

The Rhetorical Situation

Spring Events Worth Checking Out

May 9 | 5:30-7 PM
Academic Ableism: Beyond Compliance at UCSC w/ Jay Dolmage
 —College 9/10 Multipurpose Room



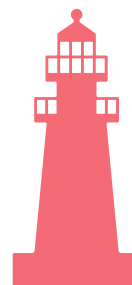
May 10 | 10:30 AM-12 PM
Disability Accommodations for Writing Courses: A Workshop w/ Jay Dolmage
 —Cowell 132 ([RSVP here](#))

May 17 | 9 AM-6 PM
Monterey Bay Applied Linguistics Symposium
 —Humanities 2, 259 ([website](#))

May 21 | 1:30-3 PM
PDC Workshop: Preparing a Review File
 —Humanities 2, 259

May 22 | 2-3:30 PM
Balancing Fair Use and Student Access in Selecting Course Texts: A Workshop for Instructors
 w/ Phil Longo and Annette Marines (& refreshments!)
 —Humanities 2, 259 ([website](#))

 **Sunday, June 9**
Writing Program End-of-Year Beach Party!
 —Time/Beach TBA; dogs & kids very welcome



Faculty Profile: Amy Vidali



CAMPUS AFFILIATIONS: I affiliate with the "lost in the Redwoods" contingent of new faculty. I'm also at Stevenson. With two quarters under my belt, noting "frequently-taught classes" feels silly, but I've taught Writing 2 twice now.

BEFORE COMING TO THE WRITING PROGRAM... I lived in Denver and had bad hair (too dry there). I'm a native Californian.

RECENT WORK: I will be leading a 20-person workshop in May at the Rhetoric Society of America (RSA) Project in Power, Place, and Publics.

WHEN I AM NOT TEACHING ... I am doing WPPC work. Just kidding. I'm chit-chatting with my son, Lyle.

ALSO: I am traumatized that I recently finished the *One Day at a Time* reboot. I'm almost unpacked.

IN THIS ISSUE:

Conference Calendar	2
Collaborative Teaching in the Writing Program	3-4
Book Reviews	5
Field Report: 4Cs	6
New WP Drive for sharing assignments & materials	6
Working with International Students	7-10

CONFERENCE CALENDAR: UPCOMING CFPS

(ACCESS THE COMPLETE CALENDAR [HERE](#))

May

Association of Writers and Writing Programs [\[link\]](#)
San Antonio, TX, March 4-7, 2020
Proposal deadline: May 1

Conference on College Composition & Communication
[\[link\]](#)
Milwaukee, WI, March 24-28, 2020
Proposal deadline: May 6

June

Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages (TESOL) Convention [\[link\]](#)
Denver, CO, March 31-April 3, 2020
Proposal deadline: Usually around June 1

UC Writing Conference
2019 location & dates TBA
Proposal deadline: Usually June

July

Rhetoric Society of America Biennial Conference
[\[link\]](#)
Portland, OR, May 21-24, 2020
Proposal deadline: July 15

August

American Association for Applied Linguistics (AAAL) Conference [\[link\]](#); [CFP link](#)
Denver, CO, March 28-31, 2020

Don't forget about
the Young Rhetoricians'
Conference in Monterey, June 20-22. Come out
and support your colleagues who are
presenting! [Register online](#)
[here.](#)

Faculty Profile: Elizabeth Abrams



CAMPUS AFFILIATIONS:
I'm Provost of Merrill
College and still a fellow
of Kresge College.

I'VE BEEN A WRITING
PROGRAM FACULTY
MEMBER SINCE... 2000

RECENT WORK: I was a
panelist at the UC
Women's Clubs
Intercampus Gathering;
our topic was "Moving
the Needle"--about the
impact of women
leaders in higher
education. According to
UC Santa Cruz Women's
Club President Claudia
Parrish, our club raises
money to support
scholarships for re-entry
students, older graduate
students, student
parents, and veterans.

WHEN I AM NOT
TEACHING... I'm binge-
listening to *The Moth*
and *This American Life*
while walking the dog.

