# Laying the Foundation, Targeting the Institutional: The Trajectory of a WAC Program in the Sciences at a Jamaican University

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**Abstract.** This paper outlines the contextual implications and experiences of a team of practitioners attempting to establish a Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC)/Communication Across the Curriculum (CAC) Program in the Sciences. Largely reflective in nature, it seeks to contextualize the progress and outcomes of this initiative by employing the Anson [2006] and Condon and Rutz [2012] framework for evaluating the positioning of WAC in relation to administration, staff, and students. This framework also helped identify the required steps for the full integration of WAC within the institution. The use of the aforementioned analytical tools revealed an appreciable gap between the current status of WAC/CAC at our institution and full institutional endorsement. A discussion of current initiatives being taken to move the program further ahead is undertaken. It is anticipated that the issues highlighted in this paper will serve to inform similar initiatives, while communicating the potential of WAC/CAC programs to enable students to develop to their full potential via a student-centred, interactive environment that promotes effective teaching and exchange of ideas.

**Key words:** Writing Across the Curriculum; sciences; program evaluation; institutional context; taxonomy.

## Introduction: Contextualizing WAC

The Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) movement, initiated in higher education inthe US in the 1970s to address the literacy crisis [Russell, 1991], is characterized by its "intended outcomes—helping students become critical thinkers and problem solvers, as well as developing their communication skills" [McLeod, Miraglia, 2001. P. 5]. The aforementioned researchers attribute WAC's appeal to practitioners within and outside the US to the aforementioned pedagogical principles as well as its transformative approach to learning, which is explicit in its move away from the lecture mode to "a model of ac-

tive student engagement with the material and with the genres of the discipline through writing, not just in English classes but in all classes across the university" [Ibid.].

This focus on WAC and its increasingly wide reach internationally has been attested to by a study undertaken by Thassis and Porter [2008], whose survey results indicate that there was a 48% increase as of 2008in the number of US and Canadian institutions that had initiated WAC programs since McLeod's earlier (1989) finding. The Thassiss survey consisted of 1,250 US and Canadian respondents and 207 international respondents from 47 countries. In fact, Townsend [2008] has indicated that an additional 208 respondents (recent at that time) were committed to implementing WAC programs at their institutions.

In responding to this phenomenon, Reiss [1998] and McLeod [2002] have attributed the exponential increase in WAC indoctrination globally to the availability and accessibility of WAC theories, practice, and scholarship via the internet and its provision of tools, such as the WAC Clearing House[1] (a host site for program information), electronic journals such as *Across the Disciplines* and *The WAC Journal*, among others.

Notwithstanding its widespread adoption, concerns have been aired concerning WAC's adaptability or "fit" within contexts outside of the US. For instance, while McLeod [2002. P. 8] has conceded that the two basic WAC tenets—writing to learn and learning to write disciplinary discourse—"are very translatable into other contexts and cultures," she has also expressed reservations concerning the whole scale transferability of WAC programs outside of the US given that WAC "emerged in the US within a specific context of stand-alone freshman composition courses."

This notion of context is supported by Ellis and LeCourt, who in commenting on WAC implementation efforts in the UK revealed that such efforts were significantly influenced by "national differences in higher education and institutional structures which account not only for differing statuses for WAC efforts in our respective countries, but also for, surprisingly, different conceptions about writing itself and its function in higher education" [Ellis, LeCourt, 2002. P. 29].

Moreover, DeDominicis and Santa [2000. P. 81], speaking from within the Bulgarian context, have opined that the institutionalization of WAC requires "conscious adaptation to the program's social context." This conclusion was based on the realization that attempts at WAC implementation at their institution "failed to permeate regional academic practice" [P. 91], not only because there was little success in designing a WAC program with the potential to engage all members of the faculty, but also because there was little opportu-

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[1] http://wac.colostate.edu

nity to "transculturate" —in Pratt's terms, to "select and invent from materials transmitted by a dominant or metropolitan culture" [P. 533].

