

PLAYING IN THE PROSE: WRITING INSTRUCTION AND
UNDERPREPARED STUDENT-ATHLETES
IN DIVISION I-A UNIVERSITIES

by

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ABSTRACT

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“Playing in the Prose: Writing Instruction and Underprepared Student-Athletes in Division I-A Universities,” is a study that contributes to the continued interest in the pedagogical tools educators can use with underprepared writers. Student-athletes, especially those at a Division I-A institution are a specialized student group particularly when enrolled at a predominantly white institution and particularly when they are academically underprepared to do the work required of them. Drawing from critical and feminist pedagogues Paulo Freire, Ira Shor, Henry Giroux, and Peter MacLaren, along with bell hooks, Susan Jarratt and Lynn Worsham, I argue that a feminist version of critical pedagogy, relational pedagogy, envisions a composition classroom as a cultural studies lab that connects students’

experiences with rhetorical ways of knowing and of relating to the world around them. This classroom turned cultural studies lab becomes a site of struggle and resistance. A relational pedagogy encourages students to make their own choices, their own political agendas, as they perceive content, genre, structure, style, and even grammar as rhetorical choices available to them, even though these choices are constrained by the dominant culture and reader expectations.

In a three-year ethnographic and longitudinal study, I examined the writing and the language of 45 underprepared writers in a year-long version of first-year composition, the “stretch model” of composition. The dissertation’s main focus is the teaching of writing to underprepared students, but second to this is the institution’s responsibility to the students it admits. Case studies highlight the writing of three representative students at different levels of preparedness and willingness to conform to institutional standards. Secondly, the dissertation highlights how, through the use of alternative assignments and relational pedagogies, students’ writing ability improved.

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CHAPTER 1:

INTRODUCTION: THE NEED FOR ALTERNATIVE PROGRAMS AND PEDAGOGIES

“Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing.”
--*attributed to* Vince Lombardi, Green Bay Packers football coach

*“I always turn to the sports page first.
The sports page records people's accomplishments
the front page, nothing but man's failures.”*
--Earl Warren, 14th Chief Justice of the United States

1.1 Introduction

Collegiate sports have value. These sports have value to those who play the sport, to those who watch the sport, to those make their livelihoods from the sport. Collegiate sports have value to universities, to communities, to individuals. Collegiate sports allow fans and spectators to live in the past (reliving their glory days), to live in the present (being part of current action), to live in the future (projecting hopes and dreams). Collegiate sports can integrate, but it can also segregate, dominate, and discriminate. For many, collegiate sports is more than a hobby; it is a passion; it is a calling. Collegiate sports—particularly sports ranked Division I-A by the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) and those sports that are revenue-producing (football and men's basketball)—can become an

all-consuming obsession for many because winning—according to Vince Lombardi and to many who follow collegiate sports—is the only thing that matters.

In the quest to win, however, those who follow collegiate sports and even those who are actively involved in the game forget about the individuals on whose backs the entire industry rests: the backs of student-athletes, the backs of 18- to 22-year old college students, students who play a high-stakes game and who are also earning a college education. Many of these young people rise to the challenge academics and athletics requires of them, and they perform equally well on the court or field and in the classroom. Other students play these same sports and they are stellar athletes, destined—they believe—to one day be a professional athlete. These students, however, may not be as academically prepared to do the scholastic work required of them.

Universities offer many programs and services to underprepared student-athletes, and many of them have proven success records. However, at some institutions, the graduate rates for student-athletes, particularly African-American male student-athletes who participate in revenue-producing sports, is abysmally low. Therefore, while the university provides the services it thinks underprepared student-athletes need, student-athletes are still not graduating at the same rate as their non-athlete peers. The young men, particularly the men who are academically underprepared to be enrolled in an academically selective university and who participate in revenue-producing sports are the focus of this dissertation study.

Many student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports at NCAA-ranked Division I-A institutions can be underprepared for the academic work required of them, they are often African-American men, and they can often come from a lower-socioeconomic class than their non-athlete student peers. According to Billy Hawkins in *The New Plantation: the Internal Colonization of Black Student Athletes*, African-American student athletes have obstacles typical students do not face. They have, according to Hawkins, "unequal access to economic, social and political opportunities that disadvantage them more culturally and socially as intellectually" (11). This inequity is not problematic on the field, but it can be in the classroom. Therefore, the opportunity is present for higher education, but achieving it is certainly not equal between the student-athlete and the non-athlete student, and this "opportunity" is not lost on the student-athletes.¹

In high profile sports, being ranked Division I-A puts the institution into a highly competitive and contentious sporting league, a league of power, of egos, of influence, of money; it is not a league of library stacks and ivory towers. Andrew Zimbalist, in *Unpaid Professionals: Commercialism and Conflict in Big-Time College Sports*, acknowledges that intercollegiate sports administrators have lost all sense of proportion when it comes to the importance of intercollegiate athletics. Participation in sports can promote physical and emotional well-being, and team sports can build character, friendships, and community. Spectator sports can provide

¹ In no way should the examples in this dissertation suggest that all student-athletes or all African-American young men and women are the same, that all are academically underprepared to attend and graduate from a university. In this dissertation, I focus on a specific and unique subset of college students. There is a great variance within any group.

relief and enrich school spirit (13). What university administrators seem to be blind to, he argues, are the student-athletes themselves. The tangible importance of athletic success can lead to what some critics would consider a neglect of the university's primary responsibility to the student-athletes it recruits: academic success. How the American culture (indeed, the culture within higher education) views student-athletes has become complex. Are these young men students or are they athletes?²

Edward M. White stated that "American education is subject to two contrasting underlying motifs: egalitarianism, the argument that everyone should have opportunities for success; and elitism, the restriction of opportunities to the most 'deserving' -- which often means to those from a relatively privileged home" (qtd. in McNenny and Fitzgerald 19). It is difficult to know what White meant by "most deserving." Student athletes, in the revenue-producing sports of football and men's basketball, however, do not normally fall into the "relatively privileged" category that White describes, but that does not mean they are not deserving of the opportunity to higher education. According to James Frey and D. Stanley Eitzen in their article "Sport and Society," most Americans remain comfortable with the cultural myth that the United States is an open society and that athletic excellence is an avenue of upward social mobility. They argue that African-American subcultures reinforce this belief (513). Nevertheless, the question remains: are the recruited students who play sports "students" or are they "athletes"? No simple answer exists

² I am concerned primarily with student-athletes who participate in revenue-producing sports, football and men's basketball, as these sports recruit students who are often underprepared academically. These students are also men, so throughout the dissertation, I will usually use the gendered pronoun, "he."

to this question. Moreover, one might not consider student-athletes, particularly those in revenue-producing sports, a marginalized student group, but they can be, and this dissertation attempts, in part, to demonstrate that. This dissertation will focus on the dilemma faculty face—particularly faculty teaching writing courses—as they work with underprepared student-athletes or other marginalized student groups. Texas Christian University (TCU)³ is the site of a three-year ethnographic and longitudinal research study that examined alternative programs and pedagogies for underprepared student-athletes.

(2) Institutions of higher education, particularly those ranked Division I-A by the NCAA, admit underprepared⁴ student-athletes into their institution as they need stellar athletes to win national championships and bowl games, but these same institutions do not publically acknowledge this fact. The unusually low graduation rates for student-athletes in revenue-producing sports, particularly African-American student athletes, support this claim. These same institutions do not often give these underprepared students the tools they need to complete their educations. As I will argue later in this chapter, institutions of higher education provide services, but these services are not always the ones students need.

³ Texas Christian University is a mid-sized, Disciples of Christ-affiliated private university with an annual enrollment of approximately 9,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Located in Fort Worth, Texas, the university has been classified as a Doctoral/Research University, and TCU is also a NCAA-ranked Division I-A institution in sports.

⁴ In composition scholarship, scholars use a number of different terms to describe students in need of writing remediation: basic writers, novice writers, developmental writers, underprepared writers, and some scholars tend to use these terms interchangeably. Throughout this dissertation, I choose to use the term "underprepared" writer, as this classification denotes a general lack in academic preparedness; it also does not label the student as one who willingly disengages in academic pursuits.

(4) To move beyond the "relatively privileged" background White describes, institutions have an ethical responsibility to these underprepared student-athletes. Without alternative pedagogies and programs, the university supports the sport myth that institutions of higher education "use 'em and lose 'em" in regards to this particular group of student-athletes. From an idealistic perspective, the institution has an ethical responsibility to the student-athletes it admits, but from a more pragmatic perspective, the institution has an ongoing need to increase retention among undergraduate students, and providing appropriate programs could help. The institution wins, to use the gaming metaphor, by providing the appropriate tools that underprepared students need. While the dissertation is a study about underprepared student-athletes, the same programs and pedagogies could be beneficial to any marginalized and underprepared student group.

1.2 Economics of Intercollegiate Athletics

"College sports are only about the money" is one of the most common myths surrounding collegiate sports, but I argue that it is not a myth at all. College sports *are* about the money. Talk to almost any Athletic Director or coach in Division I-A athletics⁵ and he will say that sports programs lose money each year. The NCAA would say the same thing. However, their publications reflect an alternate story. According to the NCAA's publication *2004-06 -- NCAA Revenues and Expenses of Division I Intercollegiate Athletics Programs Report*, the median total revenue for all football programs combined in 2006 was \$10,616,700 (*Revenues and Expenses*

⁵ Of the 120 NCAA-ranked Division I-A universities, only eight of them have female Athletic Directors.

[2004-06] 45). However, other institutions had significant revenue gain from bowl wins and ticket sales. This means that some of the smaller, less established Division I-A institutions may have had a loss in revenue for that particular period. Conversely, the NCAA institutional report offers that "athletics departments are not necessarily run to be 'profit centers' at most institutions" (*Revenues and Expenses* [2004-06] 7). Indeed, they are not "profit centers"; they are programs within institutions of higher education. Nevertheless, for the larger big-time sport schools, for example, there is big-time money. The report goes on to explain:

The data available bear out that the vast majority [of programs] do not generate revenues that exceed costs. In total, there were 19 FBS [Division I-A] programs in which generated revenues exceeded expenses in the 2006 fiscal year. When aggregated over the full three years of this study, only 16 FBS athletics programs reported positive net revenues over that timeframe. The median positive net revenue for the 19 institutions in that category in 2006 was \$4.3 million. By contrast, the median negative net revenue for the other institutions within the FBS was approximately \$8.9 million. This gap (approximately \$13.2 million in 2006) grew by about \$2 million from that reported in 2004. (*Revenues and Expenses* [2004-06] 7)

Additionally, what athletic departments publish to the world outside of athletics and what actually happens in those departments are often two very different things. These organizations engage in what those of the Knight Commission have called the

"double-speak" of the NCAA, data and information that are available but that are obscured and convoluted in such a manner to make them difficult to understand or find (qtd. in Suggs and McGough 3n2). No matter how universities report the revenue they receive or the expenses they incur, there is money in Division I-A sports, and it can be surprising just how universities spend that money. Some of these expenditures are expected; other expenses can seem excessive.

At Texas Christian University (the site of this research study), for example, according to the 2007 Athletics Department Annual Report the football, program awards 85 full scholarships each year, and at TCU's 2007 tuition rates, that equals \$2,871,130 for one season of football (TCU *Athletic Department Annual Report*, 37). Almost \$2.9 million dollars for only one semester of football is a lot of money to spend on 85 students, particularly when in the span of six years, only 60 percent of the students graduate. The \$2.9 million is only the cost of scholarships; it does not include the additional operating expenses that a Division I-A Athletics program would incur. TCU is not alone in these costs. The majority of Division I-A football programs have similar statistics to report. Each institution spends large sums of money on athletic scholarships, but the institution's retention of those student-athletes is sometimes low, too low, in fact, to justify the expense.

Nevertheless, scholarship costs are expected expenditures for revenue-producing sports programs. Other costs, though, are not quite as practical. As just one example of the exorbitant costs major sports programs incur, in 2006, the Regents at the University of Texas approved a \$150 million expansion plan to its

football stadium. This expansion also included a 7,370 square foot high-definition LED scoreboard with a screen that is "the largest in the western hemisphere" ("Texas Top Construction Projects"). The rationale for this expenditure, one could surmise, is that more people would go to the games and this would presumably make the program more money.



Fig. 1.1: "Godzillatron." The LED HD Scoreboard at UT Austin.

Yet throughout Division I-A revenue-producing sports, especially football, fans and supporters already go to the games, and at many Division I-A universities, they pay huge sums for that privilege. For the 2008 season, football fans at Texas pay \$599 per season ticket (approximately \$120 per home game), and the Darryl K.

Royal Stadium holds almost 100,000 fans. Football supporters at Auburn and Alabama pay an average \$50 per game to see their teams play with similarly sized stadiums. Florida charges only \$244 for season tickets because purchasing them also requires a \$4,200 minimum donation to the athletics department, and that makes the season ticket price \$632 per game, based on an average of five home games per season (Solomon par. 6-9). Nevertheless, scoreboards and stadiums aside, the skyrocketing cost of coaches' salaries provide at least one indicator that the "college sports are only about money" myth is true.

As just one example, the University of Notre Dame's football coach, Charlie Weis, is the highest paid collegiate football coach in the country, making \$4.2 million a year (before bonuses). The president of Notre Dame, the Reverend John Jenkins, at \$400,000 base salary per year, makes a mere 9.5 percent of the coach's salary. On one hand, this is an apples and oranges comparison. Weis and Jenkins provide different functions at the university and they serve in different ways. The salary differentials between the two men are significant, to be sure, but to one outside this particular university system, it does appear that Notre Dame values its football program more than any other on-campus institution or program, as that is where it places a significant amount of its resources. The disparity between coaches' salaries and the salaries of administrators is not just at a few select universities. The inequity exists through the Division I-A ranks.

Table 1.1 shows a salary comparison between the 10 highest paid Division I-A college football coaches in 2007 with the corresponding salary of the university

president at that same institution. When seeing the numbers side-by-side, it is difficult to not make assumptions about what these institutions favor.

Table 1.1: Ten Highest Paid Football Coaches in 2007-08 Compared with the President's Salary at the Same Institution

| University | Head Football Coach | Base Salary (2008) | President | Base Salary (2005-06) | % of Coach's Salary |
|------------|---------------------|--------------------|-------------------|-----------------------|---------------------|
| Notre Dame | Charlie Weis | \$4,200,000 | John I. Jenkins | \$400,000 | 9.5% |
| USC | Pete Carroll | \$4,000,000 | Steven B. Sample | \$727,480 | 18.1% |
| LSU | Les Miles | \$3,751,000 | Sean C. O'Keefe | \$375,000 | 10% |
| Alabama | Nick Saban | \$3,750,000 | Robert E. Witt | \$487,620 | 13% |
| Oklahoma | Bob Stoops | \$3,500,000 | David L. Boren | \$361,553 | 10.3% |
| Florida | Urban Meyer | \$3,400,000 | T. K. Wetherall | \$300,595 | 8.8% |
| Iowa | Kirk Ferentz | \$3,030,000 | Gregory Geoffroy | \$323,316 | 10.7% |
| Texas | Mack Brown | \$2,910,000 | William C. Powers | \$552,500 | 19% |
| Arkansas | Bobby Petrino | \$2,850,000 | John A. White | \$265,000 | 9.3% |
| Auburn | Tom Tuberville | \$2,825,000 | Edward Richardson | \$500,000 | 18% |

Coaches' Salary data from "Equity in Athletics Data Analysis."
 University Administrators' Salary data from the Chronicle of Higher Education
 (2005-06 is last year salary data is available)

The universities in this list make up the programs that spend the most on football coaches' salaries, yet many of these same universities have some of the lowest graduation rates for their football and basketball players (see Table 1.2, "Highest and Lowest Graduation Rates for Student-Athletes in Division I-A Football Programs"). For many in a Division I-A world, academic achievement is secondary, or, as one coach put it, "athletics is a must, education is a plus." As such, many athletic programs seem to have minimal concern about an athlete's academic progress. Their job, as they sometimes see it, is to preserve the athletes' eligibility, to

keep them healthy, and to keep them playing the sport, because a program's success hinges on the athletic abilities of its athletes, not on their academic success. Charlie Weis might be able to justify his salary, though. His team wins most of their games, and, at 95 percent, the team boasts one of the highest graduation rates in Division I-A football.

1.3 Graduation Rates for Revenue-Producing Sport Athletes

Some universities strive to support both roles the student-athletes occupy by providing support for both aspects of the student's life. Other institutions, conversely, do not succeed in achieving positive results for either the institution and for the student, with positive results defined as either a college diploma or a professional sporting career, maybe both. In her 2002 dissertation, Maura Tuite found that nationwide the most recruited football and basketball players ranked in the bottom quarter of the graduating class, if they graduated at all. Additionally, she found that male athletes in revenue-producing sports did not perform as well academically as other athletes, and that the higher the level the athlete competed in (Division I versus II, III), the less likely that athlete was to compare favorably with non-athletes academically (10-11).

The NCAA reports that 67 percent of student-athletes who play football graduate within six years (the amount of eligibility they have to complete their education while playing a sport). This percentage is an across-the-board average, as some universities graduate a much higher percentage of student-athletes, such as Notre Dame, and some graduate a much lower percentage. When the NCAA

calculates the mean, the average is positive, as 67 percent is the approximate national average for most universities with traditional student populations. However, it is important to recognize what universities do to ensure their students—all their students, not just the student-athletes—graduate. Some are more successful than others.

Table 1.2 shows the 10 Division I-A football programs with the highest graduation rates of their players in 2007. The adjoining table shows the 10 football programs with the lowest graduation rates for the same period.

Table 1.2: Highest and Lowest Graduation Rates for Student-Athletes in Division I-A Football Programs (2007)

| Football Programs with the Highest Graduation Rates (D-I) | | Football Programs with the Lowest Graduation Rates (D-I) | |
|--|-----|---|-----|
| Navy | 98% | Cal | 44% |
| Boston College | 96% | Alabama | 44% |
| Notre Dame | 95% | Minnesota | 44% |
| Stanford | 94% | UTEP | 44% |
| Wake Forest | 93% | New Mexico | 43% |
| Duke | 93% | Central Florida | 42% |
| Air Force | 93% | Georgia | 41% |
| Vanderbilt | 92% | Texas | 40% |
| Northwestern | 91% | Arizona | 39% |
| Army | 90% | Florida Atlantic | 33% |

(Stanford Cardinal)

Service academies such as Navy, Air Force, and Army, or private institutions like Stanford and Notre Dame can admit stellar student-athletes who have the academic preparation necessary for a rigorous collegiate education. These institutions also have the economic resources to provide academic support for the

student-athletes who have greater academic needs. Therefore, the graduation rates at these institutions are higher. Universities such as Arizona, Florida Atlantic, and Texas, institutions that graduate fewer than 40 percent of their football players might need to look at specific alternative programs and pedagogies that will help their students graduate.

Statistics for men's basketball are more surprising than they are for football. Overall, NCAA Division I-A basketball posts a 57 percent graduate rate for its players. Again, this is an average of all Division I-A teams (NCAA "NCAA Division I Key Findings"). Table 1.3 shows the 10 universities with the highest graduation rates, and the adjoining table shows the universities with the lowest graduation rates in 2007.

