

ANNUAL REPORT
OF THE
UNIVERSITY WRITING COMMITTEE
2007-2008
JUNIOR YEAR WRITING PROGRAM REVIEW

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The University Writing Committee (UWC), an official body of the University of Massachusetts Amherst Faculty Senate,¹ is charged with

- (a) Recommending policies concerning the administration and operation of the University Writing Program (UWP);
- (b) Monitoring and overseeing the Freshman component of the UWP;
- (c) Approving and monitoring the Junior Year Writing (JYW) component in the University's academic units;
- (d) Evaluating the program and, on the basis of this evaluation, suggesting changes in procedures or policies; and
- (e) Advising the Provost on the distribution of funds designated for the JYW component.²

In line with (d) above, the UWC regularly reviews the First Year Program and the Junior Year Writing Program (JYWP). In 2002-03, the UWC adopted a five-year review cycle for the two programs, scheduling the next major review of the JYWP for 2007-08.³ Previous reviews of the JYWP were conducted in 1998-99 and 2001-02.

In the 2005-06 review of the First Year Writing Program, the UWC reported that it was “impressed with the skill with which the staff of the FYWP carried out their roles, the enthusiasm and morale of the staff, the excellent training given to Teaching Associates, and the quality of teaching in the various courses.” After analyzing 84 portfolios of student work from EnglWrit 112: *College Writing*, the UWC concluded that “almost all students showed evidence of learning what the course purports to teach them and that the course goals seemed appropriate to what students needed to work on most at this stage in their writing and intellectual development.”⁴

The main activity of the UWC in academic year 2007-08 was the review of the JYWP. The review includes multiple parts:

- 1. A detailed questionnaire sent to all JYWPs on campus;
- 2. In-depth interviews with key figures in selected programs;
- 3. A summit with representatives from all programs to elicit feedback;
- 4. An analysis of all these materials, including also syllabi, websites, etc.; and
- 5. A draft report sent to all programs in early Fall 2008.

The final report includes our major findings and recommendations. It has the following parts:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Brief History of the JYWP
- III. Basic Information about the JYWP Structure

¹ Chapter 6 Section 8 of *Faculty Senate Bylaws* (http://www.umass.edu/senate/fs/Bylaws_constitution_0708.pdf).

² See http://www.umass.edu/senate/committees/univ_writing.html.

³ See http://www.umass.edu/senate/committees/univ_writing.html.

⁴ The full review can be found at http://www.umass.edu/senate/committees/annual_reports/Writing_2005-06.pdf.

- IV. Results from Questionnaires and Interviews with JYW Course Representatives and Instructors
- V. Information and Results from the JYWP Summit on April 25, 2008
- VI. Information from Conversations with the Director of the UWP and the Associate Director of the JYWP
- VII. Recommendations
- VIII. Appendices

I. Executive Summary

In 1982, the University of Massachusetts Amherst instituted a groundbreaking two-part writing requirement for all undergraduates, requiring that they take *both* a common first-year course on general writing processes and practices *and* a discipline-specific junior-year course on writing in their majors.⁵ While the First Year Writing course was reconceived during this change and has become a national model for postsecondary writing instruction, the innovation in 1982 was the relocation and transformation of the second semester of the Freshman Rhetoric course to the Junior year and its dispersal into the different majors on campus. The idea was to give students practice in and guidance on writing *throughout* their college years and *across* their studies.

In 2007-08, the UWC conducted a major review of the JYW courses. The review focused on instruction and administration. The UWC sent in October 2007 a detailed questionnaire to faculty and representatives from every one of the 59 JYW programs; visited and interviewed key figures in a dozen selected programs in February and March 2008; elicited feedback from department representatives during a general program “summit” in April 2008; and analyzed these and other sources of information, including course syllabi and departmental websites. Programs had the opportunity to comment on an early draft of the UWC Report.

We found among faculty, representatives, chairs, and deans nearly universal support for the JYW requirement on this campus. Most instructors see value in the teaching of disciplinary writing to upper-division undergraduates; they think that the JYW requirement is needed; and they believe that, in general, students’ writing improves as a result of the course. We were pleased to find high levels of commitment, enthusiasm, and innovation regarding the course—all the more remarkable given the challenges of attending to student writing in advanced undergraduate courses in the majors at a large public research university such as UMass Amherst.

We also found evidence that the JYWP faces challenges. Again and again, we saw the results of flat or declining resources for JYW: increasing class sizes; attenuated involvement by tenure system faculty; shrinking resources for training and faculty development; and isolation of instructors from the UWP, the UWC, and other JYW instructors. Twenty-six years after its inception, the excitement and purpose of Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) is in danger of dissipating. In contrast to earlier years, the JYW community on this campus has significantly weakened. Despite individual and programmatic initiated consultation with the JYWP Director

⁵ See Sen. Doc. No. 82-057, “Special Report of the Academic Matters Council concerning a UWP,” (http://www.umass.edu/senate/fs_docs/SEN_DOC_NO_82-057_WRITING_PROG.pdf).

and the UWP Director, individual instructors are operating in a vacuum and their enthusiasm, talent, and commitment are not being matched by the resources, communication, and support necessary for the Program to flourish.

In short, it seemed that UMass Amherst has many JYW *courses* but no real JYW *Program*. The lack of integration of courses into a comprehensive whole may in part be the inevitable result of a program designed explicitly to be de-centralized, with instruction in advanced writing dispersed across the majors. But decentralization need not mean isolation; and dispersal need not mean disconnection from a university-wide commitment to developing student writing. Writing courses deeply embedded in their own departments and disciplines can benefit from increasing central resources, cross-campus sharing and community-building, establishing collective advocacy, and implementing other common initiatives.

Our single biggest recommendation, then, is that the University substantially and publicly re-commit itself to JYW by: 1) significantly increasing the JYW allotment to departments to keep class sizes down and instructional quality high; and 2) charging (and providing resources for) the UWP to better support JYW through enhanced faculty training and development and better cross-campus communication about JYW. Other suggestions, detailed in the Recommendations, include:

- Addressing ESL concerns for the JYWP.
- Addressing the connection between Freshman Writing and JYW.
- Increased communication between the UWC and departments regarding procedures and the purpose of JYW.
- Increased communication between the JYWP and departments via the creation of a newsletter, the development of an interactive website, and the promotion of other resources.
- Increased celebration of student writing, of the work of JYW directors and instructors, and of the JYWP as a nationally-admired program.

The JYWP has a long and proud history here. We need to revitalize the spirit that animated it from the beginning and that made it a national leader in WAC, while encouraging the program to evolve and grow, and to lead undergraduate writing at UMass Amherst into the 21st century, as our students, our disciplines and professions change and our University, and society itself changes.

II. Brief History of the JYWP

Throughout the 1960s and '70s, UMass Amherst undergraduate students were required to complete a two-semester Freshman Rhetoric program. It served the university well for many years. But by the end of the 1970s, mainly because of the “process revolution” in the teaching of writing, a nationwide literacy crisis, and the rise of the WAC movement, as well as weaknesses within the Rhetoric Program itself, the campus began searching for a new way to ensure that undergraduate students received the writing instruction they needed.

In the fall of 1981, the Provost established a Rhetoric Study Group to recommend changes; that report, issued in January 1982, proposed a new six-credit undergraduate writing requirement at UMass Amherst, the first three in the English Department, the second three in the majors. The requirements themselves, along with a new UWP (with connections to English but also independent of it) and a new UWC, were instituted by the Faculty Senate in April 1982.⁶ As for the actual course requirements, the first would be satisfied by a three-credit course taken during the student's first year, called "Expository Writing," and designed, taught, and administered by the UWP: according to the Report, "The objective of this requirement is to enable students to write with more clarity and logic, with a confidence based on improved knowledge about the elements of prose style—language choices, correct grammar and spelling, strategies for organization, appropriate development, effective tone. Primary emphasis will be on students' writing rather than lectures, grammar exercises, or the analysis of prose models."⁷

Recognizing that a single course was by itself unlikely to provide proficiency in writing, the Senate also established the JYWP. The idea was to infuse writing *throughout* students' college years and *across* the curriculum, with special emphasis on students writing in their majors. As the Senate stated, "Students...are likely to develop the habit of careful writing when [the expectation to write better] is satisfied in various intellectual contexts over a number of years." Importantly, the courses encouraged teaching by faculty in those disciplines, under the belief that students are more likely to be persuaded of the importance of writing in their chosen fields when faculty members in the fields see themselves as writers and pay attention to students' writing development. The courses were meant to help students both learn to write in their field ("A primary characteristic of JYWP courses is that they respond to the educational and professional needs of students by encouraging writing that is used in [their] specific field[s]" – Basic Expectations from the JYWP *Sourcebook*) and write to learn about that field (from the 1982 Report: "The function of writing in these third-year courses will be to enhance and reinforce the subject being studied, not to teach grammar and spelling at the expense of that subject").

