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Task Force Recommendation

Rhetoric and Composition Relocation Proposal



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Executive Summary

It is the recommendation of this Task Force that one of the following changes be made (not rank ordered):

- Combine the Rhetoric and Composition Program with the Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum to create a single unit (e.g. “ASU Writing”), with one direct report to Academic Affairs or the head of University College, or
- Create a Rhetoric and Composition Program as a separate unit with a direct report to Academic Affairs or the head of University College.

The Task Force strongly recommends against delaying this decision. Structural problems are increasingly interfering with the department’s ability to function, and postponement of a resolution will exacerbate the problems.

The primary factors supporting this recommendation, based on the overarching criterion of what would be best for students, are as follows:

- Benefits gained across the university by giving greater autonomy to Rhetoric and Composition and locating it in a multidisciplinary structure ,
- Evidence of significant morale problems that have the potential to impact teaching and job performance throughout the department, and
- Increased potential for effectiveness and development of Rhetoric and Composition and the other programs in the English Department by decreasing bureaucratic inefficiencies and wasted energies.

Preface

This Task Force has spent countless hours this past semester listening to faculty, reading numerous reports and articles, and debating the issues. This report is an attempt to focus on the critical issues and present them both succinctly and thoroughly. Readers are encouraged to examine the appendices in addition to the main report, since numerous other arguments and issues have been raised by all parties involved in this proposal. In addition, the Task Force Chair is more than willing to provide interested persons with additional relevant materials that were gathered during the course of the semester.

Points of Unanimous Agreement

Throughout this process, the Task Force proceeded carefully, thoughtfully, and professionally. In the course of debating these issues, we came to unanimous agreement on the following points:

- The Rhetoric and Composition Program needs greater autonomy in its decision-making. Regardless of whatever decision is made, the program should have autonomy over a separate budget, hiring and promotion of faculty, curriculum changes, scheduling, and placement of students.
- Voting rights need to be restored to full and three-quarter time non-tenure track faculty, in accordance with the Faculty Handbook. Regardless of what decisions and changes may be made university-wide in the future, the present situation violates principles of faculty governance, and must be addressed immediately. Removing “adjunct” from their titles should take place regardless of any other outcomes.
- Leaving the situation as it is will be detrimental to all faculty members involved.

The rest of this report (with the exception of the history section) represents the conclusions of the majority of the Task Force members. One member came to different conclusions about specific issues; a minority opinion by this member is included at the end of this report (see Appendix I).

History of the Proposal and Task Force

In the spring of 2009, the Rhetoric and Composition Committee began discussing the possibility of an independent program in University College, where the Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum were already located. Harvard Professor Nancy Sommers visited in late April, and led a workshop for Writing in the Discipline faculty. At that time, in consultation with Sommers, program administrators began investigating independent writing programs.

A meeting was held between James Ivory (incoming interim chair of English), Tony Calamai (then interim Dean of Arts and Sciences), Dave Haney (Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education), and Tony Carey (Vice Provost for Faculty Affairs) on May 11th, 2009, at which the interest in relocating the program was discussed. Dave Haney at this time informed Provost Stan Aeschleman of the relocation concept, since it involved two colleges and would necessitate the involvement of his office. The Rhetoric and Composition administrators continued researching this issue over the summer of 2009.

On August 26th, Georgia Rhoades, Kim Gunter, Beth Carroll, Tonya Hassell, and Dave Haney (James Ivory was invited on August 23rd, but was unable to attend due to a conflict) met to discuss the research they had done over the summer. The Rhetoric and Composition faculty planned to draft a written proposal and bring it to the chair before presenting it to the English Department. The chair decided to place the topic on the agenda for the first faculty meeting of the fall semester. Accordingly Kim Gunter, as Director of Composition, announced that a proposal to move Composition to University College was being drafted.

On September 2nd, Stan Aeschleman, Tony Carey, Tony Calamai, and Dave Haney met to discuss how to address the proposal. They agreed to make the discussion as transparent as possible and to involve all stakeholders in the discussion. They proposed that after the proposal was completed, it should be distributed to relevant administrators. The proposal was completed September 28th, 2009. The proposal (see Appendix A) was presented to the English Department faculty, and responses were drafted by the following departmental committees: Graduate, Literature, General Education, and Undergraduate (see Appendix B).

Stan Aeschleman appointed a Task Force at the end of the Fall 2009 semester with representation from English, Arts and Sciences, University College, and the Writing Program to discuss the proposal and its implications, solicit input, look at other schools, and ultimately make a recommendation to the provost. The membership of the Task Force was chosen from faculty in the English Department and Rhetoric and Composition, since they were the primary stakeholders, and additional external members.

The Task Force held its first meeting on January 22nd, 2010, at which time Provost Aeschleman charged the members with researching the issues around the proposal and making a recommendation. He requested that the recommendation be made before the end of the spring semester. The Task Force set itself a deadline of Spring Break for the information-gathering phase, to be followed by a deliberation and recommendation phase. A regular meeting was scheduled for Monday afternoons, and the Task Force met every week during the spring semester except for holidays.

Dr. Norman Clark, chair of the Task Force, held confidential meetings with any interested faculty; approximately 20 faculty met privately with him for an hour each. Faculty were also encouraged to email the Task Force with any comments which could be anonymous; 10 people did so. The Task Force held three open forums during the evenings of the spring semester, during which time the Task Force members primarily listened to feedback. A separate open forum was held specifically for non-tenure track members of the English Department, to encourage open discussion without fear of reprisals. The Task Force also met with the University College Council to hear their comments and concerns about the proposal on March 1st. During this time, the Task Force gathered numerous internal documents, and external research, related to the proposal. At the end of this process, over 40 documents were posted to the AsULearn site created for the group.

During the course of this semester, changes occurred to the administration structure and Task Force membership. On March 12th, Dr. Tom Mc Laughlin, who had been a member of the Task Force, resigned for health-related reasons. Stan Aeschleman announced he would step down as Provost at the end of the academic year, and Dave Haney announced his departure from the university, and Mike Mayfield was appointed interim Vice Provost.

On the evening of March 15th, the Task Force met for a multi-hour retreat, at which time the key concerns and issues revolving around the proposal were addressed, using the information gathered during the first half of the semester. Dr. Norman Clark was tasked with drafting a recommendation for the Task Force to revise and vote on before the end of the semester. The Task Force met on April 28th to finalize and vote on the recommendation.

Throughout this time, a total of three relevant votes were taken by external groups. First, a straw poll was conducted of non-tenure track faculty in the fall semester. Thirty-one voted in favor of moving the program, four were opposed, and one undecided. Second, a straw poll of the tenure-track faculty in the English Department was conducted on February 24th. Thirty of the forty tenure-track faculty voted; of those, seventeen voted for the program to stay, nine for it to move, two were indecisive, and two votes were not scored since they did not follow the voting procedure. Compiling these results yields 40 in favor of the move, 21 opposed, and 3 undecided. Finally, the University College Council voted on April 12th on whether or not University College would be an appropriate home for the Rhetoric and Composition program if it were to move. Prior to this vote, a substantial rationale for an independent writing program was submitted to the University College Council members (see Appendix C). Ten voted in favor of this motion, two opposed, and four abstained.

Key Concerns

Obviously any proposal with the potential for such significant impacts would raise numerous concerns. In this case, the concerns ranged from the philosophical to the practical, and were expressed by persons from across the campus, although primarily from those most directly impacted. Several issues were identified in the original proposal (Appendix A), and even more in the subsequent responses (Appendix B).

In addition, the Task Force spent the first half of the spring semester in an information-gathering phase, providing faculty with numerous opportunities to give feedback, including private meetings, open forums, and email. The concerns expressed during this phase are consolidated and grouped in Appendix D.

The concerns that were expressed consistently, and were judged upon further research to be significant and legitimate, revolved around three key themes: pedagogical, morale, and structural considerations.

Pedagogical Considerations

When the Task Force was charged by the Provost, we were told to focus on what would be best for students. Faculty across campus often note that students are coming to universities with less preparation in communicating complex thoughts clearly in writing. The focus of any change made to writing at ASU needs to be on preparing students to become skilled and effective communicators. ASU can only strengthen its reputation and better serve its students by aggressively promoting writing skills across the curriculum, and has made great strides towards this goal with the recent changes to General Education.

Some would argue that, philosophically, writing “belongs” to a particular department. However, writing is cross-disciplinary, since in every department on campus, students must engage in writing. But this question misses the important issue. The more appropriate question is not where does writing “belong,” but who is most qualified to teach it? In this case, the Rhetoric and Composition faculty are obviously the experts, and their expertise is not location-dependent. At the same time, faculty need to be located in structures that allow them to exercise their expertise to maximize student learning.

Most would agree that the current level of writing instruction is high. Students benefit from faculty who are engaged in significant and ongoing professional development and mentoring. So the issue becomes, how can instruction be improved?

Some faculty argued that pedagogy could be negatively impacted if the program were to be removed from the English department, where it benefits from dialogue with terminal degree faculty in other English programs. However, dialogue is currently not occurring in the department, and could (should) occur across department boundaries in any case. In fact, such dialogue might be more productive if the current tensions were to be defused.

Writing program administrators, in their document to the University College Council, identified four potential benefits to students from an independent writing program: improved teaching quality in writing courses, more cohesive links among university writing programs, innovative program and instructional development, and enhanced understanding of the place and importance of writing at ASU. Please see Appendix C for a more complete discussion of these benefits.

Research on independent writing programs suggests connections between pedagogy and three other factors: autonomy, curricular development, and morale. In general, the administrative structural constraints of being subordinate to the English Department have made it difficult for the program to hire, encourage and assess instructors; place students in appropriate courses; and develop new courses. Having a more autonomous program would strengthen its ability to meet these and other pedagogically-related goals. Secondly, independent writing programs report that more creative and innovative course development becomes possible after separation (see in particular *A Field of Dreams*, by O’Neill, Crow, and Burton). Independence allows for greater focus and cohesion across the various writing courses and programs in the institution. Finally, research has connected job satisfaction with effort and performance (see Appendix H). Faculty work conditions have been linked to student learning conditions. In addition, it seems logical that lowered morale could also negatively impact faculty motivation to take part in professional development. In contrast, creating conditions where morale is improved can lead to increased job satisfaction/performance, improved faculty retention, and enhanced student learning.

Reinforcing published research, local evidence suggests that relocating the Rhetoric and Composition Program would benefit students. When the Writing Center relocated to University College, more students across the university, in classes other than English writing courses, began to make use of it. Relocating the Rhetoric and Composition Program outside of a specific department could also lead more students to see writing as central to their education. Courses that emphasize the interdisciplinarity of writing increase students' ability to transfer those skills to other contexts.

Morale Considerations

Clearly, morale in the English Department is very low. Recent events have combined to create an environment that is unhealthy for many members. Some of the morale problems are due to issues unrelated to the proposal, but the majority of the contributing factors are directly connected. Three key morale problems were identified: counterproductive expenditures of energy, perceptions and statements of disrespect, and disenfranchisement.

The most consistent comment from all faculty involved, regardless of their position on the proposal, was that the issues and arguments revolving around the proposal were consuming far too much of the faculty members' energy. All faculty are desirous of a resolution to this issue so they can return to productive work. The consensus was that having to spend so much energy on this issue was negatively impacting their ability to engage in class preparation and research. In addition, significant time is wasted with the current redundant and to some extent hindering bureaucracy for scheduling, budgeting, hiring, and other administrative tasks. This unnecessary overlap causes both administrative inefficiencies and feelings of powerlessness.

Differences of perspective on the teaching of writing have led to perceptions of disrespect on both sides of the issue. As the semester has progressed, overt expressions of disrespect in the department have become increasingly common and rancorous. On the one hand, tenure-track faculty in the other English Department programs said in interviews with the Task Force chair that they felt their previous (and in some cases, current) experience with teaching writing was not respected by the composition program. They interpreted messages that professional development was needed before teaching English 2001 as disrespectful and questioning of their professional competence.

On the other hand, composition faculty, and in particular the non-tenure track faculty, expressed numerous perceptions of disrespect. In general, they believe that some of the faculty in other English Department programs do not understand or respect their writing instruction, or even them personally. A consistent theme was that composition faculty felt far more respected by other faculty across the university, through their involvement with Writing Across the Curriculum and the Writing Center, by whom they were seen as experts. This was in contrast to the impression they got from some English faculty, who the composition faculty felt saw them as second-class instructors of a service course that those faculty would not be willing to teach. The perceptions of disrespect accelerated during this spring semester, as some faculty were subjected to personal attacks both directly and indirectly. Some faculty were verbally threatened with negative appraisals when they were to go up for tenure. Written comments made on the "straw poll" taken in the English Department and distributed to the entire faculty listserv included several personal attacks (see Appendix E). More than one faculty member, including several not teaching in composition, noted that the environment in the department has become "toxic," and has negatively impacted participation in the department across all ranks and programs.

Finally, a significant issue impacting morale was the disenfranchisement of the non-tenure track faculty. The English DPC decision to remove voting rights from the NTTs by adding “adjunct” to their title, in order to eliminate the possibility of a NTT faculty member voting on tenure issues, had the additional consequence of causing a large portion of the composition faculty to have no say in decisions that directly affected their work. This heightened the feelings of disrespect, created inefficiencies and obstructions in decision-making (see Appendix F for an example), and escalated the conflict and tensions in the department. Analogies and comparisons to such historical events as the Civil Rights movement increased the polarization within the department. In summary, it is difficult to imagine a situation where morale could be lower in the English Department than it currently is.

Structural Considerations

Obviously, the English Department is complex. Even without morale issues, the smooth functioning of a department of this size would be challenged by its structural complexity. Add in the compounding factor of low morale, and structural issues begin to take on greater significance. Moreover, Rhetoric and Composition currently comprises nearly half of the department personnel. With the absence of decision-making autonomy for the program, structural problems are currently creating inefficiencies, redundancies, and obstructions that hinder Rhetoric and Composition from operating effectively and developing to its full potential. This is especially problematic at a time when ASU needs to increase and integrate writing instructions for all students in all majors.

At present, the number of committees, ad hoc committees, individuals, groups, and sundry other decision-making bodies involved in the operation of the Composition program are daunting from an external point of view (see Figure 1). For example, the following groups are currently, or recommended to be, involved in the process of hiring non-tenure track faculty in Composition: the NTT Search Committee, Program Area Committees, an ad hoc committee looking at NTT hiring practices, the Director of the Composition Program, the DPC committee, and the Chair of English. The problems created by this bureaucratic weight are compounded by the fact that the majority of the people teaching in the Composition program do not have the right to vote on structural decisions, and that the Faculty Handbook lacks clarity on how these bodies should operate.

The placement of graduate assistants is another area of structural concern. This process is complicated by both internal and external forces (sources of funding, SACS limits on teaching, etc.). Regardless of where the Composition program is located, it will be crucial for all parties involved to be able to cooperate. Well-established and concretely defined procedures will be necessary to ensure efficiency at all levels.

Some structural concerns will be difficult to resolve at this time. For example, resources such as office space and administrative staff are challenging to find even during a good budget year. However, it is important to note that conditions for nearly all faculty in Sanford Hall are substandard; non-tenure track faculty have in some cases abysmal conditions (see Appendix G). Vibrating offices, mass offices with no privacy, extremely small spaces, and other conditions make it difficult to engage in productive (and in the case of privacy, legally protected) work. Conferencing with a student about their grades in front of several other people, while pencils vibrate off of the desk, is problematic, to say the least. This is not, unfortunately, an exaggeration of any sort.

Recommendations

It is the recommendation of this Task Force that one of the following changes be made:

- Combine the Rhetoric and Composition Program with the Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum to create a single unit (e.g. “ASU Writing”), with one direct report to Academic Affairs or the head of University College, or
- Create a Rhetoric and Composition Program as a separate unit with a direct report to Academic Affairs or the head of University College.

The Task Force strongly recommends against delaying this decision. Structural problems are increasingly interfering with the department’s ability to function, and postponement of a resolution will exacerbate the problems.

Rationale

The various proposals and responses in the appendices all offer additional arguments either in favor of or opposed to moving Composition out of English. Our attempt here is to focus on those issues that the Task Force identified through research and debate as most critical to the question. We recognize that it would be impossible to deal with all arguments exhaustively; it is our hope to address the relevant issues effectively.

Numerous articles and book chapters have been written on independent writing programs (see Appendix H for a bibliography). These writings overwhelmingly argue in favor of separate programs; in fact, we could only find two articles that claimed writing programs should remain in English Departments. This is at least in part due to the fact that arguments in favor of the status quo rarely have to be made, and would rarely warrant publication since they are not noteworthy. However, it is worth noting that the vast majority of authors conclude that independent writing programs can create better working conditions for faculty and better outcomes for both programs and students.

In addition, arguments can be made on the extent of the national trend toward independent programs. While examples of other programs can be instructive, and assist in the practical implementation of any recommendation, it is generally considered to be a fallacy to make a decision just because other schools are, or are not, doing so. We felt that it was more important to consider what would be best in our particular situation, using other schools as sources of information and points of reflection, rather than as models to blindly follow.

Our primary concern in making this recommendation was, what will be best for the students? This deceptively simple question is challenging to answer in this situation, since evidence of a direct connection between the location of a program and student outcomes is essentially non-existent. However, significant work has been done on connections between program location and other indirect indicators, which we will address. Three key factors support the claim that a program move would benefit students: increasing both faculty and student understanding of the multi-disciplinary nature of writing, improving faculty morale, and creating opportunities for program development for both English as well as Composition.

