" (Klausman, "Mapping" 238) was underway.

Our Interviews and Findings

We conducted the interviews either face-to-face or via phone with follow-up email. We asked many questions across several categories, only some of which are explicitly presented below. What we offer here is meant to suggest the various clusters of responses we received rather than a complete overview. Here are the core questions we posed:

1. Does your department offer what it refers to as a "writing program"? If so, what are its characteristics? (The program question)
2. What kind of theoretical frames and pedagogical practices seem to be in prominent play? Is there an articulated theory, philosophy, or approach that guides your writing curriculum? (The curriculum question)
3. How are programs assessed? Is there a mechanism for course revision based on course or program-level assessment? Who is responsible for conducting assessment? What preparation do they receive? (The program assessment question)
4. What are the minimum qualifications for prospective full-time and part-time faculty? Do most faculty exceed these minimum qualifications? What is the

desired preparation you most like to see in prospective applicants? What support exists for teachers? (The faculty hiring and development question)

5. Does your college have a designated Writing Program coordinator or administrator who oversees the writing courses? If your college does not have a designated WPA, please describe how the courses are administered. (The administrator question)

"Program" Responses

We recognize that the term *writing program* in our initial question establishes an expectation; we also recognize that the term is ill-defined. We are not surprised, then, that the responses reveal the conflictedness of the term itself. For example, some respondents expressed *distance and irony*. One noted that his college offers "a series of four courses, which we sometimes talk about as a program [including] two levels of basic writing." Another was more direct: "Although we refer to our first-year composition sequence as a program, it's not—at least not in the sense a WPA might use the term."

Some other answers were more *practical*, suggesting that a "program" is implicit in any directed effort to meet the writing needs of students: one respondent said his "program" has a "focus is on developmental writing" including precollege-level reading and writing courses, as well as ESL courses leading to the transfer composition course.

Other respondents seemed to *avoid the question*: "We offer two levels of developmental writing," one respondent offered, "and the almost universally-transferable first-year composition" course. Another simply substituted terms: his college did not have a "writing program" but an "English Division" that offers writing courses as well as courses in literature, creative writing, and so forth. Finally, one said that all two-year college English departments were de facto writing programs since composition courses constitute the vast majority of all offerings.

Here is present that implicit split between composition instruction in "the operative context of a two-year college English department" (Raines 154) and the indistinct "model" of a writing program we may have inherited from four-year schools. The "operative context" in our small sampling suggests relative incoherence, with differing attitudes toward the concept of "program": irony, practicality, indifference.

Nonetheless, this split may be re-envisioned not as a shortcoming but in descriptive terms. For while *writing program* often refers to coherency built around first-year composition and corollary courses and preparation, it need not only be so. Any concerted effort to teach and support writing may be considered a "program," as suggested by the CCCC Certificate in Writing Program Excellence awarded each year, which recognizes that WAC/WID programs as well as writing centers and majors in writing can constitute a "writing program."

What does that mean with regard to our project? First, we think it tells us that the very concept of "writing program"—and by extension how writing courses

ought to fit together or not—continues to be in flux at two-year colleges. It is hard to imagine that this question asked of six WPAs at four-year colleges with a graduate program in English—perhaps the origin of the ghost of the model of "a writing program"—would have anything to say but "Yes" to our first question and without irony, distance, or evasion. We think that is important because WPAs, who are paid to oversee the running and development of a program, by dint of their very position likely value coherence. The variety of the responses to our question suggests that "coherence" is, in two-year college English departments, still a contested concept.

"Curriculum" Responses

In many if not most two-year colleges, students take two composition courses as part of their transfer degrees—though most professional and technical programs require only one composition course. Nonetheless, as composition courses must meet the needs of all the students, as much as that is possible, we recognize that coordinating the first- and second-semester composition course should be an agreed-upon good. That is, it is hard to conceive of a "program" that does not recognize, for example, that English 102 should build upon and reinforce the concepts and skills taught in English 101.

We asked several questions about the curriculum: whether there was an *underlying theoretical frame*, how well it is shared, how developed it is in terms of explicit statements (such as mission or vision statements), and how explicitly the outcomes are tied to the curriculum.

Our sense, in looking at the responses to these questions as a whole, is that our sample respondents did not see a consistent underlying theoretical frame in any of their institutions. While one respondent suggested that the shared theoretical frame can be summed up as "revision is the essence of writing," he acknowledged that "this approach may not be understood by all or many" in his department—thus throwing into question how "underlying" this theory may actually be. The result, this respondent said, was that the sequence of courses did not necessarily connect: "Students have a huge variety of understandings of what college writing, [or] just writing, is."

