

Junior Year Writing Program Review Report

October 20, 2017

Presented at the
Meeting of the Faculty Senate
Date TBD

University Writing Committee Membership

Michelle Trim, *Chair*

Ginny Chandler

Alice Cheung

Herman Fong

Evan Ross

Katherine Freedman

Julie Hemment (through May 2017)

Kristin Bock (through May 2017)

Rebecca Lorimer Leonard (through Dec 2016)

Laura Hartenberger (beginning Aug 2017)

Becky Miller (beginning Aug 2017)

Dina Navon (GSA – rep)

Rebecca Dingo, *ex officio*

Deborah McCutchen, *ex officio*

Carol Barr, *ex officio*

MJ Peterson, *ex officio*

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

(a) Recommending policies concerning the administration and operation of the University Writing Program (UWP); (b) Monitoring and overseeing the First-year component of the UWP; (c) Approving and monitoring the Junior Year Writing (JYW) component in the University's academic units; (d) Evaluating the JYWP 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.

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, and in 2014 the UWC engaged in the first quinquennial review of the JYW courses themselves. This review required departments receiving funding for JYW to submit syllabi and course information for each of their courses listed as receiving JYW credit with the university registrar. As a result, scheduling of the next major review of the JYWP was set for 2016-17, after the quinquennial course review was completed. Previous reviews of the JYWP were conducted in 2007-08, 2001-2 and 1998-99.

The review included multiple activities:

1. Tabulation and analysis of responses provided by departments as part of the quinquennial course review;
2. In-depth interviews with key figures in selected programs;
3. A summit addressing one of the more pressing concerns as revealed by the interviews;
4. A report supplied by Institutional Research as to JYW course enrollments across two academic years;
5. Interviews with the Director of the UWP and the Associate Director of the JYWP

This final report includes our major findings and recommendations. It has the following sections:

I. Executive Summary

II. Brief History of the JYWP

III. Results from Questionnaires and Interviews with JYW Representatives and Instructors

IV. Information and Results from the JYWP Summit on April 3, 2017

V. Information from Conversations with the Director of the UWP and the Associate Director of the JYWP

VI. Recommendations

VII. Appendices

Executive Summary

This report provides recommendations for the University, the Writing Program, and for the University Writing Committee, that are drawn from the analysis of data collected from departments, Spire, and JYW faculty and course coordinators. These recommendations outline a pathway for the JYWP to continue to contribute to the “culture of excellence” described in Part 1¹ of the University Strategic Plan. This report offers evidence-based suggestions for achieving that excellence: It asks the University to align with departments by increasing its support of JYW and, by extension, its support of undergraduates’ disciplinary writing development and professionalization. This report also makes recommendations to both the UWP and to the UWC for sustaining the highest quality of writing instruction according to established best practices.

Brief History of JYWP

II. (The following information is taken directly from the *2008 UWC JYW Review Report*)

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 Writing Across the Curriculum (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 the English Department and also independent of it) and a new UWC, were instituted by the Faculty Senate in April 1982. 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.

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 and write to learn about that field (from the 1982 Report: “The function

¹ <https://www.umass.edu/chancellor/sites/default/files/pdf/jtfsophase-i-report2.pdf>

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 to 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. Courses differ in the kinds of disciplinary writing students do, in the number of students per section, and the courses differ in the kinds of institutional configurations they employ. Even as the evident decentralization depicted above presents the campus with significant challenges, the Program has clearly worked.

(after the 2008 UWC JYW Review Report)

In 2014, a new mechanism was added by the UWC to help the vastly different JYW courses to realize the original goal of having a standard 3-credit course structure. The UWC sent information to every participating JYW program on campus information about the Quinquennial (QQ) review process, including a link to the Course and Curriculum Management System (CCMS) hosted questionnaire designed to elicit unit-specific information about JYW courses. Once in the CCMS, JYW course representatives posted syllabi and answered questions related to currently offered courses with the JYW designation. Questions asked included general information about the course (relevant course numbers, frequency of offerings, typical enrollments, pre-requisites, and methods for staffing) and specific information related to the course curriculum (its assignments, use of feedback, incorporation of information literacy, textbooks). (See Appendix A)

This quinquennial review has enabled effective and efficient outreach to departments and programs in adjusting, developing, and enhancing their JYW courses to best serve their departments and their students. It has also enabled the UWP and the UWC to better ascertain what precisely is happening within the JYW courses so that they can provide tailored guidance and support. Engaging in this review was not a trivial activity; identifying all JYW courses and course numbers required participation from every major on campus as JYW courses are not tagged as such in SPIRE (although that functionality might be added in the future). As a side benefit of the quinquennial review, the UWC now has a working list of all current courses satisfying the JYW requirement.

