



13th Annual NJWA Conference
The New Jersey Writing Alliance Spring 2012 Conference
Friday, April 20, 2012
Georgian Court University, Lakewood, New Jersey

**Overcoming Roadblocks to Teaching Writing:
Doing More With Less**

The 13th annual NJWA conference will focus on the practical pedagogical, institutional, and economic issues that face us as we help students make the transition from writing in high school to writing in college.

**REGISTRATION AND CONTINENTAL BREAKFAST: CASINO
8:30AM-9:00AM**

**WELCOME AND OPENING REMARKS: CASINO
9:00AM-9:15AM**

Evelyn Quinn, Provost, Georgian Court University
William Ross, President, NJWA
Constance Chismar, Professor, Georgian Court University

SESSION 1: 9:30AM-10:30AM

A. "Small Group Revision Strategies: The Performance of Revision in the Public Forum"

Susan O'Hara, Georgian Court University

This presentation argues that small group revision strategies in composition courses are viable only when presented to the larger class group for validation. When students are given the opportunity to present revision strategies publicly via large computer screens such as Smart Boards, they not only have to defend their strategies, but the public forum offers them a resulting discussion of the pros and cons of their strategies

"Ready? Set? Text!"

Kainat Abidi, Montclair State University

Have you ever tried to erase text-talk from your students' papers? Have you ever found yourself accidentally using it in your own work? This interactive discussion will look at the uses of technology in the classroom, specifically texting as a tool for writing.

B. "Reading and Writing Across Disciplines, and Involving the Writing Center"

Martha Goodwin, Bergen Community College

This presentation/discussion will pragmatically focus on the benefits of pairing English Basic Skills classes with other content area college classes in a painless way to enhance reading, writing and connections to the college. Information how to include the Writing Center will be discussed. Handouts will be offered.

C. "I Prefer Not To': Helping Post-Millennials Write About Literature"

Barbara Hamilton, Montclair State University

N. West Moss, William Patterson University

We review the particular challenges in teaching post-millennial students writing with literature, highlighting how traditional plot patterns and critical frames often conflict with this generation's cognitive paradigms and social expectations. We then offer no-cost, classroom-tested, innovative practices that build on our students' strengths and honor their interests while collaborating with them to build needed global knowledge, critical thinking, and interpretive skills.

D. "Using Collaborative Research Projects in Composition Courses"

Seamus Gibbons, Bergen Community College

Michael Berkowitz, Bergen Community College

In this sixty-minute presentation, two instructors from Bergen Community College share their approach for holding their Composition students more accountable for their research papers. The presentation focuses on creating a Collaborative Group Project where students engage more with their research, help one another to maximize their effort, and produce a more thorough final product.

E. "Using Digital Media to Enhance the Writing Process"

Peter Honig, South Brunswick High School

This session will present one educator's exploration of the possibilities of using Google Docs as a digital tool to engage in the reading and writing process, and the subsequent learning that has resulted thus far. Harnessing the power of Google Docs offers the ability to create a communal approach to the writing process, and affords the teacher greater control of the writing assignment from conception to publication and evaluation.

F. "Multiple Literacies and Public Discourse in the Basic Writing Classroom: The News-Activist Curriculum"

Lynn Reid, Fairleigh Dickinson University

Although what it means to be able to read and write effectively has changed dramatically, conversations about how these changes impact how we teach basic writing are few and far between. This presentation will outline a pilot curriculum that attempts to develop basic writers' proficiency in information literacy, digital literacy, and academic literacy by asking students to read, write, and blog about issues in the news. By working with students to develop multiple literacies, faculty can better prepare basic writers to become fully engaged students and citizens in the 21st Century.

SESSION 2: 10:45AM-11:45AM

A. "Four Threshold Concepts in Writing Instruction"

Ed Jones, Seton Hall University

"Threshold concepts" are those concepts that are necessary for students to make real progress in a given discipline and that, once understood, transform their performance. This presentation (1) proposes four such key threshold concepts, based upon years of experience seeing what students struggle with as they make the transition from high school to college and (2) provides ways to approach teaching such threshold concepts.

B. "Exploring a Relationship Composed Around Writing: Lessons from a 9th Grade Writers/English Methods Course Partnership"

Kathleen Pierce, Rider University

Mari Ann Blemings, Notre Dame High School

The composing process is the root relationship between 9th graders and university preservice teachers in English Education. The partnership provides genuine opportunities for teacher mentoring as well as authentic experiences for beginning teachers to coach 9th graders through the writing process. The workshop explores the form and function of

that partnership as well as some lessons learned about composing, teaching writing, the potential of university-high school collaborations, and the inestimable value to teachers of such collaborations.