I LOVED *Lincoln in the
Bardo*, by George
Saunders--a
recommendation of
Carol Freeman's.

Collaborative Teaching in the Writing Program

The Writing Program Faculty Learning Community (FLC)

WP PARTICIPANTS: Derede Arther, Maria Herrera, Ellen Newberry, Mark Baker, Joy Hagen, Steve Coulter, Brenda Sanfillipo, Emily Murai

We have been meeting three times a quarter since September, with the generous support of Derede's Faculty Fellowship grant from the Center for Innovations in Teaching and Learning (CITL) and the Division for Student Success. At the start of the year, we brainstormed a list of topics we want to explore, organized meeting dates and volunteered to (co-)facilitate meetings on themes of personal interest, including locating and distributing relevant reading materials. In our meetings, we often "share what we know," (or use a meeting as an opportunity to "find out what we want to know"), researching and/or drawing from course materials that have been developed from our teaching.

Topics have included crafting inclusive syllabi, alternate ways of responding to writing (beyond written comments in the margins), teaching circles' best practices, mentoring and supporting junior faculty, curriculum and assignment design to promote student engagement and efficacy (namely Ellen and Maria's WRIT 2 on the theme of "democratic citizenship" —also designed with Sarah-Hope Parmeter —and Steve's College 1 Slug Stories assignment). We have also engaged in lengthy discussions about our experiences teaching the new ALC curriculum. We look forward to taking on the themes of cultural rhetorics/code switching and teaching veterans/students with disabilities this spring.

(cont.)

A CITL Fellow Reflects on Critical Friendship Groups

WP PARTICIPANTS: Kim Helmer, Gail Brenner, Michele Bigley, Nirshan Perera, Shannon Cummings, Dina El Dessouky, Tiffany Wong

"Inner circle, step to the right and greet your new partner," Eve instructs our Critical Friendship Group (CFG) of K-12 teachers, librarians, school administrators, and me. As directed, the concentric circles forming the Circles of Identity protocol shift. This past summer as part of my CITL fellowship, I attended a recertification training in Tucson, Arizona to sharpen my skills as a CFG "coach" and facilitator. Prior to beginning the Circles of Identity protocol, CFG trainees jotted down six identities with which we most identified. In response to the prompt, "How did your perception of someone else's identity hold that person back," I had to admit to my partner that when I first started working with Chinese students, I didn't demand the same of female learners when I asked them to answer front-of-the-class questions. I felt reluctant to put them on the spot while I didn't hesitate to be more persistent with their male counterparts.

This sort of time and space to reflect on teaching praxis can feel like a luxury, but it is exactly what CFGs can offer. CFGs provide teachers a professional learning community guided by norms and practices that ensure democratic participation, dialogue, and thoughtful and respectful feedback.

(cont.)

Faculty Profile: Roxi Hamilton



CAMPUS AFFILIATIONS/
FREQUENTLY TAUGHT
CLASSES: Crown
College 1; Writing 1 & 2;
Crown/Merrill College
Liaison

I'VE BEEN A WRITING
PROGRAM FACULTY
MEMBER SINCE...
1999 (Kresge College,
1998)

WHEN I AM NOT
TEACHING...I'm
parenting a fabulous
11-year-old ballerina
who shares with me a
love of dance, musical
theater, and making up
funny songs on our
ukuleles.

ALSO... I love mixing up
genres in publishing and
performance, esp. Neo-
Benshi (Live Film
Narration), which I
performed at the March
'19 AWP Conference in
Portland. I also love
mixing art with activism
(my anthology, *Viz. Inter-
Arts*, covers intervention-
ist social art), and I'd
love for you to join me
this spring to sing some
silly labor songs I wrote
(with Paul Simon and
Madonna, et al.—ahem):
50 Ways to Love your
Union, Like A Lecturer,
Age of Precarious, and
more! :)

FLC, cont.

Supplementing our meetings have been our regular Teaching Circles/Squares/Rhizomes (choose your shape!), in which members conduct classroom observations of each other. Most of us have done at least one observation/observance of another faculty member per quarter. Through this practice, we have gained valuable pedagogical tips, techniques and tricks, and insight into different types of student engagement and classroom management practices.