DeDominicis and Santa further draw a critical contextual comparison between WAC programs within and outside of the US. In the first instance, they assert that whereas WAC programs at US institutions which actively engage only a minority of faculty members are frequently successful with little negative bearing on those faculty not thus involved, WAC programs among international faculty, where emphasis tends to be on demonstrating effectiveness through widespread involvement of both staff and students, may have a detrimental effect on staff being evaluated and assessed on WAC related criteria.

The foregoing discussion has critical implications for the current paper, in which the US is the dominant point of reference, as WAC programs have had a stronger tradition and wider reach there. For this reason, there has been more research and publications in this context on a wide range of WAC-related issues—implementation, sustainability, and assessment. Moreover, the writing intervention discussed in this paper is more closely aligned to WAC pedagogy and practice than it is to the UK or the European model of developmental writing, often referred to as Academic Literacies. Therefore, in order to enhance our understanding of the contextual issues undergirding WAC implementation at our University, located in the Caribbean, I consider it essential to review our socio cultural heritage.

**Socio-historic context of the University of the West Indies (UWI), Mona**

The socio-historic, socio-linguistic, and cultural contexts of the Caribbean and, by extension, Jamaica have influenced the formulation of institutional policy at the UWI as it relates to the teaching of writing in English and WAC implementation. In fact, current UWI language education policy is a legacy of the West Indian colonial past, in which a dominant–subordinate relationship existed between the master and slave classes, and later, after emancipation, between the colonizer and the colonized. In this situation, the Creole languages of subordinate groups bore little or no validity and even now, are not considered legitimate means of communication.

On the other hand, the colonizer's language—Standard English in the case of Jamaica—was, and still is to a large extent, viewed as the only valid and acceptable means of communication, both by the colonizer and the majority of the colonized. The language policy that was formulated by British colonial authorities successfully mythologized Standard English as the first language of the Creole-speaking population, creating the illusion of English-as-a-mother-tongue in former Commonwealth Caribbean colonies [Craig, 1976; 1994]. This has had a powerful influence on the thinking and decisions of UWI administrators and academics with respect to the nature and direction of English language education.

It is still assumed, for instance, that a university in the Commonwealth Caribbean would have a native English-speaking clientele, as the expectation is that primary and secondary schools functioning monolingually in English would equip these students with the English language competence required of university entrants. Thus, the view has been and still is that there is no real place for the provision of English Language communication skills at the university level as these skills have supposedly already been developed by students at the time they entered the institution [McLaren et al., 2009].

The influence of this delusional thinking regarding the UWI's English language policy formulation is clearly exemplified by the fact that in the 1960s and 1970s—the first two decades of this education at the University—the sole English language course, "Use of English," delivered to first year students, was not designated a university-wide requirement. Consequently, two academic communities, the Faculty of Social Sciences on all three campuses, and the Faculty of Engineering on the St. Augustine campus, opted not to include it in their programs of study, alleging that their crowded curricula could not accommodate it [Ibid.].

The status of the English language changed somewhat in 1997 when the University mandated that UWI faculties incorporate three "foundation" courses into their 3-year degree programs, one of these being a Level 1 English language course that would be delivered to all first year students. The other two Foundation courses were "Science, Technology & Medicine" and "Law Governance & Society," both offered at Levels 2 and 3, respectively. Nonetheless, the academics responsible for teaching the English language courses, who had played no part in the decision-making process, viewed this policy as being contradictory, as resources made available for delivery were inadequate. For instance, fewer hours were assigned to the new English language foundation course than to the former "Use of English" course that, in the case of the Faculties of Medical Sciences and of Pure & Applied Sciences, it was replacing. In addition, the duration of the course was one semester and not the two semesters of the "Use of English" course [McLaren et al., 2009].