In the fall of 1982, the UWC issued a call for JYW course proposals from all major-offering academic units; and by September 1984, all departments had JYW courses approved by the UWC that were ready to be offered their Junior year majors. The early success of the JYWP was, in part, attributable to the hard work of Professor Charlie Moran and the former Associate Director, Professor William Mullin from Physics, as well as to the support provided by campus leaders in Whitmore and the willingness of faculty across campus to learn new ways of teaching with writing. But key to the Program's success was its design, especially the way the new requirement *combined* a common First Year writing course focused on general practices and processes with a highly decentralized JYWP focused on writing in each student's major.

The decentralization of the JYWP continues to this day. Current JYW courses on this campus differ radically from one another. They differ in the kinds of writing students do: note, for example the titles of some of the actual student papers collected in the JYWP *Sourcebook*: Ben DiTrollo's "Molecule of the Year: Carbon Dioxide," written for Lynmarie Thompson and

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ Ibid.

Holly Davis' Chem 391A *Writing in Chemistry*; Nancy Lattinville's "Signs of Empathy Observed in Animals," written for Carolyn Cave's Psych 392 *Writing in Psychology*; and Alice Gray's "Robinson and Glover: Two Different Times for Tap-Dancing in Hollywood Film," written for Nikolina Dobрева's Comp-Lit 397B *Writing in Comparative Literature*. They differ in the size and resources available to them: the University offers only a single section of Astro 397A *Writing in Astronomy* per year, with eight students this past semester; meanwhile, the Isenberg School of Management offers fifty sections a year of advanced communication courses serving 1,000 students in seven different majors, run by a full-time staff of nine. And the courses differ in the kinds of institutional configurations they employ: Engin 351 *Writing in Engineering* is a lecturer-taught technical writing course for future engineers, offered in sections of 25 students each; History 594J *Jr Writing Seminar: Slavery and the Early Republic* is a faculty-taught, low enrollment (fifteen students maximum) thematic seminar; and Psych 392 (Lec 2), *Topics in Psych: Infant/Child Development* is an example of a similarly theme-driven seminar offered by that department, but it is TO-taught with twenty students.

Even as the evident decentralization depicted above presents the campus with significant challenges, the Program, during the past quarter of a century, has clearly *worked*. According to the last major review of the JYWP in 2001-02, "the great majority of JWYP courses are well-designed and well-taught . . . Many could be considered exemplary" (4). Most units, that report concluded, take their JYWP courses seriously, and the Program as a whole, "generally succeeds in fulfilling its mission" (2). Other evidence supports the effectiveness of our JYW courses: a 2000 Office of Academic Planning and Assessment report, for example, found that two-thirds of surveyed students rated their JYW course as helpful in preparing them for their careers, with nearly 40 percent *strongly* agreeing with that sentiment; and almost three-quarters reporting that their general education courses overall were helpful in developing their ability to write clearly and effectively, with more than 20 percent saying their coursework was *very helpful* in achieving that goal. According to the researchers, these ratings were among the most positive findings in the study (3).⁸

Moreover, a Project PULSE survey in the late 1990s showed why the JYW requirement continues to be needed; it found that the median amount of writing done by undergraduate students in their courses outside of the UWP was only 1.3 papers or 5.4 pages per semester (although there was large variation across colleges or schools). In fact, both the UWC and the Faculty Senate both have consistently recommended *more* writing in students' university experience here and more support for faculty to achieve that.

Finally, in 2003, *U.S. News & World Report* named the JYWP at UMass Amherst one of 25 "Programs that Really Work" in writing in the disciplines, according to the results of a nationwide survey.⁹

⁸ UMass *Assessment Bulletin*, 4.1 (October 2000), Office of Academic Planning and Assessment - http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/assessment_bulletin/2000/JuniorAttitude.pdf

⁹ *U.S. News & World Report, America's Best Colleges*, 2003, p. 114. Readers may also want to look at *Establishing Learning Objectives: Applications for Course Planning and Assessment* by the WAC Writing Assessment Group (Laura Doyle, Anne Herrington, Linda LaDuc, William Mullin, Martha Stassen, Julian Tyson, Donna Zucker, and Kathryn Doherty), September, 2000: http://www.umass.edu/oapa/oapa/publications/online_handbooks/wac_handbook.pdf

III. Basic Information about the JYWP Structure

In 2008, the JYWP at UMass Amherst is still largely structured as it was conceived in 1982. It is still administered by the UWP, an independent academic unit which reports directly to the Deputy Provost. That Program is led by a faculty Director, a member in the English Department with specialized training in writing instruction who has a half-time appointment to direct the UWP. Currently, the Director of the UWP is Professor David Fleming. The Associate Director of the UWP for JYW, meanwhile, is traditionally a faculty member from outside English who has a one-course administrative appointment (or additional compensation) to support the JYWP. Currently, that person is Professor Genevieve Chandler from Nursing. Working with both is a full-time staff in the UWP, both professional and classified, though much of their energy is devoted to the large First Year UWP run entirely out of the UWP, which designs, staffs, and supports its two main courses *Basic Writing* (Englwrit 111) and *College Writing* (Englwrit 112); the UWP staff, moreover, are responsible for running a fast-growing Writing Center, putting on Experimental Writing Workshops, holding an annual campus-wide Celebration of Writing, and more.

The JYWP itself is large, complex, diverse, and highly decentralized. There are close to 80 separate JYW courses offered at UMass Amherst, administered by 53 different departments or academic units across eight schools and colleges, and serving nearly 4,500 students a year. (See Appendix A for a full list of departments offering JYW courses.) All of these programs, despite their diverse resources and their different approaches to writing, are subject to a common set of curricular expectations outlined in the *JYW Sourcebook*:

- Instructors should be members of the discipline or field sponsoring the course. If teaching assistants are employed to support faculty efforts, the department should provide training and supervision.
- JYWP courses should respond to the educational and professional needs of students by encouraging writing that is used in the specific field.
- Student writing should take place in multiple genres and for diverse purposes and audiences.
- JYW courses should have at least four to five main writing assignments scattered throughout the semester, mixed in length.
- Students should write drafts of the main assignments and receive responses from teachers (and if possible from other students), and then revise at least once.
- JYW courses should mix informal, lower-stakes writing for the sake of learning and grappling with course concepts and knowledge, with more careful, higher-stakes writing similar to that which novice professionals in the field produce.
- Students should have plenty of opportunities to share their writing with peers—at both draft and final stages.
- Professional development elements (e.g., résumé writing, oral presentation skills, etc.), when appropriate, should be incorporated into syllabi as a way to add value to JYW courses and give students opportunities to prepare for their careers.

- Students should be expected to use a writing handbook; instructors can assume that most students purchased one when they were enrolled in the Freshman course.
- Grades should reflect not only discipline-specific writing styles as well as content but also processes as well as products.

Since a JYW course satisfies both a requirement in a student's major and a campus-wide General Education requirement, all JYW courses are subject to the same funding allocation from the Provost. The Provost does not assume total funding of department's JYW courses; rather, she supplements the departmental instructional resources to assist departments in keeping the class size in this particular major requirement as low as possible and to help faculty members deal with the inevitable paper load of teaching writing. The current allotment for departments with JYW courses is \$210 per student at the Junior year level who has designated a department's course of study as his/her primary major (counts are based on annual information from the Office of Institutional Research).