Increasing Multi-Disciplinarity

Relocating the Writing Center to University College had an interesting consequence: more students began using it. Students and faculty alike began to see the Writing Center as a source of help for more than just the introductory writing courses. This perception of writing as central to the university was at least in part due to locating the Writing Center in University College.

With the new General Education Curriculum, the shift to seeing writing as a universal concern has intensified. Writing in the Disciplines for students, and Writing Across the Curriculum for faculty, have altered perceptions of writing instruction as both a universal as well as discipline-specific concern. The redesigning of ENG 2001 as an introduction to writing in the disciplines was yet another logical step in the shifting curricular role of writing instruction. It is clear that the focus of writing instruction at ASU is to prepare students to communicate effectively in a variety of contexts.

Locating the Composition Program in the same administrative unit as the Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum will increase perceptions of the multi-disciplinary nature of writing. Faculty are more likely than students to pay attention to administrative structures, but as evidenced by the increased use of the Writing Center, they **do** pay attention. Based on the example provided by ASU's experience with the Writing Center, it can easily be argued that students and faculty will be more likely to see the two General Education writing courses as central to their educational experience if they are located in a program that emphasizes cross-disciplinary links, and is closely aligned with other programs that do not have an affiliation with a specific academic department. This perception of the centrality of writing could benefit students as they move through their years at ASU, allowing them to more easily see the vertical connections in their coursework.

Improving Morale

The goal of any change that occurs should be to create conditions under which a program will thrive, to the benefit of its students. If we are serious about providing our students with the best possible instruction, morale needs to be improved. If we believe in deferring to experts, and the experts in writing believe this to be the best move for their program and for students, then we send a clear message that we do not see them as experts if we do not follow their lead.

With such a strongly and nearly unanimously expressed desire of the Composition faculty to leave the English Department, it is difficult to believe that morale can be improved by temporary or partial measures. If the program were to remain in the department as a semi-autonomous unit, non-tenure track faculty would still not have the right to vote. In addition, they would still perceive themselves as second-class members of the department, disrespected by many of the tenure-track faculty. While some might argue that moving the program would not solve all of these issues, Composition faculty morale would improve with a move that grants the program greater autonomy and voting rights.

Any program more easily thrives under conditions of encouragement, goodwill, and supportive interactions. Unfortunately, faculty in Rhetoric and Composition are facing a history of expressions of disrespect, an increasingly hostile environment, and obstructive interactions. If the faculty in Composition were to feel more valued in their work, this improved self-esteem would translate into increased confidence and enthusiasm in the classroom, from which all students would benefit. The faculty teaching in the writing program are to be commended for the high quality of their instruction and dedication, and efforts need to be taken to improve their conditions for even better outcomes.

Creating Opportunities for Program Development

Finally, it became clear through our research and conversations with faculty that the complexity of the English Department is hampering growth for all faculty, not just those in Rhetoric and Composition. As noted several times above, the structural inefficiencies are stifling productivity and growth for everyone involved. Faculty in other areas noted that they spend what they consider to be a disproportionate amount of time dealing with issues related to Composition. This time, they felt, could be better spent focusing on their own programmatic concerns. Faculty in Rhetoric and Composition perceive that it is difficult to make changes to their program when they have to spend time informing faculty from a wide range of specializations about the rationale for their proposals.

Rhetoric and Composition would benefit from closer and more direct ties to the Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum. This would allow for increased collaboration on mutually beneficial projects, such as bringing in guest speakers, faculty development, and more. The energy that comes from change and new structures would invigorate faculty in the area, giving them the push to overcome inertia and propose some novel programs and structures. Both written research and conversations with faculty at institutions where writing programs became independent indicate that these are typical outcomes.

Several faculty in other English programs noted that removing Rhetoric and Composition from the department would give them the opportunity to re-think the department as a whole. Without Rhetoric and Composition consuming their time, they would be able to revision what the department does, and why. If the department were less structurally complicated, it could be more efficient and thus more creative in the courses and programs offered. The outcomes of redirecting energy into new areas are difficult to predict, but it seems logical to conclude that the English Department, based on evidence from other universities, could emerge as a department with more focus, vitality, and attractiveness to students as a major.

Once again, students would benefit from a move from this perspective. By allowing both English and Composition the opportunity to grow, students will be exposed to increased connections across their writing instruction and creative new course offerings or concentrations within English. Just as faculty have been impacted by the distraction that this issue has created, so too have students. Turning all of this energy loose in productive ways will certainly have a more positive impact than forcing that energy to continue to turn inward until it implodes.

Implementation

Moving a program of this size and university-wide impact is a challenging task, even under ideal conditions. The following are our recommendations for how this could be done most effectively and efficiently. Regardless of the decision made by the administration, we urge that the following steps be taken:

- Given the current environment in the department, we urge that faculty take advantage of the summer as a time to reflect and “cool off,” so that a return to productive work will be more likely in the fall. This will only be possible if the administration makes a decision soon; otherwise, faculty will continue to be stressed over their futures and the future of their programs and the department. This is an additional reason for not delaying the process any longer.

- Also, regardless of the outcome, faculty involved will not be able to ignore one another. With no space available in other buildings at present, the Rhetoric and Composition faculty will remain in Sanford Hall for the near future. More importantly, faculty from various programs will need to continue to work together on such issues as graduate student hiring/scheduling and other mutual concerns. It is crucial that steps be taken to foster reconciliation among the various groups, and that clear procedures for collaboration be established.
- Finally, threats of non-renewed contracts and denial of tenure have surfaced throughout the past semester in the department. The administration needs to be aware that these are serious concerns, and should actively observe such decisions in the near future. It is sometimes difficult to document acts of retribution, since they can be easily disguised. However, if faculty who previously have been given positive performance reviews are suddenly not recommended for contract renewal, the Dean and Provost should take special care in examining these cases.

Resources: Space, Staffing, Equipment

Space issues at present are difficult to resolve, with the overcrowding of Sanford Hall. However, as space becomes available, we would recommend a consolidation of faculty offices and classroom space, perhaps placing all of the Writing Program faculty on one floor. This will not be able to happen immediately, but should occur over time as relocations, retirements, etc. occur.

A separate “main office” space would need to be established for Composition immediately, to give the program a distinct identity in the minds of students and faculty. This space should include room for an administrative assistant, copier, and mailboxes. We would recommend providing an administrative assistant for the Composition program; we would also recommend that this assistant line not come out of the existing lines allocated to the English Department.

Current faculty staffing levels are inadequate in the Rhetoric and Composition program, especially for graduate coursework, mentoring, and advising. An additional tenure-track faculty line should be allocated as soon as possible.

The Director of Space Management and Planning should work with the Chair of English and the Director of Composition to mediate classroom allocation issues. No additional classrooms should be needed; however, we recommend that specific classrooms be set aside for Composition use and scheduling by the Director of Composition, to minimize possible conflicts.

Budgets

If Composition, the Writing Center, and Writing Across the Curriculum are combined, the three administrators will take responsibility for the budgets for their respective programs. If Composition is moved to either Academic Affairs or University College as a separate unit, the director will assume responsibility for the budget for that program. Budget allocations will be determined by the Provost’s office. Impact on the English Department’s operating budget, assuming current allocation procedures stay the same, would be minimal since the number of FTEs moving would be small. Without program growth, and assuming student credit hours and line allocation metrics remain the same, the English Department could lose faculty lines over the long term.

Graduate Student Assistantships

Regardless of the changes in structure, it is important for all groups involved to work out specific roadmaps for collaboration. One concern is for the placement of graduate students in the Writing Center and writing courses. The Director of Composition, the English Department Graduate Director, and (if necessary) the Dean of the Graduate School (or representative) will need to meet and codify procedures, deadlines, decision-making processes, and all other details to ensure smooth collaboration between the programs. SACS guidelines require that teachers must have 18 grad hours in the field or comparable experience, so acceptable candidates will continue to come from English. To qualify as TAs, students will take appropriate mentoring courses.

Administrative Structures

The Composition Director will make decisions on hiring, evaluation, promotion, budget, and scheduling for the Composition Program, except for situations in which s/he confers with the Rhetoric and Composition graduate faculty or appropriate committees in the program. This aspect will be the same for a combined or independent program.

The Composition Program should form its own DPC to make recommendations on hiring, promotion, and tenure. The existing Faculty Handbook allows “comparable academic subdivisions” to have DPCs that consist of four members and a chair; the current number of faculty in Rhetoric and Composition would be sufficient to constitute such a committee.

If programs are combined, the three administrators of Composition, the Writing Center, and Writing Across the Curriculum will combine reporting to the appropriate authority. If Composition is moved as a separate unit of Academic Affairs or University College, the director will report separately to the appropriate authority.

Curriculum

The following course numbers should be switched from an ENG prefix to a RC (Rhetoric and Composition) prefix: 0900, 1000, 1510, 2001, 5120, 5121, 5122, 5124, 5510, 5990. The following courses will be cross-listed in both ENG and RC: 3400, 3450, 5100, 5300, 5999.

Curriculum decisions will be proposed by the Rhetoric and Composition curriculum committee, approved by Rhetoric and Composition faculty, before continuing the process to other appropriate bodies as designated by the Faculty Handbook.

The Dean of the Graduate School has indicated that the graduate certificate program could continue to exist as currently established if the program were to be located outside of English. The Rhetoric and Composition certificate advisor will continue to advise and admit students to the certificate program.

Conclusion

The Task Force appreciates the opportunity to study this issue in depth. We firmly believe that the creation of a separate Rhetoric and Composition program is the best course of action for ASU’s students and faculty. It is also important to note that the majority of the faculty in the English Department approve of this move, and the University College Council voted that University College would be an appropriate

home for the program if it were to move. We hope the administration respects the effort and research behind our recommendation, and the expertise of the faculty involved. We welcome any questions from any concerned parties.

Appendix A: Original Proposal

Proposal for the Relocation of the Composition Program* from the English Department to University College

Overview

The Composition Program supports and sustains the mission of General Education, as the new General Education curriculum relies on the Composition Program to provide the first two writing courses in the four-course vertical writing model (English 1000 and English 2001) and to provide faculty development for teaching these courses. However, the Composition Program faces many challenges: the program has no designated budget; the program is staffed by an overwhelming majority of non-tenure track faculty who are ineligible to participate in program governance; the program's faculty are not provided with adequate technological resources and office space; collaboration between the Composition Program, the University Writing Center and the Writing Across the Curriculum Program is impeded as these writing programs are housed in different colleges; most decisions concerning programmatic matters are not determined by experts in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, the norm in other UNC programs; and the program is limited in its ability to advance the larger goals of Rhetoric and Composition as a discipline.

This proposal recommends that the Composition Program be relocated to University College as an independent writing program. This relocation will centralize all three of Appalachian's academic writing programs within one college, allowing more cohesion and efficiency for writing support throughout the university. Additionally, relocating the program will benefit students because the program will be solely developed and assessed by faculty who specialize in writing studies. Finally, independent composition programs reflect a national trend [e.g., Metropolitan State University (Minnesota), Hampden-Sydney College (Virginia), James Madison University, San Diego State University, Grand Valley State University (Michigan), Georgia Southern University, Syracuse University, University of Arkansas-Little Rock, and Harvard University], and Appalachian State University has the potential to develop the first independent writing program in the UNC system.

* Please note that, by "Composition Program," we are referring to English 0900, English 1000, English 1100, and English 2001. By "Writing Program," we are referring to the Composition Program, the University Writing Center, the Writing Across the Curriculum Program and its work with the Writing in the Disciplines junior- and senior-level courses, and the Rhetoric and Composition graduate certificate. We are not referring to Professional Writing or Creative Writing.

Background

Appalachian's Composition Program has undergone a metamorphosis in the last ten years. For instance, in 1998, the program's extensive faculty were all in non-benefitted lines. However, in 2002, spurred in part by calls for improved working conditions for non-tenure track faculty (calls that were issued from the Board of Governors, Appalachian's Composition Program, and Appalachian's campus-wide Non-Tenure Track Committee), the English Department requested full-time lines for some composition faculty. The department converted one tenure-track line to a non-tenure track, full-time line in order to demonstrate to the university its commitment to improving the working lives of composition teachers. In the spring of 2006, Appalachian's Faculty Senate requested that the administration attend to its non-tenure track faculty, and in the fall of that year, eleven composition faculty members moved into benefitted lines. Eight years, then, after the first request, a total of twelve members of the composition faculty received improved wages and health coverage. Composition faculty have since been able to increase their professional development and their service to the university by working in the University Writing Center, the Visiting Writers Series, the First-Year Seminar Program, and the Writing Across the Curriculum Program. Due to grant-writing efforts and by establishing working relationships with publishers, professional development has continued as composition has brought nationally-renowned Rhetoric and Composition scholars to campus. This commitment to professional development further led to a new method of teacher evaluation; composition faculty now participate in peer mentoring groups, group members working closely together all year (observing one another's classes, examining each other's course plans, etc.) and, at the end of the spring semester, evaluating one another. The Composition Program has continued to develop—with travel money now allotted to non-tenure track scholars, additional tenure-track hires in Rhetoric and Composition, pilot teaching experiments in composition courses, linked classes, the incorporation of service learning, and non-tenure track faculty's increased involvement in and service to the program.

Two specific events, however, have brought the most significant changes to Appalachian's Writing Program. First, the University Writing Center (UWC) physically moved from Sanford Hall to the new Belk Library and Information Commons. The UWC also moved institutionally, from the College of Arts and Sciences to Academic Affairs and then to the newly formed University College. Though the UWC has continued a close, collaborative relationship with the English Department, this move has brought greater development of, greater visibility to, and greater use of the UWC, which is now recognized across campus as a unit that serves the entire university community regardless of discipline. Second, with Appalachian's implementation of the new General Education core, the Composition Program has transformed from a one-year, 1000-level course sequence to a two-year curriculum. Our new second-year course is grounded in a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) approach, and Appalachian's Writing Program is now at the center of this university with a third- and fourth-year Writing in the Disciplines requirement and an active WAC Program.

Due to the transformation of writing both within the Composition Program and at the institutional level, the Writing Program at Appalachian is poised for wider recognition. Our faculty have published about our program and presented at national and international conferences; we will present five panels and a pre-conference workshop at the Conference on College Composition and Communication, the premier conference in Rhetoric and Composition, in March, 2010. Though we foresee continuing a close partnership with the English Department, now is the time for composition to become an independent program, housed in the new University College where other components of Appalachian's Writing Program already reside.

Current Challenges

Appalachian's Writing Program is in a period of deep transition from a one-year horizontal model to a four-year vertical model. The Composition Program must reconsider and clarify its identity while also continuing to change and grow. The Composition Program faces many challenges, including the following:

- **Multiple Campus Partnerships:** Composition cooperates with various university units including the University Writing Center, the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, the General Education Program, and the First-Year Seminar Program. All of these units are housed in University College. Composition's current location in Arts and Sciences unnecessarily complicates communication and collaboration with these units.
- **Representation:** Composition faculty are excluded from the center of English Department governance. Department meetings are scheduled at a time when many composition faculty cannot attend, but more importantly, nearly all composition faculty are barred from voting, both within the larger department and as members of committees on which they serve. Our faculty's service is vital to insure multiple perspectives and the growth of the Composition Program. However, not only is service now happening without representation, but voting policies exclude the Composition Program itself from having accurate representation within the larger department since approximately 89% of composition faculty cannot vote.
- **Administrative Authority:** Currently, a number of composition matters are determined by faculty who are not Rhetoric and Composition specialists including placement of students in the composition sequence, scheduling of composition courses, granting of composition credit for transfer students, and setting enrollment caps in composition classes. While composition faculty are not empowered to make these decisions, they (and their students) must abide by them.
- **Hiring/Employment Practices:** The Composition Program currently contends with inefficient, unsound, and costly hiring and employment practices. For instance, many composition faculty also work in other locations within the institution (the University Writing Center, the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, and the First-Year Seminar Program). Composition is the only one of these units located outside University College, which leads to complicated staffing, scheduling, and review. The Composition Program would benefit if all faculty currently in ¾- and full-time lines had multi-year contracts. While our composition classes fill and even overload semester after semester, faculty remain on yearly contracts that are often not provided until late summer, leading to lack of retention of strong composition faculty and the unnecessary and expensive reality of hiring new and often less qualified teachers who must undergo extensive training. Because of the lack of multi-year contracts, faculty must also re-apply each year, and each application must be reviewed, creating inefficient, redundant workloads for both composition teachers and the Composition Director. Many of our teachers have to piece together an income by working at other institutions, and we lose good composition teachers every year because they find full-time employment elsewhere. This is a disruption to our program and an unnecessary distraction for our students.