It has been a productive and enriching year. The greatest benefits of the FLC for me have been building relationships with colleagues, observing different teaching styles, and keeping an open and ongoing conversation around different professional development themes alive—all of which has and will continue to expand and deepen my teaching skills. Here are [two articles](#) on teaching circles that have shaped some of our discussions. We plan to continue meeting next year, and invite new participants to join the Circle at any time.

- Emily Murai

This newsletter is brought to you by the Pedagogical Development Committee (a.k.a. Denise, Brenda, Phil, & Anthony), with thanks to the many colleagues who contributed. Questions/requests/complaints? Contact Denise at dsilva@ucsc.edu.

CFG, cont.

During the last academic year, I ran a CFG with MLC-WP faculty. CFG members sought and received feedback on assignment design at various stages of their inception or implementation, refined professional presentation slides, and read a common pedagogy book.

The consultancy process begins with a one-on-one meeting with the CFG "coach" in which we brainstorm a guiding question, and the coach determines an appropriate CFG protocol that will yield the most appropriate feedback and foster discussion. Most commonly, the teacher-presenter, after presenting their work and guiding question, steps back and listens as the other CFG members participate in a structured dialogue and continue to pose questions. The teacher-presenter can add further clarification if needed and, in the end, reflects back on what they have heard and might utilize.

Already, members of the Writing Program have become acquainted with CFG protocols, such as: Text Rendering, Microlabs, Block Party, and Circles of Identity. For those interested, forming a CFG could be a great opportunity to come together to work through pedagogical dilemmas in a supportive learning community. Generally, CFGs, comprised of six to 10 members, meet once or twice a month where one to two members present their work for feedback. I'm extending an invitation to the Writing Program to form a future CFG for those who would like to participate.

-Kim Helmer

Faculty Profile: Joy Hagen

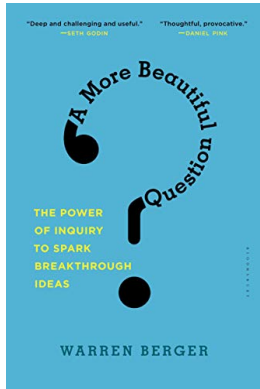


CAMPUS AFFILIATIONS/
FREQUENTLY TAUGHT
CLASSES: Writing 2,
Writing 1, Rachel Carson
College core (previously
"stretch" core), BME
185- Technical Writing
for BioMolecular
Engineers. Other roles:
Oakes and Rachel
Carson College Liaison,
Rachel Carson College
core course co-
ordinator (RCC-cccc?
Or maybe I just need a
cookie.) I'm also the
non-senate teaching
faculty rep on CEP (the
Committee for
Educational Policy).

I'VE BEEN A WRITING
PROGRAM FACULTY
MEMBER SINCE...
2007, after working as a
GSI on and off for 4-5
years.

WHEN I AM NOT
TEACHING ... I enjoy
pow wows, puppets,
chocolate, and musical
theater. My much-
neglected hobbies are
gardening, backpacking,
activism, beadwork,
sewing, crochet, and
most anything with four
or six legs.

Books We Are Trying Out

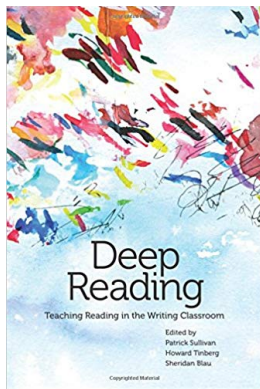


A More Beautiful Question, **Warren Berger**

Every chapter and sub-chapter in Warren Berger's *A More Beautiful Question: The Power of Inquiry to Spark Breakthrough Ideas* is phrased as a question. This is more than a cute trick; it's a way to make the unseen seen so that readers can understand the rhetorical power of questions. Berger claims that as the world becomes more complex and dynamic, inquiry will become more valuable than knowledge. Asking whether or not "knowing" is

obsolete can lead students to other questions about the role of inquiry in research, and why, perhaps, they themselves have stopped being curious and engaged in the classroom. Who is entitled to ask questions? How might we encourage a culture of inquiry? Can a university be built on questions? Only when students begin to look at research through the lens of understanding their blind spots and trying to understand what they do not know about what they do not know, can their writing be truly innovative. Berger's book is an open invitation for students to bask in the glory of their own ignorance without fear.

