

Editing *WPA*: Taking Wing

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Forty years ago, the very first issue of the *WPA Newsletter* was pulled from a typewriter platen, photocopied, and mailed to everyone who had paid their \$10 annual membership fee to the CWPA. The goals of that newsletter were as modest as its production values: it aspired “to address some of the issue which WPAs face” and to provide administrators with “helpful ways of solving common problems.” Two years later, editor Kenneth A. Bruffee recognized the field’s need for an even more vibrant, scholarly forum and transformed the newsletter to “a full-fledged journal.” In his introduction to the the first issue of *WPA: Writing Program Administration* (vol. 3, no. 1), he noted

we really didn’t expect to leave the comfortable nest of newsletter publication so soon. . . . We’re still a little shaky on our pinions. Our first few flights are likely to be short ones. But we are glad we’ve taken wing, and we hope our fellow WPAs share our exhilaration. (97)

In assuming the editorship of *WPA* nearly four decades later, we find ourselves, like Bruffee, both a little wobbly and very much exhilarated by what lies ahead.

In 1979, Bruffee outlined a seemingly simple, two-pronged vision for this publication: the dissemination of “thought, information, and expertise relevant to the teaching-administrative function of writing program administration” and public and professional advocacy for the “special needs, values, and aims of writing program administrators” (7). As the eleventh editorial team to lead this journal, we find it remarkable that *WPA*’s mission has changed so little over time. Of course, we are pleased to continue the journal’s mission to publish “thought, information, and expertise” relevant to the work we do as program administrators. But we are also dismayed that the need is perhaps more urgent than ever for us to convey our value and values to broader publics. Reviewing the earliest issues of this journal,

we can't help but observe—simultaneously and paradoxically—that *what's past is present* and *we've come a long way*.

We will be instituting some changes to the journal over the next few years to address the current values, research, and challenges of the field. For example, we are now accepting proposals for policy symposia that will engage with state, regional, or national policies of interest to WPAs. For these symposia, we would like to have one expert introduce the policy and its significance for WPAs, followed by a collection of two or three scholars from different institutions who can explain how that policy has impacted their writing program.

In response to the changing shape of our research, including the field's increasing embrace of the methods of social science, we are now accepting articles in either MLA or APA editorial style. Our wish is for the journal to reflect the wide range of research methods currently being used by WPAs and to allow *WPA* contributors to use the style most rhetorically appropriate for their purposes.

We are also delighted to bring Courtney Adams Wooten onboard as our new book review editor. Courtney is an assistant professor and writing program administrator at Stephen F. Austin State University. She has served as an assistant editor for *College English* and she is co-editor (with Jacob) of the collection *WPAs in Transition: Navigating Educational Leadership Positions*. Courtney is already hard at work on reviews for the spring 2018 issue, which will be the first issue in which she assumes full control of the book review section. We are very pleased to have her as part of our editorial team.

In addition to our core editorial team, we are pleased to welcome three graduate students, each of whom will serve for a one-year term. We've appointed two assistant editors to aid us with copyediting and author correspondence. Katie McWain is a doctoral candidate in composition and rhetoric at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln, where she co-directs the Writing Lincoln Initiative and serves as a Husker Writers teaching fellow. Molly E. Ubbesen is a doctoral candidate at the University of Wisconsin–Milwaukee, where she studies composition pedagogy, writing program administration, and feminist and queer rhetorics and she serves as the English 101 coordinator. We have also appointed Amy Cicchino as our new advertising manager. Amy is a doctoral candidate at Florida State University, where she studies WPA scholarship and digital multimodality and she teaches both in the college composition program and the editing, writing, and media major. We're grateful to Katie, Molly, and Amy for jumping into these new positions with enthusiasm and for helping us to get this first issue ready for press.

We'd like to thank the members of the editorial board who have agreed to continue their service to the journal for the next year and beyond. Members of the board met with us in Knoxville in July, providing us with advice, encouragement, and input on the direction of the journal. We're also grateful for the service of our colleagues who are cycling off of the board this year: Norbert Elliot, Kristine Hansen, Martha Townsend, and WPA-GO representative Al Harahap. The CWPA and this journal are better because of you. Finally, this journal would not be possible without the active and engaged membership of the CWPA. As a discipline of program administrators, we understand the importance of resources for maintaining vigorous institutions. Please help support the work of the council by checking your CWPA membership status on the *WPA* website. In addition, please consider becoming a sustaining member.