Table 1.3: Highest and Lowest Graduation Rates for Student-Athletes in Division I-A Basketball Programs (2007)

| Basketball Programs with the Highest Graduation Rates (D-I) | | Basketball Programs with the Lowest Graduation Rates (D-I) | |
|--|------|---|-----|
| Wake Forest | 100% | Clemson | 25% |
| Florida | 100% | Fresno State | 25% |
| Michigan State | 91% | Nevada | 24% |
| Notre Dame | 91% | San Jose State | 22% |
| Villanova | 90% | Tennessee | 18% |
| Air Force | 89% | Maryland | 18% |
| Kansas State | 88% | UNLV | 17% |
| Northwestern | 88% | Iowa State | 12% |
| Virginia | 85% | Georgia | 9% |
| Indiana | 82% | New Mexico | 7% |

(Stanford Cardinal)

Given their low graduation rates for basketball players, it seems that universities such as Georgia and New Mexico admit student-athletes who are good athletes, but who are woefully underprepared to study at the institution. In 2007-08, the New Mexico State University Aggies had a win / loss record of 21-14, and the Georgia Bulldogs had a win / loss record of 17-17 (including conference and nonconference games) (New Mexico State University Athletics; University of Georgia). For Division I-A teams, these are not bad records, and the student-athletes are skilled at the sport. These records are not NCAA March Madness records, though, and the sport does not garner the income from the "big dance" the way others teams can. One has to wonder what New Mexico and Georgia could learn about recruiting and retention from institutions such as Wake Forest and Florida. Universities with a 100 percent graduation rate for their student-athletes are doing something right. Overall, though, graduation rates for student-athletes in high-profile sports could certainly improve.

Data are not publically available about the number of student "exception" admits an institution recruits and enrolls each year because few institutions want to admit they admit underprepared students. Given the low student-athlete graduation percentages at schools such as New Mexico or Georgia, one could surmise these students came into their respective institutions under this policy. The sport myth of the "dumb jock" can have merit if "exception admits" make up a significant portion of an athletic team. The exception admit is the student who is unable to meet standard admission eligibility requirements (SAT / ACT scores, high school GPA),

but who has something the university needs. Exceptions typically fall into three categories at most Division I-A or Research I institutions: musicians, athletes, and legacies. At TCU, for example, the number of legacy and musical exceptions far outnumber the exceptions in athletics (Householder).

While it is important to make the comparison in the graduation rates between revenue-producing sport student-athletes and the traditional non-athlete student population (in order to gauge the efficacy of recruitment and retention programs, for example), it is also important to recognize the differences in graduation rates between races. In Division I-A athletics, the differences between the percentages of Caucasian and African-American players who graduate is staggering. Universities such as Nebraska and Florida graduate the majority of all their football players (of any race) with percentages often higher than those of the general student population. When Georgia graduates 75 percent of its overall student population within six years, but graduates 52 percent of its student-athletes (in Olympic as well as revenue-producing sports, female as well as male), a problem exists in that 23 percent gap. These students need something they are not receiving or they could graduate in equal percentages as their non-athlete student peers. Additionally, within the 52 percent of student-athletes graduating, 72 percent of its Caucasian football players and only 24 percent of its African-American football players, a problem exists for those student-athletes of color. Table 1.4 shows the graduation rate differential between Caucasian football players and African-American football players at universities in 2006.

Table 1.4: Graduation Rates for African-American Football Players Compared to Selected Others (2007)

| | African-American* | Caucasian* | Student Body** | Difference |
|---------------|-------------------|------------|----------------|------------|
| Ohio State | 32% | 85% | 71% | -53% |
| Georgia | 24% | 72% | 75% | -48% |
| Arkansas | 38% | 85% | 55% | -47% |
| Tennessee | 47% | 92% | 60% | -45% |
| Michigan | 50% | 91% | 87% | -41% |
| LSU | 37% | 73% | 57% | -36% |
| Auburn | 52% | 85% | 63% | -33% |
| Wisconsin | 44% | 72% | 78% | -28% |
| Florida State | 48% | 75% | 68% | -27% |
| Oklahoma | 43% | 67% | 59% | -24% |
| Texas | 33% | 57% | 77% | -24% |
| Miami | 63% | 83% | 81% | -20% |
| Florida | 74% | 91% | 79% | -17% |
| Nebraska | 80% | 91% | 62% | -11% |

*(Stanford Cardinal) **(Education Trust)

Ohio State has similar percentages. OSU boasts a 71 percent graduation rate for its student population (students who graduate within six years). Additionally, OSU has an overall 80 percent graduation rate for its student-athletes (revenue-producing and Olympic sports, male and female). Among this group, 85 percent of Caucasian football players graduate, but only 32 percent of the African-American football players receive a degree. The Stanford website notes that as a Caucasian football player at Ohio, "you're quite likely to leave [the university] with a degree; if you're African-American, you have less than a 1-in-3 probability of getting a degree" (par. 37). Other reasons exist for these problems, among those problems are the advising and placement of students in classes, but these other concerns are outside the scope of this dissertation. It is interesting to note that in 2007, the #1 ranked Ohio

State Buckeyes had a 13-2 win / loss record. One of their losses was to #2 ranked LSU in the BCS National Championship game (Ohio State University Athletics).

While the full extent of the disparities between the graduation rates of White and Black players in revenue-producing sports is outside the scope of this dissertation, suffice it to say that racism, socio-economic status, student perception, faculty perception, cultural beliefs, and academic preparedness all factor into the differences between player graduation rates. If the graduation rate differential between Black and White players in football programs is discouraging, the disparity in graduation rates between Black and White players on Division I-A basketball teams is almost criminal. Table 1.5 shows the differences in graduation rates between the average student enrolled at the university, the African-American male basketball players, and the White basketball players.

Table 1.5: Graduation Rates for African-American Basketball Players Compared to Selected Others (2007)

| | Student Body** | Caucasian* | African-American* | Difference |
|-------------|----------------|------------|-------------------|------------|
| Georgia | 75% | 72% | 9% | -63% |
| Maryland | 79% | 72% | 18% | -54% |
| Iowa State | 66% | 66% | 12% | -54% |
| Cal-Berkley | 89% | 86% | 38% | -48% |
| Clemson | 75% | 73% | 25% | -48% |
| UCLA | 89% | 87% | 44% | -43% |
| Connecticut | 74% | 71% | 30% | -41% |
| Tennessee | 60% | 58% | 18% | -40% |
| USC | 84% | 80% | 44% | -36% |
| Texas A&M | 77% | 76% | 40% | -36% |
| Providence | 57% | 85% | 50% | -35% |
| New Mexico | 37% | 42% | 7% | -35% |
| Gonzaga | 81% | 77% | 44% | -33% |
| TCU | 68% | 66% | 33% | -33% |

*(Stanford Cardinal) ** (Education Trust)

The statistics in the above table show that Georgia graduates 75 percent of its student body in a six-year period. Their overall student-athlete graduation rate for the same period is 52 percent. Of this 52 percent, 72 percent of Caucasian basketball players graduate yet only 9 percent of its African-American players graduate within six years. The significance of this is heightened when one considers the racial makeup of the team. In 2007, Georgia's 15-member basketball squad was 68 percent African-American.

Few can deny that underprepared students attend universities and receives athletic scholarships. Indeed, the NCAA, through its history, has revised the eligibility requirements for student-athletes. These shifting standards not only

simultaneously demonstrate the NCAA's willingness to make the requirements more stringent to remain eligible as a collegiate-athlete (the 20/40/60/80 rules, for instance, that a student-athlete must maintain significant achievement toward graduation each year of athletic eligibility), but also make the entrance of some underprepared high school student-athletes to selective universities a bit easier. In 2008, the NCAA developed the "sliding scale"⁶ of standardized-test score requirements, among other criterion, that would make high school athletes eligible to participate in inter-collegiate athletics.

⁶ The complete table appears in Appendix E.

Table 1.6: NCAA Division I
Sliding Scale Core GPA / Test Scores 2007

| Core GPA | SAT (verbal /math) | ACT |
|----------|-----------------------|-----|
| 3.50+ | 400 | 37 |
| 3.525 | 410 | 38 |
| 3.500 | 420 | 39 |
| 3.475 | 430 | 40 |
| 3.450 | 440 | 41 |
| 3.425 | 450 | 41 |
| 3.400 | 460 | 42 |
| 3.375 | 470 | 42 |
| 3.350 | 480 | 43 |
| 3.325 | 490 | 44 |
| 3.300 | 500 | 44 |
| 2.225 | 930 | 78 |
| 2.200 | 940 | 79 |
| 2.175 | 950 | 80 |
| 2.150 | 960 | 80 |
| 2.125 | 960 | 81 |
| 2.100 | 970 | 82 |
| 2.075 | 980 | 83 |
| 2.050 | 990 | 84 |
| 2.025 | 1000 | 85 |
| 2.000 | 1010 | 86 |

(NCAA Freshman-Eligibility Standards)

1.4 Intercollegiate Athletics: Desire vs. Reality

Many student athletes come to universities believing two things, and this is particularly true of the underprepared student athlete: that (1) he will one day become a professional athlete, or, (2) as an alternative, he will get a college degree that will enable to him to succeed in other areas of his life. However, these dreams can be unrealistic. One dream can obscure the other.

According to the NCAA, the odds of becoming a professional athlete are very low, and some student-athletes know this. Others do not. Table 1.7 shows the likelihood of achieving this goal. In men's high school basketball, for example, a player has .03 percent chance of being drafted by an NBA team (this would be an all-star player like basketball phenom, LeBron James). From playing on a college basketball team, the likelihood of being recruited jumps to 1.2 percent. In collegiate football, a college student has 1.8 percent chance of being drafted by the NFL. (Since the NFL does not recruit directly from high school, there are no statistics for this category.)

Table 1.7: Estimated Probability of Competing in Athletics Beyond the High School Interscholastic Level (2007)

| Student Athletes | Men's Basketball | Women's Basketball | Football | Baseball | Men's Ice Hockey | Men's Soccer |
|--|-------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| High School Student Athletes | 546,335 | 452,929 | 1,071,775 | 470,671 | 36,263 | 358,935 |
| High School Senior Student Athletes | 156,096 | 129,408 | 306,221 | 134,477 | 10,361 | 102,553 |
| NCAA Student Athletes | 16,571 | 15,096 | 61,252 | 28,767 | 3,973 | 19,793 |
| NCAA Freshman Roster Positions | 4,735 | 4,313 | 17,501 | 8,219 | 1,135 | 5,655 |
| NCAA Senior Student Athletes | 3,682 | 3,355 | 13,612 | 6,393 | 883 | 4,398 |
| NCAA Student Athletes Drafted | 44 | 32 | 250 | 600 | 33 | 76 |
| Percent High School to Professional | 0.03% | 0.02% | 0.08% | 0.45% | 0.32% | 0.07% |
| Percent High School to NCAA | 3.0% | 3.3% | 5.7% | 6.1% | 11.0% | 5.5% |
| Percent NCAA to Professional | 1.2% | 1.0% | 1.8% | 9.4% | 3.7% | 1.7% |

(Bracken)

Coaches, recruiters, and even parents tell these young players / students that they will succeed in their sport that they are talented enough to become a professional athlete, but that they need the collegiate experience to get them where they want to be, visible to professional scouts and coaches. The college degree, for many student-athletes, is a way to achieve their dreams of athletic success, but it is often their secondary goal for attending the university, and yet it is a goal that few understand the difficulty of achieving. When institutions admit underprepared student-athletes into the university, education can also seem to be a secondary goal, secondary to the athletes' athletic performance.

Some have attributed the dismal graduation rates of African-American athletes to a lack of academic preparation for college. For many critics and scholars, the issue of low graduation rates becomes a "blame game." Critics agree that poverty, fragmented families, a history of low expectations from family and educators, unreasonable demands placed on them from family and educators, violent cultures, stereotypes, and drug and alcohol (ab)use contribute to poor education preparation. For many reasons, though, student-athletes do not always do as well in school as their non-athlete student peers.

Nevertheless, academic underperformance in college has roots in high school academic underperformance, in the priority assigned by athletes to academics, and in what James L. Shulman and William G. Bowen, in their book *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values*, call the "culture of sport" (73) that pervades school and society. The degree of underperformance varies with not only pre-college

academic indicators such as SAT / ACT scores or high school GPA, they argue, but also with how many other athletes who played on the same teams underperformed (possible peer effects) and whether the athlete has decided that his coach is a principle mentor. Students who were active in other time-intensive extracurricular activities, they argue, *over performed* academically, relative to their SAT scores and other predictors (262). This, they state, is the support for a "culture of sport" interpretation. Their claim sounds familiar, as time spent on task is important to mastering that task. Deborah Brandt, author of "Literacy as Knowledge," has argued that children whose lives are "richly dependent" on literacy activities outside of school, do better in school ("Literacy as Knowledge" 193). Time on task is important, as Brandt noted, but so is the support one receives outside of school in regards to school activities.

Cleveland Cavaliers' forward, LeBron James, is assuredly the most famous rags-to-riches basketball player of recent history. Born in Akron, Ohio, and reared by his single mother in financially challenging conditions, James had the dream to be a successful professional athlete and lift his family out of poverty. Recruited by the Cavaliers directly out of high school, James was the number one NBA draft pick in 2003, and he signed a \$90 million shoe contract with Nike before his NBA debut. He did all of this before his 18th birthday. James never attended college. Today, James earns a reported \$4.5 to \$5 million a year as a basketball player. ("Lebron" par. 1; Lebron James" par. 1).

Rapper 50 Cent (aka Curtis James Jackson III) also never attended college, but today is a multimillionaire based on his top-selling rap CDs. 50 Cent was born in New York City to a single mother, and, according to his authorized biography, he began selling drugs as a young teenager. He never knew his father, his mother was murdered when he was very young, and he was reared by his grandmother. One of his claims-to-fame is the fact that he survived being shot nine times in a drive-by shooting ("50 Cent"). Like LeBron James, 50 Cent never needed higher education to become successful, culturally or monetarily.

These two stories fall within the stereotypical beliefs many people can have about African-American boys. These beliefs that African-American boys are raised in poverty, are reared by a single mother or grandmother, and are excused from striving for or succeeding in an academic education because they have no positive role models permeate American pop culture's understandings of African-American men. Drug use and gangs are a part of the myth, too. The stories of LeBron James, 50 Cent, and a long list of fellow rappers and athletes perpetuate the stereotype that young black men have few options for their lives and that the options they do have involve music and sports. The myth supports the idea that successful young men in the fields of athletics and music were "lucky," that some unseen benefactor aided in their success. Rarely is the hard work to succeed in either of these two fields acknowledged. Belief in these myths, however, also implies that these young men need saving, that black men cannot make decisions for themselves—or at least they cannot make the "right" decision, the decision we often try to make for them. With

their focus on sports or music, some students devote limited time or interest to academics. Educators often support these directions.

In *Unpaid Professionals*, Zimbalist writes, "It is almost a universal perception among inner-city youth that the only ticket out [of the economic struggle they are in] is through sports" (31-32). Zimbalist cites the popular movies *He Got Game* and *Hoop Dreams* as examples of how being a basketball star in college and becoming a professional athlete is an all-consuming goal for some young people (S. James; Lee). In the 1994 documentary *Hoop Dreams*, for example, director Steve James follows two boys as they grow and dream of becoming the next Shaquille O'Neal. The achievement of this dream often means saving themselves and their families from a life of poverty, and James makes this clear in the film. The goals of saving family and friends are, according to Dianne Williams Hayes, "simply a vehicle to [the student's and the family's] dreams" of athletic and economic success (par. 10). Not only do young athletes believe this scenario, but the belief that sports can change a young person's life is also a part of the American cultural expectation, especially for some African-American boys and young men. In some ways, young men (and women) becoming professional athletes and saving their families is a modern-day Horatio Alger, rags-to-riches story, the fairytale of LeBron James.

By using these films as examples of successful African-American men, however, it becomes clearer why some students are successful athletically and why some students do not succeed academically. For some, postsecondary education is not necessary for success, in life or in athletics. The opportunity for economic and

social mobility, according to Brownyn Williams and Amy Zenger in their book *Popular Culture and Representations of Literacy*, is "one of the most unshakeable and deeply ingrained myths of the U.S. culture. Work hard enough, be smart and savvy enough, and nothing can stop you from making a fortune in becoming a person of substance" (42). This myth is prevalent, from parents telling their children they can "grow up to be whatever it is they want to be," to having real-life examples of people who have "made it" against insurmountable odds. Williams and Zenger explain that "there is just enough truth to this mythology, as illustrated in individual life stories from Andrew Carnegie to Bill Gates, to reinforce it in the culture" (42). Indeed, while Williams and Zenger illuminate the Horatio Alger-type stories in the American culture, similar myths exist in the music and sports arenas, and these myths perpetuate how American culture views African-American men and boys, but it can also perpetuates how they view themselves.

As Carl E. James, author of *Race in Play: Understanding the Socio-Cultural Worlds of Student Athletes*, notes, "Educators often encourage black students to play sports, because it is often believed that their athletic skills are better than their academic skills, and sports are likely to be their most productive avenue of school participation. Educators do this in the belief that it is in the interest of the student" (10). It is not often that popular culture portrays examples of black lawyers, surgeons, or judges held up as examples for young men to emulate. Floyd Weatherspoon, in the essay, "Black Male Student-Athletes Owe Themselves, Forefathers More" puts it this way:

Not to marginalize the talents of LeBron James, Michael Vick, Chad Johnson, Dwayne Wade and other successful athletes, but the black community does not need another professional athlete. We must instill in our black males the dream of becoming the next Ronald McNair, Reginald Lewis, Kenneth Chenault, or Ben Carson. Sadly, most young blacks have no idea who these individuals are. Black athletes must understand that playing sports must not be the only dreamed to strive for, but only the collateral benefit of attending school. They must first understand that all the applause of accolades received while playing sports, especially in high school and college, are only for entertainment purposes. (par. 5)

The practice of encouraging Black students to excel in athletic activities, women in nursing and teaching professions, and Asian students in science and mathematics, for non-sport examples, are "racializing and essentializing processes, and they are also evident in schools where teachers and coaches purport to base their work on principles of antiracism," Carl James notes (10). Unfortunately, racism is more common in education than one might realize. It is important to recognize, too, however, that race is an obvious marker of difference. James continues his argument that educators do not "recognize the inequality and inequity leading to the stereotyping and marginalization of students, their alienation, and / or disengagement from the schooling process" (10). In other words, by not providing other examples of success to black students, examples other than the ones popular culture provides, we

are narrowing choices before these young men recognize how many options they actually do have.

In many ways, essentializing and limiting individuals becomes a Catch-22: educators (families and popular culture, as well) encourage young black men to avoid academic pursuits to focus their attention on athletics. The intense commitment to athletics lands them a collegiate scholarship, but their academic skills, what they need to survive in the university, are often not strong enough to see them through to graduation. They may have the skills to be successful in the collegiate sporting world, but they do not have the skills to remain at the university. Diane Williams Hayes notes that this trend is "dangerously prevalent," and that being a star academic student "is not part of the goals of sport-produced success and riches" (par. 13). The university must also address the students' prior experiences with educators, especially if the student is a scholarship athlete.

