Toward a Definition of a Writing Program at a Two-Year College: You Say You Want a Revolution?

> Jeffrey Klausman

This article traces the arc of research on two-year college writing programs and looks at implicit patterns of belief that shape discussions of such programs to offer a definition, however tentative, of a model of a two-year college writing program.

In 1990 Helon Howell Raines published "Is There a Writing Program in This College? Two Hundred and Thirty-Six Two-Year Schools Respond," in which she reported on her study, via survey and eight follow-up telephone interviews, of two-year college writing programs across the country. Raines asked questions about departmental and institutional structure, curriculum, conceived purposes of the writing courses, and other things, encompassing all aspects of what could be considered a *writing program*. More than descriptive, however, Raines's aims were to find out if her data would actually point her to some general knowledge about two-year college writing programs: "I did hope to find a pattern, to see some model of community college writing programs emerge," she writes. "None did. It seems [. . .] two-year schools are [. . .] as different as they are alike" (152). In the twenty-plus years since Raines's study, numerous writers have likewise sought—explicitly or implicitly—a pattern or model for a writing program at the two-year college and, like Raines, have failed to find or articulate one.

In this article, I trace that arc of research and look at implicit patterns of belief that shape discussions of writing programs that occur throughout our field to argue that the time has come to offer a definition, however tentative, of a model of a two-year college writing program. To do this, I look at this research and at these patterns of beliefs through the lens of activity theory to develop a concise and usable definition of a two-year college writing program.

My hope is that the definition serves as a pattern against which various college faculty or writing program administrators can measure their own programs—and I offer a means of doing so—as well as a model that can function heuristically to foster discussion and programmatic growth and unity. Given the pressures under which two-year colleges find themselves to improve retention, completion rates, and other measures of success, while simultaneously suffering drastic budget cuts and even more overreliance on non-tenure-track or adjunct faculty, looking hard

at how we function as writing programs can provide us a means of pushing back and showing, not just asserting, that the stronger the program, the better the gains in student learning. But first, let me outline some of the research that has come before this.

The Search for "a Program"

Other studies and statements have followed Raines, and like Raines the authors have sought to be descriptive while implicitly searching for a program model. Elizabeth A. Nist, coauthoring with Raines "Two-Year Colleges: Explaining and Claiming Our Majority," offers an analysis of the state of writing programs at two-year colleges, acknowledging that much collaborative work goes on, often ad hoc, and that the people who take on this work are "unidentified as WPAs [writing program administrators] or even as composition specialists" (64). Nist and Raines suggest that the idea of a writing program is, at best, unclear at the places they studied. Victoria Holmsten, in "This Site Under Construction," describes a similar situation, where writing programs operate in an ill-defined space where no one on the campus understands what program administrators—and thus writing programs—do, whose roles, Holmsten admits, are constantly shifting: "I boldly look for generalizations about community college contexts here," Holmsten writes, "even as I acknowledge it may not be entirely possible to do so" (429).

Almost twenty years after Raines's initial study, Tim N. Taylor sought to replicate her work but received far fewer responses to his survey request, only 21 of the 107 he requested. As reported at the 2007 Convention of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in New York and then in *WPA: The Journal of the Council of Writing Program Administrators* in 2009, Taylor's findings largely corroborate Raines's, though Taylor interprets the results somewhat differently. Arguing that two-year colleges are, in a way, ahead of the game in that they model a "postmasculinist" approach to program administration—ironically, he says, since his survey responses suggest that two-year colleges "yearn for a traditional WPA to hold it all together" (121)—Taylor identifies perhaps one feature that defines *writing programs* in two-year colleges that mark them as distinct from programs elsewhere: their protean nature. "So while some might perceive writing programs at community colleges as chaotic or even existing under 'tribal anarchy,'" he writes, invoking Marcia Dickson's term, "the collaborative or ecosystem model at some two-year colleges provides flexibility, stability, and respect for differences in pedagogy" (121). At "some" two-year colleges, he writes. At others—who knows? Nonetheless, Taylor notes, in language that seems less optimistic, that a "machine churns along and produces sections upon sections of composition courses" in this country, half of which are taught at two-year colleges. So the relevant question, he asks, is "how do you create a strong *writing program* from diverse faculty who usually teach writing classes as most of their full loads each semester?" (121). It's of interest to note that Taylor evokes the term *writing programs* to describe what he sees and yet uses what he sees to ask how a "writing program" can be created.