This meant, in effect, that although English language instruction was being offered to more students in all faculties, including those with no previous English language requirement, students in the Faculties of Medical Sciences and Pure& Applied Sciences, who had previously had the requirement, began to receive less English language instruction. It was thus apparent that English language instruction had no real place in the University, but given that it was already present and a case had been made for it to be spread to all students, it would be accommodated without the commitment of any new resources. Indeed, as McLaren contend, every effort would be made to use those resources already in place and spread them more thinly around.

For this reason, the institutional environment into which WAC was introduced at UWI, Mona, was one where there was reluctance in admitting that there was a need to teach English-language writing skills and where there was a lack of consensus concerning the deployment of already scarce resources for developing student ability in this area. It is important to note that this devaluing of the teaching of English language skills supersedes issues of historical heritage, such as those observed in the Caribbean context. For instance, academics in the United States, such as Stockdell-Giesler [2007], lament what they view as an identity crisis for institutions, departments and first-year writing programs, which compartmentalize writing faculty and perpetuate notions of writing as a second-class activity.

In view of the aforementioned issues, it is our hope that the discussion of WAC implementation within our context will contribute to the expanding field of cross-cultural, transnational and international comparative studies on academic writing and writing pedagogy. This sentimentis consistent with the comment of Ganobcsik-Williams that "although institutional circumstances and national priorities for education may differ, those interested in developing student writing can learn from and contribute to Academic Writing theory and pedagogy developed in other national contexts' [Ganobcsik-Williams, 2006. P. xxiii).

**Implementing WAC**

Concern over the perceived decline in English Language skills among staff members led the Head of the Department of Language, Linguistics and Philosophy to propose the establishment of a WAC program at our institution, as he considered this to be best suited for addressing the perceived decline in writing competence among our students. He proposed that the initiative be led by a team of three lecturers from the English Language Section (ELS) of the Department of Language, Linguistics and Philosophy, headed by the Coordinator of the ELS.

As conceptualized by the Head of Department, Phase 1 of the WAC initiative would involve a 2-year writing project that would "integrate English Language teaching and usage into all aspects of the education of students in order to address and rectify the failure of many students to experience writing as an integral component of their university education in general, and their academic discipline in particular" [Devonish, 2006].

These goals are consistent with Writing Across the Curriculum theory and principles, where writing is promoted as being of key importance in a university course of study as it not only improves learning, but also enhances critical thinking and analytical skills [Young, 1999]. Through writing, according to composition researchers such as Emig [1977], Kelly and Chen [1991], and Steglich [2000], learners become more actively engaged in the material being studied as they directly interact with ideas and integrate these into their thought processes.

Another area of congruence between the goals of our proposed initiative and WAC pedagogy was the requirement that staff from all disciplines actively participate in the development of their students' writing competence, instead of viewing this as the sole responsibility of English Language teachers. The pilot project was thus named the WAC project.

For members of the English language Section, the advent of WAC was a significant step forward in gaining recognition at the interdisciplinary level of the pivotal role of writing in the academic success and overall development of students.

Nevertheless, our goal of undertaking a campus-wide initiative was not realized, as funding was provided for the WAC initiative in only one Faculty—the Faulty of Pure and Applied Sciences. This was due to the fact that the request for "one-off" funding for an English-language initiative, which eventually led to the WAC Project, came from a member of the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences.

We viewed this to be appropriate, as there was also explicit concern among science staff who recognized the declining writing competence of their students. Indeed, the report of biology examiners of the regional assessment body [Caribbean Examinations Council, 2007] had pointed to "generally vague" responses of the candidates coupled with their apparent inability to write in a logical sequence, even though the students may have some idea of what they intend to express. Consequently, these examiners were recommending that students' examination preparation be focused on "practicing how to interpret and answer questions clearly, concisely and to the point" [Ibid.].