Working in concert with these sponsors of the JYWP, there is a University Writing Committee that is charged by the Faculty Senate to oversee the First Year and JYWPs. The UWC includes fourteen members: seven faculty, including at least two from the professional schools and one from the library; the Director of the UWP, serving ex officio; the Associate Director of the UWP for JYW, serving ex officio; the Provost or her designee, serving ex officio; the Secretary of the Faculty Senate, serving ex officio and non-voting; one graduate student; and one undergraduate student. The current members are listed on the cover of this report.

IV. Results from 2007-08 Questionnaires & Interviews with JYWP Participants

Background: In 2007-08, the UWC launched a review of the JYWP, and our purpose was to learn more about the present workings of JYW courses across campus, to identify strengths and difficulties faced by specific departments and colleges, and to seek ways to strengthen the entire program.

Method: The first stages of the review included a detailed questionnaire sent to academic units offering JYW courses and then in-depth interviews with selected departments. First, in October, the UWC sent to every participating JYW program on campus (by both email attachment and campus mail) a questionnaire designed to elicit unit-specific information about JYW courses. The questionnaire contained two parts: General Information (number of majors, ways students in that major satisfy the JYW requirement, relevant course titles and frequency of offerings, course enrollments, pre-requisites, and funding) and Curriculum and Teaching (assignments, process, textbooks, assessment, staffing, and support from the UWP). (See Appendix B.)

In February and March, the UWC then visited a subset of these academic departments and colleges in order to learn more about the concerns and success of JYW instructors and also to share information about resources available to all JYW instructors. After closely reviewing the questionnaire responses, the UWC split into teams of two, and each team selected two or three programs to interview. In general, we selected one of the larger programs, a program that appeared fairly typical of the college, and a program that was unusual in some way (perhaps one

that was in transition to a new format or had an atypical format). Teams, or in some cases individual committee members when scheduling proved challenging, met with JYW representatives and/or instructors in one-hour interviews. (For a list of those JYW representatives and instructors who generously talked with us, see the Appendix C.)

Findings: All in all, we were impressed by the dedication of the teaching staff for JYW courses. We found that these instructors highly value written communication skills, and that they are committed to teaching writing courses that are very time-intensive. For many of the instructors, teaching writing is a labor of love, and most had thought carefully about which skills they wanted to emphasize and how to structure their courses to enhance students' writing skills. At the same time, we also heard serious calls for attaining more pedagogical resources, establishing stronger communication within departments and across the JYWP, and procuring adequate financial support from the University. Below, we offer the review findings.

A. An Overview of JYW Courses

Given the wide range of academic disciplines that offer JYW courses, it is not surprising that a great deal of variation exists in the courses offered and in the types of writing taught. There are 53 departments, schools, or colleges offering JYW courses; 48 (or 91 percent) responded to the questionnaire by January 2008.¹⁰ (The Dept. of Linguistics returned a completed questionnaire but too late to be included in the analysis that follows.)

From the information provided by respondents to the questionnaire, we were able to assess several points of reference: ways of meeting the requirement; numbers of credits awarded; course titles; and class sizes.

A1. Ways of Meeting the Requirement

The 48 programs that responded to the questionnaire sponsor about 70 courses that meet the JYW requirement. Thirty-nine of the 48 programs (or 81 percent) offer their majors a single course, uniform across sections, that meets the requirement (e.g., all engineering majors take Engineering 351 *Writing in Engineering*—it is the only way the requirement is satisfied there). Three programs (Philosophy, Political Science, and Biochemistry) require linked courses, taken either simultaneously or in sequence (Political Science is in the process of changing this structure). Six programs (English, History, Psychology, Classics, Theater, and Sociology) offer some choice of courses (or sections) to students; in the case of the first three (English, History, and Psychology), individual sections of a similar course are organized around special topics advertised in advance to students. For example, English majors satisfy the JYW requirement through a single course, English 300 *Junior Year Seminar in English Studies*, but individual sections of the course are sub-titled, e.g., *Race and Slavery*, *Darwinism and American Literature*; in the case of the latter three (Classics, Theater, and Sociology), students have a choice from among several different courses, all of which satisfy the requirement (e.g., Theater students can satisfy the JYW requirement by taking either 320 *Classical*, 321 *Renaissance*, or 322 *Modern Repertory*).

¹⁰ The following departments did not return the questionnaire: Asian Languages & Literatures; Judaic & Near Eastern Studies; Mathematics & Statistics; and Spanish & Portuguese.

A2. Number of Credits Awarded

Across campus, the credits offered for JYW courses offered in Spring 2008 are as follows:

Table 4.1. Course Credits across the JYWP

# credits	# courses	Notes
1	2	Philosophy and Political Science offer one-credit writing “add-ons” taken in conjunction with another course
2	1	Biology is the only two-credit course in the JYWP
3	41	The vast majority of our courses, 85 percent, are three-credit
4	3	English, Journalism, and Psychology all offer four-credit JYW courses
6	1	Biochemistry requires a two-course sequence, one in the Junior year @ four credits, the other in the Senior year @ two credits

A3. Course Titles

Thirty-eight (or 79 percent) of the programs offer courses that have the word “Writing” in the title (e.g., *Writing in Nutrition*); one program (English) has “Junior Year Seminar” in the title but not “Writing;” and seven programs offer JYW courses which have neither “Writing” nor “Junior Year Seminar” in the title – in fact, they are indistinguishable from other courses in the major (Classics 381 *Intro. to Classical Scholarship*; German 391G *Intro. to German Studies*; Theater 320/321/322 *Classical/Renaissance/Modern Repertory*; Comp. Sci. 305 *Issues in Computing*; Anthro. 364 *Problems in Anthropology*, Psych. 392 *Topics in Psychology*; and Sociology 320/322/325, etc., *Work & Society*, and *Sociology of Education*, etc.). Note: These are the official course titles listed on SPIRE. Two programs are mixed: some of History’s offerings are titled *Junior Writing Seminar* and then subtitled, others say nothing about either “Seminar” or “Writing;” and one of the two linked courses in Biochemistry is titled *Seminar*.

A4. Class Sizes

Across campus, the class sizes for JYW courses in Spring 2008 are as follows:¹¹

Table 4.2 Class Size across the JYWP

class size	# programs	Notes
0-10	7	German, Italian, Dance, Women’s Studies, Food Sciences, Astronomy, Chemistry
11-15	9	Afro-American Studies, History, Comparative Literature, French, Philosophy, Communication Disorders, Journalism, STPEC, Geography ¹²
16-20	9	Art, Art History, English, Music, Physics, Psychology, BDIC, UWW, Communication
21-25	11	Engineering, Theater, ISOM, Environmental Science,

¹¹ Class sizes may vary from semester to semester. The class size of Chemistry in Spring 2008, for example, reflects the addition of an extra section in order to keep class sizes small for the benefit of students; class sizes in Chemistry in fall semesters 2004-2008, averaged 22 students.

¹² The Classics Department typically enrolls 15 students. Information for class enrollment of Classics JYW was unavailable via SPIRE in Spring 2008.

		Biochemistry, Biology, Computer Science, Anthropology, Economics, Geology, Sociology
26-30	4	Architecture & Design, Microbiology, Plant Soil & Insect Sciences, Animal Sciences
31-35	2	Nutrition, Political Science
36+	5	Kinesiology (40), LARP (50), NRC (48), Nursing (62), Legal Studies (44)

Although the proportion of large classes in the overall program (25 percent) is roughly similar to what it was six years ago (24 percent), and although we should be grateful that over half of our programs (52 percent) keep class sizes at twenty or below, we should be concerned about the increasing number of courses that were meant to be capped at twenty but which are gradually rising towards enrollment of 25 and higher. As is evident in the table above, close to a quarter of our programs have class sizes between 21 and 25, but what is striking about these programs when they are examined on SPIRE is how many are exceeding semester after semester and in section after section, their declared enrollment cap of twenty students. A case in point is the Isenberg School of Management (ISOM), which seems to be showing signs of moving towards a de facto twenty-five-student enrollment cap. Officially, writing courses in ISOM are capped at twenty, but nearly every section is currently seating 21 or 22 students, and it may not be long before the courses generally seat 23 or 24 students.