It would seem that whatever Taylor describes as "a program" in his data is not yet, fully at least, "a program."

Carolyn Calhoon-Dillahunt, in a keynote address at the 2010 Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA) Summer Conference, later published in the *WPA* journal in 2011, argues that two-year college English faculty are already resourceful shapers of writing programs, which operate most often as something like communities of practice, rising to the point of need and then dissolving when a task is completed. She writes that these efforts at many colleges across the country provide a "framework for success" (125), a model for how to think about the role of WPA in the two-year college and how to develop and maintain cohesive and successful writing programs. She writes that this is extremely important now, with challenges coming from such developments as increases in dual-credit/dual-enrollment programs and challenges to basic writing: "The need for well-developed two-year college writing programs is clear," she writes (122). Throughout, Calhoon-Dillahunt does a marvelous job of both extolling the virtues of writing program work already being done at two-year colleges while acknowledging the difficulties—the strain created by the exploitative hiring of adjunct faculty, cuts to budgets, and nonreplacement of retiring faculty, to name a few—*and* noting the need for strong programs.

What's New?

Over the years that I have been looking at this issue and reading the work on the topic, some of which I just described, I've come to understand the exigency of the issue and the nature of our attempts to address it. And the question to which I return again and again and that seems to underlie this entire line of enquiry is this: "If there's no way to describe 'a program' at two-year colleges, if there's no pattern, then how can we tell if we've got in place the best program we can to support the teaching of writing at our institution?" This, I believe, is the driving force behind Raines's work and has remained the impetus behind much of the other work I have described above; even Calhoon-Dillahunt's response seems shaped by this question at least partly, since her argument addresses, among other issues, why many two-year college English faculty do not see the relevance of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (125), whose interest is "developing and directing writing programs" (Council). Moreover, Taylor and Calhoon-Dillahunt suggest that a kind of pattern *is* emerging, in spite of the huge array of differences: one that is collaborative, needs based, and decentered. This seems fair, given the realities of two-year college work as I know it.

All of this is to say that I think we have reached the point where we can turn the research back on itself and now offer at least a tentative response to Raines's somewhat desperate note with a question of our own: "Have we already implicitly defined *a program* in the very weave of text we have already presented? Have we reached the point where we can articulate what *a model* for a writing program at a two-year college is?" I believe we have. Enough work has been done in the past

twenty years to warrant an attempt at defining a program, offering up a model with which to work. Let me explain why.

First, we may have new models of interpretation to help us reassess what is seen—concepts of communities of practice, for example, help us see what otherwise we could not see. Second, we may be seeing different things—ad hoc committees that deal with a particular need (placement issues, for example) that may have been missed in earlier studies. Third, we simply have a larger body of literature to analyze—while the body of work on two-year colleges remains small, it is not insubstantial.

If these are legitimate claims, then something else is going on, too. The implicit good of writing programs—as opposed to "a collection of classes" (see Klausman "Mapping")—has come more to the fore. One of the findings of a recent research project (see Janangelo and Klausman) is that there is a greater sense of professionalism among those who teach in or direct writing programs at two-year colleges. At my college, for instance, all of our recent full-time hires have had composition and rhetoric as a focus of study in graduate school. Since we have rewritten our job description and since there are so many graduates of comp-rhet programs, we have in fact only interviewed candidates with significant comp-rhet training. Moreover, as the field has matured, many if not most full-time faculty recognize the need to read up on composition theory and keep up in that field— or else identify themselves more as literature teachers, in which case, they tend to focus their professional identities there.

I realize this is not the case at many institutions or even perhaps most, but it is a trend that I see supported both by research (Janangelo and Klausman) as well as anecdotal evidence: colleagues hired out of PhD programs in comp-rhet joining retrained literature faculty in developing programs at two-year colleges, often with the explicit endorsement of their administrations (see Choseed; Naynaha); and colleagues setting up courses to teach composition theory to existing faculty on their campuses (see Andelora).

