Part I: Department overview

Programmatic and Teaching Achievements

2017 marked the founding of the Department of Writing Studies, a significant moment for the advancement of the discipline of Writing Studies at Montclair State. Our new departmental status required that we create founding documents and initiatives to guide the development of the department. In collaboration with the Dean’s office, the department convened a Writing Studies Task Force, comprised of Laura Field, Shannon Fanning, Catherine Keohane, Jessica Restaino, Caroline Dadas, and Emily Isaacs. During the course of the semester, this group created the following:

- A mission statement
- 2 and 5-year success measures
- Departmental bylaws
- A departmental committee structure

This group also served as an advisory committee to the acting chair of the department, Caroline Dadas. In addition to the Task Force, the department convened two search committees for our tenure-track positions. The Professional Writing search committee--comprised of Caroline Dadas (chair), Shannon Fanning, Emily Isaacs, Catherine Keohane, and Jessica Restaino--secured Kira Dreher from the University of Minnesota for our Assistant Professor line. The Open Rank search committee--comprised of Jessica Restaino (chair), Emily Isaacs, Shelagh Patterson, Bonnie Dowd, and Caroline Dadas--secured Associate Professor Ron Brooks of Oklahoma State University as the founding chair for the new department.

The department also collaboratively drafted an initial curriculum guide for a B.A. in Writing Studies. This major proposal underwent several drafts during the course of Spring 2017 and is currently being reviewed by the dean’s office and the broader university community. The department is confident that we can move a new major through the university’s curricular channels next academic year 2017/2018.

To announce its new departmental status to the university community, the Writing Studies hosted a “departmental showcase” in April 2017, where students, faculty, and staff could visit our event to learn more about what we offer. Thematically-based tables at the event included: research in Writing Studies; First Year Writing; Workshop; the Professional and Public Writing minor; Live Lit; creative writing; multimodal composition; writing and the environment; and
embodied writing practices. The event drew a consistently large crowd and attracted a number of students who are interested in further pursuing the discipline. Organized by Dr. Rick Reid, the department also created a video for the showcase that details how/why writing is important in the workplace: https://youtu.be/b-1Jw1MQYXo

We plan to adapt this video to a variety of contexts as we continue to spread the word about the department and launch our B.A. in Writing Studies in the coming year.

In addition to putting structures in place to support our change in status, the department also focused on maintaining the high level of instruction in the two programs under its purview: the First Year Writing program and the minor in Professional and Public Writing.

First Year Writing
AY 2016-2017 was distinguished by a number of new initiatives. The program decided for the first time to mandate a multimodal assignment as one of the writing sequences for WRIT 105. To prepare faculty for this change, faculty with expertise in this area help workshops to share assignment ideas and approaches. Fall 2016 also saw the program for the first time adopt a shared syllabus. Responding to needs pertaining to the new Workshop initiative (see below), the program drew on faculty’s existing assignments and prompts to compile a common syllabus for all WRIT 105 sections. This initiative also allowed for easier implementation of the multimodal assignment. While a common syllabus is not expected to be a staple of the program in the future, it allowed for productive talk about assignment pacing and development program-wide.

Fall 2016 also saw the implementation of the FYW Workshop model, which emerged in response to the elimination of ENWR100. The Workshop program follows the “stretch model” of basic writing instruction and is characterized by:

- An additional 50 minutes of credit-bearing instruction each week for those students who place into the Workshop
- Co-teaching and collaboration among 105/106W faculty (thematically-aligned section cohorts; large and small group instructional work; faculty collaboration across lesson planning and assessment)
- Peer instructional support (drop in or scheduled appointments with trained undergraduate writing tutors for extra help)
- Workshop lab hours (access to laptops for on-site writing (Bohn) with instructional support available as needed)

Coordinated by Dr. Laura Field, the Workshop model seeks to meet the needs of the university’s most in-need student writers.

More detailed information about First Year Writing can be found in the attached First Year Writing Annual Report.
Professional and Public Writing Minor

The minor has benefited greatly from being moved into an independent writing department. The Writing Studies Department has worked to increase awareness of the minor through classroom presentations in WRIT 105/106 sections, campus-wide promotional materials, and partnerships with majors around campus. As a result, in Spring 2017 the PPW minor grew from 20 students to 38, nearly doubling in size. The minor draws from a variety of majors including Communications, Fashion Studies, Political Science, English, Business, and others. Additionally, through the efforts of the curriculum committee, the department passed through several new courses that will supplement the minor’s offerings:

- WRIT 219 Composing Processes: Research, Theory, Practice
- WRIT 351 Medical Rhetorics: Texts, Bodies, Illness, Treatment
- WRIT 205 Advanced Composition
- WRIT 240 Special Topics in Writing
- WRIT 340 Seminar in Writing

The minor successfully ran its first summer class in May 2017, Workplace Writing (online), and is working to increase its online/hybrid offerings. Additionally, the minor is planning to add new faculty to the teaching rotation in 2017/2018, something that was not possible in our previous department. With the implementation of a department-wide Professional and Public Writing Committee, the minor is preparing to engage in more community outreach and design its own COOP course specifically geared toward writers in the workplace.

Finally, in terms of teaching achievements, the department is proud to have had two of its members win the Dean’s Recognition Award for Excellence in Teaching: Sarah Ghoshal and Shiladitya Sen. These awards reflect the department’s strong commitment to pedagogical innovation.