According to the U.S. Census Bureau, African-Americans comprise 12.3 percent of the total population in the United States in 2000; however, a disproportionately higher number of African-American athletes participate on college and professional teams in the major revenue-producing sports. Approximately 73 percent of the players in the National Basketball Association, and 72 percent of the athletes in the National Football League are African-American (Harris par. 13; Rhoden). Yet, overall, African-Americans make up slightly more than 10 percent of the total US enrollments in higher education, and black scholarship athletes make up 21.3 percent of all students receiving athletic

scholarships. But the number of African-American students who receive athletic scholarships accounts for only 1.5 percent of the 1.6 million black students currently enrolled in higher education ("African-American College Athletes: Debunking the Myth of the Dumb Jock" 36).

1.5 "Academics First"

A student-athlete often has to choose between his sport and his education. The average undergraduate would never have to make these representative choices: "Do you attend a meeting with your English writing group to finish the collaborative project, or do you meet with your position coach?" "Do you visit your professor during her office hours, or do you meet with the trainer so she can tape your ankles before practice?" Or even, "Do you attend class at 9:00 a.m. even though the bus taking you to 'the big game' leaves at 10:00?" Many times the student-athletes believe they do not have a choice; in every instance, the student-athletes must choose athletics, or so the coaches tell him.

In January 2001, when Myles Brand left the presidency of Indiana University and accepted the presidency of the NCAA, he spoke at the National Press Club. In his now famous speech, "Academics First: Reforming Intercollegiate Athletics," he publically made a commitment to reclaim education for student-athletes. His plan, "Academics First," would be a "gradual reform" program. One that "is a fundamental commitment to taking the steps necessary to elevate the academic mission and integrity of the university to absolute first priority" (369). Some high profile collegiate sport coaches pretend to believe this, too, when they state "Academics is

first," while holding up two fingers. "Athletics is second," while holding up one finger. The contradictions and inconsistencies can certainly confuse students, and these inconsistencies can surely help a young man decide which is more important at that moment, athletics or academics.

Student athletes are a unique subset of college students, and a one-size fits all curriculum and pedagogy does not work. The student-athletes' needs and limitations often surpass the needs and limitations of their non-athlete student peers. Zimbalist's statements about young people making choices whether to pursue excellence in athletics or academics is a fitting way to think about the student-athletes, but especially the underprepared students enrolled in an Introduction to Critical Writing (ICW) course at Texas Christian University. The ICW course is the focus of this dissertation study, but it is also a course that offered alternative pedagogies and programs to students enrolled in a yearlong composition course. Many of the students enrolled in this course were underprepared student-athletes. Yet Zimbalist notes that "educational deficiencies based in broken families, cultural violence, and poorly funded public schools cannot be redressed by the University alone" (31). Indeed, student-athletes, like a healthy number of "typical" college students, come to universities with a wide variety of educational and cultural experiences that have—in many cases—not prepared them for the rigor of a university education. Student-athletes can have the drive and determination to succeed on the court or on the field, but they often do not know how to succeed in the classroom, and Zimbalist explains that the academic requirements sanctioned by the NCAA will not "suffice to inspire

young athletes to do their homework" (31-32). In many ways, the NCAA threats and sanctions are empty. Student-athletes, those who are underprepared academically, need more than the fear of (possible) sanctions to succeed in the classroom. Most institutions do recognize the need for academic support for underprepared student-athletes, and they offer that academic support.

1.6 Athletic Academic Centers

In an August 2008 *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Brad Wolverton discusses a growing trend among the nation's largest college football programs (e.g. "football schools") to build Academic Centers for the sole use of student-athletes in order to increase the graduation rates of the institutions' student-athletes. These Academic Centers are "as big as 50,000 square feet—the size of some student-unions—and many are as swank and well appointed as any buildings on campus" (par. 3). These centers house academic tutors, advisors, and learning specialists that work exclusively with student-athletes. According to Wolverton, spending this additional money, as much as \$27 million at Texas A&M University, for example, helps keep student-athletes on track to graduate (par. 4). At the same time, these facilities do not serve all students; they only serve student-athletes. With more and more universities admitting academically underprepared student-athletes, the drive to build these specialized centers increases, as institutions do not want to lose scholarship funding for students who "fail to meet minimum academic cutoffs" (par. 5).

What these Academic Centers also do, however, is segregate the student-athlete from the rest of the student population on a campus. This segregation, what Kevin Foster calls "an opportunity for surveillance," is another method athletic departments have to protect their "property." Foster's article "Panopticonics: The Control and Surveillance of Black Female Athletes in a Collegiate Athletic Program," which I will discuss in Chapter 7, argues that the added surveillance of student-athletes (surveillance that other students do not experience) helps graduation rates (302). Many argue, however, that the surveillance techniques Foster discusses also infantilizes student-athletes and the infantilization feeds into low academic performance and low graduation rates.

What also increases when constructing these Academic Centers is the potential for abuse and academic misconduct, evidence of which has made national news in recent years. In the late 1980s, Professor Jan Kemp at the University of Tennessee found that academic tutors were writing essays and doing homework for student-athletes. At the University of Minnesota in 1999, an office manager admitted writing over 400 essays for members of the men's basketball team over six seasons (years that included NCAA Tournament appearances). At Florida State University in 2007, 60 student-athletes were suspended from their sports teams for cheating in an on-line course. The Academic Centers can often be out of the sight (and control of) academic offices and mandates (Farrey; Lambrecht).

While Academic Centers and additional academic tutors are beneficial to the student-athlete, I argue that underprepared student-athletes do not usually need

additional support from the institution; they need *different* support. This is also true of the undergraduate student who is underprepared academically but who does not have any additional services to help her or him through to graduation. Student-athletes who come into the institution not ready for the academic work required of them, who may be from a marginalized race or economic class, need a way to fit into and learn from the campus that recruited them. Additionally, many underprepared students need a nontraditional approach to learning. If the underprepared students were not successful in the K-12 educational system with a traditional pedagogy, they need an academic environment that does not replicate what they have already experienced. If it did not work the first time, there is no reason to believe it will work a second time at a university.

In order to walk the delicate line between what students need and what an institution demands, a faculty member must recognize his or her own limitations and ethical boundaries. It is easy to do too much or too little for underprepared students. It is easy to leave unchecked racial stereotypes, perceptions, and biases. Educating student-athletes from revenue-producing sports can cause one to reexamine those beliefs. Along with knowing those boundaries and limitations, a faculty member who teaches student-athletes must have a sense of who those students are; how they are different from the traditional students on a campus; the demands placed on them by coaches, family, advisors, the general public; their academic preparedness; and their socialization on a campus that—in many instances—is predominately white when the student is often nonwhite. The faculty member must understand that the student-

athlete, while highly skilled and recruited on the field or on the court—can flounder in a classroom setting, and the faculty member must understand *why* this can happen. The student can be embarrassed by his academic ability. He might be a better student than what anyone has ever led him to believe. He might be living with the myth that all he can ever become is an athlete or a rapper. He might not understand the options he has outside of the athletic arena. He might not care about his academics. He might care very much about what he learns. He might be aware of deep-seeded prejudices against him because of his skin color. He might have prejudices of his own. He might be only 18.

While faculty members cannot slow the machine of collegiate athletics, nor might they want or need to, these faculty members can aid their students as they navigate the difficult world of Division I-A athletics by engaging in relational pedagogy, a feminist pedagogical area of critical pedagogy. Additionally, many student-athletes who are underprepared academically could also benefit from a basic writing course, a course that uses a critical pedagogical approach to learning.

Unfortunately, many institutions put fewer resources into the teaching of what might be termed "remedial" courses, particularly large sports schools that are also academically selective, as these selective universities do not typically admit underprepared students. While it is clear that some institutions may not have the funding to provide the needed academic resources for a relatively small group of students, many do manage to find money for scoreboards, million-dollar salaries, and large academic centers that do little more than imprison student-athletes. However,

as a comparison, the university's other underprepared students, those who do not participate in athletics, do not have special and dedicated state-of-the-art computer facilities, study centers, separate buildings or specially-trained faculty to support their educational needs.

1.7 Allotment of Resources

If an institution does offer specialized courses for underprepared students, the courses are often an afterthought. In writing courses, for example, adjunct professors or a graduate students teach "basic writing" courses, individuals who often have little incentive or training to do the hard work that is required for the students' success. In a recent *Chronicle of Higher Education* article, Peter Schmidt argues that "at a time when colleges and universities are under increasing financial pressure to rely more on part-time instructors ... doing so erodes the quality of education many students receive" (A1). Indeed, Schmidt quotes a part-time English instructor at a technical college in Wisconsin who states, "You find it very hard to put in the kind of time you would like to because you have to do other things to make a living" (A8), and underprepared students, no matter what institution they attend, need additional time to do the work required of them.

Clearly, institutions are budget-driven. With student-athletes in revenue-producing sports at Division I-A institutions, on the other hand, institutions invests a significant amount of money in those students. It seems obvious that the institution would continue to protect that investment (the student) by providing a quality educational environment for that student, and that means trained and dedicated

faculty. Some institutions cannot afford to increase the number of full-time tenure-track (or non-tenure-track) faculty. If these same institutions can spend millions of dollars on scoreboards, stadiums, or coaches' salaries, then the cost of faculty who are trained to teach underprepared students—student-athletes and non-athlete students—could be a significant return on that investment.

A remedial writing course can often become a site of tremendous challenge and growth, for both the student and the instructor. Understanding the student-athletes' socialization at a predominately white institution, dealing with racial and economic barriers students might experience at that institution, navigating the waters of an athletics program that is focused—above all else—on winning is not directly a faculty member's responsibility, yet the faculty member is often the person who addresses these issues, all in the context of a basic writing classroom. Too often, as Geraldine McNenny and Sallyanne Fitzgerald write in the preface to *Mainstreaming Basic Writers: Politics and Pedagogies*, "basic writing programs are given the sole responsibility for acculturating marginalized students into the University's culture" (12).

In this dissertation, I contend that Division I-A institutions should consider providing alternative programs and relational pedagogies so student-athletes, particularly those in revenue-producing sports who are academically underprepared, can matriculate through the institution at a higher percentage rate than they do. By making this claim, I am fully aware that I am working within a system that argues that student-athletes do not need even more of the university's (sometimes limited)

resources. Yet, the institutions admit underprepared students; therefore, institutions have an ethical responsibility to see the students through to graduation. My argument is that with alternative programs and pedagogies, particularly those programs in writing, student-athletes can become stronger writers, stronger students. Since writing is foundational to success in college, alternative programs could bring the focus of the student-athletes' position in a university back to their roles as students. When they are stronger students, I contend, they have greater opportunity to succeed off the court and off the field. This, of course, is not to say that students who are not athletes would not benefit from these alternative programs and pedagogies. They would. However, universities ranked Division I-A by the NCAA and institutions that consider themselves Research I institutions, do not routinely admit (that they admit) underprepared students who are not a part of the athletic arena. However, the balance of this dissertation attempts to demonstrate why working with underprepared student-athletes is necessary.

Chapter 2 of this dissertation contains a summary review of the past 10 years' worth of dissertations written about Division I-A student-athletes along with texts written by sports fans and sport scholars. The dissertations encompass student-athlete graduation rates, student support services, faculty perceptions, and admission procedures. I will briefly discuss the overarching subjects of literacy, basic writing, and critical pedagogy in this review, but I will also cover these topics in more depth in subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3 outlines the hybrid methodology I used as I conducted a three-year longitudinal and ethnographic study of first-year student-athletes who enrolled in the two-course sequence, ENGL 10703 and ENGL 10803, Introduction to Critical Writing (ICW), during the fall semesters 2004, 2005, and 2006 at Texas Christian University. This course is specifically designed for the incoming first-year student who is not academically prepared to succeed in a traditional one-semester, first-year writing course. For the three years, I taught the course, 80 percent of the students enrolled (36 out of 45) were student-athletes. Of these 36 students, 95 percent of them were student-athletes in a revenue-producing sport.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 are the foundation of this dissertation as they highlight the information gathered during the longitudinal and ethnographic studies when I taught an Introduction to Writing Course during 2004, 2005, and 2006. Three case studies emerged from these years of research, and each case study corresponds to a particular year of the study. Chapter 4 presents "D'Ante"; Chapter 5, "Sean"; and Chapter 6, and "Eric." Each case study represents student-athletes in different sports, with a wide range of academic ability, and with an even wider range of desire to acclimate to a predominantly white institution. The case studies are framed by Interchapters, which function as the introduction and conclusion to this section of the dissertation.

Chapter 7 of this dissertation presents the findings and the analysis of the longitudinal and ethnographic study and how these findings are applicable to the teaching of underprepared student-athletes at Division I-A institutions. In this

chapter, I explore pedagogical strategies that were beneficial to the students enrolled in the ICW course, I address issues of critical pedagogy and student resistance, and I examine methods of teaching that involve the inversion of typical race demographics (Caucasian student as the minority) at this specific research site.

Chapter 8 is the conclusion to this dissertation, and here I outline future areas of research, but I also provide recommendations that universities could easily implement in order to aid in the retention and the matriculation of underprepared student-athletes.

CHAPTER 2:

LITERATURE REVIEW: SCHOLARSHIP RELATED TO THE DISSERTATION

"Ultimately, what one means to say will always remain incomplete and unsatisfactory when articulated in language. The more important [the] message the more an author has the feeling of having inadequately expressed it. There is always something more and something different to say in our attempts to say the same thing."
--James Edie, American Philosopher

2.1 Introduction

Highly competitive collegiate sports can make otherwise rational individuals irrational. Intercollegiate sports, for these people, are a passion, a life. In many instances, both fans and critics of intercollegiate athletics believe that Division I-A athletics should simply become a minor league for professional sports, as the "student" in the student-athlete equation is largely invisible. The university, these critics argue, recruit high caliber athletes so the university can be competitive in the sports arena. This same university system pays the athletes, and that payment comes in the form of scholarships and supplemental aid; therefore, proponents of this system argue, the institution should get its money's worth. On the other hand, many fans and supporters believe that the experience of participating in a high-stakes athletic competition is a positive benefit to the student-athlete, the non-athletes who

are students, and the community at large. These supporters believe that the money generated from intercollegiate athletics supports the university system, thereby providing education for more than just the few who participate in a sport. However, the world of NCAA ranked Division I-A sports is not that simple. Interestingly, neither of these polarized camps focuses on the education of the student-athlete; each focuses on the playing power of that student.

In several of the texts noted in this literature review, what is conspicuously absent from recent dissertations about student-athletes are the voices of coaches. This absence could point to the notion that what coaches have to contribute to a discussion about student-athletes would not be surprising, as their focus is on the job of winning games; a coach is not typically focused on individual players. Nevertheless, the lack of the coach's perspective also points to the challenge in researching big time collegiate sports. Access to coaches and players can be very difficult for researchers. Maura Tuite researched the football program at the University of Notre Dame, and she had to not only contend with constraints and confidentiality agreements from the university's legal department, but also with scripted and supervised interviews with student-athletes. While Tuite's difficult experience navigating the sports world of Notre Dame seems overly excessive, many researchers believed that access to coaches and student-athletes was a major impediment to the completion of their studies. The main reason, therefore, that coaches' voices are absent in the review of literature is certainly that they were not easily accessible to researchers. The majority of researchers studied student-athletes.

2.2 Writing about Student-Athletes

Within the last 10 years, sports writers have penned books about the controversies and ethical challenges surrounding intercollegiate sports. These books have a primary focus of the sport, but they also address concerns about the student-athletes. Additionally, writers for academic periodicals, *The Chronicle of Higher Education* and *Inside Higher Education*, for example, have covered the same controversies and ethical challenges from a decidedly academic perspective. Additionally, scholars have also produced a number of dissertations about student-athletes in revenue-producing sports, and it is the dissertation writers who attempt to provide solutions to the intercollegiate athletic dilemmas, and these dissertations fall into five distinct subject categories: student-athletes and academics; student-athletes and academic support centers and services, student-athletes and the impact of race, class, and gender on their identities; student-athletes and coaching; the economics of collegiate sports reform. Most of these dissertations come from Education or Sociology departments at major universities that have Division I-A sports teams. The researchers used a variety of methodologies studying a wide range of subjects. Some researchers studied only one institution, while others researched an entire sport conference. Some researchers met with a handful of students, others met with hundreds. Most researches obscured the university name in order to preserve the anonymity of the student-athletes, but labeled the university by geographic region. Only a few dissertation writers identified the research site by name. Researchers

conducted their studies at "large Midwestern universities" to "small private colleges."

Dissertation researchers made many comparisons in their studies: writers compared student-athletes to other student-athletes in the same or in different sports, and other writers compared student-athletes to their non-athlete student peers. Most researchers studied only football or men's basketball (the revenue-producing sports), but a few others included Olympic sports and sports played by women. Most researchers used similar methodological structures in their studies. Surveys were very common as were structured- and semi-structured interviews and observations. Two researchers used student writing in their analyses. Most studies were short-term, one semester or one year. Very few dissertation researchers engaged in longitudinal field studies. Student-athletes were common research subjects in these dissertations, as were administrators and faculty. Again, the voices of revenue-producing sport coaches were conspicuously absent.

2.2.1 Student-Athletes and Academics

A number of academic and non-academic researchers tackled the issues of student-athletes and academics, and this is certainly one of the most polarizing aspects of collegiate sports. The question, "are they 'students' or are they 'athletes' " is a common one among researchers, faculty, coaches, and even the students themselves. No one has indicted academic institutions about their focus on intercollegiate sports than more clearly than Murray Sperber, Emeritus Professor of English and American Studies at Indiana University (NCAA President Myles

Brand's and legendary basketball coach Bobby Knight's former institution). Sperber believes that higher education has forsaken education for the revenue and fame that collegiate sports can bring an institution. Since he is from Indiana University, a decidedly pro-sport institution with many sport-related successes and scandals, his point is well taken. In *Beer and Circus: How Big-Time College Sports is Crippling Undergraduate Education*, Sperber supports his claims about the failure of higher education to focus on education—claims that universities want the "show" of higher education without any of the "substance"—by analyzing the answers he received to a survey administered to students, professors, and administrators throughout the country (*Beer and Circus* 10).

He notes that universities not only focus on the creating a sport culture on their campuses (what Shulman and Bowen termed "culture of sport,") but also that many of these same institutions focus their resources and talents on graduate and professional programs. In this, he argues, undergraduate education becomes lost. Additionally, he argues, the creation of a sport culture on a university campus becomes a very expensive party, what Sperber quotes one student as defining his entire college education as "a four-year party—one long tailgater—with an \$18,000 cover charge." Of course, at 2008 tuition rates, this tailgater at TCU, the site of this research study, would be close to \$120,000. It becomes clear that if the institution does not support undergraduate education with its entirety, instead focusing on the money-making and the community-building power of intercollegiate athletics,

undergraduate students, particularly undergraduate student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports, will also have a focus other than academic achievement.