- **Budget:** The Composition Program has no budget line of its own and does not control course releases for faculty in administrative positions, funding for faculty retreats, funding for faculty development workshops, or funding for curricular innovation.
- **Curricular Development:** The representation of Rhetoric and Composition as a field is minimal within the English major and the larger department due to its underrepresentation in the B.A., its lack of undergraduate courses, its lack of an undergraduate track, and the lack of soundly designed, wired classrooms available for the teaching of writing.
- **Office Space:** The Composition Program's faculty resides in office spaces that are cramped, overcrowded, and noisy, impeding composition pedagogy. Faculty find it next to impossible to conference with students about their writing and cannot discuss private matters such as course grades. At least one of these offices, shared by fourteen people and supplied with only four computers, is potentially a health hazard and a safety risk. There has been no departmental plan for insuring fairness in the appointment of office space (for example, according to seniority, the number of classes taught, whether one occupies a benefitted line, etc.), and there is no central office for the Composition Program.
- **Web Presence:** The Composition Program's web site is dated with no staff or funding to attend to this matter. As a result, the program does not have adequate online resources to promote faculty development, educate new hires about the program, assist graduate students completing the Certificate in Rhetoric and Composition, inform distance education students of our mission, and attract prospective students.
- **Technology:** Composition faculty are not guaranteed access to working technologies. Computers and printers often remain unavailable or nonfunctioning, making it difficult for faculty to access student records, complete class preparations, or use AsULearn sites. Faculty in benefitted lines are not guaranteed personal computers or other computer equipment. Perhaps most importantly, more classrooms need to be capable of and soundly designed for the teaching of composition with computers. As the General Education Program moves toward the adoption of e-portfolios, better access to current technology is essential for all composition faculty.

Potential Benefits of Relocation

While some of the above challenges are faced by other units on campus, many of these problems are more specific to composition and could be overcome by relocating the Composition Program from the College of Arts and Sciences and restructuring it within University College. In recent years, many composition programs have made the move to become independent, for instance, at James Madison University and Georgia Southern University, two of our peer institutions. These types of decisions should always be made with institutional context in mind, and we must ask ourselves what is the best practice at this university. A relocation on our campus seems a logical, evolutionary step. Potential benefits of such a move include the following:

- **Student Success:** Students would benefit scholastically from participating in a composition program developed by Rhetoric and Composition experts who are solely responsible for shaping the program and assessing it. The recent General Education reform has underscored the Composition Program's charge to teach all students to become successful academic writers. We take this service to the

university seriously. Writing programs have always been broadly defined (a necessity with every student in the university usually enrolling in two required composition courses), and Appalachian has embraced this broader role for Rhetoric and Composition by making academic writing central to our curriculum. Therefore, since our identity centers on academic writing, pedagogy, and service to the entire university, the Composition Program is more likely to flourish outside a traditional department that centers on literary study. Students are also more likely to understand writing as an essential skill central to their collegiate and professional lives. Finally, the healthier the Composition Program is, the better it can serve its students. Despite the challenges we have faced in recent years, nearly all of our efforts have focused on faculty development and pedagogy which have contributed to our students' success. With composition faculty now invested in the life of the program and far more active in scholarship and service, independence will enable our program to thrive in new ways and further enhance students' classroom experience. We also foresee more rewarding relationships with students as faculty become student advisors and also mentor campus student groups. Currently, the UNC system does not have an independent writing program, so this move would set Appalachian apart from other North Carolina constituents and allow students to engage in a program that is first-rate.

- **Alignment of Disciplines and Visions:** The University Writing Center and the Writing Across the Curriculum Program already reside in the University College. By relocating the Composition Program to University College, Appalachian would house all units charged with shaping academic writing on our campus under one roof. This structure would make more institutional sense, streamline appointments and communications, simplify scheduling and evaluation of faculty, and inject greater cohesion, consistency, and ease of collaboration between these Rhetoric and Composition constituents. Relocation to University College would position the Composition Program within a home that more accurately reflects its vision and service mission. In part because it is the home of Appalachian's General Education program, University College's emphasis on co-curricular, interdisciplinary, and interconnected study mirrors both the interdisciplinary field of Rhetoric and Composition and the arc of our Composition Program. For instance, with General Education reform and the new 2001 composition course, fully half of the Composition Program now works in direct partnership with other disciplines on our campus (the WAC office serving as our bridge to those disciplines). Relocation to University College would enable us to more fully achieve our service mission and would encourage stronger partnerships to support writing on this campus.
- **Coalition with English:** The Composition Program would expect to retain a close, collaborative relationship with the English Department, a relationship that would evolve through genuine partnership. We imagine this relationship growing around localized and specific matters of common interest. For instance, some current composition faculty teach sophomore literature courses, and we would welcome partnering on such scheduling matters. We also hope that tenure-track and tenured English Department faculty will continue to teach composition. We would especially anticipate a close working relationship with English's graduate program, cross-listing graduate Rhetoric and Composition courses with English and collaborating on the mentoring of graduate students. In conjunction with the Writing Across the Curriculum program, we would also look forward to collaborating on the 2001 course and its preparation of students for writing in literature classes. Later we might cooperate on larger projects of common interest, such as a campus-wide Festival of Writing, portfolio contests, etc.

- **Structural Sense:** The majority of composition's partners reside in the University College. Two-thirds of the University's Writing Program (the University Writing Center and the Writing Across the Curriculum Program) are housed in University College. If composition were located within the same college, this more efficient administrative structure would facilitate work with these offices and programs, increasing ease of communication, streamlining scheduling and placement, facilitating faculty development, and enabling more collaborative efforts.
- **Increased Recognition for Composition:** Independence would bring increased visibility as composition faculty and administrators would work overtly with university partners, including nonacademic units (for instance, on issues like information literacy testing and the adoption of e-portfolios). With this move, we anticipate the same increased recognition the University Writing Center has received since foregrounding its interdisciplinary nature by moving to University College. Composition's focus continues to be pedagogy and faculty development, giving us a distinct identity on this campus and in our scholarship. Forty years ago, composition may have needed a place to develop, but Rhetoric and Composition is now universally recognized as its own discipline (with its own journals, presses, conferences, graduate programs, listservs, etc.) and, as such, should receive that recognition at this university.
- **Traditions in the Field of Rhetoric and Composition:** Increased visibility and multiple campus partnerships will more fully allow for research and scholarship in the field of Rhetoric and Composition. By fostering multiple working communities and making connections across contexts, we advance the interdisciplinarity that is a hallmark in the field. We can build on the intellectual traditions of Rhetoric and Composition through a Scholarship of Teaching and Learning that begins with actual, localized work. Composition's independence, then, facilitates access to the venues of research on which Rhetoric and Composition scholars depend. Such a relocation would mirror the location of other fields like Women's Studies and Global Studies in University College and bring us into alignment with the other interdisciplinary programs on this campus.
- **Self-Direction and Empowerment:** As an independent unit, the Composition Program would have complete responsibility for and actualization of its program, deciding how best to place its students, creating its assessment tools, evaluating its courses, determining its faculty representation, developing its own initiatives, pursuing innovation, and realizing a larger vision. Many schools within the UNC-system already charge their composition and rhetoric specialists with these tasks. For instance, the composition directors at UNC-Charlotte, Eastern Carolina University, UNC-Chapel Hill, and UNC-Greensboro are responsible for scheduling/staffing classes and for approving questions and challenges regarding transfer credit. At UNC-Charlotte, Eastern Carolina University, UNC-Pembroke, and UNC-Chapel Hill, the composition director designs and directs the placement process. (UNC-Greensboro does not conduct a placement process.) Like these other UNC programs, our Composition Program is more likely to flourish under such conditions.
- **Resources:** If the Composition Program moved into University College as an independent program, it would establish its own budget line and have more input and control regarding areas such as composition faculty's research and travel funding, salaries, summer teaching, workload, and innovative instruction. This move might save the university money in some areas, with a re-conception of placement, for instance. It might also save time in other areas with one writing program administrator reporting on behalf of all writing programs each month in a single meeting with the Vice Provost for

Undergraduate Education. Finally, composition would have access to two development officers, one to assist in finding grants and another to assist in securing gifts; we foresee our first collaboration with these individuals centering on securing monies to build more wired classrooms.

- **Improved Working Conditions for Composition Faculty:** When composition programs have become independent at other universities, non-tenure track faculty frequently report that they experience improved working conditions. (For an example, see the attached article by Barry Maid, “Non-Tenure-Track Instructors at UALR: Breaking Rules, Splitting Departments.”) If our Composition Program were to join University College, our faculty would have the opportunity for greater professionalization by more fully participating in the program’s governance and service work, thereby having greater input into the development of the program.

The Nuts and Bolts

This proposal does not hope to answer all questions that may emerge. For that matter, we will not go into such a move with all questions answered. Some questions cannot be anticipated; still others have answers that will evolve after such a move. The architects of Syracuse University’s independent writing program emphasized this point again and again. (See the attached article by Louise Phelps, “The Institutional Logic of Writing Programs: Catalyst, Laboratory, and Pattern for Change.”) However, we can anticipate some of the “nuts and bolts” of such a relocation.

- **Funding:** If composition leaves Arts and Sciences and relocates to University College, we will take some operating monies with us since operating funds are allocated for each benefitted line. However, Arts and Sciences’ need for these operating dollars would drop in direct correlation to the resources it would “lose.” The same is also true in regards to the salaries of part-time, non-benefitted composition faculty members; funds currently designated to pay the salaries for part-time composition teachers would be transferred from Arts and Sciences to University College. As the argument for new lines is made in part as a result of the ratio of student credit hours per FTE (along with other factors) and as composition classes are relatively small, it is unlikely that English would face any significant change in this area.**
- **Space:** It is likely not currently feasible for the Composition Program to relocate from Sanford, nor is it a necessity. However, space will need to be re-imagined within Sanford. The university may grant composition the fourth floor once Anthropology moves. However, if the university has other plans for

** So that all involved are fully informed on funding issues, we suggest that interested parties meet with Vice Provost for Resource Management Tim Burwell to discuss these matters.

that floor, the Composition Program could instead negotiate with English for a floor within Sanford, recognizing its need for a “home” for this program. While some shuffling of space may occur in order to provide composition with the dedicated space it needs, such a move can ultimately occur without additional space.

- **Graduate Certificate:** The Writing Program currently offers an MA certificate in Rhetoric and Composition, which is overseen by four tenure-track or tenured Rhetoric and Composition professors, most of whom serve as Writing Program Administrators (WPAs). While the Writing Program would take the courses offered for the MA certificate, we imagine cross-listing these courses with English so that they may count for dual credit. We also wish to continue providing support for second-year GTAs in English by offering assistantships in the Writing Program where GTAs would teach composition courses on a 2-2 workload. Given that the University Writing Center currently supports six to eight first-year GTA assistantships for English graduate students, the Writing Program wishes to provide the same opportunity for second-year GTAs.
- **Tenure-Track Lines:** We foresee all tenured or tenure-track lines occupied by Rhetoric and Composition scholars to be transferred to University College since tenure is conferred at the university, not the departmental level. Most Rhetoric and Composition scholars also currently serve as Writing Program Administrators and would want to reside within the same college as the staff they oversee.
- **Future of Writing at ASU:** In this document, we are proposing only the lateral shift of the current Composition Program to the University College so that it would stand as an independent program. However, we can imagine that conditions may someday be right (in better fiscal times or depending on the further development of the campus’ writing programs) for establishing a center for writing studies on this campus or a department of Rhetoric and Composition. We are not, however, currently suggesting such a move as we feel it would be premature.

Conclusion

The Writing Program at Appalachian State is already involved in national and international conversations regarding writing programs. Given the centrality of writing at the university, a vibrant University Writing Center, a successful Writing Across the Curriculum program, a successful Rhetoric and Composition graduate certificate, and the recent growth of the Composition Program, Appalachian’s Writing Program can soon serve as a national model, a point that visiting scholars like Nancy Sommers have made. Independent writing programs have become commonplace nationally.

Encouraged by data that has emerged through the department’s self-study, by General Education reform, by the success the University Writing Center has seen in its relocation, and by the creation of the Writing Across the Curriculum Program, we believe the time is right for Composition to take the next step to become an independent program. We hope the English Department will join us in supporting this growth of the Composition Program as we believe this restructuring is best for the program and its students.

Appendix B: Responses to Original Proposal from English Department Committees (Graduate, Literature, General Education, and Undergraduate)

Response of the English Department Graduate Committee to the English Department Rhetoric and Composition Committee Proposal

Summary: The English Graduate Committee does not support the proposal by the Rhetoric and Composition as written. The English MA programs and the composition program are deeply intertwined, and they have been so for many years. The view of the committee is that a move of composition into University College would harm existing and future English graduate students. It would create structural barriers to the academic progress of our graduate students, hamper the ability of the department to financially support those graduate students in an efficient and educationally useful manner, dilute the diversity of faculty expertise within the English department to which graduate students are currently exposed and from which they benefit, and harm English graduate student morale.

Below is a synthesis of specific concerns articulated by members of the graduate committee in response to the Rhetoric and Composition proposal.

Graduate Student Assistantship Support and Related Educational Concerns

The Rhetoric and Composition Committee proposal asserts that a movement of composition to UC would provide a “more efficient administrative structure.” However, such a move would be much *less* efficient for the awarding of Graduate Teaching Assistantships to English graduate students.

As of fall 2009, the English department supports 19 graduate students in various types of assistantships. Of that number, 12 graduate students currently serve as GTAs, and they teach a total of 18 sections of composition for the English department. All funds for these assistantships are paid to the English department through the Arts and Sciences Dean’s Office. If composition moved to UC, that funding stream for English graduate students would become significantly more precarious, at least in so far as it would no longer be the purview of English department to hire graduate students to teach those courses. Instead, the hiring/appointment authority would be independent of the department’s graduate director, chair, and even its college dean.

While it is true that a small number of English graduate students often serve in assistantships controlled and paid for by other units of the university (currently, that number is 2.5 graduate students, i.e., 2 students on full-time assistantships and 1 serving half-time), removing from the department what is, by far, the largest source of funding for English graduate students would constitute a change several orders of magnitude beyond current practice, and doing so would be administratively burdensome for all parties involved.

Moreover, a move of composition to UC would make it more difficult for the English department to recruit promising MA students. Since the department would no longer be in control of GTA assignments in composition, it would not be able to offer such GTA-ships as a source of support to prospective English graduate students with any degree of certainty. Indeed, even if many students in the English MA programs ultimately did continue to be appointed to teach composition courses by a composition program housed in UC, the English department would still lose oversight of the application process and the rules governing the appointment of students to such assistantships, and this would impair our ability advise students about their programs of study, planning for timely graduations, minimum enrollments necessary to hold GTA-ships in composition, and so forth.

Though the Rhetoric and Composition Committee's proposal cites a vision of "cooperation with English," a stand-alone composition program located in UC would have little incentive to work with English to coordinate their composition GTA requirements and application processes with the English graduate programs' own curricular and administrative procedures and deadlines. This would exacerbate the above-described administrative and advising inefficiencies.

The removal of composition from the English department would also have negative educational outcomes for English graduate students. Composition remains housed in English departments in the very great majority of institutions nationwide (see discussion of ASU's peer institutions below), and, given that nearly all our MA graduates who remain in academia will teach composition as part of their future academic careers (whether as students in English PhD programs or as community college or high school faculty in English departments), the teaching of composition remains an important component of the educational experience of graduate students in English. In as much as a move of composition to UC would result in reduced opportunities for English graduate students to teach composition, such a move would in many cases reduce their competitiveness in the job market or for admission to PhD programs.

Finally, the English department has traditionally used the great majority of its departmental Graduate School Assistantship Allocation funds to pay first-year English graduate students to work in the University Writing Center, which is now housed in UC. There already exist a number of additional application procedures required of students wishing to work in the UWC, and the difficulty of coordinating those UWC applications with the already large paper-work burden for incoming English graduate students hinders the department's ability to recruit top students and to adequately match the individual academic interests of the students who elect to attend ASU to their first-year assistantship assignments. As in the above examples, the removal of composition from the English department is likely to exacerbate such difficulties.

Dissimilarity of Proposed Structure to Institutional Peers, Dilution of Faculty Expertise, Negative Impact on Graduate Student Morale

Of the 19 institutions listed by the Institutional Research Office as Appalachian's official "peers" and "aspirational peers," only one, James Madison University, houses its composition program outside its English department. Perhaps even more significantly, none of ASU's "aspirational" peers--Bowling Green State University, Miami University of Ohio, and George Mason University--house their composition programs outside of English, nor do any of the universities in the University of North Carolina system.

The above facts reflect the long-standing, traditional, and well-established relationship between the teaching of writing and other aspects of the discipline of English. The English Graduate Committee believes that moving composition to UC would weaken both areas by diluting the diversity of faculty expertise in both units. Many other areas of faculty expertise in English productively overlap with Rhetoric and Composition, these areas include English Education, Professional Writing, Creative Writing, and Literary Studies and Literary Theory. The removal of composition from English would thus falsely suggest to graduate students that these important and overlapping relationships between college composition and other areas within our discipline do not exist or should not exist.

Finally, moving the four current Rhetoric and Composition specialist tenure-track faculty to UC would impede the access of English graduate students to said faculty members and their specific area of expertise, and it would damage English graduate student morale. A move to UC would reinforce what is already being perceived as a problematic “split” between Rhetoric and Composition and the other areas of the English department. Even now, graduate students are reporting to their faculty mentors (including to those in Rhetoric and Composition) that they feel “caught” or “trapped” in the middle of the perceived split within the department, and that they will suffer negative consequences based on their basic academic decisions: e.g., what courses they select to fulfill their degree requirements, which faculty they should approach for service on their MA exam committees, and what subjects and which faculty they should select for their theses. The movement of composition to UC would exacerbate this morale problem.

Additional Questions and Replies from Members of the English Graduate Committee

Below are some recent additional questions from members of the graduate committee, as well as some tentative responses by the composition program representative on the English graduate committee to various concerns voiced in English Graduate committee meetings. They are supplied for informational purposes and reflect the ongoing dialog between the English Graduate committee and the English Rhetoric and Composition Committee.