Similar observations in other contexts have also been made concerning science students. For instance, many writing practitioners [Lillis, Turner, 2001; Ganobcsik-Williams, 2006; Byrne, 2007] and science educators [Jerde, Taper, 2004; Moore, 1994] contend that in general undergraduate students have not learned to write effectively in scientific formats and that the majority of scientific writing problems observed are related to the documents' organization, tone, clarity and concision. For this reason, these and other researchers [Bangert-Drowns, Hurley, Wilkinson, 2004] have promoted a closer integration of writing with education in all disciplines, not only to improve writing skills but also to facilitate better understanding of subject matter.

It was apparent from the outset, bearing in mind the institutional context in which we operated, that those of us in the English Language Section who were involved in this project would need to assume the role of change agents in WAC implementation. This would be the case because, although this project had the blessings and good wishes of the Dean and other senior members of staff in the science faculty, there was no faculty-wide endorsement of WAC incorporation within their curriculum. This reluctance to "buy into" a labour

intensive, learner-centred initiative was not surprising in the context of a research university such as ours, where publication and research output are hallmarks of achievement as opposed to the demonstration of teacher effectiveness.

Not surprisingly, there was also little interest and no formal recognition on the part of the university administration concerning this undertaking, which led us to speculate that the 2-year project would more than likely not extend beyond the stated time and not beyond the Science Faculty. Thus, the fact that there was not going to be uniform engagement across all the disciplines and departments at our institution made us realize that in order to successfully implement the project we would have to approach individual Heads of Department and members of staff to garner their support.

This type of approach—"bottom-up"—is commonly viewed as the norm or modus operandi for early implementation of WAC programs, where there was more focus initially on the pivotal role of writing in students' intellectual development and career preparation than on concerns regarding the role of WAC programs in institutional contexts and continuity over the long term. McLeod and Soven [2000] lend support to this in their contention that up to the early "90s, WAC was still very much a "bottom-up" phenomenon, led by a few dedicated faculty who had to contend with some administrative skepticism about the idea, and this has been attested to by others [Anson, 2006; Holdstein, 2001; Bellon, 2000; Walvoord, 1996] who contend that the rapid rate of growth and establishment of WAC at many colleges and universities has been due primarily to the "bottom up/grassroots' advocacy of teaching staff. Indeed a major advantage of the "bottom-up" approach to program implementation is that it provides a forum for interested parties to introduce and discuss key areas of concern.

Furthermore, this type of interaction is often conducive to the conceptualization of innovative and creative strategies to deal with issues in question [Panda, 2007]. Panda further argues that this approach taps the "indigenous knowledge bases and local expertise. . . synthesizes and systematizes the lessons learned and disseminates those among the masses' [Panda, 2007. P. 6].

This was clearly seen in our interaction with the more receptive staff members from the Departments of Life Sciences and Chemistry, where developing and planning a type of intervention that was focused on the needs of the discipline called for close collaboration and a synthesis of strategies and approaches. Each lecturer from Life Sciences or Chemistry who had decided to formally integrate WAC strategies into his or her course chose learning activities that he or she thought would best enhance the learning and English language competence of their students.

The number of students in the course and the complexity of the material as well as course objectives also played a role in the choice of strategy and the number of strategies used. It is important to note

that the willingness of some lecturers to implement strategies that placed significant additional demands on their time and effort, such as those which required offering feedback on students' essay drafts, was a clear indication of their enthusiasm and interest in developing students' writing skills [McLaren et al., 2011].

**Reviewing and Evaluating WAC**

The review and evaluation of this first Phase of our WAC program was conducted using the Anson "Contexts of Activity" continuum and Condon and Rutz's "Taxonomy of WAC Programs." In the first instance, the second point on the Anson [2006. P.102] "Contexts of Activity" continuum, which is referred to as the "Ad Hoc Partnership/ Team Approach" (Fig. 1), was viewed as being entirely consistent with the stage of implementation we had reached, given our collaboration and working alliance with science lecturers. This position finds further support in Anson's description of this stage as one in which a "modest collaboration" occurs and where partnerships are formed and possible "formalised configurations of these partnerships' may occur.