Another pedagogical concern we encountered was the difficulty students experienced enrolling in the JYW course during their junior year. In Journalism, for instance, most majors take the JYW course during their sophomore year when they are not prepared to handle the workload. In other departments, majors are not able to get into the JYW course until their senior years after they have taken courses where they need advanced writing skills.

Recommendations: In order for JYW courses to be pedagogically effective, class size needs to be kept as small as possible. This recommendation is the consensus of the respondents to the questionnaires and the UWC. Small class size is also an important factor contributing to student satisfaction with their writing preparation. Although the UWP recommends an enrollment cap of twenty students per course, we see evidence of a potentially disturbing development in the recent history of the JYWP: the gradual increase in class size or, at the very least, a continuing inability of the Program to bring class size in some programs down to a reasonable number. A number of instructors mentioned the importance of keeping enrollment down in order to ensure they would have enough time to give adequate feedback to student writers.

A5. Additional Information

Findings: Through the questionnaires and in our conversations with selected JYW course instructors and representatives, we encountered programs that are rigorous in their efforts to teach writing effectively, and we encountered no program that seemed thrown together simply to meet the JYW requirement. Most JYW courses are appropriately designed to address writing goals in each given discipline. On the whole, most JYW courses employ both the strategies of “writing to learn” (using writing to learn more about the subject) and “learning to write” (learning the skills of writing). Learning to write, moreover, means learning to write within

particular disciplines or professions: scientific writing in science courses, technical writing in computer science courses, and business writing in ISOM courses. The teaching of discipline-specific genres, in many courses, is also supplemented with instruction on writing résumés or graduate school application statements. In addition to teaching a range of genres, a number of JYW courses also encourage teaching other modes of communication, such as oral presentations, and incorporating technology in interesting ways. In the ISOM, for example, writing instructors have identified the need for providing students with preparation in writing with technology (e.g., blogging, wikis, and presentation software) and are re-envisioning how the JYWP can address these broader needs. And instructors in Biology use wikis for collaborative writing.

The pedagogical approach used in JYW courses varies across departments. Many courses use a range of methods to teach writing that are recommended by the UWP: peer review, low-stakes writing, longer writing assignments, and multiple drafts. Most JYW representatives and instructors were aware of the recommendations; however, in some cases, several recommended that course components be omitted for a particular course though for well thought-out reasons. For example, the Journalism JYW course is meant to mimic the competitive environment of a newsroom and thus omits peer review.

Still, it should be noted that the UWC also found some unevenness across departments in the type and amount of work required in a JYW course, and this may be attributed to misconceptions about the role of the UWC in program oversight and in the requirements for the JYW course. In fact, even *within* single departments, there may be different yet uneven ways to fulfill the requirement. This problem can be addressed, in part, by strengthening communication among the departments, UWP, and UWC as we discuss later.

Summary of Findings: In sum, the sheer range of writing taught is reflective of the original purpose of the JYWP to mentor undergraduate students into advanced writing within particular disciplines and professions. The JYW courses, for the most part, are thoughtfully designed with this purpose, and when a course diverges from the JYWP goals, the UWC might consult with specific departments or individual instructors. We are concerned that increased class size will undoubtedly hinder the good work that instructors are doing in their JYW courses. No kinds of courses are more sensitive to even modest increases in class size than writing courses. Writing courses with large class sizes have been a campus-wide issue for quite some time; the First Year Writing Program has been trying for years to have its 24-student enrollment cap lowered to twenty (or below). Writing instruction, if done well, is by definition a labor-intensive, time-consuming, and exhausting enterprise, and we need to get all writing course enrollments at the University below twenty. In fact, the National Council of Teachers of English recommends no more than fifteen students per class at the postsecondary level but definitely draws the line at twenty.¹³ Keeping our classes under twenty would also help our national rankings since *U.S. News & World Report* gives extra points in its evaluation system to colleges and universities with high numbers of classes with enrollments under twenty.

B. Instructors of JYW Courses

The JYW instructors play an important, if not the most instrumental, role in designing effective discipline-specific writing courses. The commitment of the instructors was evident in

¹³ See <http://www.ncte.org/about/policy/guidelines/107620.htm>.

our conversations with department chairs, JYW representatives, and the instructors themselves. Most instructors reported that their departments value JYWP courses and view them as “a regular part of the landscape.” Several faculty mentioned that it is “no longer viewed as a punishment” to be assigned to teach writing courses. In History, for instance, all JYW courses are taught by tenured professors who are themselves engaged in various writing projects for publication. Many instructors, though not all, had good lines of communication with their departments and chairs about course content and structure. A notable example is the College of Engineering which established a task force, comprising the two writing instructors and four Engineering faculty, to rearticulate the goals of the JYWP for their students.

The instructors are widely distributed across professional ranks in courses offered in Spring 2008:

Table 4.3 Instructors across the JYWP

<i>instructor type</i>	<i># programs</i>	<i>Notes</i>
TSF: tenure system faculty	12 (25%)	Art History, Classics, English, History, Music, Philosophy, Theater, Food Sciences, Plant Soil, Astronomy, Physics, Sociology
NTSF: non-tenure system faculty	24 (50%)	Art, Arch/Design, French, German, Italian, Dance, ISOM, Biology, Nutrition, Legal Studies, Engineering, Afro-Am., Environ. Sciences, NRC, Economics, Computer Science, Kinesiology, STPEC, Microbiology, Animal Science, Anthropology, BDIC, UWW
TSF w/ TAs:	3 (6%)	LARP, Geology, Nursing
TOs alone	7 (15%)	Geography, Comp. Lit., Women’s Studies, Political Science, Psychology, Communication Disorders, Communication
Mix: TSF/NTSF	2 (4%)	Biochemistry, Chemistry, Journalism

This data demonstrates the growing trend in higher education for greater use of NTSF/ Contract Faculty. In the context of the JYWP, this has meant moving away from the original intention of having these courses taught at an advanced level by full-time, tenure-system faculty and focused not on writing *per se* but on writing in the discipline. The reliance on Contract Faculty produced mixed results. Many of the Contract Faculty who are currently directing JYW programs and teaching the courses are qualified, skilled, full-time Senior Lecturers and Lecturers. For instance, ISOM JYW is directed by a Senior Lecturer and staffed with full-time and part-time lecturers. Other departments utilize adjuncts with appropriate professional backgrounds. For instance, Journalism has twelve-student sections of their JYW course which is taught by editors of local newspapers as well as full-time faculty.

In other departments, however, it appears that part-time lecturers are used as a stop gap measure to cover the JYW requirement, and this produces uneven results. When qualified Contract Faculty are well integrated into a department and JYW courses are well integrated into the curriculum of the major, this may be an effective way of meeting the challenge of declining availability of tenure-system faculty while holding true to the original intent of the program.

However, without qualified instructors and without Departmental support, an over-reliance on part-time lecturers does not produce good JYW programs. We include the data above only as a sign, admittedly imperfect and incomplete, of the overall campus-wide commitment to JYW courses, and we are concerned that, in *some* departments, the courses have over the last decade or so become marginalized in potentially worrisome ways.

It should be noted again that we found extraordinary dedication and talent in the instructors who teach JYW courses at every instructional level.

C. The Need to Work Together: JYW Course Instructors, the UWP, & the UWC

Whereas many JYW courses are thoughtfully designed and staffed by committed teachers, the UWC found two important issues that need to be addressed: first, a lack of communication among JYWP participants, the UWP, and the UWC and, second, the declining funding for the JYWP. The UWC found that the JYWP desires stronger communication and collaboration within individual departments. There needs to be increased communication between as well as among the JYW course representatives and instructors, the UWP, and the UWC. There were several cases where instructors that seemed to be operating in a vacuum, without receiving clear feedback from the department at large or consultation with the JYWP about what should be included in course content; some did not even know such consultation was available. Some instructors seemed isolated from the rest of their departmental colleagues.