III. Results from Quinquennial Reviews and Interviews

Background: The UWC launched a review of the JYWP in 2016-17, as was done before in 2007-08; our purpose was to learn more about current JYW courses across campus, to identify strengths and

difficulties faced by specific programs, departments, and colleges, and to describe practices that strengthen the JYW program.

Method:

After completing the Quinquennial review of the JYW courses, the first stages of the JYW program review included tabulating the qualitative and quantitative data already collected. After closely reviewing the QQ responses, the UWC selected a slate of programs to interview. Beginning in September of 2016, members of the UWC visited this subset of academic departments and colleges in order to learn more about the resource needs of JYW instructors and to hear more specifically about their successes and challenges. The programs selected for interview represent JYW course diversity in terms of size, style, and staffing model. Committee members, in teams or individually, met with program directors/ department chairs and JYW instructors in one-hour interviews. (For a list of the specific programs interviewed, see Appendix B.)

Findings:

All in all, the UWC was impressed by the dedication of programs and their instructors to JYW courses. Despite surging enrollments in many majors and reduced enrollments in others, programs on the whole continue to be committed to providing students with a high quality JYW experience. Unexpected comments from programs pointed to both the essential and challenging nature of offering JYW courses. Enrollment pressures particularly are having an effect on the ease with which departments and colleges are able to achieve that quality. Findings are organized around the following emerging trends from the data:

- A. Perception of resources for staffing JYW courses;**
- B. Challenges related to serving a growing English Language Learner/ Multilingual student population;**
- C. Recognition of JYW as essential to the major;**
- D. Desire for other kinds of writing support**

A. Perception of resources for staffing 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 different JYW courses offered by 43 departments, schools, or colleges. A trend that quickly emerged from the data was an increase in class size as a function of increasing enrollments without corresponding increases in financial support. While different staffing models have emerged within programs experiencing large enrollments, there seems to be consensus that increasing class sizes has an inverse effect on JYW course quality. From the QQ review responses, we assessed several components of meeting the JYW designation requirement, including numbers of credits awarded and staffing models. In addition, we evaluated class size from SPIRE data obtained from the Office of Institutional Research (see Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 Class Size across the JYWP (from SPIRE)

| 2016 Avg. Class Size | # of programs | Programs |
|----------------------|---------------|---|
| 0-10 | 5 | A-A Studies; Spanish, French Studies, Philosophy; History |
| 11-15 | 4 | Journalism; Art Hist; UWW; BMB** |
| 16-20 | 13 | Art; Dance; Japanese; STPEC; Music; Legal Studies; Comm Dis; English; Public Health; Architecture; Theater; Communication; Nat Sci; |
| 21-25 | 10 | Psy & Brain Sci; BDIC; Microbiology; Linguistics; Engineering; Physics; Comp Sci; Anthropology; Sociology |
| 26-30 | 6 | ISOM (23-30); Res Econ(30); Food Science(29); Econ(27); Biology(26); Nutrition (26) |
| >30 | 5 | Kinesiology*; Mathematics (63); Political Science (47); Nursing* (44); BMB** (39) |

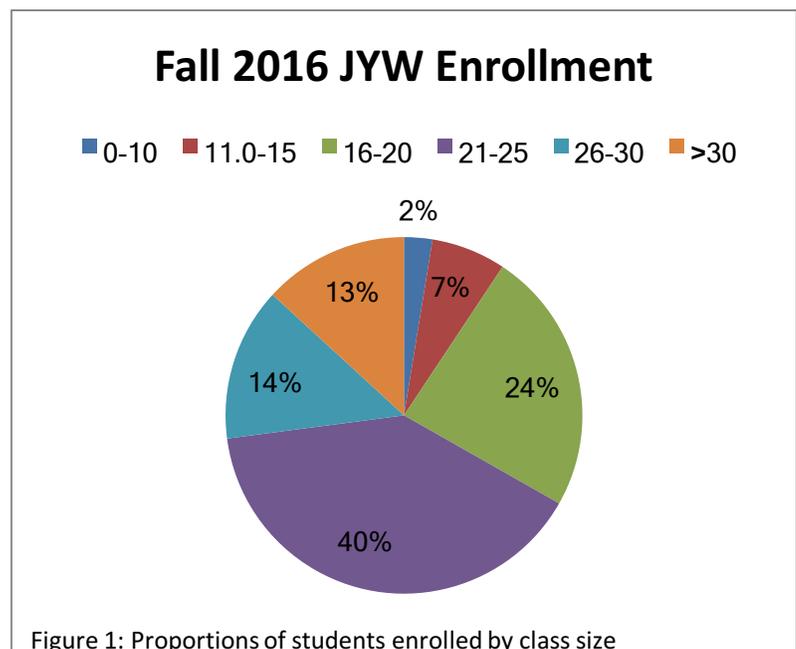
*Kinesiology and Nursing spend weekly class meetings split into 22-23 student discussion groups led by lecturers or TOs**BMB satisfies JYW with two separate courses