The latter term also aptly describes the structured approach adopted by the WAC Coordinator and members of the English Language Section (ELS) via the systematic staging of workshops, and scheduling of meetings between the ELS and the science staff involved in implementing WAC strategies. The Coordinator had further sought to provide guidance in the implementation and evaluation of strategies, conceptualise a research agenda and coordinate all WAC related activities. However, in viewing our status in relation to the "Institution" endpoint of this continuum, we realized that despite what we had accomplished we were still in the relatively early stages of implementation.

At the same time Condon and Rutz's "Taxonomy of WAC Programs' (Fig. 2) also provided a valuable and much more detailed indicator of our stage of development regarding Phase 1 WAC implementation. The "Taxonomy," which ranges from "Foundational" to "Established" to "Integrated" and culminates at "Institutional Change Agent," clearly details the characteristics of each stage as it relates to primary goals, funding, organizational structure, integration and indicators of success. Thus, ultimately, the relevance of the "Taxonomy" was seen in its presentation of the progressive levels of WAC's status and its suggested trajectory.

Figure 1. **Contexts of Activity** [Anson, 2006]

Figure 2. **A Taxonomy of WAC Programs [Condon, Rutz, 2012. P.362–363]**

| WAC program Type / Characteristics | 1 Foundational | 2 Established | 3 Integrated | 4 Institutional change agent |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Primary goals | Problem-based statement of purpose Increase writing in curriculum Teaching writing becomes everyone's job Understand difference between learning to write and writing to learn | Faculty development, and missionary models continue Need to lead others to serve WAC agenda Essentialist approach Create reliable, continual archives of materials, policies, evolution of program history | Integration into larger agendas: institutional assessment, accreditation, accountability | WAC drives institutional change |
| Funding | Largely volunteer effort, some times with minor reassigned time Dependent on good will from umbrella (provost, dean, etc.) | Program has own budget, though often on temporary funding Program identity emerges: space, staffing, programming become more visible and regularized | Budget grows to support more substantial presence At least some permanent funding assigned to WAC Funding supports outreach to faculty and students, as well as to other initiatives | Substantial, permanent institutional funding for well-defined and established roles and personnel |
| Organization / structure | Faculty development model Vision from one leader or small group of collaborators | Basic administrative existence or implementation Identity of its own, differentiated from general education or other allies People with WAC mapped into workloads Cohort of supporters or stakeholders develops (usual suspects) Interdisciplinary policy committee emerges, preferably tied to faculty governance structures | Established structure, with director and substantial support Governing/policy committee has clear place in faculty/institutional governance structures Faculty ownership emerges | Institutional identity congruent with activities Program capable of existence independent of umbrella (provost or dean's office, etc.) |
| Integration | Move beyond inoculation model for learning to write Focus on writing pedagogy Gain faculty buy-in for WAC goals | Outcomes identified in participatory process WAC scholarship recognized as valuable within institution | Ability to coordinate with other efforts and preserve program identity and mission Faculty development part of larger context Upper administration recognizes validity of WAC assessment practices, seeks advice from consultants in WAC | Alliances with other curricular initiatives feed into improvement Program moves beyond usual suspects, becomes widely valued resource Institution patterns new initiatives on existing, valued writing model Theater of action broadens to include multiple campus initiatives or collaborations in multiple efforts to build quality |
| Indicators of success | Early success based on leadership's energy and charisma Recruitment of range of faculty to WAC | Incremental improvement, guided by careful processes for change Recruitment expands to include faculty from whole curriculum Key players/ founders/vision people can hand off pieces of program or whole program to others | Writing infused throughout curriculum Carefully designed assessment process with multiple, generative benchmarks Program seen as indispensable, as a source of pride | Full theorizing of program(s) Begin to have signature pedagogy (Shulman) WAC is signature program for institution |
| Voices | Barbara Walvoord, Toby Fulwiler, Art Young, James Britton, Elaine Maimon, Jay Robinson | David Russell, Susan H. McLeod, John Bean, Barbara Walvoord, Lucille Parkinson McCarthy, Chris M. Anson, Chris Thaiss, Terry Myers Zawacki | Charles Bazerman, David Russell, Susan H. McLeod, Kathleen Blake, Yancey and Brian Huot, Barbara Walvoord | |