Beer and Circus is not Sperber's only foray into the underbelly of intercollegiate sports, as he makes similar claims in *Onward to Victory: The Creation of Modern College Sports* when he outlines how institutions of higher education have survived the "crises and scandals . . . of big-time college sports" (23). He examines the difficulties money-making big-time sports programs have, from academic misconduct to turning a blind-eye to the illegal activity of university athletes.

Very few other writers have been able to replicate the scope of Sperber's work, as they do not have the same time or resources available to them, and this is particularly true of dissertation writers. Dissertation writers also have much more at stake when writing about the world of intercollegiate athletes. They have not yet proven themselves as academics, as scholars. They do not have the *ethos* and the decades-long career that Sperber has. Therefore, Sperber can make claims and assertions—supported claims and assertions—that dissertation writers typically cannot or do not make. Clearly, Sperber focuses his work not only on the needed reform in intercollegiate athletes but also on the education of undergraduate students (particularly student-athletes), what he sees as the primary mission of higher education.

Other scholars, conversely, write about student-athletes but they do so from a much more narrow perspective. Either the scope of their project was smaller

(studying only one institution, for example) or the writers focused on one perspective of the student-athletes' education. Julie Cheville assumes the responsibility of writing about student-athletes and their education from a narrower perspective than Sperber, but she also has a unique position to do so. As a former writing instructor and basketball coach, Cheville comes to the subject of student-athlete learning from an unusual place. She knows both the inside/outside dichotomy of sports and academics. For *Minding the Body: What Student-Athletes Know About Learning*, Cheville conducted a two-year study where she observed both the academic and the athletic encounters of the players on a women's collegiate basketball team. In their sport, she argues, student-athletes depend on their bodies to understand how they play the game of basketball. Cheville describes how "sites of learning" at any single institution can require "conflicting ways of knowing" (3), or the dichotomy of academics and athletics. For the study of how student-athletes learn, this is an important point, as not all athletes, indeed not all students, learn in the same way. Their work on the court is highly physical *and* mental. The use of their bodies coincides with the use of their minds. Academic work is mental, often very passive, with little connection to the body. In this separation of mind and body, between classroom and court, "cognition [is] detached from concrete activity and interaction" (35). She argues that academic instruction—particularly writing instruction—can improve by using alternative pedagogies that allow students do use their already-developed skills of "body knowledge" (37). Cheville's research is unique and highly important in the study of student-athletes and learning. She argues that a one-size-

fits-all pedagogy does not work, that the passive learning techniques she describes do not work for the decidedly physical and active student-athletes. To her benefit, and unlike the majority of dissertation writers who write about sports or student-athletes, Cheville does not focus on one academic discipline. While her experience was in writing instruction, she broadens the scope of her work to include learning activities within higher education.

Chris Drew, in his yet to be completed dissertation on the literacy practices of student-athletes, does focus on the literacy practices of student-athletes. Drew follows Cheville's methodology, but instead of studying a women's basketball team, Drew studies a men's Division II basketball team in Florida. In his study, he found that a direct correlation exists between how the male athletes played basketball and how they responded to their coaches' demands and how they succeeded in a classroom when the professor used a similar coaching pedagogy. Drew was able to compare the sport scenario with how these same students learned in their academic classes and how they responded to their professors.

Ann Angstrom, from yet another perspective, does focus her dissertation on student-athletes' learning in one discipline: composition. The main purpose of Angstrom's study, "Literacy Profiles of African-American Male Student-Athletes," was to illuminate the perceptions of the literacy experiences of four subjects, African-American male student-athletes. Angstrom interviewed these four subjects and asked about their experiences in two spheres of their lives: (1) with reading, writing, or performing *prior* to entering the University and (2) while enrolled *in* a

required in first-year composition course (or English Composition I). Angstrom had a unique opportunity to find out why these particular student-athletes were or were not successful in writing courses, but she did not delve that deeply into the work or into the experiences the students had in their required writing classes. Not surprisingly, Angstrom's data analysis revealed that all four student-athletes had both positive and negative experiences in the writing class. Her analysis might describe any number of individuals taking a similar first-year composition course, and her analysis had very little to do with how participation in intercollegiate sports might affect student learning .

Nevertheless, the methodology and structure of Angstrom's dissertation was helpful to me as I wrote this dissertation. I used her categories of "Literacy before the University" and "Literacy within the University" as starting places of my own case study chapters. I did, however, expand those categories to include "Literacy before the University," "Growth as a Writer through Four Major Assignments," "Student's Perception / Reflection of His Growth as a Writer," "How Involvement in Sports Impacted Student Learning," and a "Teacher / Teacher-Researcher Reflection on Student Growth." A site of future study stemming from my dissertation work might be to compare these or similar categories of analysis between student-athletes and non-student-athletes in the study of composition. Susan Hathaway makes this very move when she compares non-athlete students with student-athletes.

Hathaway, in her dissertation, "Student-Athletes' Collegial Engagement and Its Effects on Academic Development: A Study of Division I Student-Athletes at a

Midwest Research University," concentrated her work on student-athletes and academics, and she did this by separating athlete and non-athlete student responses to the 2004 National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE) survey(Hathaway). Hathaway's analysis of the survey results examine differences in the benchmark scores for athletes and nonathletes in the areas of "academic challenge," "active and collaborative learning," "student and faculty interaction," and "engaging educational experiences." Hathaway measured levels of engagement by how much a student engaged with his/her academic environment and this was measured by the student's GPA. Not surprisingly, as one might assume, non-athlete students engaged more with their university academically. These students took harder courses, she argues, they studied more, engaged in more critical thinking, and carried the concepts they learned in their courses into discussions with other students once they left the classroom. Athletes, on the other hand, engaged more in non-academic experiences at a university; their focus was towards the world of athletics and they spent less time communicating with other students inside or outside of class. The two student populations, Hathaway notes, appear to be most different in what she terms "free-collegiate variables" or collegiate aptitude as measured by their incoming ACT scores and by their selection of majors. Ultimately, she finds, the level of student engagement (for student-athletes and non-athlete students) has little correlation to their academic success. Furthermore, the mere fact that one is an athlete, does not predict positively or negatively, the students' academic success. She concludes with the idea that standardized tests cannot measure engagement.

While Hathaway's claim that standardized tests cannot measure engagement in a university culture (academic or social) seems obvious, what she neglected to explain was *why* or *how* students had such different experiences. Many who study intercollegiate athletes acknowledge the time and resource differences between student-athletes and their non-athlete student peers. Hathaway largely ignores this very important variable. Non-athlete students "take harder courses" and "engage more in critical thinking" she says. Yet, Hathaway does not account for the fact that non-athlete students usually choose their own course of study, and athletic-academic advisors typically choose student-athletes' majors, schedules, and routines. Additionally, Hathaway does not define "critical thinking" in terms of student-learning or engagement or even how the NSSE defined it. Her study has interesting implications, but it is lacking in its understanding of intercollegiate athletics.

Many who write about student-athletes, however, do have a focus on the student-athletes' learning, on their ability to earn an education while playing high-stakes intercollegiate sports. Researchers often recognize the difficulty for many student-athletes to do both adequately. Jennifer Kulics in her dissertation, "An Analysis of the Academic Behaviors and Beliefs of Division I Student-Athletes and Academic Administrators: The Impact of the Increased Percentage Toward Degree Requirements," recognizes that administrators, alumni, and fans note that the success of intercollegiate athletics have been traditionally measured by the number of championship banners and the amount of revenue generated at the national, conference, and institutional levels (35). In recent years, however, as a result of

Murray Sperber's work (among others), a university's retention of student-athletes and institution's graduation rates has become almost as "appealing to some university administrators and head coaches as the quest for a national championship" (35).

Kulics surveyed both student-athletes and academic administrators, and her instruments that contained three and four open-ended questions, respectively, at six Midwestern institutions within the same athletic conference affiliation, and the findings from these surveys informed her conclusions (89). Researchers have typically evaluated the success of academic reform movements in intercollegiate athletics by the increase or decrease in the graduation rates of student-athletes and how those rates compared to the general student body. Kulics notes that the increase in the size and in the services Academic Centers dedicated solely to student-athletes has helped graduation rates increase. She notes that the additional monitoring by advisors, mandatory study halls, and enforced discipline-specific tutoring have been beneficial tools for student-athletes. However, Kulics neglects to expose the darker side of this surveillance.

The students in the above-mentioned dissertations demonstrate the clear need for greater engagement between student-athletes and their academic environments. However, the few studies reviewed do not suggest why student-athletes do not engage with their environments. Secondly, the reviewed dissertations provide few suggestions that institutions could implement to combat the engagement problems universities face with their student-athlete population. "Playing in the Prose" hopes to provide ways to combat the lack of engagement problem

2.2.2 *Student-Athletes and Academic Support Programs*

It should come as no surprise—given published statistics—that some student-athletes, particularly those in revenue-producing sports, can come to a university underprepared to do the academic work that faculty require. To aid these students, many athletic departments (as well as the NCAA) have implemented structured services to support students academically. These are dedicated services provided solely to student-athletes; other university students who might also have academic needs are excluded from these benefits. The assistance provided to student-athletes at Division I-A institutions can include study halls, computer labs, study rooms, dedicated tutors, advisors, and life-skills coaches. Researchers and writers disagree about the efficacy of such services. Some claim that the services can foster unethical and inappropriate privileging of student-athletes over the rest of the student body. Others claim that the services student-athletes receive are a small price to pay to keep the student academically eligible to play his or her sport. Yet others argue that the services are a way to equalize the playing field, as it were, for student-athletes and their non-athlete student peers.

The exorbitant cost of these Academic Centers has become—at least at some institutions—a source of concern. The facilities cost money, and in the Texas A&M example from Chapter #1, a lot of money in this case equals \$27 million (Wolverton par. 4). The facilities also need staff, committed academic tutors and advisers as well as dedicated computer technicians, facilities personnel, and in some cases, their own accounting, billing, and human resources departments. While the facilities are useful,

they only support student-athletes. The cost-ratio might not make these centers viable, particularly since they do not support the non-athlete student. Several dissertation writers have made this and similar claims in their work.

The point remains, however, that the Academic Support Centers have positive and negative benefits to an institution to its student-athletes. On one hand, these Centers help in student-athlete retention and graduation. For example, James Beal, in his dissertation, "Academic Achievement of Intercollegiate Student-Athletes Compared to Nonathletes," addressed the "dumb jock" myth by comparing student-athletes to non-athlete students, and students participating in revenue-producing sports to those participating in non-revenue-producing sports. Beal stratified student groups at the University of North Dakota by age and by gender. The students' GPA noted academic achievement. By analyzing admissions and registrar records for 279 student-athletes, Beal found that student-athletes' academic achievement surpassed non-athletes, and this, in part, has to do with the specialized help student-athletes received from the athletic academic center. In this study, the Academic Center benefitted student-athletes.

Beal noted that student-athletes who were supported by the athletic-academic center were notably less likely to have been placed on academic probation, repeated fewer credit hours, and earned significantly more annual credit than their non-athlete counterparts, because of the additional help they receive by the athletic academic staff. The "hand-holding" is not lost on many non-athlete students, faculty, and staff. Finally, he argues, even with the added assistance, the cumulative college GPA of

student-athletes participating in revenue-producing sports was significantly lower than those participating in nonrevenue sports. Beal notes that the athletes themselves as not lacking in intelligence, but the system they are in encourages their dependence and lack of initiative. It is clear through Beal's study that the student-athletes rise to the teacher's, adviser's, and coach's expectations. The "dumb jock" stereotype, he says, appears to be based more on myth and misconception than reality and fact. However, he does note that "admitting student-athletes who are ill-prepared or not as well prepared as non-athletes, as evidenced by low high school GPAs and college entrance exam scores, probably contributes to the 'dumb jock' image by both students and faculty" (73). Additionally, the statistical analyses on student-athlete graduation rates from Chapter #1 can demonstrate the "dumb jock" myth. Nevertheless, when a university can graduate as many student-athletes as it does non-athlete students, then their Academic Centers are beneficial. While they can be helpful to students, they sometimes negate the benefit with the negatives surrounding surveillance.

Elizabeth Bell, in "A Comparison of Academic Assistance Programs Provided for Student-Athletes Among the Division I-A Colleges and Universities," found similar results. In her study of academic assistance tools within Academic Support Centers at "multiple Division I-A universities," she suggests that serious deficiency in the academic success of Division I-A student-athletes can be attributed to the ways student-athletes are advised, and that academic assistance programs "do little if anything to improve the academic success of student-athletes, particularly those participating in revenue sports" (183). Bell defines "academic assistance tools"

as tools such as mandatory study hall, tutoring, and academic advisement protocols. She makes these claims based on the idea that Academic Support Centers infantilize student-athletes in such a way that these young men and women do not have control over the decisions that direct their lives. As teenagers might rebel against parents who enforces rules for the child's "own good," the student-athletes in Bell's study rebelled against the patriarchal system of the Athletic Support Center (230).

Bell and Beal both write about the infantilizing of student-athletes, although they do not use this term. They each disagree with the control athletic departments can have over student-athletes. Bell sees over control as a negative consequence for student-athletes; Beal sees it as a positive benefit. Kevin Foster, in his article, "Panopticonics: The Control and Surveillance of Black Female Athletes in a Collegiate Athletic Program," agrees with Beal. For Foster, an African-American man and a former student-athlete, the Foucaultian surveillance athletic centers enact on student-athletes is for the students' benefit. He sees nothing infantilizing about the work athletic centers must accomplish. His study followed the female members of a mid-sized university track and field team. While he focused his study on the women of the team, his primary gaze was on the African-American members of this group. I will discuss Foster's article in subsequent chapters of this dissertation, but in short, he argues that female student-athletes need to be monitored and "groomed" for inclusion into a primarily Caucasian academy, and that in the case of African-American women, Anglo women are the best "models."

Foster is not the only writer to believe that student-athletes need monitoring and surveillance, and indeed, need models of appropriate behavior. Maura Tuite found similar issues in her study. Tuite, from yet another perspective on Academic Support Centers, explores the "marriage between athletics and academics," in her study of the University of Notre Dame in "The Culture of Success / a Holistic Approach to Student-Athlete Development." She found that students benefitted from the services of the Athletic Support Center, but since the university was Notre Dame, the need for those services was, at best, questionable. Even though the university offered services to its student-athletes, Tuite found that the Center "positively celebrated the role of athletics" in higher education. This, combined with the prestige of Notre Dame, created a "culture of success" in the classroom and on the field. Tuite's study implies that Academic Support Centers for student-athletes are a positive force that helps in the retention and graduation rates of student-athletes. However, this hypothesis is difficult to prove given the considerable limitations of her study.

It is difficult to know the level of accuracy in Tuite's study. This is not to imply that Tuite would have been unethical or deceptive in her reporting. In a detailed accounting of the difficulties of her study, she writes of an on-going inability to meet with coaches or students. She needed approval for her study from the President of the institution, the head football coach, and many other influential stakeholders. She signed legal and confidentiality agreements. Ultimately, when she did meet with students, she could never meet one-on-one with a subject; a coach was

always present for the interview, and interview questions had to be approved in advance by coaches or athletic directors. The answers Tuite reported could be scripted or they could be factual. It is difficult to know. The student-athlete did not seem to be, she reported, open to speaking the "truth" in front of coaches and other athletic staff members. Nevertheless, the added uncertainty about the efficacy of programs at Notre Dame also contributes to the overarching question about student-athletes and intercollegiate sports. It is clear that Academic Support Services for student-athletes can provide value to the institution or perhaps to the student-athletes, but it is just as clear in Derrick Gragg's study that student-athletes need more than what an Athletic Department can provide them.

Gragg researched student support services specifically for football players within the 12 institutions of the Southeastern Conference, and he argued that African-American male student-athletes who attend predominately white institutions graduate at lower rates than the general student body, white teammates, the female student-athletes, and other male student-athletes. In particular, however, graduation rates for African-American football student-athletes at many Division I-A institutions are abysmally low.¹ However, some African-American male student-athletes overcome obstacles and graduate from college, and this fueled Gragg's research question: "What is it about the African-American football student-athletes who succeed academically that separate them from their African-American teammates who do not?"

¹ The tables and statistics in Chapter 1 of this dissertation support Gragg's argument about the graduation rates for African-American student-athletes in revenue-producing sports.

Using qualitative research methods, which included standardized and open-ended interviews, written documents, and information collected from a demographic questionnaire, Gragg collected data for his study. He found that six factors positively affected academic performance and graduation rates of African-American football student-athletes at these SEC institutions: "family member or significant other influence, team mate influence and peer acceptance, institutional commitment, self motivation, fraternity influence, and spirituality" (97). These are the needs many Athletic Support Centers cannot (or should not) provide. Unfortunately, however, many Athletic Support Centers and sports programs limit access and availability to the activities they do not deem appropriate or necessary (fraternity involvement, for example).

Along with recognizing the factors that African-American student-athletes needed to reach their potential while enrolled in a university, Gragg also found themes that hindered a student-athlete from graduating: unhealthy team subcultures, institutional barriers, racism, personal challenges, and a lack of positive interaction with campus and community constituents (97). A few of Gragg's recommendations include changing student-athletes support programs, holding coaches more accountable for the education of their student-athletes, and increasing the number of African-American coaches and athletic administrators. Gragg's focus is primarily with Athletic departments, but another recommendation could be greater involvement by faculty in the lives of student-athletes.

As most would agree, Athletic Academic Centers have benefits to student-athletes, but as argued elsewhere in this dissertation, they cannot replace the education and the experiences a student-athlete would have with other non-athlete students or with faculty. Jennifer Kulics does address this concern in her dissertation, but she fails to provide a solution to this problem. Where most non-athlete students have primary relationships with faculty members (who may also serve as advisors), student-athletes have their primary relationships with coaches and advisors, coaches and advisors who are not usually faculty members. One of the arguments in this dissertation is how a relational pedagogy, how interaction with faculty, for example, can also increase the retention and the graduation rates of student-athletes.

2.2.3 Student-Athletes and the Impact of Race, Class, Gender on Academic Performance

The vast majority of student-athletes in today's universities are traditionally aged, 18-22 years old, and these young adults will change dramatically during this formative four- or five-year period, for example. One's identity can shift, it can mold, and it can solidify. One's values can change. One's perspective can change. This identity transformation is common among anyone 18-22 years old, student-athletes included. Several researchers wrote about the identity formation and the identity confusion many student-athletes undergo during their time at a university. Some of these changes are ones that most young people go through, but some of the student-athlete changes are predicated on being an athlete, on being an athlete of color, or on being an athlete of color on a predominantly white campus.

For example, Damon Arnold's dissertation, "The Experiences of African-American Student-Athletes at a Predominantly White Institution" explores the idea of how intercollegiate sports can change an African-American student-athlete's identity. As a former Division I-A football player, Arnold could write from a perspective of experience. He bases his study, however, on the experiences of five African-American male student-athletes at a large SEC university.