–Tiffany Wong



Deep Reading: Teaching Reading in the Writing Classroom, **Eds. Patrick Sullivan, Howard Tinberg, & Sheridan Blau**

Given the new ALC, many of us have been thinking about the relationship between reading and writing this year. While reading has often been neglected as a crucial part of teaching composition, this collection seeks to remedy that by providing a composition-focused synthesis of

research into reading alongside practical teaching advice for Writing instructors.

Most useful for me were the essays that explained high school reading curricula that helped me understand how my students approach texts (or don't!). The usual culprits are there: high-stakes testing, banking-system models of education, and a focus on New Critical "close reading" of texts abstracted from their historical, social, and rhetorical contexts. But contributions, particularly those from Patrick Sullivan, Ellen Carillo, and Howard Tinberg, provide strategies to build on students' skills and reframe their stance toward reading. While the branding of reading strategies ("deep reading," "slow reading," "mindful reading," "unruly reading," etc.) does elicit some eye-rolling, the numerous terms remind us that reading is not one thing, but students often arrive in our classrooms believing it is. The consensus on reading instruction that emerges from this volume is that in order to help students become good readers, students need to better understanding the "whys" and "hows" of reading instead of simply the "what" of a text.

–Phil Longo

Faculty Profile: Kim Helmer



CAMPUS AFFILIATIONS/
FREQUENTLY TAUGHT CLASSES: Stevenson College; MLC Curriculum (25,26,27)...and now WRIT 1E

I'VE BEEN A WRITING PROGRAM FACULTY MEMBER SINCE...2014, coming from The City University of New York, CUNY, where I received tenure and taught for seven years.

WHEN I AM NOT TEACHING ... I garden, cook, practice yoga, work out, hike (and aspire to surf, thank you, David Thorn).

THIS SUMMER ... I plan to finish my book revisions and maybe travel to Isla Mujeres or Mallorca.

Field Report

Conference on College Composition and Communication

March 2019, Pittsburgh, PA

The 4Cs is an expansive, unruly conference with many strands, but two of the main ones this year revolved around following through on our field's commitment to social justice beyond simply lip service and the role of performance in rhetoric and teaching writing. The conference was abuzz about Asao Innou's powerful challenge to us in his Chair's Address, "How Do We Language So People Stop Killing Each Other, Or What Do We Do About White Language Supremacy?" (**text and video**). The address prompted some controversy on the WPA listserv that is detailed in **this Inside Higher Ed article**. Several of our colleagues presented: Mark, Robin, and Sarah-Hope held a panel on "WORD! Preparing for Performance: An HSI-Funded Community-Based, Pre-College, Summer Critical Reading-to-Write Program." Tonya facilitated a Special Interest Group (SIG) about graduate student preparation in Teaching for Transfer. During this SIG, participants discussed how to develop assignments in TA training courses on TFT and how to help TAs use TFT as a framework for designing their own composition courses. And Phil presented on "Beyond Skepticism: Information Literacy in the Post-Truth Classroom" (**text**).



The Pedagogical Development Committee is excited to announce the launch of our **Writing Program Community Drive**; here you will find a reservoir of living resources, including, but not limited to: sample syllabi, course overviews, and assignments; selected readings and in-class resources; and programmatic information (such as the Writing Program By-Laws, committee assignments, and faculty contact information).

Look for an invite to the Drive this week. Please help us populate it by adding your own resources and materials. Our hope is that the drive will help centralize materials related to our teaching, as well as promote a community of sharing and learning.