http://vo.hse.ru/en/

A perusal of this taxonomy in relation to our WAC program revealed that in terms of Primary Goals we had moved past the "Foundational" stage of a mere "problem-based statement of purpose" and explaining the "difference between learning to write and writing to learn" to the "Established" stage of "faculty development and missionary models' and leading "others to serving the WAC agenda" [Condon, Rutz, 2012. P. 362]. This is evidenced by our success in creating common cause and gaining WAC adherents from among the science academic staff.

However, in terms of "Funding," it was apparent that we had not moved from the "Foundation" stage. At the same time, however, the acclaim accorded WAC as a crucial tool for improving literacy, thinking, and learning about subjects across the disciplines has been clouded by concerns regarding its management, sustainability, and "reach" across the disciplines to prepare students to become full and functioning members of their respective disciplinary communities. This has led to a concerted search for solutions that has resulted in many advocates suggesting ways to counter perceived threats to WAC's viability.

For instance, in responding to issues relating to sustainability, Jones and Comprone asserted that "permanent success in the WAC movement will be established only when writing faculty and those from other disciplines meet half way, creating a curricular and pedagogical dialogue that is based on and reinforced by research" [Jones, Comprone, 1993. P. 61] and Ehrfurth [2009] has attributed viability-related concerns to the absence of central administrative involvement in WAC implementation and consistent leadership. Weighing in on the matter, Condon and Rutz have asserted that in order to be viable, WAC programs require a "complex partnership among faculty, administrators, writing centers, faculty development programs—an infrastructure that may well support general education or first-year seminar goals' [Condon, Rutz, 2012. P. 358–359].

While these words of wisdom have provided some guidance to fledgling WAC/CAC programs such as ours, what has proven to be of even more value is the presentation of concrete analytical frameworks for WAC programs such as the ones provided by Anson and Condon and Rutz, both of which identify institutional endorsement as the ultimate goal of WAC implementation.

These frameworks guide WAC practitioners and administrators in answering the all-important "do or die" questions: "Where are we with WAC implementation and what are the steps we need to take to get to where we need to be?" Indeed, Condon and Rutz, in promoting the usefulness of their "Taxonomy," contend that it "provides a comparative context for program evaluation—in effect, it amounts to a rubric for program evaluation" [Condon, Rutz, 2012. P. 379].

In other words, before we even begin searching for ways to establish WAC as a sustainable entity, it is more useful first of all to ob-

tain a realistic view of the actual positioning of WAC in relation to our goal of full institutional endorsement, and in so doing, better prepare ourselves to carve a clear path for the way forward. These considerations bear much relevance to the implementation and evaluation of our own WAC/CAC program and are best demonstrated by our experiences of establishing and attempting to sustain WAC/CAC at our institution, which was largely "voluntary in nature," with very little release time to manage and administer the program. Moreover, even this had been dependent on the "goodwill" of those in charge. In our case this had been be stowed on us by the Head of our Department.

A similar situation obtained regarding the "Organization/Structure" of WAC where we noted that we had not succeeded in moving from the "Foundation" stage of the "vision from one leader or group of collaborators "to the "Established" stage, which was defined as having "Basic administrative existence or implementation," an "Identity of its own, differentiated from general education or other allies," "People with WAC mapped into work loads," etc.

Additionally, the "Indicators of Success' category served not only to position us in terms of stage of development, but it also enhanced our awareness of what else needed to be accomplished and how close (or far) we were in accomplishing this. Here again, it was obvious that we were stuck at the "Foundational" stage of having attained "early success' and recruited "a range of faculty to WAC." The next step— the "Established" stage—would involve continued expansion of recruits, after which writing was to be "infused throughout the curriculum" at the "Integrated" stage, after which came the final "Institutional" stage of WAC becoming the "signature program of the institution."