Behind all this, acting as a kind of fixed curtain of stars against which the alignment of these planets can be measured, is a preexisting and implicit statement of what a writing program "is," one to which two-year college faculty cannot help but respond. That is, already in existence are various models of programs—not to choose from, necessarily, but rather that coalesce around certain features and systems that I think we can use, shape, and revise in order to define an effective writing program at a two-year college.

Models of Writing Programs

What are those models? First, there's the R-1 model, or the "Big School" model. The R-1 model features a WPA and a cadre of graduate students and graduate TAs teaching first-year composition. In this model, the WPA is responsible for training graduate students, developing the first-year comp course taught by TAs (often through a common syllabus and set of assignments and a chosen text; see Fulkerson), and liaising with the rest of the English department and college community.

Second, there is the SLAC—"small liberal arts college"—model that has a WPA with a cadre of often adjunct teaching faculty. This model is less well defined (thus the need for the SLAC affiliate in the Council of Writing Program Administrators), but the WPA generally has the task of coordinating teaching efforts and overseeing the effectiveness of what is presumed to be a coherent and effective approach to teaching writing. The WPA in the SLAC model has "shared responsibility for writing instruction" on the campus (Gladstein, Lebduska, and Regaignon 15).

Still other models linger: the CCCC Writing Program Certificate of Excellence is awarded each year to outstanding writing programs, where the concept of *program* is "capacious" and can describe WAC/WID programs, writing majors, and many other kinds of programs (CCCC; see for comparison Janangelo's NCTE "Issue Brief"). Finally, there are the aforementioned descriptions and interpretations of *writing programs* at two-year colleges implicit in the published research, often designed with implicit program features in mind (see Janangelo and Klausman for their disclaimer).

Finally, there exists a general consensus among WPAs themselves. A 2009 discussion on the WPA-L listserv elicited numerous responses to the question of what a writing program "is." Gerald Nelms, Edward White, Louise Whetherbee Phelps, William Macauley, and others offered their views. For my purposes, Asao Inoue's post resonates most:

> A program is a program if it acts in three important ways, or if it does three important things that make it a program (in action): organizes and teaches a collection of courses that are grouped together (it could be that the courses in question are all the same course but taught by various teachers); articulates and uses a philosophy, mission, set of goals, and learning objectives (or outcomes) that span all courses (i.e., that its courses actualize or fulfill); assess [sic] itself in some way(s), since it cannot know for sure what is happening in various courses if it doesn't take explicit actions to find out.

Others chimed in with slightly different definitions, but these of the "ideal" that Inoue suggests seem supported in nearly every other pertinent model I have seen (such as Ed White's *Developing Successful College Writing Programs*).

Why is defining a program of value? The reason is that if we are to be able to say anything about the quality of our particular program—how well developed, how effective—we have to have some measuring rod, some way of saying, "We do this well, but we're not so far along here." In other words, we have to know what we are measuring ourselves against to know if we have anything at all. And since our assessment so often focuses on the effects of a program—on the quality of student writing, for example—rather than the program that is designed to enhance student writing, we need some way to assess the program itself, some way to measure the "program-ness" of our program. So, given the realities of two-year colleges—the nature of their faculty, of their students, of their missions—what might the model of a two-year college writing program look like?

Toward a Tentative Definition

At two-year colleges, the main business of English departments is to teach writing—the vast majority of classes offered through English departments are composition classes, often but not always including developmental English, and nearly always requiring more than one course for most students. That is, the majority of students in community colleges are required to take two or more composition courses as part of their studies (usually transfer degrees), and the vast majority of classes taught through English departments are composition courses. It is also safe to say that most of the classes taught by the faculty are composition courses. Implicit in the Raines, Taylor, Janangelo and Klausman, and Calhoon-Dillahunt studies/articles is the assumption that *writing program* refers to a sequence of composition courses. Therefore, and for my purposes, I am going to limit my discussion of a *writing program* to that which is built upon and around a sequence of composition courses.