While this may be cause to worry in programmatic terms, not everyone sees this as a lack. One respondent said that what she liked about her college was the freedom individual faculty has in selecting approaches to meet agreed-upon course outcomes. For example, in teaching English 101, one instructor uses "creative non-fiction, another genre theory," while another "still uses modes, while another teaches summary." Given that this college requires a two-course sequence in English composition, it would be interesting to determine how well students from different sections of English 101 were prepared for the probably equally diverse approaches in English 102. That is, though agreed-upon course outcomes might well be shown to have been met in different courses, it would be interesting to assess the effectiveness of the meshing of these different approaches: Would student achievement be increased if a shared underlying theoretical approach grounded

curricular and pedagogical practices in that department's writing courses? That is, would an English 101 and English 102 with a shared underlying theoretical approach be more effective than two courses that did not but shared course outcomes? It would be hard to imagine not. On the other hand, what effect would this have on faculty effectiveness?

We are reminded of what Richard Fulkerson concludes in "Composition at the Turn of the Twenty-First Century": "It's easy to create a course that is self-contradictory and thus baffling to students. We may teach one thing, assign another, and actually expect yet a third" (680). How much more "baffling" to students might be a "program" with a variety of approaches to teaching writing not only (possibly) within the same course but also across sections of the same course and between courses in a sequence?

Finally, the very idea of a single, underlying theoretical approach to teaching writing as a ground to a program is itself a contentious issue. One respondent put it bluntly about whether there was a shared philosophy to teaching writing expressed in something like a mission or vision statement: "We don't have one. It seems that a number of English faculty are opposed" to such explicit statements. Another said that it was "hard to say how much [underlying theory] is shared, but [it's] easier to talk about with full-time faculty."

We can only conclude that at these colleges, the notion itself of an underlying theoretical frame is clouded with fear—that is, we surmise based on our own experiences and the responses to our questions on assessment (see below) that a shared theoretical approach—or even discussion of one—may seem threatening to a faculty member's sense of autonomy, professionalism, and competence. That the majority of composition faculty at two-year colleges are adjunct, and that adjunct faculty overwhelmingly do not feel appreciated nor valued by their institutions (see Klausman "Not") and thus feel vulnerable, such concerns raised by any talk of "underlying theoretical frames" are understandable, and thus may be part of a larger cultural, economic, and labor issue fissure.

"Program Assessment" Responses

We also asked about program assessment. Perhaps not surprisingly, given the contentiousness of assessment in general (see Schwartz), we found not only much variety but an even more explicit recognition of how conflicted are the faculty over the idea of "a program" at the colleges we looked at.

We received no reports of any consistent, valid, and regular program assessment from any of our respondents. "So far," said one, "[we have] no program assessment." Two others told us that assessment was driven by administration and conducted by deans or vice presidents and seemed more top-down and "above" the level of program or course assessment. Still another reported that regular assessment of student essays was conducted based on learning outcomes, yet these studies were "poorly designed and executed" because they were "carried out by people who know little about formal assessment." This is echoed by another, who said that program assessment is conducted by "individual instructors" with "no preparation."

Against these reports, however, are some notable exceptions. One respondent reported on a longitudinal study of students going through their sequence of courses. As a result of his study, the college "instituted a new approach to basic writing" which resulted in significant increases of success rates. Another respondent reported on a built-in assessment of the basic writing course through a department-wide portfolio assessment system that has been ongoing for twenty-five years. Still, that assessment system did not expand to other courses in the composition sequence, and the longitudinal study mentioned above was conducted by an ad hoc committee.

As for closing the loop between assessment and curriculum revision or professional development, we received varied responses. Most of the respondents (four of six) suggested little to no formal means of tying assessment, where it existed, to curriculum revision. "There is a feedback mechanism to drive curricular change, but again, it doesn't quite work," one respondent said. However, another noted that "revision ideas are raised at department meetings" and that "often, shared flex days are devoted to discussing and refining revisions to insure full faculty buy-in."

What does this mean? Perhaps similar to the situation in other institutions of higher education, English faculty in two-year colleges face a pedagogical and professional conundrum. One respondent said there was "controversy for suggesting mandatory participation" in assessment at his college. Full-time faculty were "resistant," he went on, because they felt this was "an intrusion" into the classroom. Another noted that this perhaps expresses the sense that full-time faculty must "stand up for adjuncts." Again, we find that labor issues as well as currency in the field—in this case, training in program assessment—insinuates itself into the idea of a writing program.