The implementation of WAC Phase 2 was undertaken with full awareness of our actual stage of development and also with the hope that we would make significant headway along the path that needed to be followed to achieve institutionalization. The primary objective of this phase was to design and implement a CAC program within the Faculty of Pure and Applied Sciences (FPAS) that would help students move beyond "general academic writing or novice approximations of disciplinary writing to internalizing the communication-thinking practices of professionals in their field" [Bransford et al., 2001. P. 36]. Beginning with the Departments of Chemistry and Life Sciences whose, members had participated in Phase 1 of WAC implementation, the CAC implementation process was designed to involve the selection of four courses from each of these departments; two courses at Level 2 (2nd year) and two at Level 3 (3rd year).

One course at each of these levels for each of these departments would be designated as writing intensive and the other as speaking intensive. These courses would be ones which were currently so positioned within the curriculum that most students were required

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to take them, and this would ensure the exposure of most students in these departments to a writing and speaking intensive course at levels 2 and 3. A gradual expansion of this infusion model to the Departments of Physics and Mathematics & Computer Studies was anticipated by the end of a three-year period, with the hope that this would carve a clear path to full implementation of this model across the institution.

However, it became apparent after the successful infusion of Writing and Speaking modules into Life Sciences and Chemistry courses that our hope of expansion within the FPAS would not be realized. This was the case because, although the then Dean of the Science Faculty had supported the CAC initiative by allocating funds to facilitate the delivery of writing and speaking modules in Life Sciences and Chemistry for a stated period, he had not provided additional resources or made it a requirement for the science teaching staff of the other Departments to infuse writing and speech into their courses. This meant that we were limited in our reach, as we had neither the resources nor the power to expand the CAC initiative.

Thus, in spite of forging ahead with an additional initiative (CAC), we were no closer to WAC institutionalization than before. In other words, we had retained the characteristics ofthe "Foundational" stage for the most part, although, in terms of the Anson continuum we had moved somewhat closer to the "Institutionalization" end point of his continuum as activities were consistent with those of the "Department" stage(the stage following the "Ad Hoc Team /Partnership Approach") where "each department or program is responsible for deciding how much writing students should do and of what types, and where in the major these experiences should take place" [Anson, 2006. P. 103]. One distinct advantage of this stage, we discovered, was its "sensitivity to local needs and contexts, encouraging faculty to shape their own emphases and requirements."

The above in fact implies a certain level of autonomy and intrinsic motivation, which has actually continued to be demonstrated up to this point by our Life Sciences and Chemistry lecturers who had benefited from the CAC initiative and who had become fully convinced of the "relationship between their students' success and their own curricular and pedagogical efforts' [Ibid.]. This has been evidenced by their recruitment of a part-time Writing and Speaking Tutor from the English Language Section to continue the delivery of writing and speaking modules and to offer coaching. Efforts have also been made to integrate assessment of writing and speaking into the overall evaluation of the respective writing and speaking intensive courses.

**The Way Forward?** It is indisputable that WAC program sustainability is the goal of all practitioners. It is also clear that institutional endorsement goes a long way toward ensuring sustainability. This is supported by the fact

that both the Anson [2006] and Condon and Rutz [2012] analytical frameworks of WAC program implementation have institutionalization as their end point.

Further, based on the objective evaluation of our WAC/CAC Program through the lens of the aforementioned analytical frameworks, we are forced to admit that not only are we an appreciable distance away from reaching this desired end point, but also, realistically speaking, at the point of "stasis"—"the state of equilibrium or *inactivity* caused by opposing or equal forces" (my emphasis).Or perhaps the alternate meaning might be more appropriate: "Pathology—stagnation in the flow of any of the fluids of the body, as of the blood in an inflamed area or the intestinal contents proximal to an obstruction".[2] This is based on our unchanged position at the "Foundational" stage since the inception of the WAC initiative at our institution.

