

egocentrism and decentering and applies that conception to writing. She does not discuss Piaget's entire theory.

⁴For other positions taken in the colloquy over the "inner/outer" metaphor and over Piaget in general, see bibliographical essays by Greenberg, Hays, and Lunsford ("Cognitive Studies").

⁵I do not claim that the master tropes are the only rhetorical principles involved in Piaget's thought and discourse. I suspect that one could discover some version of Aristotle's *topoi*, Burke's pentad, Toulmin's layout, Perelman's loci, and other rhetorical systems operating in Piaget's argumentation and in his cognitive scheme.

Works Cited

- Arrington, Phillip K. "Tropes of the Composing Process." *College English* 48 (1986): 325-338.
- Barritt, Loren and Barry Kroll. "Some Implications of Cognitive-Developmental Psychology for Research in Composing." *Research on Composing: Points of Departure*. Eds. Charles R. Cooper and Lee Odell. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1978. 49-58.
- Berthoff, Ann E. "Is Teaching Still Possible? Writing, Meaning, and Higher Order Reasoning." *College English* 46 (1984): 743-755.
- Burke, Kenneth. *A Grammar of Motives*. 1945. Berkeley: U of California P, 1969.
- D'Angelo, Frank J. "Rhetoric and Cognition: Toward a Meta-theory of Discourse." *PRE/TEXT* (1982): 105-119.
- Donaldson, Margaret. *Children's Minds*. New York: Norton, 1979.
- Elkind, David. Editor's Introduction. *Six Psychological Studies*. By Piaget. New York: Random House-Vintage, 1968. v-xviii.
- Enos, Theresa, ed. *A Sourcebook for Basic Writing Teachers*. New York: Random House, 1987.
- Flavell, J. H. *The Developmental Psychology of Jean Piaget*. New York: Van Nostrand, 1963.
- Flower, Linda. "Writer-Based Prose: A Cognitive Basis for Problems in Writing." *College English* 41 (1979): 19-37.
- Greenberg, Karen L. "Research on Basic Writers: Theoretical and Methodological Issues." Enos 187-207.
- Haisty, Donna. "The Developmental Theories of William Perry and Jean Piaget: An Application to the Teaching of Writing." Diss. Texas Christian U, 1983.
- Hays, Janice. "Models of Intellectual Development and Writing: A Response to Myra Kogen et al." *Journal of Basic Writing* 6 (1987): 11-27.
- Inhelder, Barbel. Introduction. Inhelder and Chipman 1-8.
- Inhelder, Barbel and Harold H. Chipman, eds. *Piaget and His School: A Reader in Developmental Psychology*. New York: Springer-Verlag, 1976.
- Kroll, Barry. "Cognitive Egocentrism and the Problem of Audience Awareness in Written Discourse." *Research in the Teaching of English* 12 (1978): 269-281.
- Lunsford, Andrea. "Cognitive Development and the Basic Writer." *College English* 41 (1979): 38-46. Enos 449-459.
- . "Cognitive Studies and Teaching Writing." *Perspectives on Research and Scholarship in Composition*. Eds. Ben W. McClelland and Timothy R. Donovan. Urbana, IL: NCTE, 1985. 145-161.

Merleau-Ponty, Maurice. *Consciousness and the Acquisition of Language*. Trans. Hugh J. Silverman. Evanston, IL: Northwestern UP, 1973.

Piaget, Jean. "Biology and Cognition." Inhelder and Chipman 45-62.

———. *The Child and Reality: Problems of Genetic Psychology*. Trans. Arnold Rosi. New York: Penguin, 1972.

———. "Piaget's Theory." Inhelder and Chipman 11-23.

———. *Six Psychological Studies*. Trans. Anita Tenzer. New York: Random House-Vintage, 1968.

Ricoeur, Paul. *Interpretation Theory: Discourse and the Surplus of Meaning*. Fort Worth: Texas Christian UP, 1976.

Trimbur, John. "Beyond Cognition: The Voices in Inner Speech." *Rhetoric Review* 5 (1987): 211-225.

Vico, Giambattista. *The New Science*. Trans. Thomas Goddard Bergin and Max Harold Fisch. Ithaca, New York: Cornell UP, 1968.

Vygotsky, Lev. *Thought and Language*. Trans. Eugenia Haufmann and Gertrude Vakar. Cambridge: MIT Press, 1962.