Given that, what does that program look like? Again, implicit in the research carried on thus far, coherence is valued over incoherence. That is, implicit is some sense of togetherness—the faculty agree, for example, on what the writing courses are supposed to do, or the faculty agree that one course augments another in some fashion (e.g., Inoue's "outcomes"). Nowhere do I find evidence for the opposite claim, that a *program* implies incoherence. There are arguments about how that coherence is to be described and practiced; there are arguments about to what degree curricula and pedagogies should be uniform; there are arguments about the degree of freedom individual faculty have to design their own courses. But the underlying claim—that a program is marked by coherence—is not disputed.

So we have "a sequence of courses" and "coherence"—I think we are almost in a position to formulate a tentative definition. However, to get there, we have to consider how this coherence is established in a sequence of courses—and one trend I have noted is the attempt to avoid talking about WPA work and program-development work in general in terms of tasks or routines and especially documents (such as "learning outcomes" statements). Instead, the focus may be on the affective dimension of WPA work (see Micciche) or other abstract "fields" that is the "work" of the WPA (see Duffey). For me, where these approaches may coalesce is around activities, and when I think of activities, I think activity systems and activity theory.

Activity theory derives from Lev Vygotsky and comes to us in one of several ways, often through Alexei Leont'ev and Yrjo Engstrom, Russian and Scandinavian theorists, respectively. It is an approach to understanding workplace activity that eschews the individual as autonomous agent and isolated tasks as means of understanding how organizations operate. In their stead, it focuses on systems: the "prime unit of analysis" is "a collective, artifact-mediated and object-oriented activity system, seen in its network relations to other activity systems" (Engstrom "Expansive" 136). Thus, a writing program is not a series of tasks, a collection of statements, nor a result of individual actions, but a network of activity systems that interact with one another. (See Engstrom ["Activity"; "Expansive"] and see Vakkayil for more on activity theory.)

A *writing program*, then, can be seen as a system made up of interlocking, networked systems. For example, a program would not be defined as "having" a curriculum, but rather a program comprises a system that defines and revises a curriculum. It is the activity that counts, not the thing. The curriculum becomes a mere artifact—inert—once defined, but then it becomes a tool picked up and used in the next activity, one that, for example, might revise an individual instructor's pedagogy (in concert with his or her colleagues).

So, with activity theory as my lens, and the body of work on two-year college writing programs as the basis, I offer this tentative definition: a writing program at a two-year college is a set of three core interlocking systems and two essential features that support a sequence of writing classes that are part of a degree or certificate program.

The three essential systems are these: (1) a system of developing a coherent, theoretically sound curriculum that is implemented in a sequence of courses by all the faculty and that is assessed and updated based on information gathered through regular program assessment and through advances in the field of composition and rhetoric; (2) a system of assessing the program—at the course and program level, such as looking at syllabi, assignments, sample student papers—that then informs both revisions to the curriculum and plans for professional development; and (3) a system for faculty to develop their expertise and pedagogical techniques in the discipline and that is responsive to changes in the field of composition and rhetoric, changes in the teaching environment (e.g., technological advances, student needs), and changes to the curriculum, which new expertise then informs the revision of curriculum and the assessment principles and methodology.

And the two essential features are these: (1) leadership that is responsive to changes arising from the work of any of the systems above, is responsive to all faculty, is flexible, and is community building; this leadership may arise ad hoc or may be appointed, but it must be reliable; and (2) a sense of community shared by all faculty and that is bolstered by and bolsters the work of the activity systems outlined above. Note that I can imagine an objection being made that *community* is inherent in any activity system, and that argument is justified; however, my claim is that the sense of community necessary for the activity systems to operate are impacted negatively by extrasystemic factors, especially employment status (both contractual and perceived) governed by college administration, which must be overcome in order for the activity systems to operate fully. See "Implications" below.