Even when JYW course instructors received good support from their departments, there was a definite disconnection between the First Year and JYW requirements. While several teachers that we interviewed expressed the opinion that their students were not as well prepared in basic writing skills for JYW as they might be, a number of interviewees also mentioned that they did not know what is covered in EnglWrit 112: *College Writing*. In addition, only nineteen of the 48 programs (40 percent) explicitly state that they require *College Writing* (EnglWrit 112) for enrollment in the JYW course. One suggestion, mentioned several times, was that EnglWrit 112 should have separate sections for students majoring within the science and technical disciplines versus students majoring within in the humanities because these disciplines require very different skill sets. As we discuss in our recommendations, we urge the building of stronger connections between First Year Writing and JYW in order for students to build on their prior writing experiences, which means sharing the EnglWrit 112 curriculum with JYW course instructors.

Beyond this disconnection, we had the sense that, in some programs, the wheel is unnecessarily being reinvented. For example, many courses have students write professional résumés, but not many departments seem to know about Career Services and how it can assist with writing résumés. Many instructors are concerned with grammatical and mechanical issues but do not necessarily know that students buy handbooks in EnglWrit 112. Many get stuck on “the writing problem” which is interpreted as grammar, sentence structure, paraphrasing, etc., without recognizing what Allen (2000) terms as “the meaning problem,” where students generate language that fakes a relationship to meaning. Furthermore, perhaps most importantly, it was only after the interviews that a number of departments became aware of the Associate Director of the JYWP, who can consult with individual JYW course representatives and instructors. Finally, we also heard questions and concerns about other aspects of writing instruction: support

for L2 student writers; resources for teaching and learning grammar; workshops for JYW instructors who generally have no training in teaching grammar and need more places to turn for help; and more. (The concern about dealing with grammar issues was most often raised in interviews with members of science departments.) The UWC recognizes that it has the responsibility of reaching out to all JYWP instructors to ensure that they are aware of existing resources and of generating new resources. While it is imperative for the JYW course representatives and instructors, UWP, and UWC to work together to strengthen the JYWP, the concern most frequently voiced by interviewees was that their programs receive inadequate funding for their JYWP courses.

D. A Call for Financial Support

As departments face constantly increasing pressure to teach more students with fewer resources, they fear that they will simply not be able to staff JYWP courses adequately. At the same time, a number of departments are increasing instruction in newer communication skills required by technology, particularly computer and presentation skills, which require additional JYWP funding.

The paths that money takes from the Office of the Provost to the departmental writing programs are varied and sometimes circuitous. Often, there is a very direct connection: JYW money is used to hire lecturers or teaching assistants/associates to teach JYW. In other departments, money is used to hire instructors for other courses that are more easily taught by short-term employees, thus freeing up full-time faculty for teaching JYW courses. In one case, whether or not funding reaches the JYW courses is unclear as the instructor was unaware that such funding even exists.

Historically, funding for JYW courses at the University is on the decline. It is apparent that the funding for JYW receives a declining portion of the overall budget necessary to keep class sizes small. As shown in the chart below, the current allotment, while nominally higher than the amounts of previous years, is actually lower when viewed as a percentage of instructional cost as defined by the annual salary of a Teaching Associateship for a graduate student at UMass Amherst.

Table 4.4 The JYW Allotment: A Historical View

Year	allotment per junior	cost of TOship	allotment/ TOship
1998	\$175	\$8,442	2.1 %
2002	\$190	\$10,731	1.8 %
2008	\$210	\$13,870	1.5 %

The UWC believes that the current allotment is insufficient for the needs of the University in general and the departments participating in JYW in particular.

Through the questionnaires and interviews, the UWC encountered dedicated teachers and JYW courses designed to encourage discipline-specific writing for undergraduate majors. Notably, the JYW courses excel most when class size remains manageable and when instructors are well-versed in the discipline being taught. We support earlier reviews that urge a class

enrollment cap of twenty students and the participation of instructors who are knowledgeable in the given discipline. Beyond these issues, two serious concerns arose concerning the need for better communication within the entire JYWP and the need for adequate funding of JYW courses. In an effort to improve communication within the JYWP, the UWC held a summit in April, and it was then that we had the opportunity to discuss our preliminary findings with the people who make up the program.

V. JYWP Summit

The summit was held on April 25, 2008, concerning the JYWP and its review. Invitations were issued to all departments, and fifty people attended the event. Relative to the small number of people who attended other UWC/JYWP events in recent years, fifty attendees constituted a large number of people. The attendees included deans, department chairs, departmental JYWP directors, and JYWP instructors from all colleges; presenters included David Fleming, Genevieve Chandler, and members of the UWC.

Three priorities guided the agenda for the review: (1) a general history of and current information on the JYWP, including the review procedures; (2) a report from UWC members on the information learned through surveys and departmental visits; (3) small group discussions concerning the Program. Additional information was provided concerning resources available to the departments. Overall, the intention of the summit was to build a sense of community between those responsible for JYW programs; this goal identified in response to one of the recommendations of the previous JYWP Review (2001-2002) to address the “lack of shared vision” across campus regarding the general mission of the Program.

The UWC presented several key points in summary from the surveys and departmental visits to the attendees; these included the following:

- A strong demonstration of support for the JYW requirement as a vital aspect of student professional development.
- A universal emphasis on student-centered and passionate teaching by relatively inexperienced and very experienced teachers alike.
- An abiding interest in continuing to offer a wide range of diverse course possibilities for the satisfaction of the JYW requirement.
- A discussion of the connection between the First Year and JYWPs.
- A ubiquitous call for greater support by the University for ESL writers in the JYWP.
- A demand for increased funding for JYW from the University to the departments.
- A common call for keeping class sizes to a manageable and pedagogically sound number, ideally twenty students.

Following the presentation of the issues, attendees were asked to discuss in small groups two questions: “Do these findings resonate?” “What should the UWC do [i.e., work towards] next?”

Nine small groups formed, and lively and productive discussions ensued, bringing people from diverse backgrounds together and helping to establish a sense of community. With respect to the first question, all of the participants concurred with the findings, and reiterated in very strong terms the need to emphasize increased funding, caps on class sizes, and increased support for ESL writers. With respect to the second question, a number of suggestions were made to the UWC, including the following:

- Advocate strongly in order to make the limit on class size a priority for the University.
- Encourage the University to provide a scheduling system whereby students who have not completed EnglWrit 111 or 112 are unable to enroll in JYW.
- Consider the possibility of a Sophomore year writing component, either mandatory or voluntary.
- Raise the campus profile and sense of community of the JYWP by creating a newsletter and hosting more events, particularly concerning identifying best teaching practices, promoting better communication between departments in the schools, developing the professional writing styles of the various disciplines, and fostering interaction between new and experienced instructors.
- Provide training sessions and workshops for JYW instructors on various topics such as teaching peer review or incorporating writing and public speaking skills into the curriculum, including the use of non-academic professionals when appropriate.
- Conduct a learning outcomes analysis of the JYWP and initiate discussions between departments on the “norms” expected for JYW, given its cross-disciplinary nature.
- Incorporate the *internet* to encourage campus-wide communication about JYWP classroom practices by providing, for example, online basic modules and a grammar handbook via SPARK.
- Encourage the University to address salary disparities between adjunct faculty and TOs, particularly with respect to class size.

At the end of the meeting, a questionnaire was distributed regarding the summit. Attendees were asked to rate the degree of the answers to the following questions on a scale of 1-5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = no opinion, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree).

Table 5.1 Participant Evaluations of the JYWP Summit

	strongly agree	agree	no opinion	disagree	strongly disagree
1. The summit described the process of the ongoing JYWP review.	15	1	0	0	0
2. The summit described similarities and differences in JYW programs.	7	4	5	0	0
3. The summit provided information on resources for JYW.	10	3	2	0	1

In the weeks that followed the summit, members of the UWC received several emails from attendees praising the summit and encouraging similar events in the years to follow.