White, Hayden. *Tropics of Discourse: Essays in Cultural Criticism*. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins UP, 1978.

TOWARD A DEFINITION OF A WRITING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATOR: EXPANDING ROLES AND EVOLVING RESPONSIBILITIES

Wendy Bishop
University of Alaska - Fairbanks

With the development of large freshman composition programs and with the dynamic and rapid changes that are occurring in the field of composition and rhetoric, writing program administrators face a sometimes bewildering array of demands on their time and expertise. English Departments can no longer afford to delegate the task of directing English composition or developing viable writing across the curriculum programs to untried and untrained junior faculty who have little or no interest in the field. Instead, qualified administrators are being trained through doctoral programs in rhetoric, composition, and linguistics (Chapman and Tate 1987) and through extensive work experience with support from professional associations. It seems important then, to overview job-related developments in the area loosely termed writing program administration.

The tasks and responsibilities of a writing program administrator can be broken down into several broad areas such as: student placement and record keeping, course staffing, program accountability, and curriculum development. Any of these areas can provide an administrator with problems, fiscal, theoretical, and practical. Given the fiscal constraints that are always with academic institutions, I will try to focus on theoretical and practical issues that a new administrator might expect to deal with in each of these areas.

Writing Program Administrators Place Students and Keep Records

A writing program administrator is expected to place incoming freshmen students into appropriate writing courses or to

exempt students with superior skills. Although many schools rely on students' SAT scores (sometimes in conjunction with high school grade point averages, etc.), evaluation researchers and theorists like Odell (1981), Cooper & Odell (1977) and Davis, Scriven, and Thomas (1981), to name a few, suggest that writing programs which value writing instruction should include writing samples (direct versus indirect assessment) in their placement scheme if for no other reason than to send a message to secondary educators that writing as a holistic process is valued for entering freshmen. Essentially, teachers will teach toward the test and if the college placement test is of the standardized variety, high school students will be directed toward work within a skills oriented curriculum which may or may not have validity in assessing their writing abilities.

It should be noted that any type of placement scheme requires the manipulation of a large amount of data on the part of the administrator, which can be enhanced by well-developed computer skills. Records need to be kept carefully as initial student placement is not infallible and a certain, often significant, number of students will change courses after being assessed by their writing instructors. Additionally, students drop out of classes, re-enroll, challenge placement, and so on. The administrator will have to develop a sophisticated, fair, and accessible system for dealing with individual students and teachers. New administrators should tap expertise within their own department: former program directors, colleagues interested in computers and research and data gathering methodology, etc. In addition, they may look to their colleagues in other disciplines. This may include discussing testing or data storage plans with experts in education, computer science, or academic support services.

Writing Program Administrators and Staffing

Writing administrators also work with a varied teaching faculty. Neel (1978) in his survey of writing programs found that a majority of freshman level teaching was performed by teaching assistants or part-time instructors. Additionally, permanent faculty, especially those who were trained in literature, are often reluctant to take on writing instruction, worried about their own skills, and sometimes, as a result, inflexible or defensive in their instructional methods (Hellstrom 1984). Young (1986) points out that over 60% of course enrollment generated in most English Departments comes from writing courses and working in this interface of literature and writing oriented department factions will require great diplomacy on the part of a writing administrator who hopes to develop a sense of working partnership with instructors in her program.

Staffing problems then will have two components which need addressing: faculty morale and the need for faculty development/reeducation. A well-educated composition teaching faculty results in higher program morale and can offer greater support and training to new teachers. Administrators need to be prepared to offer training courses for GTAs, for a growing number of such courses are being offered within English departments rather than within Education departments. If funds for courses are limited, year long workshops and teacher observation/development programs need to be instituted. Hellstrom (1984) discusses the need to develop a good departmental attitude toward teacher training at the college level. Additionally, administrators will want to work with current faculty to aid them in acquiring new skills necessary for developing a successful writing oriented composition classroom. This training may take place in faculty retreats, in-service workshops, colloquia, and by encouraging faculty to write, publish, and offer work-

shops that link their scholarship in the interrelated areas of writing and literature.