There are other desirable features that are not mentioned here (since these are often out of the hands of English department faculty): integration with support systems (writing centers, tutoring), integration with placement procedures, integration with other campus-based writing initiatives (WAC/WID), integration with college learning outcomes (since these are too often skills based and positivistic and thus often in conflict with program and course goals that may be situated in social-constructivist or more rhetorically sophisticated terms); and strong support from college administration. These desirables may impact the effectiveness of the writing program but are not, in my view, essential to it.

The Degree of "Program-ness"

If these systems and features define, however tentatively, a *writing program at a two-year college*, how can they be helpful in assessing the development of a particular program? This seems a legitimate question since, again, coherence is an implicit good. The more fully developed a writing program is, the more coherent will be the parts, and—we can assume—the more coherent and thus more effective will be the teaching of writing.

In an attempt to make sense of where my own program is against this ideal, I developed a chart, which is reproduced as Appendix A. Each of the systems and features can be measured on a scale from 0 to 3 points based on how fully developed that system or feature is. This is highly subjective, I realize, and yet the subjectivity can be reduced with greater input from other faculty. That is, if an entire department were to consider the systems and features listed in the chart and discussed the level of development of their own program, the resultant conclusions would doubtless be both more accurate and more informative. (Indeed, such an activity would itself constitute some form of program assessment.) The chart lists the three systems and two features on the left and allows a weighted measurement for each: 3 points for "fully developed/present throughout program" down to 0 points for "inactive throughout/inchoate in part or throughout." Thus, we have a measure of relative "program-ness," which we can describe on a range from "highly developed" to "undeveloped/inactive."

As detailed in Appendix B: Program Development Descriptors, programs that score 12–15 points can be called *highly developed*. A highly developed program includes systems that interact with each other, inform each other, and constantly evolve. These systems provide a means of developing an effective curriculum based on the latest research in the field filtered through active teacher-scholars and assessing that curriculum at the course and program level. Results of the assessment and developments in the field are made relevant to the program via faculty professional development and curriculum development as well as revised assessment. Participation in these activity systems create a shared sense of purpose and community that crosses ranks and gives rise to communities of practice wherein "leadership," regardless of title or position, is flexible and responsive to faculty, program, and institutional histories, constraints, and needs.

Programs that score 9–11 points can be called *developed*. A developed program has many if not all of the same features as a highly developed program though only partially implemented. For example, a developed program may have an evolving curriculum that is updated and revised often but not necessarily as a result of careful program assessment. A developed program may have excellent faculty development, for example, filling the need for faculty to learn more about basic writing pedagogy or online teaching, but this development is more ad hoc rather than systemic (however well a particular ad hoc system works). Leadership may or may not be "official," but it works at various times in various places but may

be vaguely developed or somewhat of a contentious issue. The sense of community is strong though not shared by all.

Programs that score 5–8 points can be called *marginally developed*. A marginally developed program may share some or most of the features of a highly developed program but rarely are all the different systems present, or if they are present, are situated in different parts of the program. For example, "program assessment" may be relegated to basic writing and not permeate college-level writing. Or faculty development may be limited to full-time faculty. Or curriculum development may be top-down with little input from the majority (probably adjunct) faculty. Likewise, leadership, however well intentioned, may not be responsive to the majority of faculty but rather operate in more of a boss-worker relationship or may, in fact, be marginalized. Still, some curriculum development, some professional development, and some program assessment gets done—but a marginally developed program is incomplete and inconsistent.

And programs that score between 0–4 points can be called *undeveloped/inactive*. An undeveloped or inactive program has some, few, or none of the features of a highly developed program. There may be efforts toward developing a shared curriculum, haphazard efforts to create faculty development opportunities, and some program assessment, though the latter may tend to be top-down, run by administration rather than program faculty. There's little sense of faculty buy-in—there may actually be a large divide among the faculty (adjunct faculty, for instance, having little contact with full-time faculty, having few or no opportunities to participate in assessment or curriculum design). Leadership, when it's present, may at times be reflexive, but may provide little more than administrative task fulfillment (scheduling, staffing, etc.).

Application

What is the value of this? Can this model and this chart actually help us understand anything new? My hope is that by using a definition, a program administrator or a group of faculty can roughly assess the level of development of their program. For example, when I looked at my program—and conducted a survey of faculty and assessed syllabi for the composition courses taught at my college—I was able to assess my program in the following ways.