Although the proportion of large classes (>25 students) in the overall program (26 percent) is roughly similar to what it was eight years ago (25 percent) and 14 years ago (24 percent), and although it is encouraging that half of the programs (50 percent) keep class sizes at twenty or below, the University should be concerned about the increasing number of courses that were meant to be capped at twenty, but that are gradually rising towards enrollments of 25 and higher. As is evident in Table 4.2, close to a quarter of our programs have class sizes between 21 and 25. A case in point is the School of Management (ISOM), which shows signs of moving towards a de facto twenty-five-student enrollment cap. In 2008, writing courses in SOM were capped at twenty, although every section typically enrolled 21 or 22 students, and in 2016 those enrollments rarely fell below 22 and have recently risen to as high as 30.

When considering the number of students who experience a JYW course with an enrollment of 20 or fewer versus those who do not, the data is more concerning. Table 4.3 charts class sizes as a function of total student enrollment:

Table 4.3 Number of Students in Small/Large Classes

| 2016 Ave. Class Size | # of programs | Total # of students enrolled Fall 2016 |
|----------------------|---------------|--|
| 0-10 | 5 | 84 |
| 11-15 | 4 | 221 |
| 16-20 | 13 | 782 |
| 21-25 | 10 | 1299 |
| 26-30 | 6 | 455 |
| >30 | 5 | 431 |



As Figure 1 indicates, **only 33% of UMass students experience a JYW course section capped at 20 or below**, despite approximately 50% of all programs offering such sections.

In interviews, faculty commented on the importance of keeping class sizes small. When asked about *consequences* of increased courses sizes, JYW representatives (faculty and course coordinators) offered the following comments:

- *Limited opportunities for in-depth feedback on papers and a move to more general comments or fewer assignments or limited drafting to get through a heavier grading workload.*
- *Inability to provide in-depth feedback or meet one-on-one with students, which we do now.*
- *All of us write a significant number of recommendation letters for our students (jobs, study abroad, internships, career opportunities), which would be limited or go away because of overload.*
- *Watering down of JYW curriculum ... due to our inability to cover all the assignments and documents we currently offer due to large enrollment.*
- *We feel strongly that class size should be kept small, and this is especially true because we use Junior Year Writing as a mentored teaching experience for graduate students.*

Further, several representatives from different departments commented on wanting increased assistance in working with students with disabilities. Meeting the needs of students with disabilities requires a level of tailoring that might not scale as writing classes increase in size.

From a professional standpoint, the National Council on Teachers of English published the following resolution² in regards to the working conditions of post-secondary writing teachers:

"Institutions can provide reasonable and equitable working conditions by establishing teaching loads and class sizes that are consistent with disciplinary norms. No more than 20 students should be permitted in any writing class. Ideally, classes should be limited to 15. ... No English faculty members should teach more than 60 writing students a term." (from section 11)

The recommendation that JYW courses be capped at 20 is not arbitrary, as has been demonstrated by the comments from JYW representatives and the professional guidelines for best practices. Yet, this review revealed that 67% of UMass students experience a class size larger than 20, and that, in some colleges, JYW faculty are teaching with loads of 75-100 students a semester, sometimes without TA or TO support.

In every case, comments about class sizes were connected to perceptions of resource allocation for JYW. Some faculty reps remarked on reductions in TA allocations having an impact on course sizes, while others pointed to exploding enrollments without corresponding increases in the JYW-assigned teaching staff as the cause of larger classes. In investigating the perception of resource shortfalls, the UWC wanted to see how the staffing models for JYW might have shifted over time. Table 4.4 depicts staffing in programs from the 2015-16 review, and Figure 2 depicts staffing as listed in the 2008 JYWP review report.