Writing Program Administrators and Program Accountability

Whether they deserve such attention or not, program administrators will always be responsible to higher administrators for formal evaluative reports on their program. In the worst case, higher level administrators will want to know the answer to one question only: do our students write better? This is not necessarily a bad question but one that is almost impossible to answer clearly and with minimal expense. However, with the careful use of competency testing, some attempt can be made to answer the question by offering students exiting from a freshman sequence (or junior or senior students) a holistically evaluated essay exam. It should be noted, though, that most of the evaluation specialists cited above produce convincing arguments against the whole scale imposition of such testing. Diderich (1974) does offer the most reasonable attempt to discuss school-wide competency testing. Of even greater interest, Elbow and Belanoff (1986) describe a portfolio evaluation method more in keeping with process based programs.

Simply testing exiting students for basic skills will not really show how effective an entire program is nor the commitment of a department to improved teaching of writing. These two areas should be argued as more worthwhile for investigation by any writing administrator who has influence with her administrators. Witte and Faigley (1983) have shown the complexity of program evaluation (they suggest developing a matrix of twenty-five possible areas for investigation), and both they and Davis, Scriven and Thomas (1981) suggest that multiple measures need to be gathered which can be a costly and time consuming process. Program evaluation encompasses not only student progress but curriculum and faculty development and this requires a more innovative and responsive system of evaluation, one that is formative rather than summative. Teachers can participate in self-evaluation procedures by keeping and updating a teaching folder. Departmental publication of superior student texts, collected through contests or gathered from classroom work and reproduced as an end-of-the-year bulletin or as a classroom readings text for the next year's students can focus institutional attention on successful student writing.

Writing Program Administrators Develop the Curriculum Writing Courses

The broad category of curriculum development covers three key areas: course planning, the development of a writing center, and, when possible, a writing across the curriculum program. In the area of course development, it will do little good to have a state-of-the-art placement program for incoming freshmen students and then to require that they take a poorly designed course or course sequence. If students are to be separated into levels, what mechanisms are in place to assure them the greatest help when progressing through those levels?

For instance, if basic writers are placed into special sections of composition, are they given adequate support to develop the skills that current research shows them as needing? These students need to see themselves as writers, to write often, to have a supportive environment for writing, and so on. Are these students aided by teachers who understand their problems and by a writing center and writing center staff who understand their problems or are they sent to remedial classes, drilled in grammar textbooks that have no relation to their own writing, and

directed to work on auto-tutorial computer programs of poor quality?

The choices I've outlined here are, of course, broadened in order to make a point; nonetheless, the program administrator is often the person who has the greatest direct influence on the curriculum and curriculum support services and will need to be constantly working to improve her curriculum.

An administrator would be wise to include as many faculty and instructors as possible in the curriculum development process. She will see to it that adequate sample texts are gathered for departmental review. As texts are reviewed and discussed in departmental meetings, faculty have a chance to express their views, see what others think, and grow as teachers. Often, department members have developed thoughtful and well-developed individual texts or supplemental teaching materials that can be shared with colleagues. Such involvement can encourage faculty members to design new composition courses and to help the administrator evaluate where such courses could function in a program. The administrator will also need to decide whether (and how) to enforce intra-departmental course consistency, a real consideration given that most composition students are *required* to take courses in the composition sequence.

The Writing Center.

In developing a writing center, the administrator faces many challenges. First, she needs to see that it has adequate funding. After funding, the appointment of a full-time, professional director who is a member of the department's faculty is essential. Without such status, more traditional members of a faculty can find reasons not to support a writing center. Kail (1982) and North (1984) detail some of the problems writing centers and writing center directors face: lack of esteem on the part of traditional full-time faculty, misunderstanding on the part of faculty members (who view writing centers as fix-it shops for grammar problems), lack of adequate funding and space, and so on. Although the writing administrator will delegate most writing center concerns to a director, the two should work well together because the administrator is the single most important link between the writing student, writing instructor, and upper level administrators. Olson (1984) and Harris (1982) describe many of the particulars for setting up such a center.

Writing Across the Curriculum.

A writing program should concern itself deeply with the needs of freshman students, but a program director and a university administration should also support the writing growth of students at all levels of an institution (Bishop, in press). By opening up the writing center to all students on campus, this emphasis is begun (McAndrew 1984). Even more clearly, a writing administrator who develops or shares in a writing across the curriculum (WAC) program will be supporting increased literacy for all students. Some WAC programs start at the departmental level. Others are begun when an administration or college-wide faculty perceives a need for improved writing within professional schools or beyond the freshman sequence. Sometimes changes in baccalaureate degree requirements can best be satisfied by a multi-year writing sequence. Young and Fulwiler (1986) detail the growth of such a program at Michigan Tech University.