Faculty Profile: Tonya Ritola



CAMPUS AFFILIATIONS/
FREQUENTLY TAUGHT
CLASSES: Writing 20,
Writing 1, Writing 2,
Writing 203

I'VE BEEN A WRITING
PROGRAM FACULTY
MEMBER SINCE... 2014

BEFORE COMING TO
THE WRITING
PROGRAM... I directed
writing centers and
developed peer tutoring
programs at
Appalachian State
University and Georgia
Gwinnett College on the
East Coast.

RECENT WORK: I was
awarded a grant from
the Committee on
Research to collaborate
with Dr. Hillary Angelo,
Sociology, to write an
article this summer titled
"Developing Best
Practices in Facilitating
Students' Uptake of
Disciplinary Writing in
Sociology." This grant
will allow us to work with
graduate student
Heather Schlaman.

WHEN I AM NOT
TEACHING, I AM...
typically doing yoga,
making art with my wife,
designing costumes for
non-binary drag events,
and spending time with
my adorable dog Lolly.

WP Crowd-Sourcing

In this issue: Colleagues address your FAQ about working with international students

ADVICE ON WORKING WITH STUDENTS WHO HAVE DIFFICULTY UNDERSTANDING YOUR ORAL AND WRITTEN INSTRUCTIONS

When I am concerned about students understanding my instructions, I focus on my delivery and my awareness of their comprehension since these are the things I can control. Here are a few strategies I use for this:

- ▶ Write oral instructions on the board as much as possible
- ▶ Preface oral instructions with signal phrases (“Here is what I want you to do:”; “This is what you will do next.”)
- ▶ Do in-the-moment comprehension checks that require students to do more than say “yes, I understand” (“What should you do first?”; “When is this assignment due?”; “Explain the task to your partner in your own words.”)
Include time for structured questioning:
 - ▶ Think-Pair-Share prompts (individual idea generation, then talk about it with a partner, and finally share with the class)
 - ▶ “What follow-up questions do you need to ask in order to understand this task fully?”
- ▶ Go over written instructions on the document projector, marking and highlighting key words
- ▶ Teach color coding (e.g., requirements get highlighted in yellow and options get highlighted in green; background information gets highlighted in pink and deliverables get highlighted in blue)
- ▶ Incorporate low-stakes reflections that ask students to explain their understanding of major assignments and how they relate to other aspects of the course
- ▶ Have students create action plans, which will highlight any places where they are missing information about the task

—Sarah Michals



ADVICE ON ENCOURAGING STUDENTS TO USE THE TARGET LANGUAGE IN CLASS

1. If the proportion of MLC/non-MLC students allows, always create mixed groups for discussion--the presence of even one non-MLC student in a group will ensure use of conversational English without any overt instructor guidance on using the target language.
2. Use proximity techniques and incorporate yourself into small groups to ensure use of target language--rotate through groups and stay longer in groups that are having trouble staying with conversational English. This technique will also encourage use of conversational English without explicit instruction/guidance.
3. Designate specific portions of time in activities to be used for conversation in Mandarin, if desired, to check for understanding and specific portions of time to be used for conversational English for target language practice.

Your guiding philosophy in all three options above, ideally, is that students’ use of their first language is a good and needed thing in their next language acquisition/fluency process and should not be outlawed or proscribed. I’m from the immigrant ethos and something I think about personally with this issue are all my father’s stories about being caned as a child by schoolmasters for speaking his native language in British colonial schools--we should be very aware of the historical/postcolonial/imperial dynamics around policing and disciplining native language use and our classroom practices need to be sensitive to this, even as we work to structure our classes so our students are working extensively with the target language to acquire greater levels of fluency. Here’s a very recent [horror story from the news](#) that’s connected to this issue.

—Nirshan Perera



ADVICE FOR INSTRUCTORS WHO AREN'T SURE HOW MUCH SUPPLEMENTAL GRAMMAR INSTRUCTION THEY SHOULD BE GIVING THEIR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

I don't always refer them to other resources. Rather by having them do a lot of reading (at least one book they choose for themselves as pleasure reading in English), reading other students' work, watching TV and listening to music and playing video games in English, and practicing, they get to work on their grammar in a practical way. I occasionally will highlight their mistakes and have them fix each other's work--which they almost always know how to fix.