VI. Conversations with the Director of the UWP & Associate Director of the JYWP

The final portion of our review included conversations with the Director of the UWP, Professor David Fleming of English, and the Associate Director of the JYWP, Professor Genevieve Chandler of Nursing. The Director of the UWP and the Associate Director of the JYWP work together with the aim of strengthening teaching and learning in the JYWP. To get a fuller picture of the JYWP, we sought their perspectives on the strengths and needs of the Program as a whole.

A Conversation with David Fleming, Director of the UWP

David Fleming is the current Director of the UWP, a position that releases him from two courses for the English department per year. The term of the position is typically four years. In addition to his duties as director, Professor Fleming teaches two courses each year, one section of *College Writing* and one graduate course in English. While the First Year Writing Program demands much of his day-to-day attention, he has found that the JYWP part of his job has required a steeper learning curve. A big part of the job is supporting JYW instructors in the University through consulting, administering workshops, and providing materials such as the JYWP Sourcebook that was developed last year. Professor Fleming also has two primary public roles in the JYWP, both usually performed in conjunction with the Associate Director of the JYWP, currently Genevieve Chandler: (1) advocacy for the JYWP to the Deputy Provost and the Provost, often related to matters of funding and (2) university-wide outreach for the JYWP. Lastly, he is also an *ex officio* member of the UWC, which oversees the JYWP.

Professor Fleming sees several strengths in the JYWP, especially the fact that there is a JYW requirement, which has a strong history of twenty-six years. Also, because the early leaders and creators of the Program were so strong, he finds that faculty today may argue over how Junior year writing is to be best taught, but does not see the dialogue as something that should be abolished. In spite of the strengths of the Program, he thinks that it has languished in recent years due in part because the UWP and the UWC themselves have failed to sufficiently support junior-year writing instructors and students. This failure is due to a number of causes:

- Because of the decline in faculty, departments can no longer afford course releases for the Associate Director of the JYWP, and the faculty who have filled the position have had to do their JYWP work on top of their normal departmental workloads.
- Because the Writing Center has grown so much, the Assistant Director of the University Writing Program, Pat Zukowski, was reassigned to support the Writing Center and has been unable to do some of the work such as outreach and departmental visits she used to do in the UWP.
- The clerical work of administering the program is substantially greater than it used to be.

As a result, Professor Fleming suggests a number of recommendations that would improve JYWP:

1. The Associate Director of the UWP should receive one course-release per year to allow him or her to do more outreach and to collaborate more fully with campus faculty teaching JYW.
2. Now that there is a full-time director of the Writing Center, the work of the Assistant Director of the UWP can be redirected back to the Program itself.
3. A teaching associate position should be assigned to the Program to do outreach and research, and to assist with workshops, publications, and the JYW website.

If these recommendations were to be adopted, Professor Fleming thinks a number of essential initiatives could be accomplished, including creating a newsletter, establishing a mandatory orientation for JYW instructors, conducting more research, and encouraging more communication with faculty and departments. Quite simply, he believes there needs to be more time devoted to these endeavors.

Overall, Professor Fleming sees the JYWP as an essential part of the University and knows that others do too. Faculty, students, and administrators are all aware of the importance of writing—the new generation of students are writing more in their professional, academic, and personal lives—and writing is becoming more complex. JYWP needs to be well-supported so it can meet the needs of UMass students in the twenty-first century.

A Conversation with Genevieve Chandler, Associate Director of the JYWP

Genevieve Chandler, a faculty member in the Nursing department, has served as Associate Director of the JYWP for two years. Although she does not receive a course release as Associate Director, she does receive a salary increase. Her primary roles include meeting with faculty members who are setting up or revising their JYW courses; teaching people who have never taught writing but who are adept at researching and publishing how to communicate their knowledge to students; and working closely with the Director of the UWP on projects such as creating a sourcebook for JYW instructors. Her experience teaching the JYW course in the Nursing department (six times in the classroom and three times online), her experience with the Center for Teaching and Learning, and her own participation in writing groups prepared her for the position.

Professor Chandler believes that it is significant that UMass has a JYWP in contrast to the peer institutions that do not, and that the university supports relatively small, discipline-specific classes in a system in which large lecture courses are more common. On an academic level, she believes that JYW courses are an integral way for students to become part of their chosen professional discourse communities; on a personal level, she believes that the writing process encouraged by the UWP both heals writers and connects them with communities and experiences outside of their own.

Professor Chandler points to the lack of centralization and the difficulty of keeping track of JYW teachers and their curriculum as issues that need to be addressed. She made several recommendations:

1. While she has met with approximately twelve departments a year, she recommends that the Associate Director meet with everyone involved in JYW.
2. More writing workshops and general meetings should be offered for instructors.
3. The UWC should generate and distribute an annotated bibliography with current writing research to all departments with JYW programs.
4. To encourage the building of a writing community, the JYWP should also highlight best practices of instructors who are doing exemplary jobs, perhaps by nominating a “Teacher of the Year.”
5. Finally, to make transitions within the UWP more effective, there should be a scaffolding system in place for training new Associate Directors, whereby the current Associate Director will serve as a mentor for one year before the new Associate Director takes over the position.

VII. Recommendations for the JYWP

By nearly every measure, writing is the gateway to professional, political, intellectual, and cultural involvement in our society. According to the National Commission on Writing, it is the key marker of high-wage, high-skill work in the global economy.¹⁴ In the reports of that Commission and the reports of the AACU’s recent Liberal Education and America’s Promise (LEAP) initiative, employers say repeatedly how important graduates’ written communication skills are to them.¹⁵ And with good reason. As literacy researcher Deborah Brandt has put it, “Writing is at the heart of the knowledge economy...Some analysts estimate that [the] knowledge...codified in writing composes about three fourths of the value added in the production of goods and services, making it more valuable than land, equipment, or even money.”¹⁶

In colleges and universities, meanwhile, skill in writing is probably the trait that faculty most value and desire in their students’ work, as well as the trait they most admire in each other. By “skill in writing,” however, they do not mean something “basic,” however much they may complain about students’ punctuation, spelling, and grammar. They mean the same high-level analytic and creative skill that employers are looking for. Mike Rose has described that skill this way: “Many young people come to the university able to summarize the events in a news story or write a personal response to a play or a movie or give back what a teacher said in a straightforward lecture. But they have considerable trouble with what has come to be called *critical literacy*: framing an argument or taking someone else’s argument apart, systematically inspecting a document, an issue, or an event, synthesizing different points of view, applying a theory to disparate phenomena, and so on”¹⁷

And it is not just the workplace and classroom where writing increasingly occupies a central place: more and more people are turning to writing for aesthetic, personal, and political expression. The National Endowment of the Arts, in fact, has found significant growth in the

¹⁴ See <http://www.writingcommission.org/>.

¹⁵ See <http://www.aacu.org/advocacy/leap/index.cfm>.

¹⁶ Brandt, Deborah. “Writing for a Living: Literacy and the Knowledge Economy” *Written Communication* 22.2 (2005), 166.