²<http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/postsecondarywriting>

Figure 2: Instructors across the JYWP circa 2008 (from the 2008 JYW Review Report)

| <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, SOM, 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 |

Table 4.4: Instructors across the JYWP circa 2016

| Type of Instructor | # programs | Departments/programs |
|---------------------------------|------------|--|
| TSF: Tenure System Faculty | 11 (24%) | Anthropology; Art Hist; Astronomy; Classics; English; Food Science; Linguistics; Portuguese; Spanish; Stockbridge; Sust Comm; |
| NTSF: Non Tenure System Faculty | 15 (28%) | A-A Studies; Art; BDIC; CompSci; Econ; Education; Italian; MicroBiology; Nutrition; Res Econ; ISOM (7 majors); STPEC; UWW; |
| TOs alone | 3 (5.5%) | Communication; Comp Lit; Public Health |
| TSF and/or NTSF faculty + TAs | 4 (7%) | Chinese; Kinesiology; Nursing; CNS |
| Faculty + TOs | 3 (5.5%) | ComDis; Philosophy; Psychology |
| NTSF + TSF Faculty | 16 (30%) | Architecture; BioChem and Mol. Biol (or BMB); Biology; Chemistry; French Studies; German; History; Japanese; Journalism; Math; CNS ICONS; Music; Physics; Sociology; WomenSST; |

The biggest shift has been the reduction in TOs and the increase in Non-Tenure Stream Faculty. The number of TSF faculty involved in teaching JYW has remained fairly constant, although more programs are incorporating NTSF who teach alongside the TSF faculty. Although the JYWP originally was envisioned as being taught primarily by Tenure Stream Faculty, the key consideration in staffing remains that JYW instructors be integrated, participating members of their respective disciplines and departments. The UWC is concerned that resource shortfalls may lead to an increased use of part-time faculty for whom the contingent and temporary nature of their employment often precludes the level of participation deemed important to remain current as disciplinary writing experts.

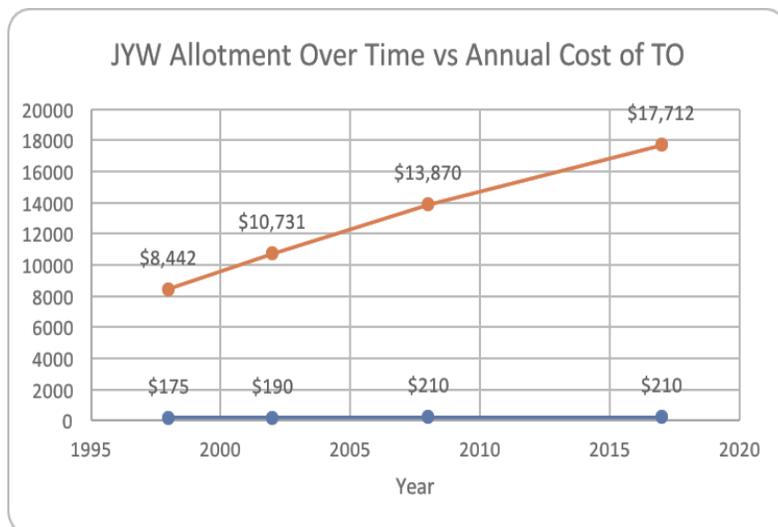
In order to understand the connection between staffing changes over time and the perception of resource shortfalls, it is helpful to consider the financial support departments receive as a function of both TO and NTSF salaries, particularly since the University has established minimums for both.

Table 4.5 provides additional information about JYW allocations to departments over time and as a function of TO instructional costs or lecturer salary, also over time.

Table 4.5 The JYW Allotment over Time as a Function of Instructional Costs using Graduate Student TOs

| Year | Allotment per junior | Annual Cost of 10 hour TOship** |
|------|----------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1998 | \$175 | \$8442 |
| 2002 | \$190 | \$10,731 |
| 2008 | \$210 | \$13,870 |
| 2017 | \$210 | \$17,712 |

**value includes minimum salary, tuition fee, health & welfare fund, health charge



It is important to note that, in the table above, minimum costs and salaries are used; many disciplines' costs are much higher due to competitive markets for qualified faculty and graduate students.

B. Challenges related to serving a growing English Language Learner/ Multilingual student population

Since 2008, UMass Amherst has seen a thousand percent increase in the enrollment of International students. In Fall 2008, 36 first-year international undergraduate students were admitted to the University as compared to 367 admitted in the fall of 2016³. Many international students are also English language learners, and in some majors, JYW is the only opportunity outside of first year writing to practice their English writing skills. This situation presents unique challenges for JYW instructors who often expect to begin their courses within a shared disciplinary context that requires some existing fluency with its discursive practices.