Arnold writes that "student-athletes have historically struggled against the discrimination that has been a part of intercollegiate sports" (v). Within this broad context, his study explores the following questions: (1) In what ways does the culture and climate at a predominately-white institution contribute to, or detract from, the success of African-American student-athletes? (2) What on-campus experiences contribute to the success of African-American student-athletes at a predominately-white institution? (3) How did individual, educational, social, and environmental characteristics and strategies influence African-American student-athletes' experiences at a predominately white institution? (4) What coping strategies do student-athletes develop? (10).

Through semi-structured interviews and observations with five African-American football players, Arnold examined their definitions of *success* and their educational and social experiences at a predominately-white institution. Arnold then described and analyzed the college experiences and needs of African-American student-athletes. The key finding of his study were that African-American student-athletes' primary strategy for coping with their experiences at a predominately-white

institution is to develop a common "black student culture" or what Orlando Patterson would call the "cool pose." While Arnold does not discuss Patterson in his dissertation, it is in a study like Arnold's that Patterson's theories need illumination. In his *New York Times* opinion article, "A Poverty of Mind," Patterson, a sociology professor at Harvard, discusses the "tragic disconnection of millions of black youths from American mainstream" (par. 1). The respondents' narratives reflected a shared cultural understanding of "black student culture." The adoption of this cultural belief fuels the stereotypes and the myths that surround student-athletes and intercollegiate athletics.

No matter the student-athlete's race, benefits exist on campuses for this specialized group of students. One dissertation focused on the advantages being an athlete plays in admissions decisions at major universities. "Admission Policies for Athletes: A Survey of NCAA Division I-A Admission Directors," is Pamela Wuestenberg's study about the policies and practices of admitting student-athletes to 11, Division I-A institutions. In this work, she argues that the designation "recruited" on an admission application provides the student-athlete extra benefits in the admission process, benefits not available to non-athlete students vying for enrollment slots. Those benefits can include admission to the institution even though standardized test scores and high school GPAs are lower than those of traditionally-admitted students and lower than what the university might normally accept. Universities use a number of tools to determine acceptance of students into a university. Table 1.6 in Chapter 1 shows the "sliding scale" used by the NCAA to

determine academic eligibility. This is another tool available to college admissions personnel. The scale is meant to balance standardized test scores. For example, if a student scores badly on a standardized test and has a sufficiently high GPA, then the lower SAT / ACT scores are not damaging. Likewise, if one has a very low GPA but can score at a high enough level on the standardized tests, then college admission should not be too problematic. Universities, however, do not use such a scale to determine academic eligibility for the majority of its student population.

Those extra benefits do not cease after the student becomes enrolled, she says. Once the students enroll in a university, they receive other support inside and outside of the classroom and these support systems aid in increasing graduation rates. These additional benefits can also give the student-athlete a sense of entitlement. The entitlement issues along with other benefits, she argues, can cause resentment among non-athlete students and among some faculty members.

From the perspective of a student-athlete, entitlement may be justified, as non-athletes do not understand the sacrifices a student-athlete makes in order to play a sport at a Division I-A institution. The life of a student-athlete is not an easy one, particularly when we take into account a student's athletic and academic abilities, race, gender, or socio-economic class. Leslie-Anne Killeya's study looked at the role integration and the conflicts student-athletes face when these markers of difference (race, class, gender) come into play (5). Over a five-month time span, she interviewed and surveyed 21 "ethnic majority" and 19 "ethnic minority" elite male, college student-athletes at one major university to determine how they rated

themselves as students or as athletes. She also investigated the relationship between how they defined themselves and their measures of adjustment, satisfaction, and academic performance. The study also considered whether the relationships, mechanisms and outcomes were similar between ethnic minority and ethnic majority student-athletes.

Throughout her study, she found that the identity markers of "student" and "athlete" roles can predict a positive adjustment, greater satisfaction with academics and life, and better academic performance. Killeya used student-athlete SAT scores as a way to measure reliability of her study; however, she found that these scores were good predictors only for the ethnic majority (Caucasian students). The ethnic minority students (students of color), she noted, assumed their student role as more important.

Ruben Berry, in his dissertation, "Athletic Commodities: The African-American Male Student-Athletes in Higher Education," contradicts Killeya's claims about African-American male student-athlete self-perception and self-identity. Berry argues that a student-athlete's self-identity as a "student" is predicated on his self-identity as an "athlete." Five African-American men who played revenue-producing sports at a major university in the Southwest revealed that their concerns throughout their university experiences revolved around collegiate and professional sports, the racism and discrimination they experienced as university students, and how the university would support them once their eligibility expired. Berry suggests in this dissertation that it is the student role that is "out of place" in the self concept of the

student-athlete and that "valuing the student role may motivate the student-athlete to bring the student and athlete roles into a harmonious relation" (37). Berry surmises, then, that the stories athletes tell themselves help them understand their role in the academy.

Donna Widener also focused on the stories student-athletes tell about themselves in her dissertation, "The Stories They Tell, the Lives They Create: Exploring Processes of Self and Identity Formation in Intercollegiate Student-athletes." In her study, Widener explored the intersections of race, class, and gender as these "shape self-knowledge and identity formation in a critical period in the life of young adults" (vii). Specifically, she argues, three spheres that student-athletes occupy (internal, intrapersonal, and public), race, class, and gender backgrounds shaped the self-identity of student-athletes. Widener interviewed 70 student-athletes and found that they were most profoundly affected by the dominance of athletic competition. In other words, student-athletes saw themselves as athletes.

Joy Gaston in her dissertation, the "Study of Student-Athletes Motivation toward Sports and Academics," questioned 236 athletes from a number of varsity sports at a large university in the Midwest. Her basic research question was, "are student-athletes 'students' or 'athletes'?" To find the answer to this question, she interviewed and surveyed men and women in six separate sports. She used two high profile sports for men (basketball and football), two high profile sports for women (softball and basketball), to lower profile sports are men (La Crosse and volleyball), and to lower profile sports for women (La Crosse and field hockey). She studied

how student-athletes motivate themselves to succeed in the classroom and in sports. Gaston's study was one of the few that researched student-athletes across genders and across sports (both Olympic and revenue-producing).

Her results were not surprising. Gender played a significant role in her study as lower profile male athletes (La Crosse and volleyball) had the highest ACT scores, followed by lower profile females, high profile females, and high profile males, respectively. Females, she argues, had higher academic motivation than males, while males had higher career athletic motivation and student athletic motivation than females. High profile athletes also had higher career athletic motivation than low profile athletes. Gaston's study confirmed that "academic motivation" scores (ACT or SAT tests) were significant predictors of academic performance. This means that academic readiness must begin much earlier than when students enter a university. Lastly, she argues that early detection / intervention with student-athletes can "prevent over emphasis in one domain over the other"(35). She also calls for programs that would be "designed to motivate the academically at-risk student to develop a balance between academic and athletic tasks" (35). From her study, it is easy to see how an underprepared student-athlete can have a stronger athletic identity. Clearly, the ways student-athletes identify themselves plays a significant role in their academic success at a university. This is an interesting point. Some studies claim that standardized test scores are predictive of academic success. Other studies see these same tests as not predictive.

2.2.4 *Student-Athletes and Coaching*

Few writers acknowledge that student-athletes can learn differently than non-athlete students or even acknowledge the possibility of the difference in the needs of student-athletes and their non-athlete peers. Researchers have only begun to recognize the coaching relationship in the court or field is often more powerful than the relationship between the professor and a student. How might the pedagogy from the court translate to that of a classroom when the Athletic Academic Center is replacing the relationship between student and faculty member?

Matthew Johnson, on the other hand, conducted an existential-phenomenological investigation in "Student-Athletes' Experience of Being Coached." Johnson argues that the coaching relationship is a vital one and he suggests that coaches influence both athletes success on and off the court. Johnson studied one three-time All-American student-athlete for his study. Johnson found three themes emerged from the athlete' experience of previous coaches and these three themes break down into smaller categories: While Johnson's focus is not on learning or academic engagement within the classroom, his work could be modified from that of a coach / athlete relationship to that of a teacher / student relationship. Many of the characteristics or student concerns in these relationships overlap.

Table 2.1: Johnson's Coaching Themes (Athletes' Perspective)

| Theme 1: | Theme 2: | Theme 3: |
|---|--|---|
| "The coach is there for me or is not there for me" | "The coach knows me personally and I know the coach." | "The coach has power and authority in our relationship." |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach has knowledge of what I should do | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach is open-minded, is communicative, and trusts | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach imposes power and authority upon me |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach helps me or pulls me through | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach knows how to motivate me | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach is a source of guidance |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach has confidence in me | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach allows himself to be known (is not distant) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach can be confronted about authority |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach cares about me | | |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Coach abandoned me | | |

Johnson did not construct this table to demonstrate the different ways student-athletes view their coaches, but the table makes his points easier to follow. While the themes Johnson describes in his dissertation do not concern learning in a classroom environment, he does make some interesting points about the relationship dynamics between coaches and their athletes. As a site of future research, one might study how the teaching / learning relationship does or does not mirror the coaching / playing model.

Anthony Smith, on the other hand, looked at the reflexive pedagogy that faculty and coaches can use to engage student-athletes in his dissertation, "Changing the Field of Practice: a Reflexive Pedagogy for Student-athletes." Smith's study explores "the nature and structure of college student-athletes' experiences, their

varied responses to the factors that shape these experiences, and the roles that a reflexive pedagogy practice can play in helping them understand and transform that experience to their benefit" (188-89). Using qualitative data derived from a single course he co-taught with another instructor, Smith analyzed student writing (journal entries) and transcribed conversations, Smith found that these "expectations and conditions are experienced differentially across and within race, class, and gender" (A. M. Smith).

2.2.5 *Economics and Reform in Collegiate Sports*

The history and reform of intercollegiate athletics has a long and sordid history. James L. Shulman and William G. Bowen, in their well-regarded book *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values* and in *The Shape of the River: Long-Term Consequences of Considering Race in College and University Admissions*, outline much of history and the needed reform in collegiate sports through the past 100 years. For example, Shulman and Bowen describe educational reforms that have occurred in intercollegiate athletics, from the beginning of collegiate football when Yale protested the participation of a graduate on the Harvard crew in 1855, to the creation of the National Collegiate Athletic Association in 1906, to the NCAA's institution of dozens of national sanctions and propositions. They go on to discuss the NCAA's reform proposals such as the 1898 Round Report, the 1929 Carnegie Report, and the 1948 Sanity Code. Lastly, they discuss how each reform movement represented attempts to direct athletic policy on an educational

basis. The failure of these reforms, however, reveals the power of the professional model in intercollegiate sports.

The authors analyzed data on close to 100,000 student-athletes who attended 30 "selective" colleges and universities through the 1950s, 1970s, and the 1990s. Their studies are some of the largest done using student-athletes as subjects. Much as Zimbalist did before them, Shulman and Bowen ask for reforms that the NCAA could not feasibly implement with the various stakeholders and their needs and desires within the intercollegiate athletics arena. The inability to implement does not mean the reforms are not necessary, however. They are.

Andrew Zimbalist, an economics professor at Smith College, has written extensively on the business side of sports. In *Unpaid Professionals: Commercialism and Conflict in Big-Time College Sports*, he asks whether big-time sports are worth the problems they create for colleges and universities as these problems frequently conflict with the goals of academic institutions. These problems can also lead, as Zimbalist notes, to "questionable compromises with the demands of advertisers and the media" (103). He continues in this book to discuss the oversight of the collegiate sports, the NCAA, and then he provides a 10-step reform program for the entirety of NCAA Division I-A sports. These reform steps include shortening sport seasons, eliminating first-year student eligibility, and putting coaches on a tenure-track system with faculty. While he fully understands that the NCAA will never adopt the reform measures he suggests, he makes it abundantly clear in this book that reform in intercollegiate sports is necessary .

However, Stanley Eitzen, another well-known and well-respected sports writer, has asked for similar reforms. In *Fair and Foul: The Myths and Paradoxes of Sport*, Eitzen argues for broad changes, much as other writers have done. However, he asks for reforms not from a position of a critic, but from the positive of a sports fan. In *Fair and Foul*, he articulates what is positive about the world of sports while asking for reform. For example, he writes, "even as sport excites and inspires, it has problems. Let's not get rid of sport. Let's make it better. For me, that means sport should be more fun, more inclusive, more humanized, and more ethical" (*Fair and Foul* 174). He argues for changes at all levels, for example, shifting oversight of the system from the NCAA to university presidents, putting coaches into the tenure system, restricting student eligibility, and paying athletes a monthly stipend. The student-athletes would then become athletes. However, he is clear about how these reform measures would be implemented: He writes, "[t]he problem with the plan that I just outlined is that it will never be implemented" (131). Through this dilemma, he asks a question that recognizes the central problem in intercollegiate athletics. He asks, "The dilemma is this: We like (I like) big-time college sport—the festival, the pageantry, the exuberance, the excitement, and the excellence. But are we then willing to accept the hypocrisy that goes with it?" (132). Most people, he argues, are willing to accept that hypocrisy. He continues this argument in *Sport in Contemporary Society* by reminding his readers of the positive messages sports can bring: from someone like LeBron James becoming a professional athlete (despite the

odds against him) to Lance Armstrong surviving cancer to win the Tour de France seven times (*Sport and Contemporary Society* 217).

In his dissertation, Jay Helman discusses the long and sordid history of revenue-producing sports, namely football. He argues that athletic/academic "reforms" have been present since the beginning of the sport. Researching sport archives in library collections representing several major athletic conferences, Helman writes specifically how eligibility requirements have changed through the life of sport reform. By studying the history of collegiate sports, Helman found that historically student-run athletic organizations, with alumni support and influence, had little interest in the grade point averages or the student status of its players. A century later, he notes, coaches and athletic representatives recruited talented players to field the strongest teams possible. Recruiting methods of frequently lead to distrust and disputes among team representatives, and prompted the formation of eligibility guidelines to prevent unfair competitive advantages for teams using players who were not regular students.

University officials turned to eligibility standards bridge the gap between the educational mission of the University and the goals for athletic success. Alumni and boosters groups often undermined institutional efforts to strengthen academic regulations for athletes, and, at times, found the means to provide players with tuition and expenses, thereby restrictions against subsidizing athletes.

2.3 Conclusion

The world of intercollegiate athletics is a complex one, and this dissertation literature review attempts to limit the complex subject. While dozens and dozens of scholars have written about intercollegiate sports (football, basketball, baseball, etc.), not many have ventured into the academic world of student-athletes. Since these texts are usually not focused on the student in the student-athlete title, I have not included them here. This dissertation subject is about alternative programs and pedagogies within an institution of higher education. It is not about winning ball games. Many of the individuals who have written about intercollegiate athletics, of course with noted exceptions, have a vested economic stake in Division I-A athletics. Dissertation writers, on the other hand, typically understand student-athletes as students, not as athletes. The dissertation writer does not usually have an economic investment in seeing a university team win a championship or bowl game.

The review of these dissertations, however, can show future researchers the gaps that exist within the academic world of intercollegiate athletics, and that is something this dissertation hopes to address. For example, few researchers study how student-athletes learn (kinesthetic learning, visual learning, auditory learning), and even fewer delve into the idea of how a teacher and student relationship can mimic the relationship between the coach and the athlete. A few writers in these studied dissertations explored the efficacy of services that would benefit student-athletes at Division I-A institutions, however, these writers did not offer alternatives if the studied subject was ineffective.

The writers of these dissertations, mine included, focused exclusively on Division I-A institution. Division II and Division III institutions, while outside the scope of this study, could provide additional insight into the academic world of student-athletes, as the economic stakes in Division II and Division III are not as high as Division I-A.

CHAPTER 3:

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

*"Setting a goal is not the main thing. It is deciding
how you will go about achieving it
and staying with that plan."*

--Tom Landry, Dallas Cowboys football coach

3.1 Introduction

Student-athletes enrolled in universities and colleges throughout the country—particularly those defined as NCAA Division I-A institutions—come to these schools with varying levels of academic preparedness. Many are more prepared to excel in a sport than they are to excel in a classroom, particularly in a writing classroom. Although faculty and administrators use high school grades, SAT / ACT scores, and writing samples to place students in appropriately-leveled writing courses, even the most appropriate writing course cannot help a student if that student has no desire to succeed, to learn, in that particular academic arena. Students need motivation to succeed academically, and as K. Patricia Cross notes, "motivation is the center of academic success" (Cross and League for Innovation in the Community 13). Motivation is also the center of athletic success, and student-athletes already know this, but they do not often make is the connection between

being motivated on the playing field and being motivated in the classroom. Therefore, in order to teach students who are not particularly motivated to learn academic material, faculty must find ways to motivate them with alternative programs and pedagogies that in some way mirror the pedagogy of the court or the field.

In order to conduct research that describes students in an environment where an instructor uses alternative pedagogies, I conducted a *macroethnography*, or what Wendy Bishop would call a "hybridization of research methods—sociological, cognitive, and anthropological" (4). By interviewing the 45 students who took the Introduction to Critical Writing course during three academic years (2004-2006) and by reading and analyzing student work and other textual artifacts from the students enrolled in these courses, I was able to define four distinct areas important to the understanding of student learning, particularly when those students are athletes. Therefore, the four primary objectives in this dissertation project are (1) to learn how underprepared student-athletes can become better writers, (2) to learn how this particular group of students engages with the writing process, (3) to determine if enhanced pedagogy contributes to the students' learning and engagement, and (4) to determine how writing instructors can motivate and teach underprepared student-athletes.

Ethnography has a long history in composition studies. In 1971, Janet Emig wrote *The Composing Process of 12th Graders*, in which she reported on the composing practices and processes of eight high school seniors she followed and

researched for one year. Based on her findings, she suggested alternative ways to teach composition. Other—just as powerful and just as important—ethnographic reports exist in composition studies, and these research projects have proven vital to current composition practices (see Shaughnessy [1977], Bartholomae [1980], Hull and Rose [1989], Flower [1994], and Sternglass [1997]). Each of these ethnographies follows what Wendy Bishop and Harry Wolcott would call "good project design" in which the researcher has collected field texts to the best of her or his ability and then looked at or listens to what she or he has found (Bishop 93; Wolcott 47). In other words, the researcher does not come to the data with preconceived notions of what she wants to produce. She "listens" to the text, and the text informs what needs to be said. A good project design would include an ethnographer / researcher who "(1) spends time in the field, (2) collects multiple sources of data, (3) lets the context and participants help guide research questions, and (4) conducts analysis as a reiterative process" (Bishop 93). It is within the "reiterative process" that I found a useful theoretical methodology: reflection.

Reflection combined with action, according to service learning experts Janet Eyler and Dwight Giles, give participants (students, teachers, researchers) an opportunity to learn. In service learning, they argue, the "process of acting and reflecting to achieve real objectives for the community and deeper understanding and skills for themselves" are pivotal to learning and to growth (214). Denny Taylor and Catherine Dorsey-Gaines make a similar claim about ethnographic study in *Growing up Literate: Learning from Inner City Families*. They note that ethnographers, those

outside the studied community, must "deal on a daily basis with [their] own ethnocentrism and mental baggage. Reflection and introspection are continuous processes which must take place throughout the study" (xv). In this research project, the action / reflection cycle helped me learn, think, and rethink my project as I struggled with my own "mental baggage," while also helping the project design, research questions, and research objectives. By reflecting on prior actions and assumptions, I was able to make changes as I went through the process of writing this dissertation. The action / reflection cycle of learning and adapting is similar to the ethnographer's work of taking field notes, coding those notes, and then determining how those codes and notes have significance to the overall study.