Questions:

“How would English be able to keep Rhetoric and Composition as an approved MA Exam area?”

“How would English graduate students be able to write a thesis in Rhetoric and Composition if all RC faculty were moved to a different college, UC?”

“What if faculty remaining in the English department wanted to offer a Rhetoric and Composition course in the English MA?”

“How could the English department depend on seats for its MA students who needed to now take graduate courses in UC, as required components of teaching assistantships in composition (e.g., seats in courses such as English 5100)?”

“If composition faculty housed in UC decided to add more courses, or require more workshops as requirements for GTAs teaching composition, wouldn’t this negatively impact English graduate students’ already overloaded schedules, and wouldn’t that leave the English department with no effective mechanism for input or oversight into these changes?”

Preliminary Replies:

“Since money follows need, we assume that funds which have previously gone to English to employ TAs would go to University College if we moved there to employ TAs to teach composition. Kim says that she agrees that Composition could make a strong commitment to/partnership with English to somehow privilege English TAs (at least for now and probably for the foreseeable future) in the very unlikely case that we are suddenly flooded by TAs from other disciplines.”

“I think we could work out something if English wants to keep us in the [MA] comps. . . . For purposes of our Certificate, we don’t have to have people taking comps in RC, and English might not want to keep that as an [MA exam] area.”

Literature Committee's Response to The Rhetoric and Composition Proposal (rev. 11/20)

The Literature Committee has voted that it cannot approve the Rhetoric and Composition proposal in its current form. Included in this report are (I) specific concerns committee members have about the proposal, especially as it pertains to the department's offerings in literature, and (II) recommendations on how to proceed, whether the Rhetoric and Composition Program remains in the English Department or moves to University College.

I. Concerns: The proposal lacks specifics about numbers of personnel, resources, and other “nuts and bolts” matters, as well as data to support many of its claims. We request a revised proposal that deals with the items listed below:

- The philosophical issue of separating composition (writing) from literary studies is not really addressed in the proposal. Is it the intent of the R/C program to signal to students, parents, administrators, and legislators that writing and literary/cultural study are separate and perhaps only tangentially related? Whether the answer to this question is yes or no, as literature faculty for whom, at all levels, writing about literature is a central aspect of teaching literature, we would like to see this issue explored in detail.
- We do not feel that the proposal contains adequate data to support its argument that relocation will be better for students (undergraduate or graduate).
- Many of the issues the proposal identifies as motivating factors for relocation are, in fact, university-wide issues and not particular to the English Department. In matters of autonomy over class size, budget, scheduling, etc., the R/C Program is no different from other programs in the department, nor is English different from other departments in the university who have multiple programs. Thus the urgency of relocation on the basis of lack of autonomy is not convincing. Will relocating really ameliorate these issues? Is it possible to address these issues yet not relocate?
- The proposal makes vague references to ways in which the R/C Program has been impeded by TT English faculty, including Literature faculty, from making decisions about personnel, curriculum, resources, etc., but there are no specifics. We would like to see a list of instances where the will of the R/C faculty has been undermined or forestalled by TT English faculty.
- The proposal's discussion of national trends and peer institutions is misleading. The schools mentioned in the proposal differ from our department in many ways: size of program, number of majors, number of TT faculty in R/C, credentials of benefitted NTTs, degree-granting status of institution, number and variety of R/C courses offered. While there may be some national increases in stand-alone R/C Programs, our designated peer and aspirational peer institutions do not reflect such a trend. Only one of our official peer institutions (James Madison) houses its R/C Program outside its English Department; and none of Appalachian's aspirational peers house their R/C programs outside of English. The proposal also lacks data about the other logical group of comparable institutions--other UNC schools. Our preliminary research has not revealed that other UNC schools are moving toward stand-alone programs. This disparity between claims and data is disconcerting. Indeed, is the stand-

alone trend in R/C Programs actually mostly among those programs that offer a doctoral degree in R/C, and/or among those programs whose NTTs hold the Ph.D. themselves? If so, this is not the same as a stand-alone R/C Program with an overwhelming number of NTT faculty without the Ph.D. All this issues have complex ramifications for structure, resources and accreditation. *Without accurate accounts of peer and aspirational peer institutions, we cannot even begin to make an informed decision about the implications of the proposed relocation or to begin to think about logical and viable models that might work for us who will remain in the English department.*

- The proposal does not include enough detail about resources. More information should be provided regarding where the money for more technological resources, more benefited positions with multi-year contracts, faculty retreats, faculty development workshops, curricular innovation, a web site staff, etc., is coming from. The reason this is of concern to the faculty who will remain in English is that in the current bleak economic climate, such funds will likely be reallocated from other university units.
- Office and classroom space is an issue for all units in our department, including those of us who teach Literature. Thus we would like clarification of the “Space” section of the proposal (page 7), particularly the suggestion that the R/C Program might “negotiate with English for a floor within Sanford.” Does this mean the R/C Program intends to take over all classrooms, offices, etc., on the floor? Would English Department faculty currently in offices on the designated floor be relocated elsewhere? If the R/C Program takes over the third floor, what would be the status of the faculty lounge?
- On the first page of the relocation proposal, the footnote defines “Composition Program” as including English 1100, Introduction to Literature. Although 1100 may eventually disappear, inasmuch as its focus is literary we would argue that it should remain in English for the remainder of its existence. If the R/C Program relocates, may we assume that ENG 1100 will **not** be one of the courses that leave with the program? This issue should be clarified in the footnote.
- We would like clarification about what role, if any, the teaching of literature (closely reading literary texts, the written and oral analysis of literary works, etc.) would have in the proposed independent program. We are especially concerned about the disinclination to teach literature in 2001. Will the proposed program no longer teach literature, except perhaps marginally? How can we expect our students to be able to deal adequately with the ASU requirement that every student take one literature course on at least the 2000 level without at least some exploration of literature in 2001? As teachers of 2000-level surveys, we need to know what preparation in literary study (if any) we can expect from our students.
- The institutional relocation of the R/C Program will profoundly affect our Graduate Program. The department has been under pressure to open up large survey courses, and it is possible that, as the English department’s service responsibilities shift from composition to literary surveys, English may decide to employ more and more GTAs as section leaders for the large survey courses, and thus the number of sections of 1000 and 2001 taught by English GTAs may decrease. Is this a possibility that the R/C program has considered?
- We are concerned that the proposal does not reflect all NTTs’ feelings about the proposed relocation. Several members of the Literature Committee have had conversations with NTTs (at various ranks) who have reported they are either noncommittal about relocation or they oppose it but do not feel

comfortable articulating their views to the other NTTs or the WPAs. Before the taskforce meets to discuss the future of the R/C Program, all NTTs should have a confidential opportunity to share their thoughts about the relocation.

II. Recommendations: Regardless of what happens, the Literature Committee hopes there will be successful intellectual and pedagogical collaboration and collegiality between all faculty. To this end, we recommend that action be taken only after detailed research, and with clear planning, respectful behavior, and documented evidence about our actions' impact on our students. We support creating a work environment appropriate to the assigned duties of all faculty at their respective ranks and levels of employment, and in concert with national trends and best practices across the academy.

We also recommend that any future action implement clean breaks and clear boundaries regarding resources, including personnel, since unnecessary sharing of resources, especially across college lines, will surely lead to excess administrative labor as well as potential confusion, error, and conflict.

A. Recommendations in the event that Rhetoric and Composition stays in English

- Each benefitted NTT should have an office and computer that is their own or that is shared by only one other NTT. (*Rationale: Fair and productive working conditions within resource constraints*)
- Part time (unbenefitted) NTTs should have ample access to computers and desk space as is necessary for their work and for meeting with students. Their shared office should be repaired so that it does not shake. (*Rationale: Fair and productive working conditions within resource constraints*)
- If desired, the R/C Director should schedule composition courses herself, in consultation with the chair. She should be kept apprised of changes in the class caps and should be able to negotiate with the dean. (*Rationale: Fair and productive working conditions within resource constraints*)
- If there is precedent elsewhere in the college, and if desired, the R/C Program should have charge over its own budget, for ease of managing the large numbers of NTTs. This should include operational funds for travel and other costs, etc., with the agreement that English will no longer be responsible for excess R/C expenditures. (*Rationale: Fair and productive working conditions within resource constraints; English department economic well-being*)
- We request that literature be better represented in the 2001 curriculum. (*Rationale: better serve the undergraduates*)
- The Literature Committee would like to vet and recommend to the DPC NTTs who want to teach literature, (same for CW if they like, and PW and Film). The existing NTT Hiring Committee should only vet and recommend to the DPC NTTs for teaching composition. (*Rationale: Criteria for hiring NTTs to teach R/C are not always the best criteria for hiring NTTs to teach literature*)
- We suggest that benefitted NTTs be included in the general department peer observation schema. (*Rationale: To apply consistent measures of accountability to faculty presumed to be the permanent work force. Also, to foster better exchange of ideas and pedagogical expertise across ranks.*)

In addition to the above material and procedural changes, we request that the chair and the WPAs advocate for improved departmental morale by asking that there be an end to agitating within the department regarding NTT voting. The current faculty handbook straitjackets the options we can have while still respecting the real differences in credentialing that exist within the profession, especially at this university, where our NTTs are largely not PhDs (unlike most other contracted NTTs at research institutions in urban areas). The TT faculty has repeatedly expressed support for NTT requests to vote on matters that apply to their teaching but not on other matters like promotion and tenure. NTT activism regarding voting should be directed toward changing university policy, which is where the real block to voting privileges appropriate to NTTs resides.

B. Recommendations in the event that Rhetoric and Composition relocates to University College:

- After R/C relocates, we suggest that the English Dept. NTT Hiring Committee be disbanded. The Literature Committee should vet and make recommendations to the DPC about NTTs who wish to teach literature courses. (The CW committee might consider doing the same, and Film, and English Ed, etc.). (*Rationale: Criteria for hiring NTTs to teach R/C—such as evidence of portfolio use—are not always the necessary criteria for hiring NTTs to teach literature.*)
- When Anthropology exits the 4th floor, the building should be studied for remodeling of office and classroom space for both the English Department and the R/C Program. This should be done ASAP. In the meanwhile, R/C should be given space to set up an office for their own support staff, copier, etc. We should not share support resources, including staff. (*Rationale: clean breaks and good boundaries. Also, economic well-being of the English department: if there is a separate program, English should not have to bear the impact of the administrative resources necessary to run that separate program.*)
- The R/C Director, Writing Center Director and WAC director should relocate completely, moving their tenure home to UC. Accordingly, they would not serve on English department committees including DPC, or get their OCSA, travel, or other funding from English; they would be tenured and promoted by their own DPC; and they would not participate in the rotations for ENG courses. If they wish to teach ENG courses, this would occur through the same procedure applied to any other faculty housed in units other than English. (*Rationale: clean breaks and good boundaries. Also, economic well-being of the English department: if there is a separate program, English should not have to bear the impact of the administrative resources necessary to run that separate program.*)
- After the three (or four) TT R/C faculty move, the English department chair should ask the dean to assess the TT situation to see if it is feasible to replace at least one or two of those TT faculty lines with English department TT hires in areas of need (who would teach 3/3). (*Rationale: protecting English department economic well-being and resources earned historically by the entire dept.*)
- Any 3/4 or full-time NTT who wishes to stay in the English department should be permitted to keep their benefitted line in the English department rather than relocate. (*Rationale: fairness and collegiality to NTTs who teach literature.*)
- Prior to a final recommendation whether or not to support the relocation, we'd like to know precise numbers of benefitted NTTs who will want to move their lines to UC and precise numbers of benefitted

NTTs who will want to keep their lines in English. (*Rationale: protecting English department economic well-being.*)

- Any NTT who moves their benefitted line to R/C will be able to apply to the appropriate committee to teach in English and thus, if approved, be bought out by English. Those long-term NTTs who anticipate teaching literature (or anything else) on a regular basis should be able to negotiate a plan for teaching in both places so everyone can plan. Once the plan is set (2 lit, every fall, for instance), their assignment should not be rearranged. (*Rationale: clean breaks, clear boundaries, fairness and collegiality to NTTs who teach literature.*)
- After the benefitted NTT faculty move, the English department chair should ask the dean to reassess the NTT situation to see if it is feasible to replace those lines with NTT lines of our own (or visiting post doc lines, or more TT lines). (*Rationale: protecting English department economic well-being and resources earned historically by the entire dept.*)
- After the relocation, the department should talk about using new English NTT lines for visiting post doc positions (esp. to replace faculty who are on OCSA or who will be teaching FYS or in another program, etc.). (*Rationale: adopt best practices in the academy by insuring that specialists teach our students and by keeping our faculty “fresh” by influx of new voices and personalities. Also serve the profession by employing qualified postdocs who haven’t yet found jobs.*)
- We request that R/C not plan to establish new courses in their new program in the field of literature, (CW, Film or PW too?), (*Rationale: avoid curricular redundancy.*)
- We request that R/C not advocate for future policy changes in the Gen Ed program that will require English to change our WID or capstone courses. (*Rationale: Literature needs to have academic freedom in how we teach our courses; and we do have the expertise to make sound decisions how to teach writing about literature (and CW and PW and film)*)
- The English department should revisit ENG 1100 and consider revamping it while retaining its original purpose of preparing students to take a 2000-level lit course. For instance, it has been suggested that 1100 could be a 1000-level literature elective in a Gen Ed theme, while simultaneously, it could also be a prerequisite for 2050 or 2350 for nonmajors who don’t meet a certain benchmark (to be determined) and thus who are at risk for not doing well in those classes. This could be a course that grad students and NTTs might often teach. (*Rationale: 2001 does not seem to be preparing some students to take 2000-level literature courses. Also, economic well-being of the department and grad program*)
- A set of guidelines should be developed to guide English faculty who might want to create “writing” classes in the future. Those faculty should be given a great degree of freedom to practice their proven expertise and training in the field, while not stepping on the new R/C Program’s toes. (*Rationale: fairness. Also, philosophical conviction that in teaching literature, one is also teaching writing*)

Statement from the English Department General Education Committee on the Pros and Cons of the Composition Proposal to Relocate to University College

The proposal to move the Writing program from the English Department to University College raises several categories of concern, and the General Education Committee has tried to respond to each of these as it would impact the delivery of General Education courses. What follows represents a majority consensus; the report indicates where no consensus was reached, and includes brief explanations.

1. Effect on students in ENG 1000 and ENG 2001: neutral-perhaps improved (Some felt improvement would be inevitable as a result of improved morale (see below), and because the composition budget would be substantially greater and could thus pay for more travel, and more professional development. However, most of us felt Dave Haney made clear that the monies allotted to composition would remain much as is. Also, there has been no discussion of specific ways in which the teaching of composition would change so as to improve student learning under an independent program).
 - a. Pedagogy will not be affected, negatively or positively by a separation of the Writing Program from the Department (some committee members disagree but have not yet offered specifics on how pedagogy will likely change with an independent program)
 - b. Student learning goals will not be affected, negatively or positively (some committee members disagree but have not yet offered specifics on how student learning goals will change and/or be better met with a change to an independent program)
 - c. There may be a slight shift in student understanding of writing as interdisciplinary, but most students won't notice or think about the implications of writing being offered as an independent program rather than as an English class
 - d. Better morale might improve the teaching of composition (although we have no documented evidence of the ways in which the teaching of composition at Appalachian currently is in need of improvement). Studies suggest there is a connection between morale and quality of composition instruction, especially when instruction formerly delivered by part-time faculty changes to instruction delivered by full-time faculty, but there is no assurance that the percentage of full-time NTT instructors would change with a move.
2. Effect on resources: not much change in resources; time-consuming complications to work through
 - a. The Writing Program is not likely to gain financial, space, clerical, or other supports, but it's not likely to lose financial, space, clerical, or other supports (although there's some contradiction in information here: Dave Haney said there were no extra resources to give to an independent Writing Program, while Tim Burwell did note that we have no precedent for programs housed under two separate entities of the University (such as AandS and UC) to share administrative assistants or other secretarial staff.
 - i. Salaries and Lines: the English Department budget could move lines and funds currently used by the composition and rhetoric/composition faculty to University College with minimal impact on English Department operating needs, according to both Tim Burwell and Dave Haney. And, it shouldn't be hard to negotiate

- amicable decisions about who would carry the lines for composition faculty who also have literature or administrative duties.
- ii. Space: There is no space that Dave Haney knows of that could be added to that currently used by our composition faculty. Given a separation, the big space change would be that the head of the Writing Program would independently negotiate with other departments to find the extra space needed, as James does now, and the head of the Writing Program would be in charge of finding teaching spaces for all First Year Seminar classes taught by instructors bought out from the Writing Program, as James does now. There could also be a division of departmental classroom space that would give the Writing Program some dedicated classrooms (although almost certainly not enough to fill all their needs), or the English Department and Writing Program could negotiate space needs semester-by-semester. Space decisions would be difficult and complicated, but doable.
 - iii. Clerical support: This area is murky, but Dave Haney strongly suggested that no new staff would be added to the Writing Program. Tim Burwell said the current staff positions, now held by Amy Greer and Gina Kelly, would be evaluated to see if a separation of programs would decrease their English Department workload enough to split their time between two programs. The fact that these two have specialized non-overlapping jobs, each of which performs tasks needed by both programs, is a complicating factor. This could be a big problem if no new money is found to hire an additional support person for the Writing Program.
 - iv. Operating Costs: This fund includes supplies, travel, maintenance, and Part-Time faculty (those below $\frac{3}{4}$ time). The Writing Program would probably get the same amount of money currently allotted to these needs, and would negotiate with University College to see if there is additional money they could have. Dave did not seem optimistic about resources being increased, so new funds shouldn't be expected. Salaries are set at the University level, not the Department/Program level, so there would be little difference here.
 - v. New lines: Since lines are allotted by colleges, a potential gain in lines for a Writing Program located in University College is an unknown. Dave Haney was non-committal on this point.
3. Professional Development: status quo would probably hold
 - a. The composition faculty at Appalachian have a strong professional development program, thanks in large part to the unflagging efforts initially of Georgia Rhoades, and taken up more recently by Kim Gunter, assisted by other tenure-track Rhetoric/Composition faculty, full-time non-tenure-track veterans, and many teachers dedicated to their profession. Our staff of writing teachers has a greater awareness of writing theory and theorists, current professional issues, and new pedagogical approaches than is usual for non-tenured writing faculty, and our Department and University should be very proud of this distinction.
 - b. However, this professional development also contributes to frustrations, because there are so few ways to reward the hard work required of our non-tenure-track faculty to keep up their professional development. This lack of a way to recognize, in a meaningful way, an individual's extra effort to commit to professionalizing their program is almost certainly a contributing factor in the morale problems among our non-tenure-track

faculty, as discussed below. Since a move would not change the absence of a career promotion ladder, despite a faculty member's continued professional growth, some frustrations would likely remain.