For "ongoing curriculum development informed by regular program assessment and professional development," I gave my program a score of 2, for "Somewhat developed throughout." Why? We have a relatively thorough Curriculum Guidelines that was developed over several years and that touches on most aspects of teaching writing in our entire sequence of courses. However, there is no system for revising the guidelines; they are revised only when problems arise. And too often, these revision efforts falter before they are completed. Also, when I looked at the syllabi of composition courses taught for the 2011 fall quarter, I found that only half of

the syllabi significantly referenced the Curriculum Guidelines either explicitly or implicitly, suggesting the guidelines are not fully implemented.

For "ongoing formative program assessment that informs curriculum development and professional development," I gave my program a score of only 1, for "somewhat developed in part of program." We have a very well-developed portfolio assessment system in place, but only for our English 100, a basic writing (though not developmental writing) course. This assessment system directly informs curriculum revision in the class (faculty revise their assignments since the student writing the assignments is evaluated by other faculty) and indirectly informs curriculum in other classes (faculty in English 100 make changes to the other courses they teach). So, we have only one strong component of what could be a robust system of program assessment, and it has no direct connection with other systems. As much or more is lost from our assessment as is retained and used.

For "ongoing professional development in the discipline that informs curriculum development and program assessment," I give my program a score of 0, for "inactive throughout." We have no professional development system on our campus beyond the college-level system, which is weak at best. There is no standard for being current in the field of composition and rhetoric, no requirement that faculty teaching composition actually study composition or improve their practices based on current research. (Note that I believe we have a very strong faculty who teach very good writing courses at our college, and I'm proud to work here with these colleagues, but this says nothing about the existence of or need for an ongoing professional development system.) This is a significant weakness since the effectiveness of a program depends on a savvy and current faculty.

For "ongoing leadership that is informed by and informs the faculty, that is flexible and attuned to local histories, constraints, and opportunities," I give my program a score of 2, for "somewhat developed throughout." We are fortunate to have a designated writing program administrator position. However, in the six years of its existence, the position has lost half of its reassigned time as well as the capacity to apply dedicated funds for travel to professional conferences. Moreover, we have never defined the WPA role. Thus the WPA's ability to develop the systems that define a program is impeded.

For the feature "strong sense of community and inclusion among faculty of all ranks, high degree of participation in program-building activities," I give my program a score of 2, for "somewhat developed throughout." A survey I conducted with our composition faculty yielded responses that suggest surprisingly strong support for the program and a high degree of buy-in of the program goals and activities. However, that purported positive attitude does not necessarily translate to active community building. For example, half of the faculty reported participating in half or fewer of the program activities of the past five years, and meetings our WPAs have called in recent years are rarely well attended. Moreover, as an earlier study suggests (see Klausman "Not"), the realities of contingent labor mitigate ef-

forts at cohesiveness in program development. That is, since the vast majority of our faculty are adjunct, and since adjunct faculty are discouraged from considering themselves full members of the college community, the sense of writing program community is weakened.

Overall, with a possible high score of 15 (3 points each for three systems and two features), I give my program a 7, which I would describe as a "marginally developed" program. To use this model more fully, my next step would be to have others gauge the "program-ness" of our program and perhaps at a broader department-wide meeting discuss our assessments and the implications of those assessments. My sense is that from this discussion, we will naturally move toward actions we might want to take to rectify perceived weaknesses in our program.

Implications and Conclusion

I recognize the weakness of my definition—that my systems and features are somewhat arbitrary. Yes, they are based on research and discussion in the field, but anyone could probably argue for a fourth system and a third or fourth or fifth feature. Likewise, measuring the development of any of these systems or features is highly subjective and unlikely to stand up against any kind of rigorous critique. Granted. But I offer this definition and these means of measuring a program's development not as a definitive guide—though I do define a program—but rather as a heuristic, "serving as an aid to learning, discovery, and problem-solving" (Merriam-Webster). As a heuristic, it is meant to suggest both a point of departure (something to talk "from") and a point of return (something to talk back "to"). It is my hope that this definition of a writing program at a two-year college both stimulates conversation and challenges the status quo. If that happens, I think a number of other things will have to follow.