In interviews with JYW representatives, when asked generally about resource needs, faculty volunteered the following comments:

- *When there are large numbers of international students, this can cause problems as we struggle to meet ESL/Multilingual Student needs;*
- *Need to know how to better instruct non-native English speakers and students as some have primarily quantitative backgrounds, in composition;*
- *With more resources we would work on International students' needs. We would like a coach for ESL/ Multilingual students.*

³http://www.umass.edu/oir/sites/default/files/publications/factsheets/select_undergrad_stats/FS_sel_01.pdf

In addition to the concern for meeting the needs of students with disabilities, faculty feedback suggests that an increase in class sizes also makes it difficult to adequately serve English language learners in JYW classes.

C. Recognition of JYW as essential to the major

The structure and approach to teaching JYW varies widely across the University. Some programs, such as Computer Science, integrate ethics education into their JYW course, while other departments, such as Psychology, use JYW to strengthen writing and research skills in concert with their research methods course. Still other programs, such as Nursing and Education, use JYW as a vehicle for increasing students' engagement with the professional literature of their field. Theatre students learn dramaturgy in their JYW sections. Results show that faculty across disciplines recognize the value of the JYW program to their students' disciplinary education. Selected comments from focus groups addressing the value of JYW include:

- *Business writing is a specific and distinctive genre, one that students have little familiarity with coming in. The JYW class is a unique venue for getting feedback on writing and critical thinking.*
- *SPHHS recognizes the value of JYW to their majors, linking it to recent recommendations by their accrediting body to include public health communication in their program. JYW in SPHHS focuses on audience-specific writing within public health communication.*
- *The course helps nursing students synthesize information and figure out what to do with it, helping students to become familiar with Nursing literature.*
- *Writing is a huge part of Psych: research writing, being able to coherently make an argument, and all majors will have to use writing at some point*

It is worth mentioning that in none of our focus group interviews or QQ review questionnaires did faculty question the utility of junior year writing for their students.

D. Desire for other kinds of writing support

When asked about what resources writing faculty would like to see increased, faculty from two different colleges commented on the need for more specialized writing center support. In most cases, this was characterized as a need for discipline-specific writing help for students, either in the form of supporting materials, professional development for faculty teaching the courses, or disciplinarily trained writing center-type staff. JYW representatives from ISOM, for example, remarked that they were interested in writing coaches that would meet regularly with students one-on-one and help them focus on holistically understanding the assignment, developing skills for reflecting on their writing, and “eliciting more productive ownership of the process.”

Comments related to space point to the effects of learning and teaching on a growing campus. An administrator in Engineering commented on the challenge of finding office space for their JYW staff,

while a representative from CNS remarked that having access to computer labs for writing classes would be wonderful things to have. Several representatives mentioned a desire for access to adequately sized classrooms able to facilitate seating arrangements conducive to collaborative activities, such as peer review.

Additional comments illustrate examples of the different kinds of writing support desired:

- *OPD, Junior Year writing and TEFD workshops were all very useful but it'd be nice to have the departments communicating with each other.*
- *If there were more financial resources, hosting experts to lead workshops on specific genres and coaching faculty on how best to instruct writing.*
- *I'd love to have the resources to hire a writing instructor to teach faculty how to teach writing*
- *More resources related to offered workshops should be made available for those who cannot attend*
- *Like to see an online community for JYW teachers*
- *Regularly updated websites and materials would be extremely helpful*
- *The genres I teach are narrow and JYW workshops don't connect or apply*
- *Better guidance in how to understand and adapt a course to meet Disabilities Services accommodations*
- *Access to computer labs*

IV. Summit

On April 3, 2017, the UWP convened a summit entitled “Junior Year Writing Teaching Models Across Campus.” The 20 attendees included JYW instructors and administrators from across the university, and the event featured a panel discussion among Director of Writing Program and Associate Professor of English, Rebecca Dingo, Vice Provost and Dean for Undergraduate Education, Carol Barr, Professor of Legal Studies and Director of Legal Studies, Paul Collins, Professor of Psychology and Associate Dean, Beth Jakob, and Biochemistry and Molecular Biology Department Head and Professor, Jennifer Normanly. Associate Director of Junior Year Writing, Deborah McCutchen helped manage the event.