Indeed Jackson and Morton revealed similar sentiments being aired at the 2006 WAC conference in terms such as "mid-life crisis," "enliven," "keeping the movement going," "staying afloat," and "in need of a tune-up." These stasis points, according to Morton and Jackson, may be navigated through "moves toward individual action and emergent strategies, discussing either multimodality made possible through technologies or... engaging affordances of postmodernism via constructivism, collaboration, consensus-building, and notions of both de-centering and multiplicity" [Jackson, Morton, 2007. P. 48].

Others such as Hall Kells et al. [2006] have asserted that in order to attain success, developing WAC programs need to be organic (community-based), systemic (institutionally-distributed), and sustainable (flexible and responsive). Earlier endorsement of this notion is to be found in the contentions of Miraglia and McLeod [1997] whose survey on successful WAC programs highlighted that neither top-down nor bottom-up is sufficient on its own, and if either one was applied without the other, failure would be the likely result. A combination of both is thus the most desirable and effective option.

This is strongly supported by Condon and Rutz [2012], who assert that in order to be effective WAC programs require a complex partnership that includes faculty, administrators, writing centers, and faculty development programs. Even Jackson and Morton, in highlighting practical lessons learned in moving beyond stasis, admit that "The effort had to centralize and decentralize, use top-down as well as bottom-up" [Jackson, Morton, 2007. P. 54].

These contentions clearly point to a major limitation in our own efforts to establish WAC—the lack of full and sustainable institutional endorsement (top-down).This absence of central administrative involvement in the implementation process has undoubtedly hin-

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[2] http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/stasis

dered the progress in WAC implementation, and this is most obvious in the lack of funding and approved curricular revision to support WAC initiatives. Furthermore, this lack of political will may be explained by the absence of what Kuh [1993] refers to as an institutional ethos of commitment to continuous improvement in teaching effectiveness.

Therefore, a major concern then becomes, not where we should be headed, but how do we get there? Faced with the seemingly insurmountable obstacles of an administration that pays lip service to the importance of communication skills, while lacking the political will to take the requisite steps to actively foster competence in this area; apathetic staff members who do not wish to actively support or engage in an integrated, disciplinary and student-centred approach to developing communication skills; and dissension among members of the institution generally, as to how scarce English language teaching resources should be deployed, only the bravest or most foolish would venture further. And yet, returning to point zero (pre-WAC) is not an option. We and our fellow adherents have seen and experienced the benefits of WAC first-hand, albeit on a small scale, and this has impelled us to continue promoting and strengthening our current initiatives, while constantly seeking opportunities within "the gaps and fissures' [Jackson, Morton, 2007. P. 48] for gaining more ground in our attempts to expand the reach of WAC/WID at our institution, within and beyond the Science Faculty.

These attempts at promoting and strengthening our initiatives have taken the form of seeking and receiving grants to pay instructors for continuing the delivery of modules in writing and speaking in select science courses. We have been successful in gaining the support of the new Dean of the Science Faculty, who has agreed to employ a post-graduate student to expand delivery of the aforementioned modules throughout the Science Faculty, and eventually the campus. We have also engaged in "collaboration, consensus-building" [Ibid.] by launching a university-wide publicity campaign regarding our current attempts to infuse Communication modules into the science curriculum. This has gained the interest and attention of many persons, and it is the hope that this will further pave the way to full institutional endorsement.

Our own experiences and those of others within other contexts have highlighted the mediating role of socio-cultural and institutional issues in the process of implementing WAC. However, in spite of differences between and within these contexts in terms of institutional circumstances and priorities, there are also a host of commonalities, not least of which is the desire to enable students to develop to their full potential via a student-centred, interactive environment that promotes effective teaching. And, the consensus across boundaries seems to be that WAC is the ideal tool for achieving this.

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