Student Academic Achievements

The First Year Writing program held its annual exemplary essay award contest; the winners include:

- Curtis Watkins (ENWR100, Spring 2016), "Hire Me For Who I Am, Not For Who I Was"
- Mariah Zenobia Pogue (ENWR105, Fall 2016), "Daily Double: The Effects of Being a Minority Diagnosed with a Mental Health Disorder"
- Nicole Marquez (ENWR106/Studio, Spring 2016), "Zombieland: A Post-Apocalyptic Nightmare or Adulthood Reality?"

To build toward more direct career outcomes for Professional and Public Writing students, the minor will pass through its own COOP course next year so that students can intern in writing-oriented workplaces. We believe that doing so will promote a more clear connection between the minor and career options for PPW students.
Community Engagement and Service
Writing faculty are involved in a number of efforts in the local community and on campus. These efforts include:

Adamo, Melissa. Fellow, Engaged Teaching Fellows Program 2016.


O’Dell, Carrie. Fellow, Engaged Teaching Fellows Program 2016.

Patterson, Shelagh. Consultant, Newark Street Academy, 2016.

Patterson, Shelagh. Member, Steering Committee. New Jersey Writing Alliance.


Part II. Faculty Scholarship Reporting

Faculty Achievements – Books


Faculty Achievement -- Journal Articles


Restaino, Jessica with Laurie Cella, Eli Goldblatt, Karen Johnson, Paula Mathieu, and Steve

Restaino, Jessica. **Honorable mention, Nancy Ethel Welch Outstanding Article Award** for “Surrender as Method: Research, Writing, Rhetoric, Love,” published in *Peitho* (Annual award of the Coalition of Feminist Scholars in the History of Rhetoric and Composition; Conference on College Composition and Communication, Portland, OR)

**Faculty Achievements -- Book Chapters**


**Faculty Achievements -- Editorial Journal and Other Work**


Cortese, Claudia. Staff book reviewer for *Muzzle Magazine*.


Curto, Kathy. “Closing Time.” 3rd Place *Healing Voices* Lit Contest.

Dadas, Caroline. Ad hoc reviewer: *Peitho; New Media and Society; The Journal of Homosexuality*.

Martin, Elizabeth. Staff interviewer and reviewer: *American Microreviews and Interviews*. Print.

Restaino, Jessica. Ad hoc reviewer: *College Composition and Communication; College English; Literacy in Composition Studies; Peitho; Utah State University Press*. 

**Faculty Achievements -- Short Fiction and Memoir, Poems, Humor and Essays**


Cortese, Claudia. “Girlhood.” *Indiana Review*, vol. 19, no. 1, pg. 100


- Film screened at the 2017 Grove Film Festival and was an audience choice nominee for best film. Interview with me: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1keWUsq3FbU&t=4s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1keWUsq3FbU&t=4s)
- Film accepted to the 2017 Long Island International Film Expo in July 2017.

**Faculty Achievements -- Invited Lectures and Plenary Talks**

Adamo, Melissa and Carrie O’Dell. ““A Literary Field Trip: Exploring WRIT106’s Live Literature
Adamo, Melissa. “Personalizing, Questioning, and Tweeting: Implementing New Methods for Student Engagement,” University Teaching and Learning Showcase, Montclair State University, Montclair, NJ, 2017


Restaino, Jessica. Invited guest lecture for graduate research methods course (First Semester), University of West Florida, Spring 2017.

Restaino, Jessica. Invited guest instructor for graduate research methods course (First Semester), Western Washington University, Fall 2016.

Restaino, Jessica. Invited guest instructor for graduate writing program administration course, CUNY Graduate Center, October 2016.

Restaino, Jessica. Invited guest instructor for graduate writing program administration course, Old Dominion University, July 2016.


First-Year Writing Annual Report 2016/2017

Introduction
First-Year Writing at Montclair State is a nationally recognized program that provides general education writing instruction to the undergraduate population. We offer two general education writing courses--WRIT 105 and WRIT 106--which are delivered by a faculty of about 80-85 full and part-time instructors each semester. Fuller descriptions of our course offerings, programming (special events, professional development workshops, faculty accomplishments, etc), and assessment initiatives (from student writing to the larger program) can be found via our website.

AY 17 marked the first academic year in which the First-Year Writing (FYW) program was housed in the new Department of Writing Studies. Fundamental to this development are new initiatives around shared governance that more fully integrate FYW into the life and work of the department, and curricular experimentation that expand our course offerings more broadly into contact with writing and how it happens across and within disciplines.

Mission Statement
The mission of the First-Year Writing program is to provide all undergraduate students with process-based instruction in argument-driven academic writing that will support their continued growth and development as writers and thinkers throughout their undergraduate education and beyond. Our three courses—“Introduction to College Writing,” “College Writing I,” and “College Writing II”—are designed to connect writing, intellectual inquiry, and learning across the contexts of school, work, relationships, and community.¹

The mission of the first-year writing program is supported by standardized criteria for assessment of student writing, written collaboratively by full-time faculty.

Program Leadership
Jessica Restaino continues to serve as faculty program director, elected for a second three-year term effective July 1, 2015. The faculty director carries primary responsibility for all aspects of the program, including faculty hiring, curriculum, training, and evaluation. As the FYW program is now situated in a new, free-standing Department of Writing Studies, the FYW Director and Department Chair have begun to develop more integrative collaborations, drawing on their respective shared disciplinary expertise.