Similar to feedback we received from focus groups, topics raised by attendees included concern over the perceived inadequacy of funding for achieving JYW program goals (partially-funded mandate), a desire for greater sharing of approaches with other JYW instructors, and a desire for more discipline specific writing instruction support, particularly in the sciences. Over half of the attendees returned their completed questionnaires. (See Appendix D for the questionnaire employed.) What was striking about their feedback was the number of instructors desiring more support in classrooms with 20-23 students, even when aided by a TA. If faculty teaching just above the recommended 20-student cap felt that more instructional support would enable them to achieve course learning goals, how do faculty teaching 75 or more writing students a semester without any TA support manage to satisfy course objectives?

Following is a representative selection of comments received, organized by the three main identified trends previously mentioned above.

A. Concern over limited funding/resources/class sizes

- *I want the class size to be small enough that I can interact with all students, so 20-30, but no more.*
- *Keeping classes at 20 is critical.*
- *I feel as if the department's expectation is that this class is not much work, so I feel as if I cannot complain or explain the 'reality.'*
- *If classes were smaller I could give more feedback and have more one-on-one groups*
- *25 students makes giving feedback on multiple drafts very difficult.*
- *I think a class of 20 is still a bit large for my course objectives. 15 would be ideal.*
- *Once in a class of 25 students I received a TA for 8 weeks and it helped enormously.*

B. Desire for more shared materials with other JYW instructors

- *Discussions of specific models between departments. What are the Learning Goals for the classes? Connecting classes that have similar objectives*
- *I would like to see a repository of other assignments and exercises that other instructors have used in their classes.*

C. Desire for more disciplinary-based writing support/ more writing support

- *More collaboration amongst faculty [in my department]*
- *I would really like to have a teaching observation/review from a faculty member with expertise teaching writing classes.*
- *Example assignments with clear objectives and searchable by objective*

V. Information from Conversations with the Director of the UWP, Dr. Haivan Hoang (WPD 2009-2016) and the Associate Director of the JYWP, Deborah McCutchen

In her interview, Prof. Hoang emphasized that the strength of the UMass writing program is the timing for the writing class requirements: the first and the third year. This punctuated timing allows writing to be practiced in other courses (e.g. Gen Ed, which is supposed to have some elements of writing but not all courses manage, because of size) and that accumulated skill should be of advantage when returning to learn writing in the discipline in the third year. Additionally, housing the JYW in departments also engages a full campus commitment to writing, rather than relegating it to just the English department as a service. Leaving decision-making in the departments is also good as it enables each department to tailor the course to meet each specific discipline's need. From that University-wide perspective, Prof. McCutchen emphasized that JYW is an opportunity for undergraduates to practice communicating their professional findings and insights to their peers, the public, and potential employers or graduate

schools. She stressed the importance of students having the opportunities JYW affords for practicing and supporting their articulation of ideas and arguments in speech and writing.

Prof. Hoang also pointed to the many essential education outcomes related to the specific models of writing instruction happening in the writing program. These included students' grasp of writing as iterative, as a process that requires frequency and focus. Since most research in writing classes is secondary vs. primary research, students begin to learn how to use information effectively, particularly in terms of filtering and prioritizing when information seems so abundant. Although one-on-one outreach to departments and workshops for faculty teaching writing courses are effective, JYW remains a difficult program to assess. Perhaps more involvement and commitments from departments would result in more disciplinary-based writing resources.

Prof. McCutchen observed that since she was hired as a JYW Lecturer in 2008, there seemed to be a positive step forward that changed instructor work load from impossible to reasonable. It allowed instructional goals to focus on student needs and incorporate the Writing Program's established Best Practices, rather than pedagogies for instructor survival. She cautioned that recently we've also seen classes creep up in numbers when departments don't have resources or don't feel resources for JYW have been fairly provided (there have been several complaints about it being a "partially funded mandate"). She sees the Writing Program and UWC working together to establish the importance of student writing skills for the ongoing success of students in all disciplines, but it's clear that more needs to be done.

In the meantime, Prof. Hoang agrees that resources generally are an issue. Faculty needs require an increase in staffing support, perhaps including the development of new programs such as JYW orientation sessions or a Fellows Program to support efforts in developing writing courses and interacting with departments. Prof. McCutchen reiterated the impact of resource levels on teaching and learning in JYW. Increasing resources would immediately result in better, more individualized feedback and increased learning opportunities. For example, if it were possible for students to write up research projects from other classes within their disciplines, or actively collaborate with local professionals, alum, or NGOs, we could make writing classes more directed and meaningful, and motivate more young professionals. Research suggests that the only thing that substantially improves writing is feedback and revision. Conversely, if classes get bigger, and resources fewer there would be less feedback, less revision, and far fewer chances for active learning or substantial improvement of student writing.