C. "Methods and Strategies for Successful Peer Revision"

Traci Maloney, Jackson Liberty High School

Kristie-Anne Opaleski-DiMeo, Jackson Liberty High School

Metacognition is the "buzz word" in education today but how is it accomplished with novice writers? As the revised New Jersey Core Curricular Standards focus on the importance of writing as a process, this presentation will offer hands-on instruction for a successful peer review. Sample reviews will be shared.

D. "How I Fixed My Back: One Writing Professor's Quest to Eliminate the Hard Copy"

Sarah Ghoshal, Montclair State University

This presentation will show writing professors and teachers how to switch from grading hard copies to a digital grading and feedback system using Microsoft Excel and Google's Gmail. It will also foster conversation on student resistance and the drawbacks and advantages of a digital grading system.

E. "The 'Write' and the 'Wrong'; Facilitating and Promoting Student Engagement in Threaded Discussions in an Online Writing Class."

Sarbani Vengadasalam, Rutgers University

The presentation will analyze the importance and role of a threaded discussion in an online class. Taking a practitioner focus, the presentation will demonstrate the elements of instructor posting and the need to move from vertical to horizontal. The integration of new media tools and use of samples and rubrics in asynchronous discussion room to achieve learning objectives and curriculum goals of a writing course will be expanded on. The presentation will conclude with showing the links between the learner centeredness of the online discussion room and instructor/classroom success.

F. "Big Bytes for Little Centers: Re-Purposing Freeware for the English Classroom"

Sally Chandler, Kean University

Mark Sutton, Kean University

Charles Nelson, Kean University

Kimberly Kiefer, Rahway High School

This sixty-minute workshop explores strategies for re-purposing readily available, easy-to-use, free software to serve English teacher agendas. After the presenters share projects with these programs, we divide into small groups where participants brainstorm and start designing ideas for projects in their own classes.

G. "Let the Show Begin: Using Films to Teach Essay Writing"

Russell Shaffer, Fairleigh Dickinson University

As the younger generation is growing up on visual stimuli, being shown information becomes crucial to their learning.

Using films to teach writing "shows" students how to develop ideas, engages them in the writing process, and provides a visual to remember outside of class. This sixty-minute presentation will "show" that films relate to students, improve comprehension and increase application in writing essays. Let the show begin. Let the learning begin.

H. "Writing With New Technologies: Challenges of Keeping a Writing Standard, Using Revision, and Assessing and Using Rubrics"

Paul Caruso, Montclair State University

Included in the presentation and discussion will be the use of revision, adherence to specific writing standards (per institution or discipline), assessment or projects with the use of rubrics, and the many challenges teachers face when incorporating new media to new audiences. While some students are technologically savvy, others need formal instruction. This layer of responsibility falls partially on the instructors who decide to incorporate the technology into their classes. Another consideration is ways of reading and writing where a visual aspect is an integral element of a

project. The visual and audio components that are often integrated into new media influence the writing as well as the reading of the textual components.

**LUNCH IN THE CASINO
11:45AM-1:15PM**

Regional Roundtables: Enjoy conversation and local New Jersey networking with other partner institutions

NJWA Business Meeting

Bedford St. Martin's and Georgian Court representatives at information tables

SESSION 3: 1:30PM-2:30PM

A. "Rescuing Freshman English with the Reading/Writing Workshop"

Dave Knecht, Seneca High School
Jackie Lambusta, Seneca High School
Melissa Peraria, Seneca High School
Julie Smith, Seneca High School
Nik Tama, Seneca High School
Jen Wolfson, Seneca High School

A group of passionate English teachers at Seneca High School in Tabernacle decided to reinvent the school's freshman English course, abandoning much of the traditional, random literature and writing instruction in favor of their own version of the reading/writing workshop model. The results have been positive and invigorating.

B. "Spaces of Influence: Rowan University's Studio Sessions"

Kelly Adams, Rowan University
Florette Press, Rowan University
Marie Haughton Flocco, Rowan University
Sharada Krishnamurthy, Rowan University

This sixty minute panel presentation discusses the role of the Rowan University Writing Center's studio sessions (Grego and Thompson) in assisting students in intensive first-year college composition. In this presentation the panelists offer first-hand accounts of the implementation of the Studio Model and its effectiveness in helping first-year college students transition from writing in high school to writing in college. Panelists discuss its effectiveness from the points of view of the director of Rowan's Writing Center, the Writing Center's administrative intern, an instructor teaching Intensive College Composition I and a tutor assigned to the course.