¹⁷ Rose, Mike. *Lives on the Boundary* (Penguin, 1990), p. 188.

number of Americans engaged in self-sponsored writing, up from just ten years ago.¹⁸ On the other hand, the Pew Internet and American Life Project estimates that eight million people now keep electronic diaries (blogs) and that 44 percent of Internet users have created original material and published it on the Web. The proportion of Internet users is especially high for younger users is growing yearly.¹⁹

The fact is that writing both fosters and marks *engagement*: creative, political, and intellectual; and for that reason, it is something we should pay attention to as educators. Whatever else may happen there, classes in which there is a lot of writing are very often the classes where students learn the most, work the hardest, and end up enjoying and valuing higher education the most. Richard Light, an expert in the assessment of learning during the college years, has found that of all skills students say they want to strengthen, writing is mentioned three times more than any other. In his book *Making the Most of College*, he records the strong attitudes students have toward writing, how deeply many of them care about it, and how strongly they hunger for attention to it. In a detailed breakdown of data about student learning collected from hundreds of undergraduates, Light asked students about their courses in terms of time commitment, intellectual challenge, and personal engagement. This is what he writes about the results of the survey:

The results are stunning. The relationship between the amount of writing for a course and students' level of engagement – whether engagement is measured by time spent on the course, or the intellectual challenge it presents, or students' self-reported level of interest in it – is stronger than any relationship we found between student engagement and any other course characteristic. (55)

Students especially valued writing in the Junior and Senior years, in the context of their major field of study, and not just for their professor but for their fellow students as well.²⁰

But writing is also complex, multi-faceted, and difficult to do. Skill in writing is slow to develop and sensitive to environment. And given the increasing linguistic and cultural diversity of this country and the State of Massachusetts, the rapidly changing technological demands put on writing in our society, the increasingly global implications and configurations of literacy – writing is becoming only more complex, more difficult to learn, and more difficult to teach every year. A 2007 public opinion survey from the National Writing Project, with respondents from all income, geographic, and education levels, found that *three-quarters of those surveyed* believe there is a greater need to be able to write well now than there was just twenty years ago; according to the survey, the American public wants writing to be taught *more* and better in our schools.²¹

Recommendations: The UWC wishes to commend the JYWP for its continued success. It also wishes to commend the outstanding efforts of the Associate Directors of the JYWP since the 2001-2002 review, Linda LaDuc and Ginny Chandler; the departmental program directors and

¹⁸ See <http://www.nea.gov/research/ReadingAtRisk.pdf>.

¹⁹ See <http://www.pewinternet.org/>.

²⁰ Richard Light, *Making the Most of College: Students Speak Their Minds* (Harvard, 2001).

²¹ See <http://www.nwp.org/cs/public/print/resource/2300>.

others who teach and staff the nationally-recognized program; the UWP; and past iterations of the UWC. The JYWP is a genuinely shining benefit for the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and almost three decades after the Program was launched, it is imperative that we sustain the high quality of advanced undergraduate writing instruction.

Specific Recommendations

In order to sustain the success of our University's excellent program and to meet current challenges, the UWC offers the following recommendations.

1. We recommend that the Administration provide the JYWP with funds to do the following:
 - A. Increase the JYWP supplement from \$210 to \$275 per student. Although the allotment is intended to only supplement rather than fully fund these classes (since they also meet departmental requirements for the major), the decrease in the relative value of the supplement over time, as shown in Table 4.4, is considerable and detrimental. Where once the allotment amounted to more than 2 percent of a TOship, it now equals less than 1.5 percent. To return to the 1998 level of support for Junior Year Writing, the University would need to raise the current allotment from \$210 to \$275, which we recommend. We advocate this increase in order to maintain class enrollments at a reasonable size, recognizing that JYW courses offer students sustained and meaningful contact with teachers, an increasingly rare opportunity. We also advocate it as an imperative to address the needs of an ever-diversifying student population, to serve the expanding professional needs of disciplines, and to preserve the highest pedagogical standards that rank the JYWP nationally.
 - B. Address the immediate and growing needs of ESL vis-à-vis student enrollment in the JYWP. With a student population that becomes more diverse and a University that wishes to attract students from all regions of the United States and the world, and in order to best serve students whose professional careers will involve working in a global marketplace, the provision of support for increased staffing and funding of ESL assistance for JYW requirements is imperative.
 - C. Address the salary disparities between contract faculty and TOs/TAs who teach JYW. In many cases, departments have found it necessary to hire part-time faculty to teach the JYW component; these faculty consistently rate high in formal and informal evaluations and are an integral part of the success of the JYWP, as are TOs/TAs.
 - D. Fundraise to create an endowment to guarantee future support for the JYWP. The JYWP is noteworthy and meritorious on a national scale. In noting its remarkable achievement for the University of Massachusetts Amherst, and seeking outside sources for funding such as an endowment, this recommendation suggests a complement rather than a replacement for University support, and as a means to further highlight the success of the JYWP.
 - E. Make the recommendation to the Administration that the Scheduling Office create a system in which student registration in a departmental JYW course is

impossible without prior successful completion of the Freshman Writing Course (EnglWrit 112) or its equivalent.

2. We recommend that the UWC do the following:
 - A. Consider the evolving relationship of the required First Year writing course (EnglWrit 112) to the JYWP. Address of this relationship may range from straightforward tasks such as maintaining or recommending a single handbook for JYW courses, to using more advanced initiatives such as advocacy for a Sophomore writing component or elective in order to sustain the intellectual benefits of continued writing beyond the Freshman year.
 - B. Routinely remind all departments on campus of the JYWP mandate and provide information pertaining to such matters as course requirements, approval of syllabi procedures, ideal class enrollment sizes, and available resources. There has been considerable improvement in communicating about the Program since its 2001-2002 Review; the recommendation now is to maintain this excellence in communication about the JYWP and to clarify the purpose of its courses when necessary.
 - C. Advocate for the importance of sustained support of ESL writers in the JYWP, for reasons similar to 1B, above.
 - D. Continue to offer events and workshops in collaboration with the Center for Teaching for the purpose of community-building and encouraging collaboration among departmental programs and particularly between experienced and new instructors of JYW. Since the 2001-2002 Review, there has been considerable improvement in outreach efforts; the recommendation now is to maintain and increase these endeavors.
 - E. Review discrepancies between departmental requirements, such as the success of one-credit, two-credit, three-credit, and four-credit manifestations.

3. We recommend that the JYWP do the following:
 - A. Remind departments of resources available to them, including those from the JYWP (such as the JYWP Sourcebook) and other campus offices such as Career Services. Since the 2001-2002 Review, there has been considerable improvement in advertising the availability of resources; the recommendation now is to maintain this excellence in communication.
 - B. Maintain regular communication with instructors through such media as a JYWP newsletter.
 - C. Maintain the website for the JYWP in collaboration with the UWP and explore ways in which the website may be used to encourage further community-building for departmental JYW programs across campus.
 - D. Conduct a detailed examination of student writing as students proceed through the JYWP in order to review writing requirements pertinent to all departments and to develop strategies for developing engaging course requirements and promoting

styles of writing characteristic of particular colleges and professions. Such analysis may be done in collaboration with the Office of Assessment.

- E. Celebrate to highlight the success of the JYWP through holding sponsored events for faculty, as described in 2D, above, and for students such as the Annual Celebration of Writing in order to encourage all campus members to become aware of and involved in a program that is highly beneficial and highly-regarded.

The University of Massachusetts Amherst has a long-standing, reputable, and highly-effective program of undergraduate writing instruction. For more than a quarter of a century, we have shown that students' writing skills can be effectively and responsibly fostered at a large public research university. Our groundbreaking six-credit writing requirement, including both a common First Year course focused on general writing processes and a discipline-specific Junior year course focused on writing in the majors, is a model for attending to writing across the curriculum throughout the college years. It has admittedly been difficult to keep the momentum for such a complex and multi-faceted initiative going for so long, given competing demands for the attention of and resources from the University Administration. And the fact is that writing instruction at UMass Amherst is facing a series of critical challenges, including flat or even falling financial support precisely when writing is increasing in complexity and in importance in the society at large. But the last twenty-five years have left a deep foundation of support for writing instruction on this campus. And for that we should all be thankful.

IX. Appendices

Appendix A: Departments offering JYW Courses

The JYW units are listed below, with a + by each official JYW “program” on campus.