Ultimately, the per-student support of \$210 was set ten years ago, and it is not enough for the current size of the UMass student body, particularly when considering the increased costs of instruction. As a result, class sizes are increasing, and student interest in and attention to their writing is falling by the wayside, making it especially hard for multilingual students and students with disability to get the help they need to be successful.

VI. Recommendations

After considering all of the data and information generated through this review, the University Writing Committee offers the following recommendations:

A. Recommendations to the University: Increase the per-student allotment from \$210 to proportionally match the increases in TO and lecturer salary costs.

With all of this growth, it is perhaps unsurprising that the first recommendation of the UWC is that the University keep pace with the increased cost of instruction. As demonstrated in Table 4.3, there has not been an increase in the per-student support since 2008. \$330 support per student would approach the proportional level of support available in 1998.

Table 4.5 The JYW Allotment over Time as a Function of Instructional Costs

| Year | Allotment per junior | Annual Cost of 10 hour TOship** | Two Course Cost to hire a Lecturer (salary only)* |
|------|----------------------|---------------------------------|---|
| 1998 | \$175 | \$8442 | |
| 2002 | \$190 | \$10,731 | |
| 2008 | \$210 | \$13,870 | |
| 2017 | \$210 | \$17,712 | \$13,000 |

*minimum university salaries for lecturers were not established in 2008, 2002, or 1998

**value includes minimum salary, tuition fee, health & welfare fund, health charge

Increasing enrollments, coupled with the nature of the per-student support, result in a disincentive for departments to maintain small class sizes. The cost to departments of hiring a part time lecturer to cover two sections of 25 or more students a semester is substantially lower than the cost of allocating full-time tenure or non-tenure stream faculty to sections of the same size, let alone the 20-student-sized sections recommended by the UWC. For departments/colleges with JYW enrollments of 200 students a year, the difference in moving from 25 to 20 student sections is the addition of 2 more sections of the course per year. The cost of assigning TOs to teach JYW may seem more prohibitive as the cost of instruction must also include the time and effort of the faculty assigned to mentor them. In order to maintain the high quality of writing instruction for which UMass is a national model, departments must receive enough financial support to justify the increased costs of delivering that level of quality.

Since the last review of the JYWP, the UMass Writing Program was competitively awarded the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) 2008-09 Writing Program Certificate of Excellence. In particular, the program was recognized for *“being impressively well grounded theoretically and pedagogically as well as historically.”* Achieving this distinction is not trivial: It points to the level of institutional and faculty commitment to writing on this campus. Unfortunately, the financial aspect of that support has since stagnated. We have the foundation, and we have the faculty commitment to perpetuate high levels of achievement in student writing. We just need the finances to match.

B. Recommendations to the UWP: Provide centralized, online access to teaching materials for JYW instructors

Instructors across campus have commented on the desire for lasting access to everything from workshop materials to writing faculty development materials to specific writing assignments. Providing an online clearinghouse for this information, and establishing a means for maintaining its currency, would enable all JYW instructors and coordinators to have/use these materials in their programs.

C. Recommendations to the UWC: Help organize cross-campus connections for JYW faculty

Perhaps the most fundamental request coming out of this review is a need for greater connection. One way that the UWC has traditionally supported connecting departments to best practices is through its published recommendations around JYW. It is imperative that the UWC continue to make explicit the importance of class size in achieving established learning outcomes for JYW. In addition, the UWC must continue its outreach efforts by providing workshops that meet the needs of the faculty teaching JYW across campus, possibly expanding these offerings to include supporting multilingual students and students with disabilities. Through outreach, faculty and their departments can learn from experienced writing teachers who can provide examples of ways their courses perform best practices in disciplinary writing instruction.

Although there are JYW faculty, both on and off the tenure stream, who are active in the academic life of their departments, there still remains a sense of isolation in some parts of campus. There are good reasons for simply wanting to know who the JYW faculty are, to meet each other, and to share ideas in less structured contexts than a formal workshop. JYW faculty across campus have commented on a desire to know more about what their counterparts are doing in their classes. What do different writing assignments, peer review techniques, classroom discussion structures, and uses of information technology look like in different JYW classes? How are other JYW faculty involved in departmental governance or in the shaping of curriculum for the classes they teach? Research tells us that writing teachers who are involved in their academic departments are more engaged with the classes they teach, and this level of engagement can equate to better performance⁴. (For policy recommendations along these same lines, see <http://www.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/working-conditions-ntt> and <https://www.aaup.org/report/status-non-tenure-track-faculty>). While it is outside the scope of this committee to address JYW roles within departments, a sense of community across JYW instructors could be fostered which might provide similar feelings of connection.