C. "From 'Anti-Writing' to Writing the Dialectic: A Rhetorical Approach to Teaching Writing"

Drew Kopp, Rowan University

If good writing necessitates the dialectic juxtaposition of divergent viewpoints in contention with each other, and if engaging in dialectic writing is quite difficult even for first year college writers, how is it possible to teach students to produce good writing in high school? This question becomes even more difficult to answer when we consider the degree to which institutional forces conspire to have students write what Jasper Neel has called "anti-writing": grammatically correct writing that expresses a singular and didactic viewpoint bent on impressing the teacher. As a possible strategy to disrupt the drive to produce "anti-writing," the presentation will offer a method that can be simple and accessible while at the same time could allow for amplification into greater degrees of challenging complexity.

D. "Non-Readers as Writers: Overcoming Challenging Texts and Producing Effective Writing"

Leslie Puente-Ervin, Willingboro High School

This presentation focuses on strategies designed to motivate non-readers to write organized and coherent writing, using challenging literature. Once non-readers overcome their own anxieties of reading deeply complex literature, they embrace the challenge of responding to literature and become unafraid to take literary and compositional risks.

E. "Fanning Out in the Writing Classroom"

Kristen Julia Anderson, William Patterson University

Fan interests and academic interests—what does one have to do with the other? This interactive presentation will share the experiences of a new college writing instructor who decided to motivate students by asking them to explore their own fan interests through their writing. It will involve exposition, discussion, and audience participation.

F. "Graphic Novels: Taking Reluctant Readers to the Text and Beyond"

Leigh Brodsky, Watchung Hills Regional High School

Graphic novels hook students. The added reading skill from decoding the pictures lends an inexpensive hand to differentiating lessons to grab and lift up motivated and reluctant students about reading and writing. This workshop will review the conceptual underpinnings of text/image reading skills. Along with the theoretical pedagogical concepts, the presentation will discuss specific applications and activities for graphic novels in the classroom that bolster all students' (the ready and the reluctant) critical thinking and writing.

G. "The Task of Instructors in the Creation of the Writing Assignment"

Vanessa Velez, Rutgers University

A formidable obstacle to quality writing among composition students lies in the wording their instructors exercise in their own assignment. Some prompts shut down the students' analytical thought process, while others intimidate students from creating a piece of writing they otherwise may have been able to accomplish with exceeding success. As instructors of writing, we need to discover creative ways of initiating our own voices within our writing assignments to guide our students along the process of composition.

H. "Saying More with Less: Approaches to Dealing with Wordiness in College Writing"

Michael Goeller, Rutgers University

Regina Masiello, Rutgers University

In order to help students prepare for the complex texts they are expected to analyze in college, in the workplace, and on an increasing number of standardized tests, we propose using an immersive writing process that has students deploy ideas from short but complex expository prose selections as a lens to analyze more traditional narrative texts. Our discussion will present a curriculum module designed to scaffold this approach, including reading selections, sample activities and assignments, guides to revision, and sample papers.

**CONFERENCE CLOSING IN ARTS AND SCIENCES BUILDING MAIN LOBBY
CERTIFICATE DISTRIBUTION AND CONFERENCE EVALUATION
2:45PM**

**CAMPUS TOUR BEGINS IN ARTS AND SCIENCES BUILDING MAIN LOBBY
2:50PM**

2012 NJWA OFFICERS & COMMITTEES

President: Will Ross, Watchung Hills Regional High School
Immediate Past-President: Ed Jones, Seton Hall University
President-Elect: Darcy Gioia, Rutgers University
Secretary: Sallie DelVecchio, Middlesex County College
Treasurer: Liz Mammen, Watchung Hills Regional High School
Webtender: Roberta Reavey, Rowan University
Conference Committee Chair: Darcy Gioia, Rutgers University

Program Committee: Bryan Buttler, Gloucester County College (chair); Darcy Gioia, Rutgers University;
Roberta Reavey, Rowan University; Kristie-Anne Opaleski-DiMeo (Jackson Liberty High School)
and Will Ross (Watchung Hills Regional High School)

Site Committee: Connie Chismar, Georgian Court University (chair), Sallie DelVecchio, Middlesex County
College

SPECIAL THANKS

Alexis Jankowski, GCU Special Events Coordinator
Christine Maglione, Chartwell's Food Service Coordinator