It should also be noted that in many very tangible ways the writing program has flourished as an arm of the English Department, in the establishment of many benefitted positions, many full-time or part-time positions, in granting multi-year contracts, in generous allowances for re-assigned administrative time, in approving a move to a vertical writing model as envisioned by the Rhetoric and Composition faculty, and in supporting professional development, including modest travel allowances .

4. Governance and Morale: would be improved with an independent Writing Program
 - a. Governance: The English Department, strapped by a Faculty Handbook that gives us only "all or nothing" voting options, has been unable to find a way to give non-tenure track faculty voting rights that protect the peer-evaluation rights of tenured track faculty coming up for promotion and tenure, or for voting on new tenure-track hires. An independent Writing Program would solve this problem by allowing a re-definition of "peer" in Rhetoric/Composition matters.
 - b. Morale: The English Department has not solved, and is not likely to solve, the problem of low morale among some composition faculty. This low morale is nationally endemic and stems in part from the exploitative use made of non-tenure-track faculty in colleges and universities throughout our nation. It also stems from the frustrations that come from a lack of possible advancement for non-tenure-track faculty, despite years of service, good teaching evaluations, participation in professional development, and it stems from a perception (sometimes real, sometimes imagined) that tenure-track faculty do not value or respect the people and courses associated with teaching freshman/sophomore writing skills. While this morale problem is a national phenomenon, the problem has been exacerbated at Appalachian by a prolonged and heated debate on non-tenure-track faculty voting rights.

Finally, the view of most on the General Education Committee is that in most ways there is no big advantage or disadvantage to establishing a Writing Program independent of the English Department and located in University College (except for the enormous commitment to time-consuming negotiations and planning associated with a separation). The split might (and should) require a considerable extra financial commitment from the University (for an Administrative Assistant, perhaps for more lines, upgraded computers, etc.), but there's no indication this will happen, and if so, these monies would not come from the English Department. Most important, though, we're convinced that students will get fine instruction from our faculty no matter where the writing program is located.

Therefore, the biggest factor our Committee notes is that of Governance and Morale. It could certainly be argued that our Department could find solutions to some of the grievances noted in the Composition Proposal. Other grievances are probably not solvable no matter where the program is located, since our University seemingly does not have the resources to meet all the needs of our composition faculty.

However, a separation could probably solve the current governance grievances of the composition faculty, which would go a good ways towards improving morale. While morale problems are likely to always exist as long as education in American universities is as two-tiered as it has become, faculty who are an entity

to themselves and not the lowest-paid, heaviest-load workers in a large department would have a greater chance of having improved morale, even without real changes in their work conditions. And improved morale would probably—although not in a way that can be easily measured—improve the delivery of general education writing on campus.

Undergraduate Studies Committee Response to “Proposal for the Relocation of the Composition Program from the English Department to University College”

- I. The Rhetoric and Composition Committee has submitted a proposal that the composition program should relocate from the English Department to University College. The Undergraduate Studies Committee opposes that proposal, for the following reasons.
1. From kindergarten through Ph.D., English Studies are based on the interconnection of reading and writing. These two foundational human skills should not be housed in separate administrative units. The fields of interpretation and composition have been intertwined since the beginnings of Western culture, and they are taught together at all levels of our educational system, including in the most cutting edge pedagogies that combine them with information literacy and new media. Their interconnection should be reflected in their institutional placement.
 2. We believe that the General Education learning goals associated with English 1000 have been well served by the English Department for many years. These goals, including critical thinking skills, communication skills, analytical and synthesizing skills, creative thinking skills, and research skills have been the central concerns of the entire English Department, in its courses in writing and in literary and cultural studies. These goals are best addressed within a department whose primary purpose is to teach those skills at all levels of study.
 3. Writing is the primary mode of discovery and understanding in our study of literature, language, and culture. The study of writing is integral to the courses we offer in these areas in general education, in our major, and in our graduate programs.
 4. Writing is a central concern in virtually all English Department courses. The department offers programs in creative writing and professional writing as well as courses in rhetoric and composition, and virtually all courses in literature, film, linguistics, folklore, and teacher education have a significant writing component. The English Department is a multi-disciplinary program, and our faculty in all of these fields are interdisciplinary scholars who understand writing in a broad and rich context. We believe that the teaching of first year writing should be a vital part of that interdisciplinary, writing centered approach.
 5. Our BS teaching majors and our graduate students in the secondary education and community college programs should have the integration of reading and writing as a model for their preparation for teaching. Separating the two fields sends a confusing message to these teachers in training.
 6. Teachers of composition, teachers of literature and culture, and teachers of all forms of writing should be making curricular decisions together, so that all of our courses provide an integrated approach to the student learning goals of general education and of undergraduate and graduate education.
- II. The Undergraduate Studies Committee believes that a number of concerns articulated in the relocation proposal are not only legitimate and important, but are widely shared by the faculty as a whole. Unfortunately, some of the needs expressed here (for more office space, more computer classrooms, etc.) reflect limited resources and space and are unrelated to the matter of where the composition program is housed. Other concerns voiced in the proposal, such as the stated desire for curricular development in rhetoric and composition, should be addressed by demonstrating

need for these curricular developments and requesting resources, such as new faculty lines, to address them. This process is the same regardless of where the composition program is located.

Other issues raised in the proposal can and should be addressed within the English Department. In response to concerns voiced by the drafters of this proposal, the Undergraduate Studies Committee recommends the following:

1. that department meetings be held, whenever possible, at times that do not conflict with faculty teaching responsibilities in the department. As a practical matter, this likely means a return to the former practice of holding department meetings on Friday afternoons.
2. that the Composition Director be given responsibility for scheduling composition classes, in consultation with the Department Chair.
3. that the Composition Director be given responsibility for assigning office space to NTT composition faculty.
4. that the Composition Director take part in administrative matters such as placement of students in the sequence of composition classes and granting of composition credit for transfer. (Because of recent changes to the SAT exam, which now includes a writing component, changes in the placement process are already being discussed among new student orientation staff, the Composition Director, and English Department faculty who have been responsible for composition placement for many years.)
5. that the Composition Director and Department Chair continue to advocate for additional 3/4 - and full-time positions and multi-year contracts for NTT faculty. The English Department has fully supported these efforts in recent years and should continue to do so.
6. that NTT faculty continue to serve on committees pertinent to the areas in which they teach (with few exceptions, these are the General Education Committee, the Rhetoric and Composition Committee, and the NTT Faculty Committee), as well as committees addressing faculty working conditions, including the Technology, Equipment, and Building Committee and the Faculty Welfare and Morale Committee; that NTT faculty in 3/4- and full-time positions have the right to vote on committees on which they serve; and that NTT faculty in 3/4- and full-time positions have the right to vote in Department meetings on matters concerning the courses they teach.

The Undergraduate Studies Committee urges the English Department to oppose the relocation of the composition program to the University College. The Rhetoric and Composition proposal makes many valid points about the problems that the composition program has encountered within the department, but we believe that many of those problems can be solved within the department and that the proper pedagogic home for composition is in the English Department.

Appendix C: Rationale Presented to University College Council

To: University College Council Members

From: Beth Carroll, Writing Center Director (University College) and Associate Professor, Department of English
Georgia Rhoades, Writing Across the Curriculum Director (University College) and Professor, Department of English
Kim Gunter, Composition Director (English) and Assistant Professor, Department of English

Subject: **Rationale for Creating an Independent Composition Program in University College**

Date: March 22, 2010

In response to questions from the University College Council regarding the Composition Program, Dave Haney suggested that we, as the writing program administrators, write a document explaining why we believe University College is the best location for the Composition program. In this memo, we address concerns expressed by members of the UC Council in the meeting on March 1; explain our rationale for proposing to create an independent writing program in UC; and describe benefits for students and faculty that would result from moving the program to UC. We welcome the opportunity to discuss the proposal with you at a future UC Council meeting.

Rationale for an Independent Composition Program

Over the past two decades, programs and departments of rhetoric and composition nationwide have created free-standing units in increasing numbers. These separations from English departments have been a result of growing disciplinary divisions and recognition of the benefits that independent writing programs provide to students and to universities that seek to increase the prominence of writing at the university.

Disciplinary Divisions

Since their inception in the late nineteenth century, English departments have been organized in historical periods, a scheme often described as a “field coverage model.” Literature specialists are hired on the basis of their mastery of the imaginative literature produced in a given historical period, such as “The Renaissance.” While literary studies focuses primarily on interpretation of literary text, writing studies is inextricably grounded in production of non-literary text, such as writing in legal, non-profit, corporate, civic, academic, professional, digital, religious and personal contexts. In addition to these basic differences (which can, of course, also be seen as complementary), literature scholars and writing studies scholars work within separate disciplinary domains, drawing on distinct epistemological paradigms and modes of inquiry, and participating in distinct professional and scholarly communities. (See Appendix A for a description of the field of rhetoric and composition.) Disciplinary divisions between composition and English have resulted in a nation-wide trend toward moving writing programs out of English departments and into independent units.

Moving a composition program out of an English department requires an appropriate site for relocation, which should be the institutional structure that can best support the goals of the writing program. Depending on institutional context, independent writing units function as programs, departments, or schools, and they are housed in various structures, including colleges of fine arts, university colleges, liberal studies colleges, and colleges of arts and sciences. For reasons we outline below, we believe that our Composition program at

Appalachian belongs in University College, and the majority of composition faculty in the English department agrees with us. (See Appendix B for results of straw polls of NTT and TT English faculty.) The university has been moving toward increased support for and visibility of writing and writing instruction on our campus, and we believe that relocating the Composition program to UC would be a significant step towards professionalizing the teaching of writing at Appalachian. Two of the three components of the writing program are already located in UC: the University Writing Center (UWC), formerly located in the English department, and Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC). The UWC moved from the English department in 2005 and is thriving in UC, meeting the writing needs of students from across the university. WAC, in concert with the general education program, has also demonstrated success in UC. Moving the Composition program to UC will align it with the successful UWC and WAC programs, benefitting students and faculty through greater support for the Composition program and more opportunities for collaboration with other UC units.

The Composition program directly supports the mission of UC (excerpted below), in the following areas:

- Liberal education
- Interdisciplinarity
- General education
- Portal of entry
- First-year experience
- Engaged teaching and learning
- Collaborative teaching and learning
- Service
- Research and leadership development

Liberal Education (“providing students with a rigorous liberal education that prepares them for the social, economic, and personal opportunities and challenges of the twenty-first century”): Mastering writing skills and competencies is central to a successful liberal education. According to the American Association of Colleges and Universities, a liberal education “helps students develop . . . strong and transferable intellectual and practical skills such as communication, analytical and problem-solving skills, and a demonstrated ability to apply knowledge and skills in real-world settings” (http://www.aacu.org/leap/what_is_liberal_education.cfm). Student success in and beyond their experience at Appalachian is directly related to the goals and outcomes of our writing curriculum. The College Board’s National Commission on Writing is only one example of a recent entity to stress the relationship between writing proficiency and employment (http://www.writingcommission.org/pr/writing_for_employ.html). A shared commitment to liberal education is foundational to the missions of UC and of the Composition program.

Interdisciplinarity (“the investigation of major questions across departmental, divisional, and disciplinary boundaries”): Interdisciplinarity is a key feature of writing studies. The specific object of study is writing, which is found *in, across, and beyond* the disciplines. As writing specialists, our research and pedagogical interests move well beyond traditional boundaries of English studies, and require from us a perspective on writing that must take other disciplinary values into account. Writing is a large part of the doing and knowing in all disciplines; scholarship is written; students produce texts for evaluation; textbook production and curricular design are all carried out through writing. Writing specialists conduct scholarly research on and teach in these areas and others. Consequently, although writing studies is its own discipline, writing specialists must also consider and teach how and to what effect writing reproduces, intersects, and crosses traditional disciplinary boundaries.

While many disciplines can claim thematic interdisciplinarity, only Composition can claim both thematic *and* structural interdisciplinarity at Appalachian. The general education curriculum assumes the structural interdisciplinarity of ENG 1000 and ENG 2001: with the exception of First-Year Seminar, ENG 1000 and ENG 2001

are the only two courses required of all students, regardless of major. In students' first-year experience, a large number of sections of FYS and ENG 1000 are linked classes, designed to provide students a foundation for college-level thinking and writing, and these classes typically are interdisciplinary in their focus. Recent examples include Appalachian Studies and Prison Studies. Also, composition in Watauga Global Communities, which counts for first-year writing credit, is already located in UC. ENG 2001, Introduction to Writing Across the Curriculum, is concerned with the study of writing in all academic areas, as it teaches students how to investigate major questions related to writing within and across disciplinary boundaries. ENG 2001 practice is informed by conversations about teaching writing from faculty in Composition and faculty in all disciplines, a structure supported by WAC. ENG 1000 and ENG 2001 are the first two courses in the four-year vertical writing curriculum, which supports the writing development of all students in all majors at Appalachian, and is concerned with the study of writing in and across all disciplines.

General Education ("the investigation of major questions across departmental, divisional, and disciplinary boundaries through . . . general education"): Writing is supported by General Education through all disciplines at Appalachian, the only dedicated four-year component of students' academic work. The goals and outcomes of general education courses are skills- and competency-based, not content-based. Seeking greater alignment between the Composition program and General Education, the Rhetoric and Composition committee is currently drafting a new set of outcomes and goals to adopt for English 1000, drawn directly from language in the General Education documents and from the vertical writing model in the General Education Task Force's final report. (http://www1.appstate.edu/orgs/gen_ed/PDF/Final_Report_on_Goals%20_Outcomes_10-17.pdf). (See Appendix C for the Rhetoric and Composition committee's draft-in-progress of ENG 1000 outcomes and goals.)

Writing instruction in ENG 1000 and 2001 is designed to support students as they master the skills and competencies required for writing across the curriculum and for writing in the disciplines. Given the overlapping goals of Composition and General Education in the vertical writing curriculum, operations such as assessment of ENG 1000 and 2001 and implementation of information literacy require collaboration between the General Education program and the Composition program. In addition to Composition and Writing Across the Curriculum providing writing assessment in Composition for General Education, the Composition Program's own assessment goals and outcomes reflect its support of the vertical writing model. Moving Composition to UC, where General Education is located and supported, will facilitate the implementation of assessment and information literacy mandates shared by both programs.

Portal of Entry ("assists new students in their transition to the Appalachian community"): Accurate placement of students (in either ENG 0900 or ENG 1000) increases the likelihood of a successful transition to the university. Currently, composition faculty do not control writing placement, an issue that the relocation proposal addresses by proposing to move writing placement under the control of writing specialists in composition. With the exception of the Composition program, every unit concerned with writing placement is already in UC: Orientation, Testing, and Advising. Also, with exception of writing, the *administration* of placement is already in UC, which controls foreign language placement in addition to math. Moving the Composition program to UC would make writing placement a seamless process, with all stakeholders under the same administrative structure.

First-year Experience ("help students achieve the essential learning outcomes of a liberal education and assist new students in their transition to the Appalachian community"): ENG 1000, the first course in the four-year vertical writing curriculum, is concerned with preparing students to write at the college level, and, as the entry point for the writing curriculum, is concerned with matters directly related to retention and student success at ASU. ENG 0900, Basic Writing, is the composition course designed to support students who are under-prepared for college-level writing, and, as such, is specifically designed to support the success and retention of first-year students. Also, many sections of First-Year Seminar classes are linked formally to sections of ENG 1000 to support the outcomes and increase the likelihood of success in both classes and in the first year. Other programs concerning the first-year experience are located in UC (First-Year Seminar, Advising, Orientation, the University Writing Center, the Learning

Assistance Program); moving composition to UC would facilitate collaborations among all units concerned with supporting students' first-year experiences.