Taking notes and coding data, however, are not enough to get a sense of a community and what that community values. According to Beverly Moss, an ethnographer must gain access to the community she studies; this access takes time and it takes the participants' willingness to be studied. Ethnographers must "allow participants (along with artifacts from the community) to define [that] community," but by also involving participants in the study, those participants become co-researchers in the project (157). By taking notes, coding data, incorporating the views and perspectives of study participants, and by reflecting and acting upon knowledge gained, the ethnographer can gain access to the community she studies.

Including John Dewey's educational theories of action / reflection alongside other research methods (the sociological, cognitive, and anthropological methods mentioned by Bishop), this dissertation became a hybrid research project(Dewey).

This type of hybridization in composition research is common. Marilyn Sternglass and Mina Shaughnessy, among others, have demonstrated the value of thorough and rigorous ethnographic research that employs the hybrid approach. Bishop notes that ethnography gains power through length, and that long-term observation of participants increases the researcher's depth of knowledge about the subject (73). My dissertation project spanned four years: three years as a teacher-researcher and one year as an ethnographic-researcher. It is through time—longitude—that a researcher can reflect on the research, make modifications to initial hypotheses, and try again to make meaning of the data, once again using the action / reflection cycle.

3.2 Research Site

Since questions about motivation, learning, and pedagogy drove my research about effective ways to teach writing to underprepared student athletes, my research site involved a unique writing course at Texas Christian University (TCU), Introduction to Critical Writing (ICW). This writing course is a first-year composition course stretched over the span of two academic semesters. The students enrolled in this course were students who might not pass a traditional one-semester, first-year composition course because of their lack of preparedness in writing. Many of the students enrolled in ICW were student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports of football and men's basketball at the Division I-A level, but the course is not limited to this particular student group. Athletes in other sports (Olympic sports),

female athletes, second-language learners, and students with learning differences¹ have also been members of this learning community. Through the academic years 2004-2006, 45 students enrolled in the ICW course, with an average of 15 students per yearlong class. Table 3.1 shows a statistical analysis of the three-year ICW class demographic when I acted as teacher-researcher. The fourth year TCU offered the ICW course, I acted as an ethnographer-researcher; I will describe this course and the students enrolled in it more fully in Chapter 7.

¹ Documented learning differences refer to the disabilities students can request accommodation for and these learning differences might include dyslexia, dysgraphia, developmental articulation disorder, expressive language disorder, or a visual processing disorder.

Table 3.1: Statistical Analysis of ICW Course (Academic Years 2004-2006)

| Gender | # of Students | | % of Total | |
|---|--------------------|-----|------------------------------|-----|
| • Male | 37 / 45 | | 82% | |
| • Female | 8 / 45 | | 18% | |
| Race | | | | |
| • African-American Men 27 / Women 2 | 29 / 45 | | 64% | |
| • White Men 10 / Women 2 | 12 / 45 | | 27% | |
| • Asian Men 2 / Women 1 | 3 / 45 | | 7%* | |
| • Hispanic Men 0 / Women 1 | 1 / 45 | | 2% | |
| • ESL Men 2 / Women 1 | 3 / 45 | | 7%* | |
| Disability | | | | |
| • Learning Difference Men 9 / Women 2 | 11 / 45 | | 24% | |
| Athletes vs. Non-Athletes | | | | |
| • Athlete Men 32 / Women 5 | 37 / 45 | | 82% | |
| • Non-Athlete Men 5 / Women 3 | 8 / 45 | | 18% | |
| Sport | | | | |
| | Class Whole | | Student Athlete Whole | |
| • Football Men 21 / Women 0 | 21 / 45 | 47% | 21 / 37 | 57% |
| • Basketball Men 4 / Women 0 | 4 / 45 | 9% | 4 / 37 | 11% |
| • Baseball Men 2 / Women 0 | 2 / 45 | 4% | 2 / 37 | 5% |
| • Tennis Men 1 / Women 1 | 2 / 45 | 4% | 2 / 37 | 5% |
| • Track and Field Men 2 / Women 2 | 4 / 45 | 9% | 4 / 37 | 11% |
| • Volleyball Men 0 / Women 2 | 2 / 45 | 4% | 2 / 37 | 6% |
| • Student Athletic Trainer Men 1 / Women 0 | 1 / 45 | 2% | 1 / 37 | 3% |

(*) The ESL students were also the Asian students, so this number appears twice.

TCU is a predominantly white institution (PWI) with White students comprising 75.4 percent of the student population. The remaining 24.6 percent of students combine non-white students and foreign nationals.² The university also has

² The "Ethnic Distribution of Student Headcount" in the TCU Fact Book shows minority enrollment at 24.6%, and this breaks down into the following categories: Asian (2.5%), Black (5.1%), Hispanic (7.2%), Native American (0.5%), and unknown (4.4%).

an undergraduate female / male student body ratio of three-to-one (69:31).³ With these demographic data in mind, is essential to recognize the irregularity of the ICW course demographic. It was unusual for 82 percent of this class to be male, 64 percent of the class to be African-American, 82 percent to be student-athletes participating in both Olympic and revenue-producing sports, and 11 percent to have a documented learning difference. The mix of students in these percentages and ratios was highly atypical for any course at this particular university.⁴

As much as I would want the statistical data presented in Table 3.1, along with the other ethnographic research artifacts, to speak for themselves, they cannot. I am fully aware that as an ethnographer, I am not constructing a sole reality with this data; I am constructing what Patricia A. Sullivan calls a "situated perspective" (57). The context of the class, the participants of the class, and who I was as a teacher-researcher of this class are specific to that particular moment in time. Table 3.1 shows the numbers of students enrolled in ICW during the three years of my study, but, as Robert Connors notes, these discrete facts, "hang in a vacuum, useless, without the interpretations that order them" (28). What the discrete facts do not and cannot show are the very complex reactions and assumptions that faculty and students held about this course and about the students in the course. As the teacher /

³ According to the TCU Fact Book, the 69:31 ratio (female to male) is consistently true at TCU, and has been for at least a decade just as it is a consistent statistic nationwide. For the academic year 2006, TCU enrolled 4,301 undergraduate women and 2,966 undergraduate men.

⁴ A table that shows the demographic breakdown of all four ICW courses, 2004-2007, appears in Appendix E.

researcher in this study, I also had stubborn preconceptions and mental baggage that were difficult to overcome.

Since I already had an extensive background working with diverse student populations, I had the experience of that work to inform the teaching of the ICW classes. I knew something, for example, about the types of writing concerns these students would bring to the course, I knew about their public high school experiences with writing, and I even knew something about the potential behavioral issues the students could bring with them into the ICW course. I also understood how to handle those issues. What I was unprepared for, however, was the overt and covert racism that surrounded the course. As noted in the Chapter 1, students, faculty and staff can hold specific beliefs about the African-American men and student-athletes, students enrolled in the class. This was no different at TCU. Many faculty members, for instance, believed that the students' abilities and their personalities would "certainly" present problems in the classroom. The negative preconceptions and reactions other faculty members had about the non-White students enrolled in ICW were actually quite surprising. The eye rolls and the "oh, I'm so sorry you are teaching *that* group of students" became common sentiments from many colleagues and faculty from around campus. The implicit and explicit racism and derogatory perceptions of the ICW students began to affect the way I saw the students. I did not see the students in a negative way; the comments from my colleagues and from the White students in the class made me want to defend the racial majority (the students of color) in that class from those attacks. My emotions in these cases presented an ethnographer

dilemma: I often questioned if I had become too close to the subjects and if my objectivity had been challenged. This proved to be an obstacle in the writing of the dissertation.

The demographic of mostly male, mostly African-American, mostly student-athletes influenced how I taught the entire class of students as I was teaching the ICW course. In this one course on this one campus, suddenly Black men defined the standard for education, for learning, for growth in this composition classroom. The work that the Black men in the classroom produced became the standard against by which the work in the course was measured.

Ultimately, however, my assumptions about teaching students enrolled in the ICW course, researching these students, and analyzing my own pedagogical practices, coincided. Yet, as I began teaching ICW, I understood my pedagogical practices were provisional. They would adjust as the students adjusted to a new environment, as I adjusted to them, and as the institution adjusted to this radical shift in educational standards.

3.3 Classroom Environment

Throughout the three years of the study, I taught the ICW course in the same networked classroom. As Figure 3.1 shows, the computer classroom was long and narrow with 21 computer stations. Each student workstation was equipped with a desktop computer that connected to the university network. The students had access to the Internet and their personal secured university server space. Each computer had flash-drive portals and a DVD/CD-ROM player. In this lab, students had access to

Microsoft Office Suite (Word, Publisher, Excel, and PowerPoint), Inspiration 8 (concept mapping software), Fireworks (photo editing software), and Macromedia Dreamweaver (website construction software). Approximately 90 percent of the students enrolled in the course were already proficient with basic computer and word processing operations, and using these software programs did not require a lot of in-class training.⁵

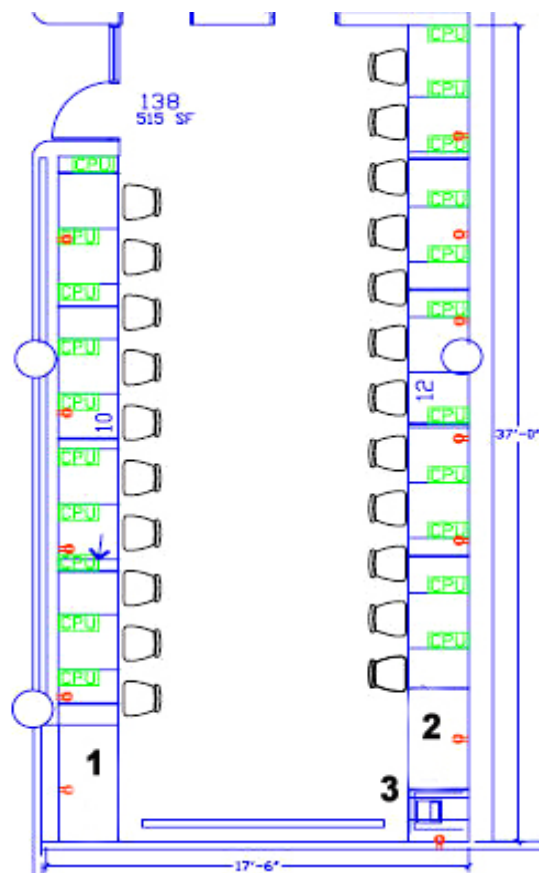


Fig. 3.1: ICW Classroom Configuration

⁵ Even though all the students enrolled in ICW needed additional help with their writing, very few of them needed help using a computer. With only two exceptions over the three years of the study, each student had experience with word processing and accessing the Internet, as a course in the use of technology is a requirement in Texas high schools.

The printer station (#1 in the image) had a black and white laser printer and a black and white scanner that students could access whenever they were in the classroom. If students needed to print, they could swipe their ID card into the printer system. The printing charges were added to their student-account. The teacher's station (#2 in the image) contained a desktop computer with the same software packages that the student computers contained, but this station also included notebook computer connections. This station also controlled the multi-media station (#3 in the image). This station had a CD / DVD player, VHS player, a projector with retractable screen. The multimedia setup also included ceiling-mounted speakers. The room also had a large white board and adjustable lighting with controls on both ends of the lab.

The computer lab did not have traditional desks or desk space. If students were not actively working on the computers, they faced each other in the room, turning their backs to the monitors. This room construction helped alleviate the physical barriers students place between themselves and their peers and between themselves and their instructor. The room had 22 armless desk chairs with wheels. Students could easily roll around the room if they needed. Without a desk to hide behind, students often felt slightly more vulnerable and exposed, as they could not use the desk to separate themselves from their peers or from me. Since the lab is long and narrow and since there are no discernable desks in the room, there is also no traditional front and back of the classroom. Throughout each class session, as I walked the length of the room, talking with each student or directing them in a specific task, every student at some point during a class session was at the "front" of

the room. In Chapter 7, I will discuss how instrumental this classroom space was in creating what Robert Putnam calls a "third space" for students enrolled in Introduction to Critical Writing (28).

3.4 Researcher Positionality

I came to this project through participation in an inadvertent teaching / researching triad involving the Introduction to Critical Writing course. While teaching this course for three academic years (2004-2006), I acted as a *teacher-researcher*, a research role that is a subfield of both Education and Composition. During the fall 2007 semester, I acted as an *ethnographic-researcher* (a role common in social-science research) when the course was taught by another instructor, Jason King; and lastly, I used data compiled by a *participant-observer*, Travis Mann, who used the fall 2005 course for his master's-level research. I embraced the two roles, teacher-researcher and ethnographic-researcher. In this dissertation, however, I will add a third role. I also view myself as a *qualitative researcher* who has used multiple, context-based methods of data collection to improve, correct, and confirm my observations that student-athletes (and other marginalized student groups) need alternative programs and pedagogies to motivate them to succeed academically. Qualitative research as "naturalistic inquiry" is holistic and takes place in a natural setting (e.g. the classroom). The two basic rules of naturalistic research are that (1) the researcher does not influence or manipulate the conditions of the study, and (2) the researcher imposes no *a priori* categories on the results of the study (Lincoln and Guba 8).

3.4.1 *Teacher-Researcher*

Part of the complexity of my methodological choices, especially the choice to employ a "hybridization" approach, is that I draw from a range of traditions, one of which is teacher research. Ruth Ray, a prominent voice in the defining of this phrase, distinguishes between "teacher research" and "research on teaching" (*Practice of Theory* 183). She notes that although research on teaching employs similar methods,

what distinguishes teacher research from other composition research is its collaborative spirit; its emphasis on the relationship between theory and practice; and its interest in bringing about change—in the teacher, the student, the school system, the teaching profession, the field of study, and the practice of research—*from within the classroom.* (*Practice of Theory* 183)

Indeed, if the teacher-researcher is conducting research from within the classroom, students become co-researchers in the project. As Ray notes, "Students are not merely subjects whom the teacher-researcher instructs and assesses; they are co-researchers, sources of knowledge whose insights help focus and provide new directions for the study" ("Composition from the Teacher-Researcher Point of View" 175-76).

From inside the protected space of the ICW course, as the instructor of record, I was able to gather more information about the individual students, their writing habits, their personalities, their academic histories, their families, or their

sporting careers than possibly anyone else at TCU had ever considered. Additionally, from my research on this subject, I was unable to find other researchers who addressed the issues of underprepared student-athletes in quite the manner that I envisioned. Furthermore, I was also able to gather more information about the collective majority of students in this course (as young men, as Division I-A athletes, as African-Americans, as underprepared writers, or as members of a minority class on a predominantly white campus) than most faculty or administrators thought necessary. What made the observations part of the teacher-researcher methodology is that I did not observe students by myself. As I learned information about students, they also learned information about each other and even about themselves. Therefore, the observation and data supplied in Table 3.1 simply came from collaborative interactions and through information I had available as course instructor. The classroom configuration aided in the data collection.

3.4.2 *Ethnographic-Researcher*

In defining the term *participant-observer*, Wendy Bishop notes that some participant-observers "observe more than participate" (74). Some, she adds, "feel that participation is intrinsic to their accurate observation" (74). Bishop offers two extremes of this participant type: "At one extreme," she notes, "you have a distant white-coated clinician, the fly on the wall; at the other extreme, you have the tainted site, where the researcher has disappeared into the community or culture, has gone native" (74). It is when the participant-observer overly participates in the research study that "obvious and often dubious fictions" erupt "out of the potentialities of

fact" (74). With the potential for abuse and fraud within the participant-observer role in mind, and as a way to move away from such extreme behavior, I chose to use Bishop's ideas, but instead, I adopted the term *ethnographic-researcher* to describe my role. This shift in semantics supports James Potter's division of observational choices in qualitative research, as either "passive observer, active observer, [or] active participant" (94). The active observer role—which I will equate with the ethnographic researcher—"mov[es] into the scene, where it seems natural and polite, and mov[es] back to observe more carefully when that also seems functional" (94).

The major difference, then, between the data collection I did as a teacher-researcher and the data collection I did as an ethnographic-researcher was my role, or my positionality. Working within these two roles proved difficult at times. As a White female Ph.D. candidate seeking information into the lives and writing practices of (primarily) African-American men who happened to be exceptional athletes at a NCAA Division I-A-ranked, and predominantly white institution, I was painfully aware at times about the presentation of data gathered for this study. That is, I was concerned about my ability to mine and present the data in an accurate, non-biased, unobtrusive way.

In a sense, this dissertation includes (unofficial) co-researchers. In my study, I also drew from the findings of Travis Mann, who spent 12-class sessions in the ICW classroom during the fall semester 2005, sessions used as research for his master's thesis, "Making Connections: Understanding How Basic Writers View Themselves as Academic Writers."(Mann) In 2007, I spent one semester as an

ethnographic-researcher when I observed Jason King's ICW course. Figure 3.2 outlines how the teacher-researchers and the ethnographic researchers collaborated in studying the ICW course. However, this was not an equal and reciprocal research experience. As the Figure 3.2 notes, I was both a teacher-researcher and an ethnographic researcher. I also spent three years studying the ICW course, compared to one semester for Mann and one year for King.

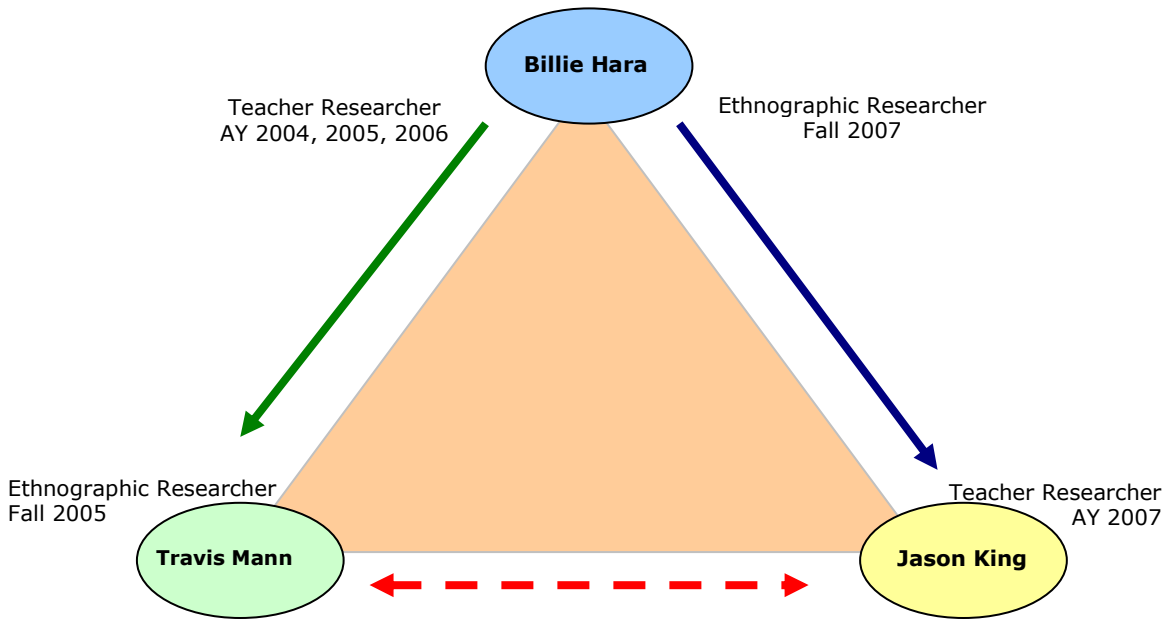


Fig. 3.2: Triad of Ethnographic Research

During the second year of the ICW course (2005), Travis Mann, a master's student at TCU, observed the course as a research site for his master's thesis. At the same time, Mann was taking a graduate course with Jason King, a Ph.D. candidate who would teach the ICW course in 2007. King also read and responded to Mann's work.