The program is supported by an Associate Director, Jennifer Holly-Wells, who occupies a full-time professional staff position, and an Assistant Director, Bonnie Dowd, who holds an Instructional Specialist position with three credit hours of reassigned time each semester to support the administrative leadership work of the program. Additionally, the program has a full

¹ “Introduction to College Writing”/WRIT 100 has not been offered since Summer 2016.
time administrative assistant, Phyllis Brooks, who processes faculty hiring and leave paperwork, budgetary reimbursement and purchasing tasks, prepares minutes at department meetings, tracks and orders department office supplies, and coordinates the work study student’s schedule.

Program Location
Faculty offices in AY 17 are located on the first floor of Dickson Hall; the main department office is DI 120. Effective January 2017, the Department also acquired Schmitt 319, which is now a dedicated work space for part-time faculty. Additional faculty offices have been allocated in Schmitt and moves are expected in Summer 2017.

Students: Instruction, Services, and Support
A key highlight of our program is its size: the FYW program instructs nearly every undergraduate at the University. Student needs are diverse and significant across our demographic and drive program events, professional development, curricular initiatives, and staffing. The table below outlines recent enrollment numbers across all three courses offered over AY 17:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WRIT 100 sections</th>
<th>WRIT 100 seats</th>
<th>WRIT 100 used</th>
<th>% capacity used</th>
<th>WRIT 105 sections</th>
<th>WRIT 105 seats</th>
<th>WRIT 105 used</th>
<th>% capacity used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2016</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>101.66%</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>54</td>
<td>71.05%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3040</td>
<td>3044</td>
<td>100.13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>266</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>WRIT 106 sects</th>
<th>WRIT 106 seats</th>
<th>WRIT 106 used</th>
<th>% capacity used</th>
<th>Total FYW sections</th>
<th>Total FYW seats</th>
<th>Total FYW used</th>
<th>Total Capacity Used</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Summer 2016</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>55</td>
<td>57.89%</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>291</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>79.38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fall 2016</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>646</td>
<td>649</td>
<td>100.46%</td>
<td>194</td>
<td>3686</td>
<td>3693</td>
<td>100.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Winter 2017</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring 2017</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>2812</td>
<td>2702</td>
<td>96.10%</td>
<td>162</td>
<td>3078</td>
<td>2968</td>
<td>96.40%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Advising
First-year students seek advisement for several issues, including: evaluation of courses taken at other universities, concern about an instructor, appeal of a plagiarism charge, grade grievances, and placement in writing courses. The FYW administration maintains
office hours each week: the associate director is available on a standard professional staff schedule and the faculty director keeps weekly office hours and appointments by request of students and faculty. Both correspond with students via email to meet the extensive demand. The associate and assistant directors take primary responsibility for review of transfer evaluations, consulting the director in more controversial cases, many of which require additional document collection and evaluation (syllabi and sample papers) and a few of which require an in-house essay assessment. Course waiver records are maintained in an online database designed to enable tracking and report-generation. In AY 17, FYW leadership met with Admissions office staff, under the leadership of Jeff Gant, to review course equivalency records and processes in order to continue supporting the transfer process while maintaining rigorous standards for equivalency.

Grade grievances and disciplinary issues (most often plagiarism) demand time and attention from both the director and associate director. The program works regularly with the University conduct officer (Jerry Collins) to enforce the University and program plagiarism policies, and partners with the Dean’s office (CHSS Asst. Dean Yolanda Alvarez) on grade appeal issues as needed. The program insists that students follow a process that involves first a faculty meeting before progressing through administrative appeals; most issues are resolved on the programmatic level and do not require Dean level involvement. The faculty director also works regularly with the Dean of Students office, Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS), and the Director of the Disability Resource Center to address struggling students and their resource and support needs.

Curriculum
The FYW program takes a process-based approach to writing instruction, with an emphasis on multiple drafts, peer review, and one-on-one conferencing. All courses end with students’ submission of cumulative portfolios to demonstrate improvement over time. The central focus of each course is academic argument and analytical writing, though the content can vary by course number and as per instructor discretion. Students produce three essays in each course, and all essays in each course undergo a three-draft process that includes peer and instructor feedback. Each course ends with a cumulative portfolio review. Instructors choose among textbooks selected by faculty committee, but have the option of drawing on materials outside of the recommended texts (including increasingly the design of textbook-free, open-access courses) in consultation with the program Director. The two general education writing courses--WRIT 105 and WRIT 106--received formal recertification by the University General Education committee in May 2017.

The FYW program offers three courses:

- WRIT 100, Introduction to College Writing: This course, capped at 15 students was last offered in Summer 2016 and has been largely discontinued and replaced by a supplemental instruction program, “workshop,” described below. In Summer 2016 the course was offered only for student enrolled in the EOF program; in Summer 2017 EOF students will take WRIT 105.
WRIT 105, College Writing I: The first of two required general education writing courses, WRIT 105 (capped at 19 students) takes a broad, interdisciplinary focus across issues related to gender, race, culture, sexuality, and ethnicity with an emphasis on academic argument and analytical writing.

WRIT 106, College Writing II: The second of two required general education writing courses, ENWR 106 (capped at 19 students) currently engages students in critical reading of text and genre while continuing the emphasis on academic argument and analytical writing. Experimentation with the thematic foci of the course to reach colleges across the university began in in Sp ’17 with sections focused thematically on business and science. More formal changes will take time and will be ongoing through AY 18.