IN THIS ISSUE

In this issue, we will continue the work of the previous editors by seeing the articles that they selected and developed to publication. We remain struck by the quality of works that Barbara L'Eplattenier and Lisa Mastrangelo cultivated and, as we have worked with them during the editorial transition, we have seen firsthand how constructive, generous, and thoughtful they were in their responses to articles; how closely they worked with *WPA* contributors; and how meticulous they were in every aspect of this journal's production. We are fortunate to follow in their footsteps. It will probably also surprise no one that these two historians of the field maintained a careful archive for the journal that enabled us to make a smooth editorial transition. Barb and Lisa have been generous, instructive, and supportive during this past year as we shadowed their work for the journal, and we are grateful for their mentorship.

This issue opens with an article by Alexis Teagarden and Michael Carlotzi that investigates models for information literacy instruction in first-year writing courses and asks "what does good information literacy instruction look like?" While library researchers generally agree that "one-shot" instructional approaches are inadequate, the more resource-intensive, embedded librarian approach may not be any more effective. They suggest that WPAs should consider alternative models, including the four approaches these authors describe: online embedding, "train-the-trainer" models, "macro-embedded librarian positions," and "campus-wide curriculum remapping."

Diane Kelly-Riley's argument for a "think little" model of assessment emphasizes the importance of contextualizing assessment data within a

local setting. Drawing from a junior-level portfolio assessment at a single institution, Kelly-Riley addresses how to use local assessment data along with broader, multi-institutional data from sources such as the National Survey of Student Engagement. Following from the naturalist Wendell Berry's invitation to think little, Kelly-Riley argues that WPAs can do more with assessment than just satisfy institutional assessment mandates. Her article offers a model for gathering and analyzing data about student writing that can enable WPAs to make assessment mandates "more meaningful for our programs and the faculty and students who occupy them."

Bethany Davila, Tiffany Bourelle, Andrew Bourelle, and Anna Knutson explore "Linguistic Diversity in Online Writing Classes" by describing an online writing curriculum that enacts our field's commitment to honoring "linguistic diversity and multilingual writers" in our programs. Among the findings of their study, which was conducted at a Hispanic-Serving Institution, Davila et al. note that while students in "traditional" sections of the course referenced their exposure to other languages in their portfolio reflections, students enrolled in the language-focused classes seemed to recognize that "language choices vary based on the expectations, affordances, and limitations of discourse community values and genres."

Melanie Burdick and Jane Greer investigate how secondary educators define "college-level writing" and document the outside sources that shape these teachers' definitions and practices. Their survey of secondary educators in thirteen counties demonstrates that these teachers "draw upon a wide range of professional resources and theories as they work to prepare students for writing in college," and they encourage WPAs to "engage more energetically" with these practitioners and develop additional studies to determine "how both high school teachers and college writing instructors synthesize different sources of professional knowledge."

While Burdick and Greer researched secondary educators' definitions of college-level writing, Neil Baird and Bradley Dilger's article examines the metaphors writing-in-the-disciplines faculty use to describe transfer. Their study, "Metaphors for Writing Transfer in the Writing Lives and Teaching Practices of Faculty in the Disciplines," presents data from interviews with fifteen faculty at their state comprehensive university and illustrates a disconnect between these instructors' understanding of transfer in their own learning, and their construction of transfer for their students. Baird and Dilger demonstrate that a majority of instructors in their study employed more complex metaphors for transfer when describing their own experiences, but used much "simpler metaphors and approaches when teaching writing."

This issue concludes with review essays from Alice Horning and Jonathan Alexander, both commissioned by outgoing book review editor Norbert Elliot. As her title suggests, Horning's "Critical Reading: Attention Needed!" calls attention to works on reading in writing studies. Exploring recent books by Ellen C. Carillo, Daniel Keller, and Amy Wan, Horning ultimately asserts that these texts offer "various ways to achieve the outcome of intentional critical literacy" and that it is the "responsibility of writing program administrators" to strive to incorporate critical literacy instruction in their programs. Alexander's "Queer Ways of Knowing" provides a review of research on queering the WPA, calling back to past president Rita Malenczyk's 2013 CWPA conference theme. Alexander offers a review that examines the "relative irreconcilability of queerness and WPA work while also . . . maintaining an eye on both for any generative tensions that might yield useful insights." We hope you find these reviews to be useful, engaging, and thought-provoking.