3.5 Author's Relationship with Topic and Study Participants

As a researcher, I am committed to a constructivist epistemology. That is, knowledge is an ever-shifting product of collaboration. Constructivists situate themselves as *in* and *part* of the field, and we seek meaningful interactions with research subjects and in doing so reveal a commitment to community building. This collaboration is with other researchers, but it is also with study participants. Therefore, it should come as no surprise that my interactions with the students in this study were complex and rewarding, challenging and rich. From the first day of classes each fall semester, through one year of coursework, after numerous conferences, after successes and failures through their collegiate experiences, through their growth as first-year students to college graduates, we laughed, joked, irritated, challenged, and even cried together.

3.6 Study Participants

This dissertation highlights three specific students from the 45 who enrolled in Introduction to Critical Writing. I have chosen these students to represent the whole of the student population this dissertation describes. The three students represent the broad range of students enrolled in ICW: the student who had the most difficulty acclimating to university life and university-level work, the student who could do the work but who needed additional time to be confident in his or her ability to produce collegiate-level writing, and finally, the student who could do the work but who also had organic obstacles to overcome.

3.7 Data Collection

The primary research objectives at this course site were to gather data about how underprepared student-athletes can become better writers, how this particular group of students engages with the writing process, how (or if) enhanced pedagogy contributes to the learning and engagement, and how writing instructors could motivate and teach underprepared student-athletes. My specific methods of data collection were the direct observation of student brainstorming and writing, the collection and analysis of written assignments asking students to reflect upon and analyze their own writing and the writing of others, and the collection and analysis of surveys and interviews, structured and unstructured, with students enrolled in the ICW course throughout a four-year time span. I also used interviews with Athletic Academic Staff about the writing and learning experiences of student athletes (during and after the students' time in the course) and interviews with coaching staff about coaching / teaching / pedagogy.

Collecting data from the ICW course sections proved an unproblematic task as I was the instructor of record and a *teacher-researcher* simultaneously, and I had almost daily access to students enrolled in the course and their work produced for the course. I was present at all class sessions, and I had numerous conferences with each student each semester. I read all assignments and drafts, in-class and out-of-class work, and I observed many out-of-class learning sessions. Furthermore, if a student enrolled in ICW was a part of a public performance (sports, drama, music, dance, etc.), I attended those performances as frequently as I could. Part of the research

process—what I will refer to as "relational pedagogy"—was to know the entire student, not just the athlete, or dancer, or musician, and not just the writer.

As the recipient of data from an ethnographic-observer (Travis Mann), I had access to his perspective of the course as I was teaching. I also had access to drafts of his master's thesis, as he used the 2005 ICW course, as his research site. Secondly, as an ethnographic-researcher in Jason King's version of the ICW course, I had access to his students' writing and classroom artifacts. In addition, I had access to King's teaching and reflection journal when he taught the course in 2007.

3.8 Data Sources

As many qualitative and quantitative researchers note, using a multiplicity of data sources in quantitative research is beneficial. Using multiple sources from multiple perspectives can help a researcher triangulate data, a method for improving the validity and the reliability of research or evaluation findings (Golafshani 603). Data sources from this study came from students, researchers, journals, field notes, interviews, observations, and course artifacts.

3.8.1 Student Writing

I photocopied each piece of writing students submitted for a grade and kept those copies in a secured student file. This copied work also included multiple drafts of formal essays, copies of email correspondence between the student and me, and printed work done electronically on the course management system, eCollege. (These electronic documents were journal entries and in-class writing exercises.)

3.8.2 *Teacher-Researcher Journal*

As a tool for quantitative / qualitative research, teacher-researcher journals can provide teacher-researchers with the opportunity to maintain narrative accounts of their professional reflections on practice. These journals, according to Geoffrey Mills, become an "ongoing attempt by teachers to systemically reflect on their practice by constructing a narrative that honors the unique and powerful voice of the teachers' language" (68). Working with another *teacher-researcher* observing the same group can also help both researchers understand the work or the research site differently. Each researcher can have a different perception of the same event. Teacher-journals can reflect this difference.

During the academic years I taught the course, I kept a bound notebook, a teaching journal, in which I recorded notes before and after each class session. These notes contained instructional goals, the students' performance objectives, pedagogical strategies, and accommodation for individual student needs (learning differences, gender, and culture, for example). The journal also included five-part lesson plans (introduction, developing readiness, body of lesson, questioning, and integration).⁶ The teaching journal included information about students' interaction with other students in the class, behavioral concerns, and the involvement of the departments across campus that had a stake in the success or failure of this course. Lastly, I included detailed reflections about the class as a whole, how students responded to the pedagogy, how the pedagogy worked or did not work in that class

⁶ A copy of this lesson plan form appears in Appendix B.

or unit, and how I could teach the class differently the next time I presented that course material or faced a similar classroom dynamic.

Throughout the 2007 academic year that King taught the ICW course, King and I kept a jointly constructed, secured blog, "Introduction to Critical Writing," where he wrote reflections about the class and his teaching at the end of each class session. The "Introduction to Critical Writing" blog became King's teaching journal, and it became my research journal for that segment of my study. King also kept an account of his students' work and how they responded to his pedagogical strategies, what problems the students faced with their writing assignments for the class, and the interpersonal dynamics within the classroom setting.

3.8.3 *Field Notes*

Field notes are a running account of what a researcher observes during the study of research subjects. The standard rules for taking field notes, according to Lawrence Neuman and Bruce Wiegand, include taking notes as soon as possible, counting the number of times key words or phrases are used by members of the studied group, and carefully recording the order or sequence of events and how long each sequence lasts. Recording even the smallest details; drawing maps or diagrams of the location, including the researcher's movements and any reaction by others; writing quickly and not worrying about spelling, as well as avoiding evaluative judgments or summarizing are also strategies for constructing field notes (213).

Field notes from Travis Mann's research were ultimately the draft chapters of his master's thesis. As he researched the class and wrote his thesis, he followed

Bishop's admonition to "share in order to be shared with" (71), and he allowed me to read his chapter drafts. This "sharing" is also a form of triangulation. While he was directly researching the students in my class and their perceptions of themselves as writers, he was indirectly researching my pedagogical style. Once his drafts were complete, the students he researched read the portions of the text that were relevant to them. Throughout his process of writing his thesis, I had access to each draft. Secondly, as a graduate student in course work at the time, King also read drafts of Mann's thesis.

As I researched and observed King's ICW course, I kept detailed notes about what I heard, saw, and read, in ways outlined by Neuman and Wiegand (213). These notes became a part of the "Introduction to Critical Writing" blog that King and I constructed. As I observed King's ICW course, I specifically noted King's pedagogy and the way the students responded to that pedagogy. I also noted the class demographic markers that were visible to me. For example, it is usually not too difficult to determine the age of a traditional first-year student at TCU, or to see race or gender. Through listening to class conversations, I was able to discern the sport each student played and other pertinent details of their lives.⁷ The results of my observation of King's class appear in Chapter 7.

3.8.4 Transcripts from Student-Teacher Conferences

For each teacher-student conference with the students I taught in the ICW courses (2004-2006), I transcribed detailed notes after each session. The conference

⁷ Jason King's 2007 ICW course included only African-American student-athletes, eight men and one woman.

meeting notes, sometimes audio recorded and sometimes handwritten, included the date, time, and location of the conference, the expressed purpose or the goals of the conference, the duration of the conference, and whether the goals of that meeting were achieved. If the session was recorded, I used an RCA 64M digital audio recorder. Those digital voice files were stored on an external hard drive in an .mp3 file format. If the student and I did not meet the explicit goals of the conference, we scheduled a follow up conference. I also documented the follow-up session. The student-teacher conferences were unstructured interviews.

3.8.5 Assignments

Throughout the three-year study, I maintained copies of the eight major assignments given to students each year. Four of these assignments or activities remained constant throughout the three-year study; the other assignments varied each year depending on the students enrolled in the course, the preparedness levels of these students, and the students' collective interests. Detailed explanations and student writing samples of assignments outlined in Table 3.2 appear in Chapters 4 through 6 (the case study chapters).⁸

⁸ Copies of each assignment and appropriate evaluation rubric appear in the Appendix C. Selected alternative assignments appear in Appendix D.

Table 3.2: Assignments Throughout Three-Year Study

| Static Assignments Covered in Chapter 4 (Ethnography of Three Students) | |
|--|--|
| First-Day Writing Assessments | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 10-minute introduction • 30-minute in-class essay |
| Literacy Autobiography | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autobiographical Haiku • Literacy Autobiographical Essay |
| Position Essay | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Argument Essay • Rhetorical Revision |
| Alternative Assignments (covered in future research) | |
| Service Learning Project | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "Writing Partners" (letter exchange) |
| New Media | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Photoshop • Blogs |
| Letter Portfolio | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Personal • Praise • Complaint • To Editor |
| Writing about the Self | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Autoethnography • Framing Identities |

3.8.6 *Photographs*

Throughout the three-year study, I took a digital photograph of each student enrolled in the course early in the fall semester of that course. I clearly stated at the beginning of the semester that I would take photographs, but that would only be for my use. I would not share them with others without expressed written permission from the students. Initially, I took these photographs to help me remember student names, but I quickly found that students liked having their pictures taken, as I would give each student a copy of the digital picture. I found a myriad of uses for these photographs in the classroom, and the students used these images as online social networking profile pictures. Occasionally, I would take group photographs of students—always with their consent—if we were doing something in a particular

course that warranted a group photo. I saved all student photos in a secured location on an external hard drive; additionally, each student received a digital copy of his or her photograph. For some assignments, students used self-produced photographs. Students used their own digital cameras, borrowed one from a friend, or borrowed from TCU's New Media Writing Studio. While I used photographs of students throughout the study, those photographs are not replicated here to protect student identity.

3.9 Data Analysis

This dissertation has four primary objectives, and each objective has clear, measurement criteria. The first objective, learning how underprepared student-athletes can become better writers, can be measured by the student's grade in the course. According to the English Department policy at TCU, a student with a grade of "D" or better passes the course. Additionally, if a student can recognize effective writing ability by demonstrating the ability to scrutinize one's own writing, the ability to see and consider a range of rhetorical possibilities, the ability to recognize and consciously shape genres for writing, and the ability to recognize the elements of the rhetorical situation, the researcher can measure if a student has become a better writer.

The second objective, learning how this particular group of students engages with the writing process, can be measured by evidence of enthusiasm for an assignment, and that of going beyond assignment requirements. This objective can

also be measured by class attendance and tardiness. If the students did not engage in the classroom activities or in learning, they would not come to class.

The third objective, determining if enhanced pedagogy contributes to the learning and engagement, can be measured by the confirmation that particular pedagogical practices aided in students' enthusiasm for writing, and by confirmation that particular pedagogical practices inhibited learning.

Lastly, the fourth objective, learning how writing instructors can motivate and teach underprepared student-athletes, can be measured by the verification that perceptions / beliefs about students support or hinder learning and by the verification that a "coaching" practice is a more effective teaching strategy.

The first objective, measuring student writing success by the student's grade in the ENGL 10703-10803, is problematic, as I assigned the grades to students in these three courses. Because I occupied two roles simultaneously (teacher and teacher-researcher), my objectivity comes into question. In order to balance any perceived or true bias about student writing ability, I was able to measure the students' performance in the ICW course against their performance in the required sophomore-writing course at TCU. An objective of ENGL 10703 and ENGL 10803 was to prepare students for the sophomore writing course, ENGL 20803. Students take the sophomore-level writing course after they have accumulated 24 hours of college credit, and they could take this course with any number of faculty members or graduate student instructors. Table 3.3 demonstrates the grade distribution for the students who took both courses.

I obtained information from the university registrar about the students enrolled in ICW and those ICW students who had enrolled in ENGL 20803 (required sophomore composition). Of the 45 students enrolled in ICW throughout the three-year period, 44 of them received a final grade in ENGL 10803 (one student dropped the course and subsequently left the university). By the spring semester of 2008 (during the writing of this dissertation), of those 44 students who completed ICW, 34 of them had completed sophomore composition.

Table 3.3: Success Rate from ENGL 10703 to ENGL 20803

| ENGL 10703 (ICW) | ENGL 20803 |
|-------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 44 students | 34 students |
| 2.68 (from 4.0) average score | 2.88 (from 4.0) average score |

The grades students receive in the ICW course is not a direct factor in determining the pass rate of sophomore composition, as a grade for one course does not guarantee a passing grade in the next course. The stretch course, however, has shown benefit. In years prior to ICW, the rate of student-athletes in revenue-producing sports not completing or failing first-year composition was high, roughly 50 percent (the department did not keep formal statistics about this particular student sub-group), according to former Director of Composition, Carrie Leverenz. However, with the inclusion of ICW in the curriculum, underprepared students (athletes and non-athletes) were able to pass the course and then also pass the

required sophomore course at higher percentages. Across both courses, student grades remained roughly the same.

3.9.1 Triangulation

Triangulation is important in naturalistic and qualitative approaches, because as Nahid Golafshani writes, it helps to control bias and establish valid propositions (597). Bishop notes five categories of triangulation in composition-related research, and these include data triangulation, the use of a variety of data sources in the study; investigator triangulation, the use of several different researchers or evaluators; methodological triangulation, the use of multiple methods to study a single problem; theory triangulation, the use of multiple perspectives to interpret a single set of data; and interdisciplinary triangulation, using other disciplines to inform a research process (48).

In this dissertation study, I used three types of triangulation to evaluate and test my collected data. I used data triangulation since I worked with more than one group of stakeholders (students, university administrators, academic advisors, and personnel of the Office of Academic Services [disability services]). Checking data from each group against the other confirmed or challenged my results. Furthermore, since I was fortuitously involved in a teaching triad (see Figure 3.2), I used investigator triangulation. Each ethnographic-researcher and teacher-researcher studied similar courses (each with a very similar student population), and our results confirmed or challenged one another. I used a combination of textual artifacts, interviews, quantitative data, and observations, and I used methodological

triangulation as I used multiple methods to gain data: longitudinal study, case studies, observation, interviews, class artifacts, and surveys.

3.10 Rationale for Multiple Methodologies

Throughout this dissertation, I used multiple methods of collecting data: a three-year longitudinal study, an ethnographic study, interviews, observation, classroom artifacts (written texts and photographs), and qualitative studies (brief surveys and demographic gathering instruments). As noted above, these multiple methods serve as a way to validate the research. They are also context-sensitive, as another researcher would be unable to replicate this exact work. Therefore, I employ multiple methodologies to combine, as Thomas Huckin notes, "multiple forms of analysis, both qualitative and quantitative that can produce converging results that support the plausibility of [my] argument" (90).

3.10.1 Longitudinal Study

Conducting a survey over a period of time not only provides the necessary information about changes that occur but also shows the impact of those changes (Bishop 19). In the ICW course, I formally interviewed students four times: at the beginning of the academic year they enrolled in the ICW course, six months into the course (beginning of the spring semester), one-year after and two-years after the student matriculated through the course. Forty-five students⁹ were interviewed for

⁹ Two exceptions exist: in the 2004-05 academic year and the first year of the ICW course, Ashon, a sophomore, enrolled in the course. He had failed his first attempt at first-year composition course the year before (when he was a true first-year student), and he attempted the stretch course during his sophomore year. The second exception is Darnell. He was a first-year student during his enrollment in ICW during 2005-06. Darnell did not pass the course during 2005-06, and he enrolled in the course again the next fall, 2006-07, as a sophomore.

this study. All students were over the age of 18 and were first-year students at TCU when they begin the course. One of the benefits of conducting longitudinal survey with the ICW students was that I was able to look at levels of engagement not only within a class, but also between classes.

3.10.2 Ethnographic Profiles (Case Studies)

Case studies, one of the most common methods of reporting in ethnography, strive toward a holistic understanding of the research site and those subjects within it. Wolcott notes that case studies are "better regarded as a form of reporting than as a strategy for conducting research" (91). This reporting can take the form of stories and narratives, and they are effective tools, according to Richard Delgado, one of the nation's leading Critical Race Theorists, for destroying preconceived notions about people and about cultures. In some manner, case studies allow the case study subject to tell his or her own story. Nevertheless, there is one caveat to this storytelling: the case study subjects do not write their own narratives. As Bishop notes, "there is also little doubt that the sociological narrative is partly autobiographical, reflecting something about the researcher's personality as well as those of the subjects who enter the ethnographic dialogue" (141). However, "stories build consensus," Delgado asserts, a consensus that includes "a common culture of shared understanding, and a deeper more vital, ethic" (65).

Building consensus is particularly important in this dissertation study as one of the ethical challenges is how to fully present the stories of participants—specifically the three case studies examined in Chapters 4, 5, and 6—and at the same

time protect the students' identities, knowing that their reputations and particular athletic achievements are already in the public domain. For this reason, I asked students how they felt about the publication of their stories in a dissertation. They all agreed that it was "OK," or that "it didn't matter." Some even suggested that I use their given names in this work. However, since the setting for discussing the issues of anonymity was during class (early in the fall semester of the students' first year of college), and since the students might not have fully understood the long-term implications of using their given names versus using a pseudonym in a dissertation, I decided to err on the side of caution. Several of the students had the potential for national exposure in their chosen sport. I did not want to risk that the student could be identifiable given that I would use samples of student writing which might cast the student in a negative light. Therefore, while I name the university, I have given each student a pseudonym. In the tradition of qualitative investigation, I also aim to show the complexity, diversity, and variability of the students' experiences, choices, plans, and aspirations in these narratives, of course, always striving for a fair and sensitive representation.

3.10.3 Observations / Interviews

Most of the quoted passages in this dissertation study are not only drawn from interviews with the three case study subjects and their course artifacts, but also from the voices and perspectives of the other 42 students enrolled in the ICW course during the time of the study, along with numerous university colleagues. These interviews ranged from informal questioning to formal organized discussions.