"Faculty Development and Faculty Hiring" Responses

If a program implies coherence and relies upon faculty to create and maintain that coherence, then programs at the two-year colleges we looked at face an added hurdle in terms of professional development. Our respondents reported very little to no support for, nor leadership in, discipline-specific training and development at their colleges.

One said, "We do have a college Center for Teaching and Learning that offers popular courses and workshops in teaching with technology, but we offer very little discipline-specific support." Another responded that full-time faculty were offered grants for study while adjunct faculty were offered faculty mentors, thus highlighting the importance of employment status. Still, more than one respondent said that "quite a few" faculty remained active in their fields, attending CCCC and regional TYCA conferences, most with some resources available to offset travel costs, though often less for and less easily obtained by adjunct faculty. As one respondent put it: "We are free" to participate in professional development and to "pursue small amounts of in-house funding" but are "not compensated" for it.

All of our respondents had been involved at some point in hiring new fac-

ulty—either directly in writing the job description or serving on hiring committees. The responses to the questions we asked about *the minimum qualifications for hiring new faculty—full-time and adjunct—and the desired preparation hiring committees would most like to see* reveal much about the state of flux program development may be in at the colleges we examined.

All of the respondents noted that an MA in English constituted the minimum requirement, but all noted that a master's in a "related field" was often sufficient, especially when hiring adjunct faculty and especially when the need for teachers was great. Thus, hiring faculty with a master's degree in ESL, reading, creative writing, or education was common, though one respondent noted a preference that was shared by all but one of the respondents: "I like to see both coursework/training and actual experience teaching first-year comp." Two of the respondents noted that a nearby university with a quality composition–rhetoric graduate program furnished many well-qualified adjunct faculty.

Notably, all the respondents observed that hiring faculty with less than the desired qualifications was often necessary. One said, "Given our size and the number of composition classes we offer, I do hire faculty [who] have no training in teaching writing." Another said, "What we get few of are people with much education in rhet/comp and almost never with any formal training in basic writing, which we are coming to view as our most important teaching. Fifty-seven percent of our students place in basic writing." It would seem that program development at the colleges we looked at may be hindered on two fronts—hiring as well as professional development support.

However, we noted in two of the responses a move toward specialization in composition in hiring new faculty, especially full-time faculty. One of the respondents notes that "coursework in composition and rhetoric" is a required qualification and is so noted in the job description. Another said that he rewrote the job description from "generalist" to include a "set of qualifications to match those in [a] *TETYC* article of a couple of years ago" (see TYCA, "Guidelines"). "Still," the respondent noted, he was only able to hire "a minority of comp people."

We also asked *how many faculty exceeded minimum qualifications*. All but one of those who answered (four total) reported that the majority of faculty did not exceed minimum qualifications. The one who did exceed offered an interesting response. She said, "Yes," the majority of her faculty exceeded minimum qualifications: "Nearly 50% of FT has doctorates." However, even without knowing in which field those doctorates were awarded (literature, composition), we can't assume this number constitutes "most." The same respondent reported that her department had thirty-one full-time and forty-eight part-time faculty (seventy-nine total) and that "adjuncts teach 51% of all writing classes." Without information on the qualifications of the adjunct faculty, it is impossible to know whether "most" of the faculty exceeds minimum qualifications. The response is interesting, however, for what it implies about who constitutes "faculty" in a department—if not a program—and about what a doctorate means.

"Program Leadership" and "Decision Making" Responses

Finally, we asked about *leadership*, recognizing its importance to program development (see White): Asao Inoue has said, "While a writing program needs a head, a WPA, it doesn't . . . need one as a matter of course but because any project needs a leader or decision-maker, even if that decision maker mostly facilitates discussion and agreement among stakeholders, then initiates or moves on decisions made communally." We asked about whether our respondents' colleges had a designated coordinator or administrator who oversees the writing courses. If not, we asked how the courses and program were administered.