First, I think we will have to revitalize our efforts to make labor inequities a major focus of our professional organizations. I have worked on behalf of adjunct faculty both on my own campus and with the state faculty union, and I know that inequities exist absolutely and are even worse in other states than my own. Further, as some research has suggested (e.g., Klausman "Not"), reliance on adjunct faculty acts as a force that counters efforts to build program coherence. So, labor inequities do not merely form a parallel issue to program development; they form a force working against program coherence and thus the highest-quality writing instruction. We know this, but now we have a rationale built within a theoretical frame, the sense of community as a component feature of a writing program.

Second, and along with that realization, we will have to ask what *professional* means. If we are to demand equal treatment for all faculty, we are going to have to ask ourselves the frank and difficult question of whether expectations for all faculty are equal, and by this, I mean professional expectations: training in and knowledge of current practices for teaching composition. What are those expectations and how

do we measure them? Do we really believe in the statements the Two-Year College English Association (TYCA) has developed on "Characteristics of a Successful Two-Year College English Instructor" and "Guidelines for the Academic Preparation of English Faculty at Two-Year Colleges" (TYCA "Position Statements")? If so, what follows? If not, why not?

Third, we' are going to have to ask ourselves some tough questions about what *academic freedom* means. According to the American Association of University Professors (AAUP), "institutions of higher education are conducted for the common good and not to further the interest of either the individual teacher or the institution as a whole." By this definition, I believe it is clear that the need for student success in sequential courses, bolstered by greater coherence ("the common good"), outweighs the individual faculty member's right to design a course that contradicts the goals of the program ("not to further the interest of (. . .) the individual teacher"). It is not a matter of academic freedom, for instance, for an individual faculty member to decide by herself or himself that teaching grammar explicitly and focusing on essay modes is the "right" way to teach writing when the program curriculum explicitly states otherwise. How a faculty member works with and within the curriculum is where academic freedom comes into play, not in rejecting the principles and practices of the program.

Fourth, we are going to have to have some tough conversations about the need for program assessment and faculty fear of surveillance. The fear of surveillance and all that suggests—job insecurity, professional insecurity—have to be brought to light and discussed, systems of job security have to be put into place (and thus, the labor issue again needs to be addressed), and a sense of a greater community, a "community of practice," needs to be developed. A system of assessment needs to be developed that encompasses the efforts of all the faculty. This is very tricky, given the realities of our profession: the relative newness of it—that is, the expectation that composition courses be taught by composition-trained faculty and not by literature-trained faculty (the comp/lit divide, which cuts across the employment status line); the inequities of labor (the full-time/part-time divide); and the multiplicity of approaches to teaching writing (especially if left undefined, everything from expressivism to critical discourse to current-traditional to a hodge-podge of all). Against all this, an emphasis on assessment as formative, rather than summative or evaluative, has to be developed.

Fifth, we are going to have to get administration buy-in, and to do that, we're going to have to conduct some research on the effectiveness of "programs" where they exist. This research can be descriptive. That is, if a program at College X measures itself as "developed," we can look at student writing produced at that college and other measurable outcomes and compare them with outcomes at our own colleges and others that might be described as "marginal" or "undeveloped." That would require us to make our programs known, possibly through some kind of national database (possibly using NCTE's Connected Community). Simultane-

ously, or even prior to the research, we might measure our own programs using the ideas presented in this article—however modified—in order to get a better sense of where our own programs are. We can then present our findings and our desires to build a better program and offer concrete reasons why. Jeff Andelora, for example, at Mesa Community College, told his administration that few if any of the new hires for composition in 2009 had any training in teaching writing at all. His vice chancellor gave him support to build "a world-class writing program," which began with new tenure-track hiring lines in composition and a director of composition position with reassign time, both of which would augment a professional development credit-bearing course on teaching composition already offered to all faculty for a nominal fee (Andelora). Clearly, this is a step in the right direction.