⁴Kezar, A. Research in Higher Education (2013) 54: 571.
doi:10.1007/s11162-013-9288-5 "Examining Non-Tenure Track Faculty Perceptions of How Departmental Policies and Practices Shape Their Performance and Ability to Create Student Learning at Four-Year Institutions"

Appendix

A: QQ Review Questionnaire

QQ Review Questions (*questions used online in the CCMS*)

Course Information

Please attach the syllabus for the course receiving JYW credit.

Program and course number (please include all courses numbers for which students should receive JYW credit):

Course title:

JYW Overall Department Planning Information

1. Which major (or majors) does this JYW plan apply to?
2. How many sections of JYW courses does your major offer per year?
3. Which Junior Year Writing model listed below fits your Junior Year Writing plan ? (If none, explain.)

- One course#, one section, one syllabus
- One course#, multiple sections, one syllabus
- One course#, multiple sections, multiple syllabi

4. How do you ensure that JYW goals are consistently met in each JYW syllabus every semester? For instance, if your major has more than one JYW course, if instructors change from year to year or semester to semester, or if you have multiple sections with different syllabi, how do you ensure consistency, quality, and compliance with JYW goals?

5. Are these courses typically taught by (highlight/circle all that apply)

- Graduate Students (TOs)
- Full-time NTT faculty
- Part-time NTT faculty
- TT/T faculty

6. Are your JYW instructors trained in your field of study? (If instructors are not trained in your discipline, what support or training do they get so they are prepared to teach advanced writing in your unique discipline?)

Enrollment Information

1. What is the average enrollment of your JYW sections?
2. How many credits are satisfied by your JYW course?
3. What pre-requisites do you require in addition to ENGL 112?

Assignment Information

1. What writing assignments are required in this course? What are their expected page length?
2. How do these assignments meet the goal of improving a student's ability to do advanced writing in the discipline?

Drafts, Feedback and Revision

1. For which assignments do students receive teacher feedback on drafts?
2. What opportunities do students have for peer response?
3. For which assignments are students required to revise and resubmit their writing?

Writing Handbook

All writers need access to writing reference resources (print or on-line) writing reference resources for assistance with grammar, mechanics, and citation information. What writing reference do students in your course use?

Recommended Topics in JYW Courses

1. How do you incorporate lessons/training in information literacy in your JYW course?
2. How do you incorporate lessons/training in career development in your JYW course?

B: List of focus group participating departments/colleges.

- Biochemical & Molecular Biology
- Comparative Literature
- Education
- Engineering
- ISOM
- Nursing
- Psychology

C. Focus Group Questions

1. What about your JYW courses is important to your program?
2. What do you see as students' most pressing writing and research needs in your department/discipline?
3. What research and teaching resources on writing would you like to see offered?
4. What support is helping you meet instructional goals for JYW?
5. And, what current challenges are preventing/hindering you in meeting those goals?
6. How would your instructional goals change if your resource needs were fully met? Or reduced
7. How are the JYW goals for your department developed and shared with JYW instructors?

D. Summit Questionnaire

Junior Year Writing Summit, April 3, 2017

The University Writing Committee is looking to know more about the different experiences of JYW programs and instructors across campus. Please help us by answering the questions below:

1. Do you feel it is important for your JYW class to adhere to the recommended enrollment of 20? If your classes are larger than that, and if you'd prefer that they be smaller or larger, what would you do differently if they were smaller or larger?
2. What about your JYW course, or the JYW course in your program, is particularly important to the major?
3. What learning outcomes, approaches, projects, course designs..etc... are you particularly proud of?
4. If you could design a help session, workshop, or website to support you in designing and delivering your JYW classes, what kinds of content would you most want to see? Please be as specific as you can.
5. Do you feel well prepared by your program/department/college to teach your JYW courses? Please describe the ways that you feel (or not) well prepared to deliver your JYW course.
6. How many writing sections do you teach in a typical semester? How many writing students do you see in a typical semester? And, do you have TA or grader support?
7. If you are a graduate student, what kinds of support systems and training are provided to you in supporting your teaching of a JYW course? Are you the instructor of record for the course?
8. If you are NTT/T-TT faculty, what current or what additional resources might enable you to deliver your preferred version/design/iteration of your JYW class?