Something beneficial I learned from Kim is that often students with a particular grammar issue might always make that mistake regarding articles, or something like that. So sometimes we just have to allow for those inconsistencies in their writing.

I also often find that the international students can at times be better able to help native speakers to understand some grammar concepts.

I like to remind them that learning another language is a lifelong process and that's ok. We're not aiming for mastery.

—Michele Bigley



ADVICE ON HELPING INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS BE COMFORTABLE PARTICIPATING IN CLASS

This speaks to a much larger question about how much participation (oral or otherwise) should count towards a Writing Student's grade. Not only are international students sometimes uncomfortable participating in group work and full-class discussions, but there is research that shows that there are also other marginalized groups of students (e.g. first-generation, etc.) who rarely enjoy "speaking up" or doing much else other than "active listening." The tricky thing about participation is that it's difficult to run a seminar without any from the students--so what do we do as instructors to show that there is a value in such activities as groupwork and full-class discussions?

In MLC courses, I find that students often value getting to speak and write about their experiences as international students. In a space such as this, I incorporate very low stakes sharing exercises such as going around and creating a story verbally. This helps students' speaking, logic, and descriptive skills. Moving on to W1, it's important to make sure at least 1-2 times a week that I have an activity (which involves writing) that everyone can refer back to, to say something about. Going around and having everyone speak can be time consuming, but it's important that students hear their own voice in class somewhat often.

In W2, I emphasize the importance of group work and oral communication in other professional fields outside of academia and the classroom. Something I like to tell my students is how no one I know has ever gotten paid to sit in a 300-student lecture and shop on their laptop, and that if they want to start practicing skills (oral, written, or otherwise) that will help them be employed later in life, a small seminar is the best place to practice.

This doesn't always *work* of course. I once had a group of W2 students (primary first generation) who were super shy and refused to talk in class. We'd go around in a circle and most students would "pass." Then a line of 12 students would want to talk to me privately at the end of every class, which was completely unacceptable. I had to train them to raise their hands to ask questions in front of the class, because, perhaps they weren't the only person with that question. As for participation, the ONLY thing that worked was purchasing a "class" stuffed animal that students would pass around and hold onto every time they spoke like a talking stick. Then I gave them A TON of positive reinforcement and/or a small candy every time they did speak. Luckily, this class was an outlier, and I haven't had a class this unlikely to participate since!

—Tiffany Wong



ADVICE ON ANTI-PLAGIARISM RESOURCES APPROPRIATE FOR INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS

All anti-plagiarism resources (along with those re: citations, framing quotes & paraphrasing) information that I've used with international students, I also use with domestic students. Most sources are quite straightforward clarifying what constitutes plagiarism, types of plagiarism, how to avoid it, plus overly-close paraphrasing and basics of citing sources. I find that international students have no trouble understanding the material or the expectations. So my materials don't specifically target international students.

However, some of our conversation does apply more specifically to any multi-language speaker, and to those who might be interested in using a source in their native or acquired language other than English. I do allow this on a few specific occasions as I promote and of course believe in the value and appropriateness of material written in languages other than English. The benefit here, though I generally can't read those "other language" sources to check them, is that students must paraphrase or summarize the material in order to use it effectively, thus practicing these skills. Even with these sources, I do need to be able to access the source, and students know this.

In mixed groups of international and domestic students, such as in W1, I find that the domestic students are no more versed than international students in the particulars of what constitutes plagiarism, how best to avoid it, how to paraphrase/summarize effectively, how to accurately cite sources and why we need to. Students brainstorm & discuss what they know and what they want to (need to) know. We look at scenarios and ask, is it okay or would it be considered plagiarized. We discuss self-plagiarism and other types of inappropriate use of others' materials & ideas, not just by students, but anyone, professors included. The rules apply to all.

I prefer to not "lecture" them on the importance of not cheating, but rather just present (and we discuss) the ethics & other reasons to cite sources and the facts regarding expectations and protocol re: Academic Dishonesty for the class, the Writing Program and the university. Most students are interested in knowing how to avoid being guilty or accused of plagiarism.