I do not know if the ground that Raines covered over twenty years ago has actually changed. But I do believe that enough work has been undertaken, enough research conducted, that at least a tentative, working definition can be offered for what *a* writing program at a two-year college is. And I think that tentative definition can help us heuristically: it can serve as a means of invention as we imagine what a writing program might look like on our own campus; it can act as a measuring rod as we assess what we already have in place; and it can act as a goal as we demand, both from our administrations and from ourselves, better and more coherent writing instruction. You say you want a revolution? Imagine if we conducted these kinds of conversations at all of our campuses. Regardless of the outcomes and what kinds of programs were created, imagine the positive discussions about writing and writing instruction that might ensue. ◤

Directions: For each system or feature in the left hand column, assess where your program would currently fall in the four columns to the right.

System or feature/degree of development	Fully developed/ Present throughout program 3 pts.	Fully developed in part of program/ Somewhat developed throughout 2 pts.	Somewhat developed in part of program 1 pts.	Inactive throughout/ Inchoate in part or throughout 0 pts.
Ongoing curriculum development informed by regular program assessment and professional development				
Ongoing formative program assessment that informs curriculum development and professional development				
Ongoing professional development in the discipline that informs curriculum development and program assessment				
Ongoing leadership that is informed by and informs the faculty, that is flexible and attuned to local histories, constraints, and opportunities				
Strong sense of community and inclusion among faculty of all ranks, high degree of participation in program-building activities				
YOUR PROGRAM SCORES: Total of the column				
YOUR PROGRAM TOTAL (add the column totals): _____	Highly developed 12-15	Developed 9-11	Marginally developed 5-8	Undeveloped/ Inactive 0-5

Scores	Program descriptions
Highly Developed 12–15	A highly developed program includes systems that interact with each other, inform each other, and constantly evolve. These systems provide a means of developing an effective curriculum based on the latest research in the field filtered through active teacher-scholars and assessing that curriculum at the course and program level; results of the assessment and developments in the field made relevant to the program via faculty professional development inform the curriculum as well as the assessment and professional development activities. Participation in these activity systems create a shared sense of purpose and community that crosses ranks and gives rise to communities of practice wherein "leadership," regardless of title or position, is flexible and responsive to faculty, program, and institutional histories, constraints, and needs.
Developed 9–11	A developed program has many if not all of the same features as a highly developed program though only partially implemented. For example, a developed program may have an evolving curriculum that is updated and revised often but not necessarily as a result of careful program assessment. A developed program may have excellent faculty development, for example, filling the need for faculty to learn more about basic writing pedagogy or online teaching, but this development is more ad hoc rather than systemic (however well a particular ad hoc system works). Leadership may or may not be "official," but it works at various times in various places but may be vaguely developed or somewhat of a contentious issue. The sense of community is strong though not shared by all.
Marginally Developed 5–8	A marginally developed program may share some or most of the features of a highly developed program, but rarely are all the different systems present, or if they are, they are situated in different parts of the program. For example, "program assessment" may be relegated to basic writing and not permeate college-level writing. Or faculty development may be limited to full-time faculty. Or curriculum development may be "top down" with little input from the majority (perhaps adjunct) faculty. Likewise, leadership, however well intentioned, may not be responsive to the majority of faculty but rather operate in more of a boss-worker relationship. Still, some curriculum development, some professional development, and some program assessment gets done—but a marginally developed program is hit and miss and inconsistent.
Undeveloped/ Inactive 0–4	An undeveloped or inactive program has some, few, or none of the features of a highly developed program. There may be efforts toward developing a shared curriculum, haphazard efforts to create faculty development opportunities, and some program assessment, though the latter may tend to be top-down, run by "administration" rather than program faculty. There's little sense of faculty buy-in—there may actually be a large divide among the faculty (adjunct faculty, for instance, having little contact with full-time faculty, having few or no opportunities to participate in assessment or curriculum design). Leadership, when it's present, may at times be reflexive but may provide little more than administrative task fulfillment (scheduling, staffing, etc.).

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Jeffrey Klausman teaches at Whatcom Community College in Bellingham, Washington.