Because content area faculty can sometimes look with suspicion upon an English department imposed WAC program, the writing center offers a good location for such a plan. This will call for expanded services: faculty training, curriculum develop-

ment, perhaps more teaching assistants (if writing intensive courses within disciplines are offered [Griffin 1984]). Again, although the writing administrator will not be directly administering such a program, her help and expertise will be essential for its viability within a university.

Conclusion

After reviewing these broad areas of a writing program administrator's potential responsibilities, it is clear that the same problems can occur in any single area: lack of funds, personality clashes, lack of training and expertise, lack of departmental consensus, poor record keeping, and so on. And it is difficult to say which program function is of the greatest importance. It seems equally important to place students accurately in classes as it does to assure that those are quality classes. It is important to train composition instructors but training will go only so far without adequate departmental and institutional support in terms of continued in-services, writing center assistance, and so on.

The major challenge for a new writing program administrator is that of becoming expert in so many fields yet still working toward the important goal of improved student writing. Certainly writing administrators need a strong grounding in rhetoric, linguistics, evaluation, composition theory and research, and practical experience in working with a diverse group of people: students, parents, administrators, faculty. Equally important, they need the support and backing of a department and administration that sees writing program administrators realistically, understanding the multiple demands and many restraints that are placed on writing programs. Program administrators can no longer be defined by a single role and its related problems and responsibilities. These individuals must develop multiple areas of expertise to meet the many challenging developments and issues ahead in the field of program administration.

Works Cited

- Bishop, Wendy. (In press). "Planning for a Writing Across the Curriculum Program: Issues and Suggestions." *The English Record*.
- Chapman, David W., and Gary Tate. (1987). "A Survey of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition." *Rhetoric Review*, 5: 124-186.
- Cooper, Charles R., ed. (1981). *The Nature and Measurement of Competency in English*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE.
- Cooper, Charles R., and Lee Odell, eds. (1977). *Evaluating Writing: Describing, Measuring, Judging*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE.
- Davis, Barbara Gross, Michael Scriven, and Susan Thomas, eds. (1981). *The Evaluation of Composition Instruction*. Inverness, CA: Edgepress.
- Diderich, Paul. (1974). *Measuring Growth in English*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE.
- Elbow, Peter, and Pat Belanoff. (1986). "Portfolios as a Substitute for Proficiency Exams." *College Composition and Communication*, 37: 336-339.
- Griffin, C. W. (1985). "Programs for Writing Across the Curriculum: A Report." *College Composition and Communication*, 36: 398-403.
- Hellstrom, Ward. (1984). "Economics, Elitism, and Teacher Apprentice Programs." *ADE Bulletin*, 77: 26-32.
- Kail, Harvey. (1983). "Collaborative Learning in Context: The Problem with Peer Tutoring." *College English*, 45: 594-599.

- McAndrew, Donald A. (1984). "From Writing Center to Center for Writing: A Heuristic for Development." *Writing Lab Newsletter*, 9: 1-5.
- Neel, Jasper P., ed. (1978). *Options for the Teaching of English*. New York: MLA.
- North, Stephen M. (1984). "The Idea of a Writing Center." *College English*, 46: 433-446.
- Olson, Gary A., ed. (1984). *Writing Centers: Theory and Administration*. Urbana, Ill.: NCTE.
- Witte, Stephen P., and Lester Faigley. (1983). *Evaluating College Writing Programs*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP.
- Young, Art. (1986). "Rebuilding Community in the English Department." *Writing Across the Disciplines*. Ed. Art Young and Toby Fulwiler. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook.
- _____, and Toby Fulwiler, eds. (1986). *Writing Across the Disciplines*. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook.