I do not know that international students are, in fact, any more guilty than domestic students of, for example, buying essays from the "essay mills" or having someone else write their papers, but those types of essay submissions have distinct red flags, and I let students know that fact (though not what those red flags are, of course). However, I do let students know that in short order I come to recognize their work, writing styles and voices, and, although I expect their work to advance and become more articulate and effective throughout the term, if a piece does not sound like "their writing" I will question it.

Something to keep in mind, particularly with many Asian students, is that they generally have not (per their own accounts) been raised with the idea that their voices and opinions are an entitlement as most domestic students have. Even toddlers in the U.S. are asked what they think, or which item they want or like best. Domestic students are generally more comfortable in their own voices and feel the right to express themselves whether effectively, logically, thoughtfully, or not. So international students do need to be reminded that their ideas and opinions, their perspectives are as valid as anyone's, and though they may feel that their language limitations belie the depth of their thoughts and analysis, it is *their* worthy ideas & voices, presented to the best of their ability, that I want to hear, and to see in their work.

Finally, I find that putting the focus on and requiring that students develop effective use of sources, accurate citation, developing the art of well chosen and framed quotes, and effective paraphrasing goes a long way in to deterring plagiarism.

—Gail Brenner



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED ABOUT WORKING EFFECTIVELY WITH INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS THAT YOUR WP COLLEAGUES MEETING THESE STUDENTS IN WRITING 1/WRITING 2 SHOULD KNOW?

Many international students come in with strong “first” language literacy, analytic, and study skills, which you can build upon. With their strong work ethic, I have found that they can handle the workload to a greater extent than some domestic students. In short, students, for the most part, are not “basic” or “developmental” writers and thus may have different needs than those students placed in WRIT 1.

Many students are truly multilingual. They speak a provincial-regional language and then learn Mandarin for school and later English. Some also know functional Korean or Japanese due to popular-culture interest. Students are mature. Living abroad, some since high school, has developed a tremendous resilience. At the same time, they may not be accessing the familial psychological support that they may need as some will resist sharing their loneliness or other issues with parents because they don’t want to worry them. I have found myself tearing up on many occasions when I hear how students “protect” their parents from their away-from-home troubles. For this reason, I do give students my cell phone number and allow them to text me at any time. This may not be appropriate for some of you, but I have found that this has made my relationship with students very close. I feel like they need an adult support contact, being so far from home, and I am happy to be that person. (It’s also great for English language acquisition.)

Students speak an “interlanguage” (IL). IL is a language that has not completely reached target-language proficiency. IL is developmental, stable, and systematic, following its own “grammatical rules,” albeit prescriptively ungrammatical. Students’ IL develops as they begin to “notice” how their approximate system differs from the target. Language instruction that promotes student noticing versus “telling” will help students acquire more target-like forms. Otherwise, grammatical instruction goes in one ear and out the other. Exposure to abundant language and interaction in the target language is essential for this acquisition to occur. For this reason, the MLC features self-selected “pleasure” reading and group projects that include interviewing others in English. Thus, students have had experience collecting primary data and its analysis.

I have learned that many students, primarily from China, do really well when you introduce both professional and student models of the genre they will be producing. I teach them the value of reverse outlining to understand the genre conventions and components. Because of their solid analytical skills, providing models works well as they can pinpoint the rhetorical moves and replicate them with great facility. I also point out and provide them with short phrases to use in their writing—something that you might not think of doing with English speakers. You can also have them spot these signal phrases or rhetorical moves as another activity, which could work with local students as well.

To increase better communication and comprehension of course materials or projects, I learned from Michele that if you have several Chinese students in your class, you can ask one of them to be the “WeChat” point person (a group texting platform) so that they can communicate with one another and answer questions. When enough students have a similar question, the point person contacts me and then distributes my response to the class.

I love, love, love working with these students. Getting to know them personally is key as they do have linguistic insecurity when speaking publicly. Thus, it is possible that you won’t get to know them as well in that context. However, one-on-one or group conferencing and texting facilitate good relationships which fosters greater classroom participation.

—Kim Helmer