Delivery Formats

- Traditional First-Year Writing courses offer a structured approach to the curriculum. Classes are taught by one professor, and meet twice a week at the same time in a regularly-scheduled classroom. Class time is a mixture of small group discussion, lecture, and in-class reading and writing. Traditional course models make up the bulk of the program's offerings. Like all first-year writing courses, they are designed to advance the standard learning goals of the program, teaching students to be more effective writers of academic, analytical argument. Students are encouraged to email their professors, visit office hours, and/or make appointments if they need individual attention.

- Workshop sections of First-Year Writing offer an additional 50 minutes of instruction per week, in a 4-credit course, with additional support for students coming from Student Assistants who are upper-level experienced writers. Students are notified if they require the Workshop section, although other spaces may be available to interested students. See below for a report on the workshop instruction in FYW. Approaches to workshop instruction is informed by the work of a faculty committee. Fuller details about the workshop format are included under the “program assessment” section below.

- Hybrid and online courses in the First-Year Writing Program are rigorous. More writing is required than in traditional courses—at least 1,000-2,000 words per week in addition to regular required essays via online discussions and online collaborative work. Students in hybrid sections are expected to engage in the online classroom environment regularly and therefore, although the course meets in person only one day per week, it is not a one-day per- week course. Similarly, students in online sections have class activities and assignments due twice a week. The “online day/s” for the individual classes are listed in WESS. See below for a report on online instruction in FYW. Approaches to hybrid and online instruction is informed by the work of a faculty committee; details are included in the committee report section below.

FYW Website
The FYW website has continued to serve as a popular and highly-trafficked hub for resources and information for MSU students, faculty, and the public alike, averaging 1500-2500 page
views per month. For students, the FYW website features essential documents for FYW procedures, detailed information about FYW course formats, faculty, and policies—including detailed descriptions regarding the goals of FYW courses, “Academic Integrity and Plagiarism,” and “Student Writing Assessment” criteria—as well as the primary online centers for FYW’s “Exemplary Essay Awards” and “Live Lit” programs. For faculty, the FYW website not only details “Faculty Requirements” for the instruction of FYW courses, but assists with the excellence in teaching FYW through the providing of resources for both course development and design as well as professional development. Although primarily maintained by full-time Instructional Specialist Rick Reid since AY 10/11, the development of the Department of Writing Studies brought about a Website Committee that includes four Writing Studies faculty members to collectively refine the FYW website and develop and launch a Department of Writing Studies website for AY 16/17. Details are included in the committee report section below.

FYW Staffing Structure
The staffing table below represents the configuration for FA 16; full-time faculty remained consistent through SP 17 and adjunct needs fluctuated mildly in light of slightly fewer sections (which is typical for the spring semester).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL 16</th>
<th>Specialists</th>
<th>Tenure-Line</th>
<th>Adjunct</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sections Taught</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>194</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percentage of FYW</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>1%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In preparing for AY 18, the Department submitted a more comprehensive line request, which imagines FYW as more fully foundational to the curriculum, a launching pad into the minor and, eventually, the major. Wider teaching diversity among all faculty--specialists and tenure line--is expected, as all will teach regularly in the FYW sequence in order to provide connection and continuity into further study of the discipline on the 200, 300, and 400 levels. The proposed staffing configuration for AY 18 is below:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>FALL 17</th>
<th>Specialists</th>
<th>Tenure-Line</th>
<th>Adjunct</th>
<th>Totals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Individuals (Projected)</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2 As of this writing, the Department has not yet received approval for this request.
Reliance on adjunct faculty creates instability and inconsistency in program’s instruction due to higher turnover rates and the inevitable limitations to adjuncts’ time and availability. The table below tracks hiring and turnover rates among adjunct faculty since 2010:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sections Taught</th>
<th>Coverage Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>135[1]</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43</td>
<td>23.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>185[2]</td>
<td>~100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

[1] Section coverage factors in specialist reassigned time for administrative and workshop initiatives.
[2] Lower section totals for FA 17 reflect the absence of WRIT 100 and thus quicker movement of students through our sequence.

Faculty: Staffing Structure and Type, Hiring, Reappointment
The First-Year Writing Program at Montclair State enjoys high national and regional regard among scholars and teachers of college composition. Teaching positions in the program attract a high volume of applications from talented and well-qualified candidates. Measures of teaching evaluation and student performance, from student grade and survey data to classroom observations, indicate faculty deliver engaging, rigorous, high quality writing instruction.

Faculty Retention, Evaluation, and Development Activities
New faculty members—however extensive their previous training—are introduced to the
FYW Program through a mandatory two-day orientation that takes place in August. The orientation curriculum requires that faculty engage with foundational scholarship in composition theory and best practice, both as a means to orient them to the philosophical stance of our program and to ensure that they have a solid grounding in this pedagogical and research area. The workshop also reviews grading criteria, benchmark papers, program policies, and gives new faculty the opportunity to apply a variety of assessment and instructional techniques. Finally, the workshop introduces faculty to a variety of materials for their use and experimentation. New faculty are compensated for this time commitment. A more comprehensive description of professional development for both new and continuing faculty is outlined later in this report.

Program Assessment
The FYW program maintains a rigorous agenda of program assessment. These assessments include routine faculty class observations, student evaluations, program grade data reports by semester, and periodic surveys of faculty opinion on topics related to program materials (ie handbooks, textbooks) and their own classroom experiences (new teaching approaches, professional development needs, assessment of students’ strengths and weaknesses outside of grade performance). The program also conducts assessments of any new curricular or programmatic initiatives as needed.