Engaged Teaching and Learning ("engages students, staff, and faculty in . . . active, collaborative teaching, learning, and scholarship . . . [and] provides an environment in which students, faculty, and staff can develop, experience and disseminate practices of engaged and successful learning."): As a scholarly field and at Appalachian, Composition and Rhetoric is committed to engaged teaching and learning. Our curriculum, instruction, and faculty development in the teaching of writing are informed by scholarly research on pedagogy. This attention to engaged pedagogy, which benefits students directly, is shared by other academic and academic support units in UC. Moving composition to UC would enable more collaborations involving faculty development, more opportunities for linked classes and learning communities, and other initiatives related to engaged teaching and learning.

Collaborations with the University Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum ("Linking curricular and co-curricular programs"): With two of the three rhetoric and composition programs already in UC, relocating composition to UC would have immediate and multiple benefits for programmatic collaborations among the three units in at least the following areas: faculty development; scheduling of classes; hiring, scheduling, and retention of faculty; support for WAC, WID, and composition-related initiatives in general education (assessment, information literacy, vertical writing curriculum); and bringing courses on writing center theory and pedagogy (ENG 3450 and 5120) into the college that houses the UWC. In UC, the Composition program, UWC, and WAC could collaborate more closely and streamline reporting lines to the dean of UC; the three writing program administrators would make decisions collaboratively and meet as a team with the dean of UC to report on all three programs.

Service to the University Community ("engages students, staff, and faculty in . . . campus, local, and global communities through service"): Understood as service courses, ENG 1000 and 2001 support the writing development necessary for students to achieve success at ASU. While the Composition program willingly provides service to the university community through its courses, the English department has distanced itself from a service mission. (For example, the English department voted last year not to offer a writing course to the School of Music, citing an unwillingness to be seen as a service department.) In alignment with UC's mission, the Composition program embraces its service-related mission to the university.

Also, as the location of the ACT program and service-learning, UC offers structures of support for service to the university and service-learning in writing classes. Several composition faculty are enrolled in the ACT faculty fellows program in UC. Links between composition courses and service learning are increasing in higher education institutions across the country; we have an opportunity to participate more fully in that developing those connections here at Appalachian. Moving composition to UC would strengthen support for the composition program's service to the university and the community.

Research and Leadership Development ("Engages students, faculty, and staff in . . . campus, local, and global communities through . . . research, leadership development and other forms of learning "): Through our publications and presentations, the Graduate Certificate in Rhetoric and Composition, and the education, mentoring, and development of new writing teachers (TAs and new composition faculty), the Composition program is already directly engaged with scholarly research and leadership development in the teaching of writing. Moving the composition program to UC would enhance research opportunities for students and faculty interested in the teaching of writing. Collaborative opportunities among the three writing programs for scholarly and professional development activities would increase by moving the Composition program to UC.

Benefits for ASU Students

In line with arguments made by others in the field of rhetoric and composition, we believe that the creation of an independent composition program in UC would be of great benefit to ASU students, accruing *at least* the following benefits.

1. *Improved teaching quality in writing courses.* Currently, the English department retains control over the Composition program even though it is really a university program. The English department sees it as English's program and denies the expertise of the composition specialists they've hired, thus hurting the effectiveness of what ought to be a university program. Composition Studies is a field rooted in teaching and scholarship about teaching. Resituating responsibility for Composition in the hands of those with dedicated training and interest in that activity can be expected to have a powerful impact on student retention and academic rigor by way of radically improved quality control in hiring, supervision, training, and evaluation of composition faculty (CCCC *Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing*: <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/postsecondarywriting>).

2. *More cohesive links among university writing programs.* In establishing an independent Composition program in UC, the university will create a structure that allows improved efficiency and efficacy in delivering high quality writing instruction to students. The Composition program, which includes undergraduate and graduate courses in rhetoric and composition, has no formal connection with the University Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum, both located in University College. Administering these courses and programs within University College centralizes the writing programs at Appalachian. As we strive to infuse effective writing instruction throughout students' undergraduate experience, the writing programs will benefit from the increased communication and structural links that would result from housing all three programs in UC.

3. *Innovative program and instructional development.* In only four years, we have experienced tremendous growth in our graduate certificate in rhetoric and composition. (Eighteen students are currently enrolled or are being advised at various stages of entering the program. Eight of these are not in the English MA program.). Given the amount of interest in the certificate, we anticipate this program will continue to grow quickly. An independent composition program would result in increased research of writing at Appalachian, as part of capstone and thesis projects and independent graduate research. Such research would have direct implications for the creation of innovative programs and instruction in writing courses at the university.

4. *Enhanced understanding of the place and importance of writing at ASU.* Good writing is expected across the curriculum, not just in English courses. In creating an independent unit of composition and rhetoric in UC, the university raises the visibility of writing, delivering a clear message to students and faculty about the value placed on written communication as part of a liberal arts education.

Benefits for Composition Faculty

Composition faculty at Appalachian are a professionally active and productive group. We have published articles and chapters; led workshops and institutes; presented nationally and internationally; served in professional organizations; administered writing programs; and developed innovative courses and programs. As our writing programs have grown in recognition in the field, Rhoades has been invited to speak about them at European Academic Teachers of Writing, the International Writing Across the Curriculum Conference, at the Academic Association of Colleges and Universities twice, and at the Belfast Diversity conference. Georgia Rhoades and Dave Haney were invited to write about faculty and professional development in the Composition program for *Academe*, and Rhoades has been interviewed about writing program administration by *Academic Leader*. Gunter has been invited to speak about our Composition program at the Conference on Diversity in Organisations,

Communities, and Nations (Belfast) and The Fifth International Conference on New Directions in the Humanities in Paris. Carroll was invited to submit an article on the UWC's recent growth and success to the Southeastern Writing Center Association's publication, *Southern Discourse*. In March 2010, in four panels and a half-day workshop at the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC), nine composition faculty from Appalachian, including Rhoades, Gunter, and Carroll, gave well-received presentations on our writing programs. We also attended a meeting of the Special Interest Group on Independent Writing Programs at CCCC and met colleagues from across the US and Canada. We are developing a network and wide interest in our work in our writing programs here at Appalachian.

The creation of an independent composition program in UC will allow our faculty to thrive by providing a supportive environment, leading also to:

1. *Improved recognition of contingent faculty.* Composition Studies has been attuned to the growing trend within the academy to include non-tenure track faculty in governance and hiring decisions that affect everyone within a program. Because of Composition Studies' interest in producing responsible administrators, the discipline has developed a large theoretical corpus that focuses on program administration and is oriented to ethical, collegial relations with non-tenure-track faculty. To highlight issues and provide support for contingent faculty, WAC is bringing Eileen Schell, a leading scholar on non-tenure-track faculty issues in Composition, to Appalachian in April 2010 to give a workshop.

2. *Improved support and recognition of faculty work.* Tenured, tenure-track, and non-tenure-track composition faculty will have the opportunity to be mentored, reviewed, and energized by disciplinary peers, colleagues who know and understand their scholarly work and their professional commitments. (See Appendix D for composition faculty credentials and degrees). According to *The CCCC Statement of Principles and Standards for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing*, composition faculty should be reviewed and promoted by faculty in Composition Studies (<http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/postsecondarywriting>).

3. *Improved retention and recruitment.* The capacity to recruit and retain tenured, tenure-track, non-tenure-track faculty will be markedly improved. The ability to hire outstanding Composition Studies faculty will be improved by the appeal of a dedicated program grounded in their discipline.

4. *Improved administration of writing program.* With the Composition program's location in the English department, the composition director can't administer the Composition program. Moving the Composition program to UC will allow it to be administered by disciplinary experts who have a clear commitment to the scholarly and pedagogical objectives of those areas.

Given this rationale for creating an independent writing program, it is not surprising that numerous universities across the country have already chosen to establish independent units in writing studies. Appendix E presents a representative list of such independent programs. Appendix F shows support for our proposal from prominent scholars in rhetoric and composition, many of whom have written scholarly books and articles on independent writing programs.

** This document was developed with input from Pete Vandenberg, Barry Maid, and Kurt Schick, leading Rhetoric and Composition scholars who work in independent writing programs.

Appendix A: What is Rhetoric and Composition?

Rhetoric and composition is the discipline defined by research on writing practices in contemporary culture, including postsecondary education. As it is practiced in PhD-granting departments in the US, rhetoric and composition is distinctly responsible for training writing teachers, theorists, and administrators, including those who supervise writing centers and campus-wide programs in Writing Across the Curriculum and Writing in the Disciplines. The discipline informs the teaching and administration of first-year writing, including the training and supervision of graduate teaching assistants. The Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition identifies more than 60 institutions that offer independent degrees, concentrations, tracks, and interdisciplinary configurations involving rhetoric and composition. Rhetoric and Composition is identified as a discipline by the Research Council of the National Academies (<http://www7.nationalacademies.org/resdoc/index.html>), and occupies a category in Dissertation Abstracts International (0681).

While Rhetoric is also taught and studied in departments of communication, rhetoric and composition is distinct from communication studies, which has traditionally focused on oral modes (including performance and speech) and journalism, and from English studies, which has been oriented almost exclusively toward the interpretation and appreciation of literary texts. While they remain wholly compatible in theory, in practice they are increasingly separating (or being separated) into concentrated, independent units that are more productive, more easily managed, and more readily accountable. The University Writing Center and Writing Across the Curriculum, two of the three rhetoric and composition programs at ASU, are located outside of the English department in University College. Moving the UWC out of English into UC and establishing WAC in UC have strengthened support for writing at ASU, raising the visibility and prominence of writing on our campus, and benefitting students and faculty in multiple ways.

Appendix B: Voting Results from English TT and NTT Faculty Straw Polls*

Non-Tenure-Track Faculty (38)	Tenure-Track Faculty (42)		
31 in favor	+	9 in favor	= 40 in favor
4 opposed	+	17 opposed	= 21 opposed
1 abstention	+	2 abstentions	= 3 abstentions

36 NTT votes (out of 38)

28 TT votes (out of 42)

19 NTTs are FT or $\frac{3}{4}$ -time. The *Faculty Handbook* recognizes these 19 faculty as eligible for voting rights.

* These straw polls are non-binding and unofficial. If the English department had taken a formal vote, only the tenure-track faculty would have been eligible. According to the *Faculty Handbook*, faculty teaching 6 hours or more should have voting rights (19 NTT faculty in English); however, three years ago, the English Department's DPC voted to place "adjunct" in the title of all NTT faculty, regardless of how many hours they teach, specifically to remove their right to vote. While the *Faculty Handbook* empowers 23 composition faculty to vote, the English department's policy limits the eligible voting membership of the composition faculty to 4.

Appendix C: Goals and Outcomes of Appalachian State University's First-Year Writing Course (English 1000)

Goal 1: Student exhibits increasing Rhetorical Knowledge.

Outcomes:

- Drafts with a clear purpose in mind.
- Analyzes and responds appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations.
- Writes with strong voice and authority.

Goal 2: Student exhibits increasingly Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing Skills.

Outcomes:

- Uses writing and reading for learning, thinking, and communicating.
- Locates, evaluates, analyzes, synthesizes, and documents primary and secondary sources.
- Demonstrates critical thinking, in part by understanding that personal investments and cultural perspectives are woven into language and knowledge.

Goal 3: Student exhibits increasing understanding that writing is a Process.

Outcomes:

- Generates ideas and drafts, revises, edits, and proofreads recursively, consciously, and effectively.
- Participates actively and collaboratively in a writing community.
- Reflects upon semester writing, in part by evaluating own work and that of writing community members.

Goal 4: Student gains increasing ability to research and write in various environments, including Electronic Environments.

Outcomes:

- Use a variety of technologies to produce and share writing.
- Use a variety of technologies in conducting research.

Appendix D: Rhetoric and Composition Faculty Credentials**TENURE-TRACK FACULTY CREDENTIALS:**

PhD in English with concentration in Rhetoric and Composition: 4

NON-TENURE-TRACK FACULTY CREDENTIALS:**HIGHEST DEGREE EARNED*****DEGREES/CERTIFICATION IN PROGRESS**

Title	Number	Title	Number
MA in English, Literature	26	PhD in Interdisciplinary Studies	1
MA in English, Community College Track	4	PhD in Comp/Rhet	1
MA in Teaching	2	Ed D	2
MFA in Creative Writing	3	Certificate in Comp/Rhet	2
Ed S	1	MA in Education	3
PhD in English, Literature	2	MA in Teaching	2
Total	38	Total	11

**This list includes a total of 38 NTT faculty; two did not teach composition classes for this academic year, though they are part of the program.*

OTHER DEGREES AND CERTIFICATIONS EARNED BY NON-TENURE-TRACK COMP/RHET FACULTY

Certificate in Comp/Rhet	2	MA in History	1
Certificate in Appalachian Studies	1	MA in Education	2
Certificate in Women's Studies	1	MA in Sociology	1
MA in Appalachian Studies	1	PhD in English	2
MA in Business Administration	1	JD	1
Total			13

Appendix E: An Incomplete List of Independent Writing Programs

Arizona State University	San Francisco State University
Bowling Green State University**	Southwest Minnesota State University
Colgate University	SUNY-Binghamton
Cornell University	Syracuse University
DePaul University	University of Arkansas, Little Rock
George Washington University	University of California at Davis
Georgia Southern University *	University of California at Santa Barbara
Grand Valley State University	University of Central Arkansas
Hampden-Sydney College	University of Hartford
Hofstra University	University of Minnesota Duluth
Ithaca College	University of Minnesota, Minneapolis
James Madison University*	University of Rhode Island
Loyola College of Maryland	University of San Francisco
Massachusetts Institute of Technology	University of Texas at Austin
Michigan State University	University of Toronto
Metropolitan State	University of Washington
Morningside College	University of Colorado at Boulder
Oakland University	Virginia Commonwealth University
Oberlin College	Western Connecticut State College
Rowan University	Wordsworth College
San Diego State University	

*peer institutions

** aspirational peer institution

Appendix F: Support from Scholars in Rhetoric and Composition

We have discussed our proposal to relocate our Composition program with the following scholars in composition and rhetoric, all of whom have expertise on independent writing programs. We are receiving national attention from these and other prominent scholars in the field who endorse our proposal and believe that University College is the appropriate location for Appalachian's Composition program:

Tony Scott (University of North Carolina – Charlotte) directs the writing program at UNCC. He told us that faculty at UNCC are considering the possibility of moving the writing program out of the English department at UNCC. We've discussed our proposal with him, and he's encouraged our efforts to relocate our program.

Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater (University of North Carolina – Greensboro) met with us and discussed our proposal to relocate the Composition program. She believes that we should relocate to UC and that others the UNC system should follow Appalachian's lead in creating independent Composition programs.

Nancy Sommers (Harvard University) spoke with WPA's during her spring visit in 2009 to the WAC program about the advantages she could see in our moving to UC, specifically our being able to grow. She also pointed out that UC provides an unusually appropriate structure for writing, given the confluence of the UWC, WAC, and General Education.

Kurt Schick (James Madison University) teaches in an independent school of writing at JMU. He was hired just after Composition left the English department. He believes that the first-rate writing instruction and status of writing at

JMU came as a result of moving the program out of English. He has discussed our proposal with us and thinks we have a wonderful opportunity to professionalize writing instruction through an independent program. As a peer institution, JMU should be considered an excellent example of how our writing program would benefit from relocation. Schick invited Appalachian faculty to a site visit to JMU to learn more about their independent writing programs.

Barbara Walvoord (University of Notre Dame): During her February workshop for General Education assessment, Walvoord pointed out that Appalachian has an unusual structure for fostering conversation outside the department structure, saying that faculty conversation here is ambitious and interconnected. Moving Composition outside English is a step toward that interdisciplinary conversation on assessment. She said that most universities aren't at that stage and only have a structure for departmental conversation about assessment.

Barry Maid (Arizona State University) has authored many articles on independent writing programs, and is considered a leading expert on the subject. We have discussed our proposal extensively with him, and he enthusiastically supports our move to UC. He has offered to talk with faculty and administrators at Appalachian and explain why he believes we should move the Composition program to UC.

Nancy Welch (University of Vermont) visited Appalachian and conducted a writing workshop with composition, WAC, and the UWC. She is impressed with our writing programs and believes we can offer much more to students if we move our Composition program to UC. She emphasized the need to improve working conditions for faculty in order to improve learning conditions for students.

Eileen Schell (Syracuse University) has praised our process so far and encourages us to establish an independent program, pointing out that Syracuse's was established in 1986. She is coming to Appalachian in April 2010 to give a workshop on contingent faculty issues.

Pete Vandenberg (DePaul University) is the chair of a newly created independent department of writing at DePaul. We talked with him at length about his experience establishing the new department and about our hopes for relocating our program. He believes that we'd have a much stronger program if we relocated to UC, where the other two writing programs are housed. He shared information and ideas with us, and made himself available for further contact and assistance.

Darsie Bowden (DePaul University) encouraged us to leave English and to make plans for growing our graduate certificate in Rhetoric and Composition. She believes that we have much greater potential for growing the Composition program if we are in an independent unit in UC.