A DIALECTICAL MODEL FOR COLLEGE COMPOSITION

William Zeiger
San Diego State University

In an essay once much anthologized, "A Dissertation upon Roast Pig," Charles Lamb applauds the savory satisfactions of his favorite food. He begins by inventing a fable about how roast pig came to be an esteemed entree in old China; he identifies the eating of pig with genteel gratification; he lavishly describes the succulence of the pig as it roasts—its crisping skin, its juicy fat, its tender meat. He compares the eating of it to the enjoyment of other dainties, declares it as tasty as pineapple, yet heartier. These accolades extend throughout the essay, with disarming good humor and gusto extolling the indulgence of an appetite. Gradually, however, as the essay progresses, other ideas slip in which widen the essay's conceptual scope: the pig is personified; it seems generously to give itself for human consumption; it takes on Christ-like qualities. The pig is thought to suffer. A digression about an injustice to a small boy extends the idea of suffering to the human plane. The word "torture" appears. There is a brief but palpable passage recalling the medieval Inquisition. Each of these ideas emerges innocuously, as it were, without arresting the comic career of gustatory joy; yet cumulatively these wayward references constitute an antithetical position, asserting that the satisfaction of one creature's desire may cause another creature pain. By the end of the essay, the question of roast pig has broadened to embrace along with the enjoyment of appetite on one side the dangers of insensitivity on the other; and the reader's laughter grows pensive.

This old chestnut exemplifies a formal strategy quite distinct from the thesis-support structure of conventional college composition, and a strategy ripe with potential for stimulating fresh thought. More than a decade ago Keith Fort called for college English to liberate itself from the "critical essay" structure. Since then several articles have extended the discussion. My own "Exploratory Essay" proposes the teaching of familiar essays alongside the expository form. Coe describes several ways to reintegrate form into process. Anderson analyzes a Burkean alternative to the conventional thesis-support structure. Lamb's essay illustrates another alternative, a dialectical form in which a thesis gives rise to an antithesis and the two antitheses struggle together, creating the need for a synthesis. During the past two

years I have taught this form in my composition classes. Its chief virtue is that it fosters a respect and tolerance for ambiguity. Too many essays that I used to receive from students adopted a clear position at the outset and "supported" that position, sometimes shrilly, as if any contrary opinion were unthinkable. It seems counter to a liberal education to encourage students to entrench themselves in a complacent bias. A dialectical form requires the writer to examine opposing viewpoints.

The dialectical model stimulates thinking as all forms do, by guiding thought into specific coherent patterns. Almost invariably when we try a form—whether a comparison/contrast essay or a sonnet—we find that some of our ideas fit readily and some new ideas must be generated to complete the pattern. Thus the form spurs us to create something we hadn't foreseen. Yet we remain free of the form in the sense that we deliberate over how well we like what we produce and how well our initial inspiration has been served. We may discard a cumbersome form; but we should appreciate the rewards of cleaving to a form as well.

Form, in its emptiness, is heuristic, for it guides a structural search. Faced with the emptiness of a form, a human being seeks matter to fill it. Form becomes, therefore, a motive for generating information. Like any heuristic, it motivates a search for information of a certain type: when the searchers can anticipate what shape of stuff they seek, generation is less free, but much more efficient; by constraining research, form directs attention. (Coe, 18)

The dialectical form not only directs the writer to consider a view excluded by the initial view; it also suggests that opposing views need not "fight to the death," but may join in a synthesis which preserves essential features of both sides.

When they choose topics for their essays, I ask my students to address issues from their own experience and reflections so that they can invest both antitheses with genuine concern. The antithesis is less valuable, less potent, if the writer retains an "us-them" attitude than if each alternative embodies a personal motive. If the initial bias does not permit the writer to treat an alternative view sympathetically, then it is best to choose another topic. But in most cases we are willing, even when we favor one side strongly, to examine the opposing side and allow that, in another context, perhaps, we might adopt its values. Such an admission opens the possibility of true antithesis. One writer (not in my class—a Texas Republican on a news program) expressed the strongest disapproval of Richard Nixon's lying to the American people; then he tempered his anger by admitting that he, too, lied sometimes. Though his own lies were not so fraught with consequence as the President's, his experience of them—being under pressure and looking for an "out"—enabled him to understand the behavior with a degree of personal insight and fellow feeling. The dialectical essay need not be confessional, but the opposing sides must not be treated as routine arguments; they must be quickened with the writer's belief.

It is important to distinguish between an antithesis and a simple contradiction. As Walter Ong cautions (31-32), a contradiction may simply deny a thesis without making a counterstatement. A genuine antithesis, however, makes an independent assertion expressed in its own terms and having its own rationale. One of my students, for example, began a rough draft by describing how important it was to her to diet and maintain a trim figure. As an opposed value she presented the spectre of unrestrained eating making her overweight and ugly. But these two ideas are not true antitheses because they subscribe to the single idea of slenderness. An appropriate opposite to a