On the student level, as a program we track performance of our EOF (Educational Opportunity Fund) students, identify and target late-stage undergraduates in first-year writing (for example, we have offered sections of first-year writing exclusively for juniors/seniors) to move these students more effectively through the program, and periodically conduct performance assessments in relation to courses, our placement process, and other relevant needs as they arise.

Grading
Standardized grading practices across the program is a major and demanding priority area in a program of our size. The program philosophy around grading emphasizes and values revision, and faculty are expected to assign grades that are aligned with the program assessment criteria and grading benchmarks. The letter grades students receive at the end of the semester are predominantly reflective of the quality of their academic writing rather than other components of the course, such as participation, attendance, and the completion of low-stakes assignments.

The director requests grade data from the Office of Institutional Research at the close of each semester. This data indicates averages per course type across the program, as well as grade frequencies (As, Bs, Cs…) per instructor per course. Typically the director, in consultation with the associate and assistant director, identifies outlier faculty who have assigned a prevalence of either notably high or notably low grades. The director typically indicates the trend in writing and meets with the instructor; as a program, we target assessment as an instructional tool and aim to work with faculty towards alignment with program standards. We also pursue talk about grading trends as an opportunity to learn
about our instructors’ needs and approaches, their experiences in the classroom, and the needs they see among students. We recognize that each section is a unique group with strengths and particularities.

As part of the standard professional development offered in the program, each fall semester we offer multiple “grade norming” workshops, essential particularly for newer faculty, facilitated by either the director or associate director. In the spring, we tend to target struggling faculty on a case-by-case basis. In particular, adjunct faculty teaching at more than one institution face the steepest challenge in aligning their grading practices with our program. The chart below tracks grading trends in the program from 2010-2017:

![Percentage of D, F, WD Grades in WRIT 105, with Total](image)

**Faculty Observations and Course Evaluations**
All faculty teaching in the program receive consistent course evaluations and are observed with regularity. Course evaluations are completed in two of the lecturers’ four classes per semester, and in all of the courses taught by part-time faculty. These course evaluations are reviewed by the Director, Associate Director, and Assistant Director, and are distributed to faculty. Summaries of each faculty member’s evaluations each semester are also entered into a master database that is regularly reviewed by the Director. Notably weak course evaluations are flagged in this database and the instructor in this case is
usually invited to discuss the class with the Director for some assistance in improving the situation. In rare cases, consistently weak course evaluations, coupled with weak class observations, can result in termination of employment or non-renewal.

All FYW faculty are observed on a rotating basis, with new faculty the top priority. Full-time instructors are observed by either the faculty director, associate director, or another tenure-track faculty member; the faculty director tries to observe all new full-time instructors personally during their first year. All other FYW faculty (part-time/adjuncts) are observed by either the Director or full-time FYW faculty. Observation reports are submitted to the Director for review and of course shared with individual instructors. These observation reports are an essential component of the Program’s evaluation of faculty.

Reappointment
Faculty on full-time contracts require reappointment review at the close of each contract year for renewal. Faculty submit an application for review which documents their performance as writing instructors and the faculty director reviews all files and writes recommendations, as appropriate, for each faculty member under review. As our full-time numbers have continued to increase, this work is of particular importance and is of course notably time consuming.

Historically, the faculty director submits all recommendations to the department chair for final approval and submission to the Dean’s office. Effective with the establishment of the new department in January 2017, the department established a new committee dedicated to reappointment review that is researching new models for faculty evaluation and reappointment that involve peer review and and more robust evaluative participation.

Workshop
In response to a lack of resources for comprehensive writing placement assessment prior to first-year students’ arrival on campus, the FYW program developed a non-credit supplemental instruction program (“workshop”) designed to provide struggling students with support concurrently throughout ENWR105 in FA 16. Because students could not be moved out of the 105 courses assigned to them during orientation, the workshop program had a flexible schedule to allow students to receive support throughout the week, and offered an instructional support program aligned with a standardized 105 curriculum to maintain consistency when students visited the workshop. While there were clear challenges, it was essential to develop a plan to support incoming first year students who struggled with writing.

The Fa16 workshop faculty consisted of eleven Specialists and four student assistants. In lieu of teaching a fourth course, ten of the eleven faculty completed two rounds of placement reading, taught in the workshop on a weekly basis, and developed workshop curriculum. Between both fall and spring placement, faculty read approximately 1,000 essays as part of the double blind read. During the 10-weeks of instruction, faculty met with students for 6 hours each week both
in groups and during office hours. To support their teaching the team met for a weekly planning session. One specialist taught a one course load and was responsible for coordinating the placement reading for fall and spring, communicating with students and faculty on a weekly basis, scheduling and managing student assistants, planning weekly meetings, following up on student registration, and teaching in the workshop space. Student assistant responsibilities included assistance with placement make-up essays, directing students in the space, tracking attendance and laptop rentals, and staffing drop-in hours.

Fall 2016 workshop instruction extended over a 10-week period and was supported by a program wide, faculty developed standardized syllabus. These shared assignments and readings allowed students to work on the same major assignments in both their regular classes and workshop sessions because workshop was designed to support the standard syllabus. This curriculum was designed over the summer when workshop faculty met to outline weekly goals, targets, and outcomes, which were then fine-tuned throughout the semester during weekly workshop meetings.