Appendix D: Summary of Comments from Information-Gathering

General comments regarding proposal/issue

- proposal did not appear to come through proper channels
- practical concerns about cooperation post recommendation: need reconciliation regardless of outcome
- people need option to affiliate with either area without prejudice
- feels process is moving too quickly, department needs more time
- sense of self will be different
- sad to see proposal, connected to increase in NTT numbers, professionalization of those ranks
- “tell us why we should say” seems to approach the issue from the wrong direction
- if ENG has tradition of deferring to experts, seems undemocratic/unprofessional not to let move
- fundamental issue: would be psychologically good for people, but pragmatically challenging
- need to avoid villainizing department; tone of recommendation will be important
- surprised at level of rejection to proposal, would have thought people would see possibilities to benefit everyone
- any half-measure will need to deal with collegiality issue: how can enforced collegiality work? what punishments might ensue for Rhet/Comp faculty if they stay?
- too much has been said for things to just go back

Fit of Rhetoric/Composition with English

- comp and ENG have different purposes, ENG recognized/accepted this when made change to 2001 (WAC)
- since comp is for university as a whole, shouldn’t be in one department—ENG has already acknowledged this (practically speaking)
- undermines mission of department, fundamental to what ENG does; if mission is to be changed, should be addressed by department
- philosophy issue is not important: basically, not good to work with people who don’t want to work with you
- comp not same as rest of ENG, not just another part of it, large faculty serving broader university that never get voices heard
- hypocrisy of “we should keep it because we should teach it, but I don’t want to teach it”

Proposal votes

- NTT vote on proposal: 31 for, 4 against, 1 undecided
- 17 of 40 TTs voted to stay, 9 to go, 4?—not a majority, if R/C allowed to vote, overwhelming vote is to go

Growth/change

- program has limited opportunity to advance or grow inside of ENG Dept
- would enhance ability to be creative, energized by newness

- values Rhet/Comp aspirations for program and integrity
- desire to leave to reduce being thwarted understandable: difficult to make change in dept, people don't have energy or time to combat the bullying
- proposal comes from situation where dept can't or won't work out issues, realize they have to leave to innovate/keep up with field, shouldn't have to struggle this much
- positive outcome possible: may force department to think more clearly about what it does, why, become less bloated, more creative/efficient (smaller could be better)
- people who keep wanting to make dept larger fail to recognize potential in becoming leaner/more focused

Trends

- split being represented as a trend, but not so at peers
- not comparable situation to R1s, where most NTTs also have PhD
- majority of departments around country are integrated, seems artificial to split
- Rhet/Comp programs gaining independence nationally; two peers (JMU, Georgia Southern)
- used to be more overlap between comp and rest of dept, now more of a divide (TTs don't teach comp, NTTs not allowed to teach lit without terminal degree)
- values the Rhet/Comp faculty, knows there is a national frame/conversation about independent writing programs,
- not out of line with national trends
- comp becoming increasingly professionalized, not just what junior faculty teach because they have to
- TTs resistance to being trained to teach new course demonstration that the discipline is growing with its own concerns, own field

Bureaucracy

- issues of leadership and valuing: not enough communication, reassurances; too many layers of bureaucracy
- current situation leads to confusion about reporting lines, multiple units; complications with working with FYS, WAC, 1100, Writing Center
- ENG faculty teaching in FYS and Writing Center told can't make copies in ENG
- how will split faculty be dealt with? buyouts or...?
- how would tenure be granted
- director needs to be on 12 month contract
- classroom allocation needs to be worked out
- interface between grad program and writing program needs to be ironed out, cooperation key
- if split occurs, should cross-list 2001 in both areas
- confusing messages about NTT % weight of teaching/scholarship/service, what counts; needs to be straightened out, would be easier to do so if program was independent

Resources/size

- if split, needs to be "clean" with clear boundaries about resources (secretaries, office materials, etc.)
- space concerns are very significant

- need to shift physical location if at all possible, but this shouldn't dictate decision
- don't necessarily have problem sharing office space, but do need private space for conferencing with students, discussing grades in private
- ENG is too large to run efficiently, too many programs
- presented as resource problem, but should be an academic matter
- concerned about splitting allocation of resources, especially administrative assistants
- not much realism about how material conditions would improve
- need own copier

Voting issues

- voting needs to be more flexible (changes to Faculty Handbook)
- voting rights issue is a bit of distraction; majority of faculty would support extending where appropriate, but Faculty Handbook limits options
- problem of voting is key issue; ENG has tried to fix/address this
- until 2007, NTTs could vote in faculty meetings; DPC voted to add adjunct to titles of all NTTs
- don't know of any NTT that wants to be on DPC, but would like vote on who is on it
- issue of whether or not benefitted NTTs should vote keeps getting tabled, "wait for faculty-wide plan"
- need to trust that people won't vote on issues they don't know anything about
- deciders don't understand job or interaction implications of vertical writing model, but make decisions about it
- demand for votes won't be able to be met with current structures

Tenure Track vs Non-Tenure Track faculty

- MA's should not be voting on people at higher ranks on DPC
- credentialing matters; students deserve best in writing courses (instruction by PhD's)
- contingent faculty should not drive department
- TT faculty often taught comp for a while as grads, but stopped as soon as possible and don't want to teach it again
- professional development needs to be balanced by "reality check": NTTs will always be contingent faculty; if want a permanent position, requires terminal degree
- split is not a good academic model, given the make-up of Rhet/Comp faculty (ratio of NTT to TT)
- writing program built by NTTs, not literature faculty; vs...
- ENG department courses, developed by ENG faculty
- NTTs represent large chunk of department, but little opportunity for advancement/growth, can lose job, have to reapply yearly, feels unprofessional, hurts morale
- conditions set up to create/encourage transience; not a choice, but still used to judge people
- have to state research and service, but only evaluated on teaching; have to fudge percentages; little reward for research and service
- would feel more confident if Rhet/Comp faculty were making decisions about NTTs, since they know more about what they are doing and are like in the classroom than the majority of ENG TTs; DPC takes into consideration recommendations of NTT hiring committee, but doesn't have to
- R/C faculty have done the bulk of the professional development and provided leadership for NTTs
- felt valued as graduate students, but when switched into roll of NTT, lost respect of department; dept interested in developing grads, but not NTTs

- few TTs see the pedagogical differences since they don't teach these courses
- many don't realize some stay in NTT role because they want to, trying to build themselves up, not ready yet for PhD program
- statements that NTTs "choose" to work elsewhere (implying lack of commitment) ignores fact that most have to work elsewhere to earn a living wage
- wouldn't allow a department to be staffed with so few terminal degree faculty, why a program?
- local environment is an issue, no readily-available pool of ABDs
- people without terminal degree will be teaching comp for the foreseeable future, best that can be done is have them located in a department with TT faculty
- university is hierarchical, needs to be
- precedent issue of large program with few TTs
- could ease tensions between TT and NTT, if move to UC, will "no longer be issue" (?)
- in environment that is already poisonous, comments about terminal degree status are damaging
- moves to clarify job description/promotion keep getting postponed/tabled, always told to wait
- unethical to be told to serve on committees, but then not be allowed to vote
- fallacious to say that TTs should control because they taught as grads, not the same as being a professional in field, like saying I saw a film once so I am a film expert, foolish to say "you may have own profession/journals/conferences, but we still know better"

Moving to University College

- NTTs seem to be misinformed about prospects for job security
- nervous about integrity of program with such an imbalance between NTTs and TTs
- NTTs may be moving because believe they'll get longer contracts in UC
- if UC is still amorphous, wouldn't it be better to stay in ENG?
- Rhet/Comp has same goals as FYS, WAC, WID; others all housed in UC; moving would lead to more shared understanding, better communication, better outcomes for students
- goal of R/C is to teach transferable/rhetorical skills for everyone, not just ENG majors
- resources not primary reason for move: main reason is it would be better if housed together with Writing Center and WAC; structurally makes more sense, would make collaboration easier
- department's strength is its interdisciplinarity, congruent with move toward interdisciplinarity in university. why create comp program that is divorced from discipline

Appendix E: Written Comments from English Straw Poll

It's a no-win situation, for everybody. But if the Rhet Comp folks are "forced" to stay-they've already stated a collective will to leave-will departmental morale improve?

Let it go, let it go.

I support the proposal for several reasons:

First, I firmly believe that the faculty who teach in a program should determine its future. Since very few TT faculty now teach in the English composition program, I think the comp faculty, primarily NTT faculty, know what is best for the program and for them as instructors. The proposal seems based on a great deal of research about trends in the Rhetoric and Composition fields, and I think the faculty who created the proposal are some of the best teachers I know, so I feel sure of their expertise. Also, if the NTT faculty think they can get a better deal for themselves in terms of contracts, voting rights, etc., in the University College rather than as a part of the English dept. in AandS, I certainly don't begrudge them the chance for a better situation. We all know that the NTT situation is an epidemic in American universities; perhaps this arrangement may prove to be a model for other NC colleges if it results in a better work environment for NTT faculty (something that was expressly called for by our system president, Erskine Bowles).

Second, the English department has become unwieldy in its size and the variety of missions and tasks it performs for the university. From an administrative point of view, our chair has to oversee far too many instructors. It seems likely that we have moved to a system of internal, rotating chairs in our department, and that job would be much more approachable if our department were reduced in size. From everything I have heard or read, I see no reason to suppose that the English department will suffer in terms of funding from this change, and I think we might do a better job in general if we were able to focus our efforts on fewer tasks. I also don't agree with the argument that if the composition program moves to University College, then every department could send its Gen Ed courses and faculty to that entity. The composition program is unique in its alignment with WAC and the Writing Center; that is the reason this is a logical move. The English department will continue to contribute to Gen Ed through sophomore literature survey courses, and with this move, the department could focus more on developing that aspect of our mission, in addition to working towards a better program for our majors.

Finally, it is obvious that a part of the motivation for this move comes from a general feeling of disenfranchisement by the English dept. NTT faculty. A small minority of TT faculty members made their composition colleagues feel inferior, and unfortunately, the rest of us did not respond quickly enough, or vocally enough, to those public statements that hurt many of our colleagues. Because of this somewhat poisoned atmosphere in the English dept. currently, I do not believe it is possible for us to regain a collegial atmosphere if the Composition Program feels forced to remain in the English department. On the other hand, if they are allowed the autonomy to move their program to a different college, I think the possibility of returning to an atmosphere of collegial cooperation between composition faculty and the rest of the English department is quite strong, particularly because the vast majority of dept. faculty have respect for the contributions of NTT composition faculty and wish them only the best.

I fully support the proposal for Rhetoric and Composition to relocate to University College. They have both the expertise and the right to direct their program toward healthy growth. I have the greatest confidence that their decision has been made with the best interest of students, the program, and the faculty in mind.

I support the right of the composition faculty to determine what's best for their program. If they want to leave, we shouldn't hold them against their will. Faculty opposing the proposal have failed to make convincing arguments for keeping composition in English. Neither the department chair nor the faculty opposing relocation have offered any evidence that they support the composition program: they do not seem to value the program or the people teaching in it, but they don't want to lose the resources it brings to the department. Moreover, the level of hostility directed at composition faculty has escalated and I am concerned for their well-being if they have to stay in English.

Until such time that TT faculty behave in such a way that demonstrates their commitment to and respect for Rhet/Comp in this department I have grave doubts that anything will / could change. The remark by Dr. Groover regarding NTT's qualifications is shameful. I am sure it has not been the first such comment nor will be the last. If I were a writing specialist, I would definitely wish to relocate. I fully appreciate the sentiments expressed in the forum and other discussions on the part of the rhet/comp folks. I am skeptical that this group of tenured and tenure track faculty has the ability to make the rhet/comp, especially the NTTs feel welcome. A start would be removing the "adjunct" title from their position title, thus giving the right to vote in our department. Animal Farm comes to mind

The department members who teach composition, the great majority of whom are NTT faculty, have demonstrated considerable commitment to the composition program, and yet TT faculty who seldom if ever teach composition want to maintain ultimate control over those who actually do the work. Composition teaching has become increasingly specialized over the past twenty years, and it is now inappropriate for those of us who are not active in the pedagogy to seek to control those who are. A clear majority of the NTT faculty wish to leave the English department. If we force them to stay, what hope is there of any improvement in NTT morale or of healing the divisions that have developed among the TT faculty? This issue will not go away. The composition program will separate in due course. Let's not swim against the tide but get on with working out how to make our major relevant and attractive to students in the twenty-first century.

- This proposal fundamentally undermines the mission of the English Department, as articulated in our Mission Statement. It creates a false dichotomy between the teaching of literary/cultural studies and the teaching of writing. As the Mission Statement makes clear, these two areas of our discipline and of our teaching are integral.

- While claiming that a separate composition program is better for students, the proposal does not identify any past or current problems with the teaching of writing in the department.
- From a pedagogical point of view, it is not clear what problems this proposal intends to fix. The proposal provides no data supporting the claim that students will benefit from the move.
- There has been no discussion within the English Department about perceived problems with the teaching of writing or of best practices in the teaching of writing. Before such a move is considered, the faculty of the English Department should discuss and make recommendations concerning the pedagogical implications of a separate composition program.
- The English Department is strongly interdisciplinary, integrating teaching and research in the areas of literature, rhetoric and composition, cultural studies, film, creative writing, folklore, and professional writing. This integrated approach is one of the department's strengths, and certainly seems congruent with the move toward greater interdisciplinarity in the University generally and the General Education curriculum in particular. To separate the teaching of writing from the larger discipline seems incongruent and regressive in view of these larger trends.
- The committee represents this as a largely logistical matter having to do with space and resources, while addressing pedagogical issues only superficially. This proposal has profound philosophical implications regarding the nature of the discipline and pedagogical implications regarding best practices in the teaching of reading and writing. These should be departmental decisions in which the views of the faculty as a whole should weigh heavily. Bypassing the English Department faculty circumvents the process of faculty governance.
- This proposal is disingenuous in representing the real source of conflict between the composition program and the rest of the English Dept., which is determining how NTT faculty who do not hold the terminal degree should participate in academic decision-making. Three major committees in the department - undergraduate studies, literature, and graduate studies - have all responded at length to this proposal and have suggested a number of concessions and compromises in areas of disagreement. Most if not all of the perceived problems raised in the proposal can be resolved while keeping the department and its mission intact.
- Creating an academic program staffed almost exclusively by NTT faculty who do not hold a terminal degree undermines the mission of the University. Such a program may cause problems with SACS accreditation and should certainly cause concern about what distinguishes the University's composition program from one found at a community college.
- If the composition program creates this precedent, there is no reason why NTT instructors from math, history, biology, or any other department with a large number of service courses should not separate from their home academic departments and create "programs" within University College. This trend ghettoizes lower-division courses by separating them from academic departments in which curricular development is informed by the best practices of the discipline at all levels.

I do not support the **proposal** as it makes NO pedagogical argument as to how the move will benefit the students at this university. The only argument I have heard as to how this move will benefit students is if NTT faculty are "happy," they will be better teachers. Such an argument is weak and based on no factual information. Proponents of the proposal charge that the TT faculty only focus on "resources" and fail to show how the move will "benefit the composition program." I would argue that the proponents are engaging in exactly the same kind of arguments, even resorting to egregious and erroneous character assassinations in department meetings, something that NO TT faculty has ever done to NTT faculty.

PROPOSAL: I unequivocally reject this proposal on pedagogical and philosophical grounds. The RhetCom faculty never followed the proper process and never provided a persuasive argument.

MOVE: This group has created lots of ill will in the dept. They are tone deaf about alternatives and not one of them took the time to address concerns put forth by the three departmental committees (who spent countless hours carefully reasoning the pros and cons of such a move) which is insulting. They have managed to alienate the most accommodating group of faculty and caused irreparable damage to collegial relationships. So, go and good riddance!

DELAY: Because both Stan and Dave are leaving, I also believe that this decision should be postponed until a new Provost is hired.

I do not support the proposal as it is written, nor do I support the move of composition to University College (and away from the English department) in principal. However, I have been both saddened and angered by the tenor of the discussion-English NTTs clearly believe they are being abused and exploited by the English TT, and never lose an opportunity to say so. I heartily disagree with that view; I believe the opposite to be true-the department has worked very hard on their behalf. However, the NTTs, regardless of the facts in front of them, remain unchangeable in their firm belief in their own exploitation, for which they also almost exclusively blame English TT faculty. Just last week, for instance, an English NTT compared a TTs reference--to the current impossibility of even discussing who does and does not possess the terminal degree in the field, (the PhD)-at one of the Task Force's open forums to a totalitarian dictator (this was in an email to the English department's listserve). Such rhetoric has become typical. Obviously, it isn't helpful.

To my mind, the Undergraduate Committee's response to the proposal affirms the composition program's value, growth, and development in the English Department, and I wish its details would be accepted as a way to have a unified department that values writing and rhetoric.

How does it serve ASU's students to be invited to think of rhetoric and composition as activities separate from what the English Department offers? What message does that send to our students-metaphorically, symbolically, literally?

My education in English departments included the study of rhetoric and composition-and I truly believe that rhetoric and composition are valuable parts of what an English Department offers.

I feel that the proper philosophical and pedagogical role for Composition and Rhetoric lies within the English department, not outside in a separate program.

A few of the reasons I support the proposal:

- ① My RAC colleagues desire it, & I respect & value their aspirations to develop & grow their program.
- ② I agree that our comp teachers will thrive & become even better teachers outside the hostile environment the department has created for them.
- ③ I agree that by failing to work with NTEs on various issues & enfranchisement within the department the department has alienated a large group of valuable teachers & made it difficult for them to do their work well because of low morale.
- ④ Departments & programs are dynamic entities that need to develop & transform in order to remain healthy. The department must embrace the opportunity presented by

→ This act is in order to develop & transform itself. Although I fear it will not, I hope it will.