Perhaps because of our selection process, a probably disproportionate number of the colleges we examined had designated program administrators: two had a designated program coordinator, one had both a director of composition and an assessment coordinator, and one had a "coordinator of basic writing." However, the duties for these positions varied. For example, one college had a "writing program coordinator" with responsibility for "designing curriculum, conducting assessment, and running a tutoring center." The explicit goal was to "establish a sense of identity as a writing program." However, another respondent reported that the "Director of Composition" oversaw all writing classes—developmental through college-level—and had very broad duties: everything from norming to assessment to evaluation of adjunct faculty; from "conferences with adjuncts who seem to be struggling or who need help," to updating handbooks to planning "flex days and annotating lists of textbooks faculty use in their courses."

Two respondents said they had no director or program leader, so "choosing textbooks, establishing course goals, etc." was done by committee or the department chair. The final respondent's answer falls between "yes" and "no": "We do not have a position anything like a director of the writing program or a WPA per se," he said, "but we do have a coordinator of basic writing." This same respondent went on to suggest that the idea of writing program coordinator needed to be expanded: "It's accurate to think of English Department heads in two-year schools as WPAs. More than 90% of the courses we offer are writing courses, so the department head is really heading a writing program that offers a handful of lit courses."

Along with asking about leadership, we asked about *decision making*. In general, even when there was a designated "WPA," decision making tended toward the "post-masculinist" model Taylor describes as conducive to faculty autonomy. None of the responses suggested a negative view about decision making at the respective campuses. Said one respondent: "Yes, everything is a constant negotiation, but that also means you have repeated opportunities to engage with your faculty and staff." The central gain, he said, is that "helping people see that their choices in the classroom are coming from somewhere can in itself be useful . . . if only because it gives [faculty] more options."

Without exception, faculty in the colleges we examined have "almost complete autonomy" over their courses and teaching. Two respondents noted that faculty must teach to "generic course outlines" even though "no one is checking up" on

whether those outlines are followed or outcomes met. Another noted that there is "beauty" in this autonomy of instructors: it is "friendly" to individual interests and experiences and encourages "creativity" and "experimentation."

Perhaps the notion of autonomy—strong respect for and insistence upon the individual faculty member's independence in course design, textbook selection, assessment, and so on—is what marks the two-year college writing program as different from vestiges of the old Research I model, which has at its core the preparation of graduate students as teaching assistants and then independent teachers (Farris).

Conclusion

We come back to where we began. We argued that when an "idea" precedes an activity, it can deeply influence the perceptions, interactions, and performances of those involved in an activity. Comprising four members of the Council of Writing Program Administrators, our ad hoc committee brought with it the "idea" of a writing program, no doubt imported, ghost-like, from the context of our own graduate training—all four members of the ad hoc committee hold doctorates. And while we may have sought to be descriptive, we recognized that our very questions shaped our observations. Yet it was and is our hope that the responses push back and shape our idea of a writing program, while being wary of any definitive answers as to how this might work.

Our interviews occurred in the context of what we believe are some important changes in teaching English at two-year colleges. For one thing, more and more new professionals in composition with doctoral-level preparation are taking jobs in two-year colleges. Two of the respondents to our interview have a PhD in composition and rhetoric from major programs, and we are aware of two other PhDs in composition and rhetoric who have recently been hired to head up writing program development at two-year colleges. Two of the respondents noted that they recently revised the job descriptions for hiring full-time faculty to explicitly solicit composition and rhetoric scholar-teachers.

There is also a shift in perspective, we believe, as long-term tenured faculty in English departments, often self-taught compositionists, seek the input of newly trained composition faculty. This is accompanied by a call for greater assessment and by challenges presented by concurrent or dual enrollment (see McCrimmon), advanced placement, and growth in basic and developmental writing. Simply put, the need for evidenced-based, data-driven decision making (sometimes linked to accreditation) requires people trained in composition studies to design, staff, oversee, and assess student writing and writing courses—what might be called "a writing program."

These shifts and our interview responses provoke us to ask three questions of two-year college English departments:

1. To what extent does the idea of a writing program viably challenge the notion that "English" is a site where mostly literature-trained faculty teach mostly composition? At many places, an "MA in English" is still the primary

criterion for hiring, yet newly hired composition faculty can be seen as a challenge to the status quo, offering a model of professionalism in the field that may be uncomfortable to some.

2. In what ways does the idea of a writing program challenge two-year college English departments that support pedagogical and curricular autonomy over coherent curricula and pedagogy, thus, possibly, adversely affecting effectiveness of instruction? Again, newly hired composition faculty may challenge this status quo and instead promote a more coherent curriculum and pedagogy with a theoretical underpinning supported by a more valid and sustainable assessment procedure.