During the semester, the 60-minute sessions typically started with a student check-in, an introduction to the week’s focus, and then group or individual writing tasks. Tasks completed earlier in a syllabus module focused on invention, while tasks assigned later in the process focused on working closely with students drafts. Despite the standard syllabus, and as a result of the needs of the individual classes and instructors, not all courses kept the same pace and faculty found that students were often in different places in the process. As a result, instructors were flexible in order to meet student needs and often approached the class with multiple task options, so that students could choose the task that would best suit their needs. In the end, the workshop curriculum was useful as a guide, but faculty found students were more engaged and participated when they were given opportunities to make choices in the sessions.

Challenges of this model included the in-class diagnostic, student scheduling and retention, and the workshop space. Successes included the compliance incentive, faculty reception and participation, professional development of student assistance and workshop faculty, and student requests for spring workshop placement.

Identifying Students: Placement
In order to establish our Fa16 Workshop cohort, students were assessed by a variety of factors:

- Overall high school GPA (2.86 and below)
- High school junior English grade (79 and below)
- First week self-efficacy survey (35 and below)
- A double-blind read of faculty flagged in-class diagnostic essays.

Meeting two quantitative data points (ex: HS GPA and junior year English grade) qualified a student for automatic placement into the FA 16 WRIT 105 workshop (regardless of the outcome of diagnostic essay review). This method of using the available data in conjunction with the read represents a change to previous placement processes, which prioritized expert reader
assessment. As a result of this process, 143 of 340 student placements were made by GPA and Jr. English alone.

Placement Results

<p>| | |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Incoming First Year Students</td>
<td>~3,100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workshop Placement</td>
<td>~340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Flagged by Faculty</td>
<td>604</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GPA (2.86 and below)</td>
<td>454</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jr. English (79 and below)</td>
<td>418</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Efficacy Score (35 and below)</td>
<td>296</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Double blind read</td>
<td>304</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

We are currently in the process of analyzing FA 16 workshop student grade performance in 105 as compared to their non-workshop peers. This data will be included in a SP 17 report that looks comparatively at grade performance in FA 16 and FA 17 workshop students, particularly given differing placement criteria each semester; this report will also offer an overview of grade performance in the general population for context.

Students were placed into, and in some cases opted into, a four-credit WRIT105 and WRIT106 courses; the move from non-credit to an additional credit for supplemental instruction is a notable, essential shift. We believe the extended time in the classroom, as well as the move from three to four credits, will address some of the challenges faced with the Fa16 version of workshop. Starting with the spring 2017 workshop additional support will be as follows:

- An additional 50 minutes of credit-bearing instruction each week
- Co-teaching and collaboration among 106W faculty (this will include thematically aligned section cohorts; large and small group instructional work; faculty collaboration across lesson planning and assessment)
- Peer instructional support (drop in or scheduled appointments with trained undergraduate writing tutors for extra help)
- Workshop lab hours (access to laptops for on-site writing (Bohn) with instructional support available as needed)
While there will most likely be some minor adjustments made for future semesters, this version of workshop will extend into the Fa17 and Sp18 workshop.

For next Fa17/Sp18, the program will implement a hybridized placement system. WRIT 105/Fall will operate on a Directed Self-Placement (DSP) model. Students will use the results of a self-inventory survey, course descriptions, and student profiles to choose their Fa17 WRIT105 course. Students who select the 4-credit version for FA 17 will have the additional instruction and support consistent with Sp17: co-teaching, additional instructional time, peer tutoring, and lab hours. Placement into WRIT 106/SP 18 workshop will be a curriculum-focused midterm assessment, similar to the one completed for SP 17 workshop placement. For students enrolled in WRIT 105 workshop during SP 17, the FYW program will complete a midterm assessment to determine WRIT 106 placement for the following semester. We will be collecting data throughout AY 18 to evaluate the effectiveness of our DSP materials, student and faculty placement satisfaction, course performance data, and the correlation between 105/106 placement outcomes.

Programming and Faculty Committees
Achievement of the FYW program’s educational goals hinges upon systemic and foundational professional development across our diverse faculty body, as well as rigorous and engaging curricula, consistent assessment practices (from the classroom to the larger program), and ongoing, sustained faculty involvement in the life of the program. A series of committees, made up primarily of both full and part-time fyw faculty volunteers, which are overseen by and report to the faculty director, help drive forward, inform, and advance the larger goals of the program in focused ways.

Mentoring
Chaired by Tatum Petrich, the mentoring program pairs incoming faculty with more experienced instructors who serve as resources on teaching strategies, program policy, grading criteria, and University systems and resources. Mentor faculty report to the director with updates and troubleshooting or need areas regarding mentees; often feedback from mentor faculty helps to drive professional development needs into the following semester. The program concludes with a dinner each spring.

Blog
The “Deep Down in the Classroom” blog, coordinated by full-time instructor Shil Sen, is a collection of practice-based posts, written by first-year writing faculty (and, on one occasion so far, a guest blogger), that engage a national and international audience on issues relevant to the college composition classroom. Readers are welcome to comment on blog posts and the blog is updated regularly throughout the academic year.