+ **College of Engineering** (combines 4 departments & 6 majors)

• **College of Humanities and Fine Arts**

- + Dept. of Afro-American Studies
- + Dept. of Art
- + Program in Art History
- + Program in Architecture + Design
- + Dept. of Classics
- + Dept. of English
- + Dept. of History
- + Dept. of Judaic & Near Eastern Studies (2 majors)
- + Program in Asian Languages & Literatures (2 majors) (LLC)
- + Program in Comparative Literature (LLC)
- + Program in French and Francophone Studies (LLC)
- + Program in German & Scandinavian Studies (LLC)
- + Program in Italian Studies (LLC)
- + Program in Spanish and Portuguese Studies (2 majors) (LLC)
- + Dept. of Linguistics
- + Dept. of Music
- + Program in Dance
- + Dept. of Philosophy
- Program in Slavic & Eastern European Studies
- + Dept. of Theater
- + Program in Women’s Studies

+ **Isenberg School of Management** (combines 6 departments in ISOM + 1, Resource Economics, from NRE)

• **College of Natural Resources and the Environment**

- + Dept. of Environmental Sciences
- + Dept. of Food Sciences
- + Dept. of Landscape Architecture & Regional Planning (2 majors) (LARP)
- + Dept. of Microbiology
- + Dept. of Natural Resources Conservation (combines 4 majors)
- + Dept. of Plant Soil & Insect Sciences
- + Dept. of Veterinary & Animal Sciences

• **College of Natural Sciences and Mathematics**

- + Dept. of Astronomy
- + Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology

- + Dept. of Biology
- + Dept. of Chemistry
- + Dept. of Computer Science
- + Program in Geology (Geosciences)
- + Program in Geography (Geosciences)
- Program in Earth Sciences (Geosciences)
- + Dept. of Mathematics & Statistics
- + Dept. of Physics
- Dept. of Polymer Sciences
- Program in Pre-Medical/Pre-Dental

+ School of Nursing

• School of Public Health and Health Sciences

- + Dept. of Communication Disorders
- + Dept. of Kinesiology
- + Dept. of Nutrition
- Dept. of Public Health (begins 2008-09)

• College of Social and Behavioral Sciences

- + Dept. of Anthropology
- + Dept. of Communication
- + Dept. of Economics
- + Journalism Program, Dept. of Communication
- + Dept. of Legal Studies
- + Dept. of Political Science
- + Dept of Psychology
- + Program in Social Thought and Political Economy
- + Dept. of Sociology

• Other

- + Bachelor's Degree with Individual Concentration (BDIC)
- + University Without Walls (UWW)

Appendix B: Questionnaire for the JYWP Review

Cover Letter

October 5, 2007

To: Heads/Chairs of UMass Amherst academic departments/units participating in Junior Year Writing

From: Prof. Stephen Gencarella, Communication, Chair, the University Writing Committee, on behalf of the entire University Writing Committee

Prof. David Fleming, English, Director, the University Writing Program

Re: **2007-08 Review of Junior Year Writing Program**

As part of its mandate from the Faculty Senate, the University Writing Committee (UWC) is engaged in a year-long formal review of the University's Junior Year Writing Program. The Senate has charged the UWC to "approve and monitor the Junior Year Writing Component in the University's academic units"; "evaluate the program and, on the basis of this evaluation, suggest changes in procedures or policies"; and "advise the Provost on the distribution of funds designated for the Junior-Year Writing Component" (for more information, see http://www.umass.edu/senate/committees/univ_writing.html). In 2002-03, the UWC adopted a five-year review cycle for the First Year and Junior Year Writing Programs and scheduled the next Junior Year Writing Program review for this year, 2007-08.

As a committee, our goal is to discover how departments and other academic units at UMass Amherst are teaching Junior Year Writing and to assess how the Writing Program can better support those departments in that work. We therefore ask that, in consultation with the Junior Year Writing representative in your department, you complete the following questionnaire about your department's Junior Year Writing course offerings. Part 1 asks for general information about courses. Part 2 seeks a fuller picture of curriculum and pedagogy. For this part, please send us course materials (syllabi, writing assignments, and other relevant documents) for **one** course that you believe characterizes your department's Junior Year Writing offerings; if any question is answered by the attached course materials, please indicate this and proceed to the next question. In Spring 2008, UWC members will be visiting selected departments/units for more in-depth interviews and fact-finding.

We appreciate your participation in this review and ask that you submit your completed questionnaire by **October 19**, 2007 to

The Writing Program
305 Bartlett Hall

We have also sent, by email, electronic versions of this questionnaire in both MSWord and PDF formats; please feel free to submit your answers by electronic attachment to

writingprogram@acad.umass.edu

If you have any questions, please contact Prof. Stephen Gencarella, Communication, chair of the University Writing Committee (solbrys@comm.umass.edu or 545-3685) or Prof. David Fleming, English, Director of the Writing Program (dfleming@english.umass.edu or 545-0610).

UNIVERSITY WRITING COMMITTEE

REVIEW OF JUNIOR YEAR WRITING PROGRAM, 2007-08

Part 1. General Information on the Junior Year Writing requirement in your department/unit

Department or unit: _____

School or College: _____

Contact name: _____

Contact title: _____

Contact email: _____

Contact phone: _____

1. a. How many undergraduate majors did your department/unit have in 2006-2007?
b. Of these, how many were juniors?
2. How do majors in your department usually satisfy the Junior Year Writing requirement?
3. Can a course in another department satisfy the Junior Year Writing requirement?
 Yes No
4. a. List course numbers and titles for all Junior Year Writing courses offered by your department in 2007-08
b. How many sections of Junior Year Writing do you typically offer in an academic year?
5. What is the typical enrollment (or enrollment cap) in sections of your Junior Year Writing course?
6. Is Englwrit 112: College Writing a stated prerequisite for your Junior Year Writing course?
 Yes No
7. How are Junior Year Writing courses funded in your department?
 - a. % from department _____
 - b. % from your college _____
 - c. % from Junior Year Writing Program _____
 - d. Other (please explain): _____

Section D. Support from the Writing Program and University Writing Committee

1. What teaching resources would you like the Writing Program and University Writing Committee to develop for your Junior Year Writing faculty? Check all that apply.

- Orientation
- Workshops
- Consultations
- Newsletter
- Sourcebook
- Other: _____

2. Which writing issues would your department's junior-year writing faculty like to have more information about? Check all that apply.

- Developing purpose & focus
- Generating audience awareness & genre knowledge
- Using writing to learn & develop ideas
- Thinking critically about content knowledge
- Developing research & citation skills
- Improving the quality of peer responses
- Editing grammar & style
- Other: _____

3. What if any additional challenges do you face in teaching Junior Year Writing?

The University Writing Committee provides occasional workshops, consultations, and other resources for Junior Year Writing instructors. Can we share your course materials in this capacity at UMass Amherst?

- Yes No

Appendix C: Interview with JYWP Participants

The members of the UWC met with the following department chairs, JYW representatives, and instructors from selected departments in February and March 2008.

+ **College of Engineering:** Lecturers Stephen Constantine and Edward Cottrill and Associate Dean Ted Djaferis

• **College of Humanities and Fine Arts**

- + Dept. of English: Professor and Chair Joseph Bartolomeo and Professor Laura Doyle
- + Dept. of History: Professor and Chair Audrey Altstadt
- + Dept. of Theater: Assistant Professor Paul Walsh and Associate Professor Harley Erdman

• **College of Social and Behavioral Science**

- + Dept. of Journalism: Professor and Program Director Karen List, Lecturer B.J. Roche (Coordinator of JYW), and Professor Norman Sims
- + Dept. of Economics: Professor and Chair Diane Flaherty, Senior Lecturer John Stifler (Director of JYW), Professor Randall Bausor, and Lecturer Kevin Crocker
- + Dept. of Political Science: Professor and Chair John Hird

+ **Isenberg School of Management:** Professor and Associate Dean Carol Barr, Senior Lecturer Linda LaDuc

• **College of Natural Resources and the Environment**

- + Dept. of Natural Resources Conservation: Professor Paul Fiset
- + Dept. of Veterinary and Animal Science: Professor and Department Head Samuel Black and Lecturer Eunice Barlow

• **College of Natural Science and Mathematics**

- + Dept. of Biology: Professor Margery Coombs (writing coordinator) and Associate Professor Elizabeth Connor
- + Dept. of Biochemistry & Molecular Biology: Professor Molly Fitzgerald
- + Dept. of Computer Science: Lecturer Stephen Constantine and Professor Robert Moll