Appendix F: Example of Failed Placement Proposal

Report on Failure of the Rhetoric and Composition Committee Proposal that the Summer Placement Exam not be used to Exempt Students from English 1000

Origins and Process of the Failed Placement Proposal

The proposal provided by the R/C Committee for the 3/16/2010 department meeting seemed a fairly straight-forward and rational request that the Composition Program be allowed to administer that Program based upon the expertise of its faculty and the scholarly guidance of the administrators and core faculty of that Program. The recommendation that English 1000 be made a required course, a prerequisite for English 2001, has been under consideration for several years by the committee. The committee declined to propose this more drastic step and instead offered the very limited proposal that was considered at the March 16th English Department Faculty Meeting. This proposal did not originate from any source outside of the Rhetoric and Composition Committee, and it was in no way associated with an earlier proposal solicited by the Office of Academic Affairs, the substance of which was to investigate the merits of directed self-placement.

The *very limited proposal* submitted to the English department faculty requested that in-coming first-year students not be allowed to place out of English 1000 based upon a timed-writing exam not available to all students who might wish to take that exam. The proposal was made available to the chair of the placement committee, to the department chair, and to the department a week before the actual department meeting. The distribution of this proposal was a collegial attempt to involve all interested faculty members, particularly members of the summer placement exam committee, to contribute to the committee's thinking about this issue.

Committee Support for the Proposal

Two main objections to the practice of allowing only selected students to take the summer placement exam (and thereby possibly be exempted from the English 1000 requirement) gave rise to the proposal to disallow exemption from English 1000 based thereon. The merits and limitations of such a proposal were discussed before the committee unofficially voted to forward the proposal to the department. The vote as not unanimous, as one member cautioned that truly outstanding students should be allowed to place directly into English 2001. The committee decided to distribute the proposal so that department members could contribute to the discussion of said proposal.

The overwhelming majority of the committee supported the proposal on the following grounds:

- **Ethical Grounds:** The examination process as it currently exists does not allow all interested students to take the exam. Even though the committee intent is sound, to save the university time and money by selecting only the students most likely to need placement into English 0900 or most likely to succeed in their bid for exemption from English 1000, the practice of “academic profiling” (Placement Committee Chair’s words), exam procedures unfairly restrict free access for all students.
- **Pedagogical Grounds:** By far the most important rationale for requiring English 1000 from students who do not have AP nor CLEP exemption is that of student success. Data from our own writing classes

correlates optimal student success in English 2001 with prior instruction in Appalachian's English 1000 class. This is likely due in large part to the on-going professionalization of our composition faculty over the past decade through increased opportunities for faculty development and mentoring, which improve the likelihood that all classes in expository writing will be conducted according to recent and respected scholarship in the field of Composition-Rhetoric.

Faculty development efforts have largely succeeded in grounding all of our classes in theory and practice drawn from a variety of fields within our discipline's scholarship. Research in Composition Rhetoric not only guides the goals of our writing courses, it

- facilitates course design, optimizing instructor freedom informed by both classic and current scholarship in the field;
- informs the creation of assignment sequences intended to move students gradually and sequentially through increasingly sophisticated writing tasks;
- and guides our assessment practices for individual students, classes, and the program itself.

Improved success in 2001 for students who have taken English 1000 is likely attributable the common goal of the first year course, which is to assist students with their transformation from secondary school writer to college-level writer according to best practices in the field.

Our writing instructors work with students at varying levels of confidence and ability to enhance student attitudes toward writing and to improve the varying processes they use when writing as well as the products they create. As a course, then, English 1000, encourages all students to become active members of the literate community that is the University, individualizing instruction as much as is feasible given class size. Instruction in the first writing class emphasizes the rhetorical reading skills as well as writing skills that will become increasingly necessary as students move into 2000-level classes and beyond.

Departmental Response and Vote

The proposal written by the committee was quite limited and grounded in what the committee thought were well-articulated and reasonable concerns. In advance of the department meeting, the proposal drew neither frank discussion nor open objection by any of the departmental faculty, including members of the Summer Placement Exam Committee. It therefore came as somewhat of a surprise that the Rhetoric and Composition Committee was accused of non-collegial behavior, obfuscation of the true reasons for the proposal, and disrespect for the work of our department colleagues on the placement committee.

Discussion revealed that some of our department colleagues were truly confused as to the scope of the proposal, a few holding to the idea that the Program's request that students not place out of English 1000 based on the selective placement exam was in actuality a bid to disband the summer placement committee. Such an idea was emphatically not included in the proposal.

Many colleagues offered helpful suggestions which were disregarded due to what nearly half of those present voted to be a premature calling of the question. Despite a fairly close vote not to suspend discussion before misinformation and confusion could be rectified, the proposal was moved to a vote, obstructing the democratic operation of faculty governance and obscuring potentially fruitful suggestions. For example, one colleague tried to make a friendly motion that the Committee revise the proposal and

resubmit it, but she was interrupted by the request to move to a vote immediately. Another colleague offered the suggestion that advanced sections of English 1000 be offered, and that students not be placed out of the course but rather into more appropriate sections. Faculty members were either unwilling or unable to seriously discuss either of these helpful suggestions.

Instead, the proposal was hastily moved to an open vote rather than a vote by ballot. It seems significant that nearly as many faculty members abstained from the vote as voted against the proposal. Of the four affirmative votes, all were offered by the only four specialists in the field enfranchised to vote. All of the votes against the proposal came from faculty outside of the field of Rhetoric and Composition. Several colleagues mentioned after the meeting that they wished we could have voted by ballot rather than by a show of hands, although it is impossible to divine the difference that anonymous ballots might have made.

Interpretation of Departmental Vote

Most programs housed in the English Department are guided by the specialists who teach in those programs and who were hired to guide program development. For example, it is hard to imagine anyone in the department voting against a recommendation about programmatic issues originating in the Literature Committee or Film Committee, for example. Yet, a proposal based upon programmatic concerns written by the faculty designated to guide the Composition Program was mischaracterized and rejected out of hand. Thus, I am reluctantly forced to conclude that the failure of the proposal brought by the Rhetoric and Composition Committee was based upon misunderstanding of the substance of the proposal, but was more importantly and egregiously due to disrespect for the Program, for the disciplinary knowledge of its faculty, and for the very scholarship that constitutes the field of Composition Rhetoric.

Had the English Department been sincere in its professed desire to support the Rhetoric and Composition Program and to maintain English as a hospitable home for the Program and its scholars, it seems that, if only as a good-will gesture, the faculty of the English Department would have granted the request made by the Rhetoric and Composition Committee.

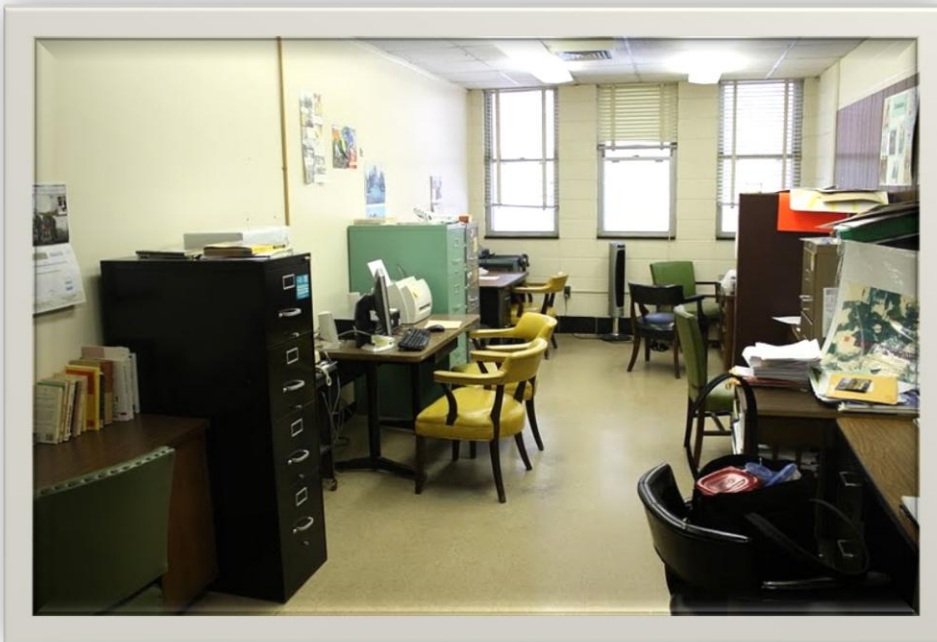
Such a vote must be seen, then, as one instance of the obstructionism that the Program faces in its current department. In order to control its own placement procedures and to safeguard the integrity of its program, then, the Rhetoric and Composition must find a new academic home.

Report regretfully written and submitted by Lynn Searfoss, March 17, 2010

Appendix G: Working Conditions



Largest NTT Office Bay:
converted
classroom with
14 desks, 3
computers,
located over
building physical
plant so the
room vibrates
noticeably, no
privacy



Smaller NTT
Office bay, with
six desks



Single NTT Office



Another Single NTT
Office (wide enough for
desk, door cannot quite
swing open all of the
way)

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Appendix I: Minority Opinion

Before I begin my dissent, let me reiterate the point made at the beginning of the majority report: I am in accord with the rest of the Task Force on some fundamental issues. I agree that non-tenure track (NTT) English department faculty should have full voting rights, and if it were in my power, I would immediately remove the term “adjunct” from all NTT contracts. This is a change of heart for me. I served on the DPC which, two years ago, voted to put “adjunct” on NTTs contracts in the first place, and I personally voted for adding the language. Some of my tenured and tenure-track (TT) colleagues argue against NTT voting rights—they believe that these rights should be given only to those hired on the tenure track, and that the power balance of the department could be tipped by a large NTT voting bloc—but in retrospect, I believe that the “adjunct” language created a false us vs. them / TT vs. NTT opposition that led to this current crisis, and I harbor the hope that giving NTTs full voting rights could help to repair relations.

I also support the autonomy of the Rhetoric and Composition program. The Rhet/Comp faculty in that discipline should make decisions about resource allocation, scheduling, etc. In fact, for reasons that I outline below, I would like to see the same autonomy extent to other disciplines in the department, such as Business and Technical Writing, Creative Writing, and my own field of Film Studies, as part of an overall English studies plan for the department.

Where I disagree with the Task Force, however, is on the issue of the Rhetoric and Composition program leaving the English department. I cannot support the proposed Rhet/Comp relocation for philosophical and pedagogical reasons.

The first reason is due to my probably irrational belief that it's not too late to restore collegiality to the English department. When I first arrived at Appalachian twelve years ago, I was impressed with how well everyone got along, regardless of rank or discipline. I did not feel vulnerable or silenced because I was a junior faculty member. A friend of mine at a different university said that the first advice she received in her job was to “keep her mouth shut” until she had tenure, but I never felt that way at Appalachian. I also saw NTTs and graduate students participating in the governance of the department much more than at other universities, a remarkable fact given that NTTs back then weren't compensated or rewarded for academic service at all. While I'm sure the situation wasn't perfect, the prevailing belief was that TTs and NTTs alike were “in it together” as members of the English department, and it was this feeling of togetherness that led to, for instance, shared TT and NTT support for NTT multi-year contracts.

Of course, I realize that this Task Force exists precisely because many NTTs and junior faculty currently feel threatened, and because we have seen a horrible decline in collegiality in the last two years. My belief, however, is that this decline is due to a few examples of anti-collegial behavior (including the placement of the “adjunct” language in NTT contracts) whose effects were compounded by tragic misunderstandings, and *not* to a widespread hatred between TTs and NTTs or Literature and Rhet/Comp faculty. Even while faculty and committee meetings become increasingly strained, exchanges between individuals in the department remain cordial and positive. I still see informal, unheralded expressions of positive social capital: colleagues across the TT/NTT and Literature/Rhet divides continue to loan books to each other, chat in the halls, and volunteer to read each other's scholarship. We're still talking--though not as much as we used to--and I still have hope.

Keeping this hope alive is, I think, an important pedagogical issue, connected to the profound affinities between English and Rhet/Comp as disciplines. In the “Pedagogical Considerations” section of the

majority recommendation, one sentence—"Others would argue that writing is cross-disciplinary, since in every department on campus, student must engage in writing"—fails to capture what those affinities are. Like most faculty in the English department, I support Writing Across the Curriculum, and I believe that (to pick just one example) Biology students should learn to write clear, cogent, discipline-appropriate prose. In Biology courses, however, the emphasis is on scientific information, and writing is primarily a means to convey this information through lab reports, poster sessions, etc. English and Rhet/Comp, however, take writing itself as the central object of study, specializing in the close reading of texts and the feedback loop between successful reading and successful writing. There are other departments that focus on texts too—my Task Force colleague Rodney Duke reminds me that this is true of Biblical Studies, for instance—but the emphasis on textual study combined with the long shared institutional history of English and Rhet/Comp here at Appalachian, represents, to me, a close relationship worth salvaging.

How does this special relationship affect pedagogy? I believe that even in these times of plummeting morale, there are advantages in keeping our text-centered disciplines close, so that dialogue can be continued and nurtured. The original Rhet/Comp relocation proposal argues that the current division of campus writing activities under two administrative entities (with Rhet/Comp in English, and the WAC program and Writing Center in University College) creates bureaucratic obstacles. Relocation would solve this problem, but create a new bureaucracy between Rhet/Comp and English; this bureaucracy, combined with the absence of Rhet/Comp personnel at committee and faculty meetings, would drastically reduce the opportunities we have to talk with and help one another, which I consider a bad idea. I still believe that anti-collegiality incidents are less common than the everyday gestures and words that bind us together, and if we can somehow return the discussions between English tenure-track faculty and Rhet/Comp NTTs to a more constructive, more congenial place, the results could once again improve *everyone's* teaching and scholarship, regardless of rank or discipline.

Improving collegiality could also lead us to a future vision of Appalachian's English department based on an English Studies model. In his introduction to the anthology *English Studies*, Bruce McComiskey lobbies for a definition of "English" as a discipline that is both broad enough to include different disciplines yet narrow enough so those disciplines can share a common mission:

English studies can move from being a set of unrelated subdisciplines to a powerful collection of integrated (structurally separate but functionally interrelated) disciplines with a coherent and collective goal that does not compromise each discipline's unique integrity. I propose that the goal of this integrated English studies should be the analysis, critique, and production of discourse in social context. And all of the various disciplines that make up English studies--linguistics and discourse analysis, rhetoric and composition, creative writing, literature and literary criticism, critical theory and cultural studies, and English education--contribute equally important functions toward accomplishing this goal. But there must be constant dialectical contact between the specialized disciplines and the larger project of English studies in order to curb further separation and divisiveness. (42-43)

This is the future I would wish for Appalachian's English department, and although the possibility looks remote, I would like Rhet/Comp to be one of the autonomous but integrated disciplines under the "big tent" of English studies. I should note, however, that not all the TTs in English agree that the English studies model is the way to go; some of my colleagues believe that literature should be the first priority of the department, and that splintering off into concentrations or integrated disciplines would dilute this mission too much. Given that I'm in film studies, it should be no surprise that I disagree. I've always

found the close reading skills and emphasis on narratology and critical theory that English and film studies share to be powerful examples of how the affiliation between intersecting yet discrete disciplines can be a great pedagogical strength. I'm thinking here specifically of two students who took my senior-level film theory class the same semester they had Tom McLaughlin for literary theory--every day, they'd come into class and say something like, "Well, Dr. McLaughlin defined Lacan's notion of the Law differently than Christian Metz did," and we'd merrily launch into a provocative discussion. I want more connections and discussions like these.

I also want the English department's resources to remain at current levels. At the open forums concerning the relocation proposal, people were reluctant to talk about resources; there was a general perception that the discussion should be focused on what was best for students rather than what was needed to maintain the institutional status quo. But I think resources and good pedagogy are inexorably bound together. When Vice Provost Tim Burwell spoke to the Task Force, he made two central points: (1.) that in the short term, an English/Rhet-Comp split would have little effect on the resources of the post-split English department, but (2.) in the long term, English might be hard pressed to justify keeping resources at current levels, unless we take drastic action (like increasing the enrollment in our classes, which is difficult, given how writing-intensive our classes are). I asked Tim if English might, over the long term, lose lines vacated by retiring faculty members, and he acknowledged that it was a possibility. I think this would be a shame. As a big department, we currently offer many different concentrations and specializations, but if we begin to lose positions, we move farther away from the "big tent" of the English studies model. There is strength in numbers and in our current diversity, and at a time when Appalachian is trying to "up its game," academically speaking, I would hate to see the English department shrink and become incapable of offering students a broad selection of diverse classes.

Let me close with a request: before any decision is made, please have administrators from English and Rhet/Comp meet one final time to brainstorm ways to salvage the relationship. If these negotiations fail, then the administrators should work out, in excruciating detail, how English and Rhet/Comp will cooperate after the split. Given that morale is at an all-time low, this is not the time for ambiguity. Everyone should know, and agree upon, the procedures that will operate after the relocation. (In particular, the post-split staffing of MA committees, and the hiring procedures of English graduate students to teach Rhet/Comp courses, should be discussed in detail.) While I believe that the bulk of TTs and NTTs still trust and value each other, I realize that it will take a while for full trust to be restored, and during that healing period we may need to codify and reaffirm those arrangements we used to take for granted. This is new territory for all of us.

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