Professional Development Workshops
The program offers regular professional development workshops each semester. While
many of these workshops are offered by experts among our faculty, we routinely invite guest presenters from beyond campus to join us at some point during the year and ideally once per semester. In Spring 2017 we asked our four finalists for the Department’s founding chair search to offer a professional development workshop for our faculty. In addition to these external expert voices, the faculty leaders in the program offered the following:

- Thurs, 9/29, Supporting Weaker Writers
- Wed, 10/5, Essay Norming
- Thurs, 10/6, Essay Norming
- Tues, 10/18, Multimodality for Newbies
- Wed, 11/2, Multimodality in ENWR106
- Mon, 3/13, Information Literacy in the Era of Fake News
- Mon, 3/21, “Discussing (or Avoiding Discussing…) Politics in the Classroom”
- Wed, 3/29, Making the Most of Peer Review
- Wed, 4/15, Promoting Diversity & Inclusivity in Our Classrooms
- Tues, 4/11, Mastering Multimodality in the Composition Classroom

Committees

Creative Writing for FYW
The “CW for FYW” committee represents the widespread interest and talent among first-year writing faculty in creative writing. The committee works to bridge instruction in academic writing with pedagogical practices in creative writing, and to explore the ways in which each medium can inform the other. The committee additionally works to foster a community of creative writers among FYW faculty, supporting accomplishments and writing projects through peer support.

Exemplary Essay Awards
The Exemplary Essay Awards competition for students enrolled in FYW courses is judged by a committee of program faculty at the close of each academic year and seeks to identify the strongest paper written in each of our courses during the academic year. Submissions are received in each of the three courses in the FYW Program and a winner is determined in each course category. Students’ essays are judged on the following criteria: Originality/Creativity; Focus; Development; Organization; Critical Thinking/Analysis; Clarity of Prose. Student award recipients receive a $100 MSU Red Hawk Dollars award and all winning essays are published on the FYW Program website and are often used for faculty training and instructional purposes.

Hybrid/Online Teaching
During the AY 17, the Hybrid/Online Teaching Committee, chaired by full-time Instructional Specialist Sarah Ghoshal, continued the exploration and practice of hybrid and online teaching and learning in First Year Writing courses at Montclair State University, as well as hybrid and online courses in the newly created Department of Writing Studies as a whole. In AY ’16-’17, 11 professors taught 15 sections of WRIT 106, as well as one section of WRIT 204 and one section
of WRIT 206, many while simultaneously teaching traditional face-to-face courses. These numbers are less than the previous academic year because we suspended Hybrid 105 to rework the registration process and to implement the upcoming Fall orientations, detailed below.

During the year, the committee pursued the development of FYW hybrid pedagogy by: 1) Revising the attendance policy to allow for some flexibility and a learning curve for students new to this course format; 2) Standardizing such practices as a required weekly email with hyperlinks and specific schedule items for online classes and a multimodal component and weekly discussions in both online and hybrid courses and; 3) Planning for student orientations in Fall ‘17 for incoming freshmen taking Hybrid WRIT 105 in order to best prepare them for taking a hybrid writing course and introduce them to a new course format (based upon research and discussion around student readiness in the previous academic year; and 4) Sharing effective and innovative digital grading methods, such as Canvas Learning System tools and Screencastify through Google. In addition, there is always an ongoing and open discussion and evaluation of hybrid and online student populations and community.

Of particular note this semester was the focus on student readiness for new course formats, as well as the above-mentioned standard items to streamline hybrid and online courses and increase their effectiveness. In addition, shells have been created on Canvas for hybrid and online versions of WRIT 105 and WRIT 106 and instructors and uploading successful modules, assignments and processes to these shells to aid in new hybrid/online instructor orientation.

Finally, online courses were taught both semesters, two in the Fall and four in the Spring, by Sarah Ghoshal and Jordine Logan. Professors Ghoshal and Logan worked and continue to work closely to analyze grade data and student performance in order to make the fully online offerings of the First Year Writing Program effective, innovate and engaging. Both professors used online texts, held online conferences (both group and one-on-one), and used multimedia and multimodal assignments, further broadening the scope of varied modes in First Year Writing Program instruction at MSU. In addition, the first ever online section of WRIT 105 will be offered fully online for Summer Session ‘17.

For the 2017-2018 academic year, the hybrid/online committee will focus on the following:

- Collection of social media/multimodal projects from current hybrid/online instructors, as well as most recent syllabi to keep current needs met
- A full report on the effectiveness of fully online courses over the past six semesters
- Pairing new hybrid instructors with veteran hybrid instructors in mentor/mentee pairings
- Add possibly customized Week 5 to OIT’s “Empowering Online Teaching and Learning” course that focuses on FYW specifically
- Standard rubric development for essays, discussion responses and homework responses

Online Courses

Six sections of online WRIT 106 were taught in AY ‘16-‘17, two in the Fall and four in the Spring, by Professors Ghoshal and Logan. Student feedback has remained positive, with both instructors utilizing the newly standardized areas mentioned above as well as audio and video
essay feedback and distance conferencing for students who are unable to come to campus physically. Grade data for both hybrid and online courses will be made available soon and will be included in a more specific report to be submitted by Fall ‘17.

*Live Lit! Reading Series*

The Live Lit program continued to be a rich presence in the program through AY 17, bringing working and prolific writers to campus and exposing our students to both live readings and the opportunity to talk with writers about their processes. The program extended its genre reach in Spring 2017 to reflect experimentation across/within disciplines, incorporating business lectures, dance, and photography into “live literature” events. A listing of past readings can be found via the program site.

Looking forward, we plan to apply for funding to more fully support this program. This includes honoraria, travel, and other accommodations to support guest readers.