3. What are the short- and long-term effects of two-year colleges continuing to neglect faculty development in the discipline of composition? Given the growth of basic writing, for example, and the dearth of qualified people to teach it, the need is obvious, though the detriment from the lack of professional training may seem less so.

However, another aspect of the context of our interviews pushes in the opposite direction. As Taylor and Calhoon-Dillahunt note, two-year college English departments tend toward collaborative, consensus-driven and flexible decision making, at times approaching a "community of practice," as Wenger defines it. WPAs or other directors at two-year colleges tend to work collaboratively with adjunct faculty coordinating, though not necessarily overseeing, a writing program that is in flux or under construction. They tend to hold the position temporarily, often rotating to another position in the department. They derive authority, then, not from a boss–worker (or teacher–student) relationship, but through knowledge and consensus.

The practices at two-year colleges may provide a resistance that can challenge existing notions of what a "writing program" is or should be. Thus we offer these questions:

1. Can the idea of a writing program offer more flexible and inclusive WPA roles, given that a growing number of writing faculty are adjunct or non-tenure-track (see ADE), as opposed to the graduate students that WPAs in four-year schools often mentor at considerable intellectual and emotional expense (see Farris)?

2. Can the idea of a writing program with a traditional WPA support greater creativity and a more nuanced concept of leadership, challenging the sometimes overwhelming and undermining burdens of being *a*—or worse *the*—departmental or programmatic point person (see Micciche)?

3. Can the idea of a writing program promote both programmatic unity while inspiring greater collegiality and autonomy?

4. Can the idea of a writing program embrace the knowledge gained from the study of two-year colleges to better prepare graduate students who will be taking composition-related leadership roles in those two-year institutions?

Finally, the very idea of a *writing program* should be approached with healthy suspicion. For example, is achieving parity across sections an altogether good

thing? Why? Do we have evidence to support our assumptions? Can the idea of a writing program be or become a detriment to serious and creative thought and progress? Here we reflect on what it can mean to *render* something. Rendering is partially defined as "an act or instance of interpretation, rendition, or depiction, as . . . a representation of a building, interior, etc., executed in perspective and usually done for purposes of presentation" (*Dictionary.com*). This definition underscores the importance of perspective: to render an idea can mean to focus on some things at the risk of obscuring others. In other words, it can mean to efface and enhance. One always risks rendering with an idea in mind, and thus presenting that idea as an ideology.

　　This particular rendering—our annotated image—aspires to draw attention to the challenges of both developing and understanding "writing programs" and their leadership at two-year colleges. As we consider the questions above, we suggest resisting the easy temptation to imitate four-year college models of writing program "administration." Instead, we recommend focusing on the evolving nature and demands of the important and variegated leadership work itself, rather than on the concept of a writing program "administrator." If we can articulate the intricacies of these leadership practices beyond that particular and perhaps limiting enunciation, category, and label, we stand a better chance of rendering new and valuable ideas rather than purveying celebrated ideals, or worse, sedimented ideations. ◄

Note

　　1. The six community colleges represented range in size from 4,000 to 20,000+ full-time equivalent students; they comprise teaching faculty ranging from forty full- and part-time faculty to over a hundred; they are situated in three of the four US continental time zones; they represent urban, suburban, and rural locations; and they have histories of serving their communities that range from forty-five years to over a hundred years.

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Winner of the Richard Ohmann Award Announced

Amy Wan's article "In the Name of Citizenship: The Writing Classroom and the Promise of Citizenship" (*College English* 74.1 [Sept. 2011]) has been selected as the recipient of the 2012 Richard Ohmann Award for Outstanding Article in *College English*. Professor Wan's article provokes needed critical reflection on the terms of composition's recent public, or civic, turn by interrogating the conflicting assumptions underlying pervasive invocations of citizenship as a goal of writing instruction. Those assumptions, Professor Wan shows, define participatory citizenship and its relation to literacy in multiple, contradictory, and often problematic ways. Against beliefs conflating participatory citizenship, economic and political equality, and literacy as achievements, Professor Wan suggests that citizenship, like literacy, can best be understood as a practice, one that may be "better integrated into the fabric of literacy teaching . . . as the cultivation of habits of citizenship."

In challenging dominant assumptions about citizenship as a goal and outcome of writing instruction, Professor Wan's article contributes to a robust scholarly tradition interrogating ideologies of literacy in the teaching of English in the US—a tradition in which Richard Ohmann's own work figures prominently. It is thus especially fitting that Professor Wan's article is the recipient of this year's Richard Ohmann Award.