*Textbook Review Committee*

Bonnie Dowd carried forward the work of this committee in consultation with the Director and Associate Director. Most notably, in Fall 2016 the WRIT 105 course operated on a standardized text, *Everyone’s an Author* (Norton), which temporarily reduced some of the work of this committee. The program also adopted a new handbook across all sections, *The Little Seagull* (Norton), which provided a useful resource at a reduced cost when bundled with the 105 textbook. For Spring 2017, the program expanded once again to incorporate choice into faculty syllabus design, recommending a series of new edition texts and further supporting faculty innovation around textbook-free, open source materials as well. Sample syllabi are regularly developed and shared on the website to reflect current uses of recommended texts.

*Website Committee*

With the development of the Department of Writing Studies, during AY 16/17, the Website Committee was formed to address the continued high-traffic engagement with the FYW website amongst MSU faculty, students, and public, as well as to design and launch a Department of Writing Studies website with an increased social media presence for FYW and the department. Although there is a continued need for regular updates to the many resources and information for both faculty and students provided on the FYW website, the primary goal of the Website Committee for AY 16/17 was to research, design, develop, and launch a brand new website for the newly formed Department of Writing Studies.

The committee undertook this work in FA16 by first researching and investigating the websites and social media of multiple writing studies programs and departments in order to develop a perspective of best practices regarding accessibility, interactivity, functionality, and aesthetics. Committee chair, Rick Reid, also worked in consultation with Web Content Manager Gina Eide to ensure that the new website would conform with CHSS standards and expectations. After a collective effort of the entire committee with research, design, and development, the new Department of Writing Studies website, along with a new WS Twitter account, was proudly launched in early SP17 in time to announce and inform students about summer courses in the
Public and Professional Writing minor as well as in FYW. Looking forward to AY 17/18, the committed will continue to refine and curate the Department of Writing Studies website to increase its interactivity with the websites for FYW and PPW, as well as re-envision the structure and design of the FYW website for streamlining. The Website Committee members are Jen Daly, Jennifer Holly-Wells, Christa Verem, and Rick Reid (chair).

FYW AY 18 Initiatives

**Placement**

Reliable and efficient placement of students into supplemental instruction (“workshop” and formerly WRIT 100) has been a continued frustration for the program due to unreliable measures and lacking resources. Placement of students into 105 and 106 is driven by two diverse approaches. For Fall ‘16, incoming WRIT 105 students completed an in-class, impromptu writing test and a self-assessment survey; faculty reviewed these writing samples and students were assigned to supplemental instruction accordingly. Assessment of this process indicated a lack of reliability in quantitative measures of HS GPA and junior year English grade in predicting writing performance (see “program assessment” above). For students heading into WRIT 106 (predominantly in SP 17), the program employed a midterm portfolio assessment, implemented during the WRIT 105 course. At the time of this writing, grade performance data is still pending, but early faculty and student feedback indicates a more successful and appropriate pairing between course/resource and student needs with the curriculum-focused assessment (the midterm portfolio review).

Goals for AY 18 include the implementation of a Directed Self-Placement model for the incoming FA 17 class and a redesign of this process for the incoming FA 18 class. Early results indicate more demand for the WRIT 105 workshop than University resources can accommodate, suggesting a need for a more refined or finely tuned DSP or filtering process, or the expansion of University resources to meet demand. The midterm assessment for placement into WRIT 106 will continue in FA 17 and the program will extend longitudinal study efforts to track student writing success going forward.

**WRIT 106**

SP 17 marked early experimentation with disciplinary-focused or themed versions of the WRIT 106 course. These experimental, pilot courses included 15 total sections (4 business-themed; 11 science-themed) geared towards students in corresponding majors. The goals of the course remain the same and aligned with general education requirements, but the topical focus is shifted and the later weeks of the course design can include some introduction to disciplinary-specific written genres but with an emphasis on formal analysis over practice. The program intends to continue and expand experimentation around the 106 course into AY 18, with a goal of targeted, advising-coordinated matching of students with thematic 106 courses in SP 18.

*Professional Development: Access and Technology*
The program plans to make its rich professional development offerings more widely accessible via the use of “live feed” workshops and the creation of digitized resources (podcasts; youtube channel). This initiative responds to the pressing imperative that faculty receive continuous, thoughtful professional development, while increasing opportunities for and ease of access. As we continue to rely on part-time faculty who often teach at multiple institutions, expecting faculty to attend on-campus events can be an unlikely reach due to schedule and location conflicts.

Multimodal Composition
Responding to trends in research and professional contexts, the program initiated a mandatory “multimodal composition” assignment across all sections of WRIT 105 in AY 17. This initiative included professional development, sample materials and assignments, and available faculty support (through Canvas and on-site). Moving into AY 18 the program will continue this initiative and likely expand opportunities to engage students in multimodal composition in the WRIT 106 course. The general education requirements continue to be central to the work of both courses, 105 and 106, including issues of word count, process instruction, feedback, and assessment.

Assessment Criteria
A meeting of faculty at the close of AY 17 focused on revision of existing assessment criteria for WRIT 105 and 106, as well as benchmark language, with an eye towards changes in student needs over time as well as the evolution of the program in a Department of Writing Studies. This includes aligning the courses with broader notions of “text” and “genre,” as well as incorporating assessment criteria reflective of multimodal composition in addition to print-based, traditional essayistic composition.