Although I have not tried to capture every nuance of these conversations—every pause, false start comment interruption—I have tried to maintain the flavor of the spoken voices. It is important to keep in mind Bishop's admonition that "transcripts are always edited transcripts" (106).

3.10.4 Photographs and Written Artifacts

Photographic artifacts offer a unique perspective in an ethnographic study. Because ethnographic studies often use traditional narrative techniques to open their reports, and because ethnographic data analysis can take years, a photographic record, according to Bishop, can prompt the researcher's or the subject's memory, allowing him or her to recapture precise details (85). Requests to obtain visual permissions from subjects can sometimes threaten the comfort of participants and also misrepresent the scene, but since I already use photography in my composition pedagogy, and using the photographs in small in-class writing exercises was a clearly stated course objective, obtaining permission to take and use photographs of study participants seemed a normal part of the course to those students.

Photographs can capture a moment in time of a study participant or a research site, and these are valuable captures. A student's writing, on the other hand, can provide an ethnographic-researcher with very different data. In the ICW course for example, by looking at a body of an individual student's work I noted the way a student's writing improved over the course of the study. By looking at the entire body of work from one course, from all students in that course, I recognized patterns and themes that emerged in the writing; I formed conceptual grouping in the work. I

compared and contrasted, student to student, year to year. Bishop notes that researchers conducting a macroethnography, with large-scale projects or with multiple researchers, may need to "code and share matrix displays of data . . . because analyzing data from multiple sites . . . can lend cohesion to the discussions, and hopefully, to the results" (119). However, coding can be tedious and expensive. Software packages exist to help in this endeavor.

For this dissertation project, I used a software program, "Tropes: High Performance Text Analysis," that produced a list of hierarchical keywords based on scanned and uploaded student text.¹⁰ "Tropes: High Performance Text Analysis" is a computer-assisted version of "content analysis," the quantitative study of texts based on the repetition of terms. This software package also analyzed and categorized student writing (by themes, for example) to produce a chronological discourse analysis, and it also produced graphical images that depicted the mined data. The software package also allowed me to analyze one student's body of work, for instance, as well as allowing me to analyze an entire classes' work on one assignment. For the assignments that did not change over the course of the three-year study, I was also able to analyze student text between academic years, between the 2004 class and the 2006 class, for example. While I set the parameters for the coding and the textual analysis, the software program could produce visual graphics based

¹⁰ This software program offers textual coding and analysis, and it is a free download from Semantic Knowledge. While the coding is user-produced, the software program can analyze hundreds of pages of text in just a few seconds and can provide, graphically, data useful to an ethnographic-researcher.

on the data it mined. These graphs were helpful in determining the meaning behind the analysis.

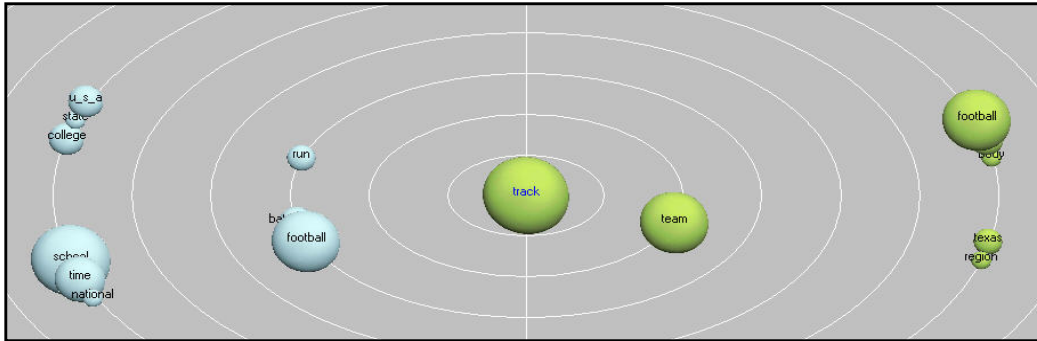


Fig. 3.3: Student Literacy Autobiography Assignment Keyword Chart

Figure 3.3 shows a simple graph based on one student's Literacy Autobiography (which each student in the ICW course completed). The graph shows the main themes in the student's work based on criteria I constructed. Here, I set the program to determine key words in the student's document, and those words are ranked according to the number of times the student used them in the analyzed text. The main reason for dividing and classifying data, according to Keith Grant-Davite, is "to simplify the material and impose order upon it" (272). By imposing order on the texts, I was also able to analyze it more fully.

3.10.5 Quantitative Survey

Many ethnographic writing researchers begin projects by conducting informal surveys to assess general tendencies and demographic statistics for groups, and my dissertation research is no different. Surveys can provide averages, and the goal of most ethnographic inquiry is to represent particulars. Still, quantitative data

can provide a demographic, a context, a backdrop, and a broad picture upon which to place context-specific description (Bishop 46). Early in the research phase of this dissertation, I attempted to administer a number of survey instruments to a large sample of student-athletes (the 417 varsity athletes in both Olympic and revenue-producing sports during the 2006-07 academic year), the 45 students enrolled in the ICW courses at TCU, university faculty, and subscribers to the Writing Program Administrator (WPA-L) listserv. After the difficulty I encountered with one university's Institutional Review Board (which I will explain in the next section), I had to rethink my use of survey tools, and I decided against using them. However, I was able to compile demographic data through classroom discussions and, in some cases, by simply looking at and talking to the students in a classroom.

3.11 IRB / Ethics

As a professional who understands the power and influence educators can have over the lives of students, I have always espoused a version of the Hippocratic Oath for teachers in which the "first, do no harm" edict is present. While the "do no harm" phrase is not literally a part of the Hippocratic Oath, but is a widely-used misconception, the fact remains the same: we should first do no harm to those who are under our care or supervision ("Hippocratic Oath"). When I began planning my research on human subjects, I had this powerful axiom in mind. At the barest minimum, researcher satisfaction of Institutional Review Board (IRB) protocols provides research participants the following protections: (1) the right not to be deceived by the researcher; (2) the maintenance of their confidentiality; (3) the right

to consent to participation; (4) the ability to withdraw the consent at any time; and (5) the right to expect that data collection will remain confidential and secure. I have made effort to satisfy these basic protections in the course of this study.

3.11.1 IRB Issues

Early each semester, like many teacher-researchers, I ask student permission to use their work in my research. I give students informed consent forms, and I make it clear that withholding permission will not affect their class grade. Most students agree to this request.¹¹ However, this dissertation project was different as there were so many more stakeholders involved in the potential success or failure of the course. Unlike a classroom setting where a student can decide for him or herself to sign an informed consent form to allow access to her or his student writing, a dissertation about (sometimes high profile) student-athletes at a NCAA-ranked Division I-A institution opened levels of involvement from people I had not anticipated. Asking permission of students was not a problem, but with a potentially publishable document, Athletic Directors and Coaches wanted input and to give (or withhold) permission for this study. While the athletic department personnel could not stop or directly hinder the writing of this dissertation, they could limit my access to student athletes, the subjects of this work. Athletic Academic Advisors and English Department administrators also wanted to be informed about the project. Then, of course, Institutional Review Boards needed to approve the work because human subjects were involved.

¹¹ See Appendix A for the informed consent form used with ICW students.

When writing this dissertation, I was a Ph.D. Candidate at the University of Texas at Arlington, and I began the IRB process at UTA, my home institution. Since I was researching another university's students, I also needed to work with TCU's IRB office. While some of the requirements from each IRB overlapped, there were significant differences in the way each IRB office approved or denied researcher protocols.

While both Texas Christian University and the University of Texas, Arlington, offer doctoral programs in a variety of disciplines, and many of these degrees and / or programs involve human subjects, The University of Texas at Arlington's Institutional Review Board was much more rigorous and thorough in its desire to protect those human subjects from any real or perceived harm, as they review hundreds of protocols each academic year. This is not to say that the IRB at Texas Christian University was not thoughtful about protecting human subjects; this institution's protocols were simply not as intricate or detailed; they asked fewer questions, and fewer approvals / signatures were required. Since I did not ask to research as a doctoral student, but as a professional in the field, I had a slightly less rigorous set of protocols to follow. Additionally, the TCU IRB office is small, approving only a handful of protocols concerning human subjects a year. Therefore, protocol approval from the TCU IRB office came within a few days of submitting the appropriate forms.

The University of Texas at Arlington, on the other hand, had a much more complicated system for IRB protocol approvals. As a doctoral student, I needed

approval from my committee chair and my department chair. I had to complete a conflict of interest form (that year and each year the study was active). I had to complete on-line training in human subject research. The UTA IRB office also had to approve the protocols from TCU's IRB office. The complex protocol applications for dissertation research were submitted, and resubmitted, and submitted again for approval and for small, often word choice-type, changes. Ultimately, months after beginning the process of gaining UTA IRB approval for three quantitative surveys, the UTA IRB office deactivated my protocols because the process had taken too long. The IRB office, however, invited me to resubmit the protocols and begin again.

The qualitative surveys were constructed to do no, or "minimal" harm to human subjects, yet approval was not awarded. In retrospect—part of the action / reflection cycle of researching—I ultimately understood that those surveys were not actually necessary to do the work demanded of this dissertation. I did find it ironic, however, that the IRB office at a research-heavy institution had such rigid protocols that actually prevented research on effective pedagogy.

The UTA IRB office did approve the protocol to examine student work, and the artifacts produced in the Introduction to Critical Writing course was more than enough to study.¹² As noted earlier, the survey information I received from students was not from an actual survey: I collected the data by teaching the students and getting to know them as people.

¹² The signed protocol appears in Appendix A.

3.11.2 Ways to Minimize Threats

Although not required by either institution's IRB office, I did design ways to minimize any potential threat to human subjects while at the same time minimizing threats to the reliability and validity of data. I enhanced reliability and validity by engaging in long-term fieldwork; using audio tape recording (when appropriate, as many subjects [e.g. coaches or athletic academic advisors] would not allow recording); using a low-interference vocabulary when compiling notes; trying to accurately describe the classroom experiences, the conferences, and the interview encounters; withholding judgment of the final analysis as long as I possibly could; and identifying my role as a researcher in the final analysis.

3.12 Limitations of Study

Every study is hampered by factors within and beyond the researcher's control. This is emphatically so when the sources of data are human beings and their constantly shifting lives, and these shifting lives can be limitations to a research study. Beverly Moss notes that ethnographers "have a tendency to rely on their own knowledge for a great deal of data" (167). I was no different. This study spanned three years and I was the sole constant participant in the work. During the second and third year of the study, it was difficult to avoid bringing assumptions about student preparedness and student behavior into the classroom setting with me, as I brought the prior year's experiences into the next year's classroom environment. I worked very hard at reminding myself that each year's class was different, each student was different, each had different needs and abilities, yet it was difficult to

keep previous years' experiences from overlapping onto the current year's study or class. I used my teaching journals to work through and reflect upon assumptions I made and prior knowledge I held so that these would not corrupt the data from the research site.

However, this study also demonstrated what Ruth Ray calls a "crucial conflict," as I often felt torn between my role as a teacher and my role as a researcher. As the students' teacher, I felt responsible for their learning. On the other hand, I did not feel that same responsibility as a researcher ("Language and Literacy from the Student Perspective: What We Can Learn from the Long-Term Case Study" 334-35).

Bishop notes that quite a few ethnographic decisions rest on access (65), and access was a significant limitation to this study. I had considerable access to students enrolled in the ICW class while they were enrolled in the course, but once they left the course, my access to them diminished. Of course, the students had busy lives, practice schedules, and classes, but what I did not anticipate was the involvement of coaching staff and how easily they limited my access to students. Once the students were no longer in my class, coaches cautioned some of the student-athletes that they could not speak with me about this project. Therefore, formal meetings with a few former students became difficult. However, depending on the student and his involvement in the sport he played, we sometimes had informal meetings or conversations. If I saw a student walking across campus or in the student union, the

student would typically talk with me, and he would be open and honest about how he experienced the ICW course and how he progressed in his academic writing.

Lastly, there is also no definite way of knowing the extent to which the data in this study represents the experiences of academically underprepared African-American male student-athletes who participate in revenue-producing sports, as athletes and their abilities vary from institution to institution. However, I can speculate that the generalizability of the data is applicable to other student-athletes who play revenue-producing sports at NCAA-ranked Division I-A institutions.

3.12.1 A Single Research Site

The institution that makes up the population of my study, Texas Christian University, is academically selective. The NCAA also ranks TCU a Division I-A institution where participation in sports is highly competitive. Being selective—on and off the field or court—means the institution receives many more applications from well-qualified students than it has places for in any given year's entering class, and it must select among applicants on a variety of criteria, including athletic talent. By national standards, the first-year class that TCU admits each year has strong academic qualifications (with SAT scores, for example, that are well above national norms, and with its share of high school valedictorians and national merit scholarship winners). The limitation to the study is that research concerns just one university, but I believe the data are similar enough to other Texas institutions who admit students who might lack preparedness in academics, particularly in writing.

3.12.2 Number of Participants

One reason for limiting the study to one group at only one institution is that sharpening the focus in this manner has allowed me to work with detailed data on approximately 45 students (of this total number of students 82 percent were student-athletes) who entered TCU four points in time: the fall of 2003, the fall of 2004, the fall of 2005, and the fall of 2006. The percentages of ESL, female student-athletes, Olympic sport athletes, and students with learning differences are much too small to make any generalizable claim about teaching these subgroups of students (see Table 3.1).

3.12.3 Sport-Related Issues as a Limitation to this Study

One of the most interesting aspects of writing a dissertation about Division I-A student athletes was the reactions from colleagues, friends, even strangers who heard about this project. These interested parties had what they considered deep understanding of revenue-producing sports, the players, the coaches, the athletes' histories. They knew the myths of collegiate sports and that these myths are not really myths at all. They also knew that those myths are exaggerations, yet they chose to believe them anyway. The contradictions and inconsistencies were disconcerting. Some faculty members wanted to share their information, and some wanted to disguise it. To some, the idea of a research study about alternative programs and pedagogies to help motivate and teach underprepared student athletes was a good and noble endeavor. To others, acknowledging that universities admit underprepared students into their institutions was a shameful act that must not be

made public, as it perpetuates the "dumb jock" myth and disparages the university. It is important to recognize that a dissertation that espouses the notions that student-athletes need what the academy does not provide them is a call to change, and change is not easy in the world of athletics or academics.

In *The Game of Life: College Sports and Educational Values*, Shulman and Bowen write that the major impediments to change include a lack of information, the fear of negative reactions, the fear of revenue losses and detrimental effects on admissions, the practical difficulties of acting in concert, and competing institutional priorities and inertia. The points Shulman and Bowen make here, when taken together, "[are] a formidable set of obstacles" (290-94). However, they note, "the growing gap between college athletics and educational values is a major, unavoidable, issue for the academy; it must be understood and addressed. The objective should be to reinvigorate the contribution of intercollegiate athletics to the achievement of educational goals" (294). By avoiding the issues raised in this dissertation, by avoiding the solutions provided here, coaches, players, administrators, faculty, and fans can deny the need for alternative programs and pedagogies. By denying the need, denying access to resources (information, personnel) is very easy.

3.12.4 Cultural Issues

"Culture," Harry Wolcott explains, "is an explicit statement of how the members of a particular social group act and believe they should act, and it does not exist until someone acting in the role of a biographer puts it there" (41). As a

dissertation writer, an instructor, a teacher-researcher, an ethnographic-researcher, a woman, a Caucasian, a non-athlete, I was an outsider in a culture that highly values community and connectedness, and this did present some limitations to the study. College sports programs emphasize their impact on building a sense of community with its players. Players work out together, eat together, live together, and take classes together. Moreover, on a predominantly white campus, African-American men, student-athletes, who come from largely urban areas and who are often from a lower socio-economic background than their new college peers, construct their own cultures, communities, and connections. About the unique culture of an ethnographic research site, Bishop writes,

the culture can be entered and participated in—to the degree that the researcher is canny enough to gain entry and the members are willing to afford entry—and then that research experience is textual and lives through the analysis of field notes, transcribed interviews, and physical . . . artifacts. (3)

Even the classroom—the site of research for this study—is a constructed culture and community, a culture and community that I could not enter because of the asymmetrical power relationship between the students and me. To the students, I was an outsider. I was an authority in the classroom, an adult, a white female, a non-athlete. I was ultimately able to enter the periphery of the community, at least for a short time, to gather data, and more importantly, teach in this "contact zone," but it was not an easy task. In some cases, particularly early in the yearlong course, access

to the community was denied. As a complete outsider, I had to earn my way into the group, but even then, I was only there for a moment.

"By the time the researcher is writing up her report," Bishop maintains, "the culture has gone elsewhere, continued on without the researcher, or, in the case of classrooms . . . , disbanded entirely and dissolved in the larger matrices of school, work, or civic life" (3). This is where the anthropological role of ethnographer becomes significant. Anthropologists—like ethnographers—study from the outside. If the ethnographer becomes part of the culture—much like Wolcott's active participant role—the scene changes, the site of research changes.

3.13 Conclusion

To date, TCU has offered the Introduction to Critical Writing course four times: the 2004-05 academic year through the 2007-08 academic year. It is my hope that my research on this course will contribute to how this alternative program affects students both at TCU and at other institutions with similar student populations, as they begin to recognize the need for alternative programs and pedagogies. However, just as Peter Mortensen notes, this research

will not be enough simply to apply the methods we now have to understand how heretofore marginalized subject talk about their writing. The methods themselves, because they grow out of the experiences of researchers who identify with the dominant culture, must be changed. Such changes, at best, entail revising how we justify the analysis of talk about writing. (123)

The next three chapters will profile three student-athletes who were enrolled in the Introduction to Critical Writing course during the academics years 2004-2006. Each case study corresponds to a single year of the study, and each student represents a different sport. An Interchapter precedes the case studies, as it functions as the introduction to this important section of this dissertation study. Chapter 4, "D'Ante, 2004," provides an example of a student who was the least prepared of all 45 ICW students over the three years of the study. D'Ante participated in an Olympic sport, Track and Field. The next chapter, Chapter 5, "Sean, 2005," demonstrates the abilities of a student who had underdeveloped academic ability. Sean was the type of student who most needed the ICW course. Sean played football. Lastly, Chapter 6, "Eric, 2006," examines the development of a student who could have passed a traditional first-year one-semester course with effort, but since he had a learning difference, he enrolled in ICW. Following Chapter #6 is another Interchapter, which offers a conclusion to this major research section.

INTERCHAPTER

INTRODUCTION TO CASE STUDIES

"If you don't make a total commitment to whatever you're doing, then you start looking to bail out the first time the boat starts leaking. It's tough enough getting that boat to shore with everybody rowing, let alone when a guy stands up and starts putting his jacket on."

--Lou Holtz, former Notre Dame football coach

While a basketball coach at Indiana University in 1983, Bobby Knight told a columnist at the *Washington Post*, "All of us learn to write in the second grade. Most of us go on to greater things" (qtd. in Will par. 11). Bobby Knight was speaking directly to sports journalists, their writing, and the difficult relationship he had with the media at the time, but this quotation can provide insight into the way he—and some other coaches—view academics. Learning to read and write are core skills to have, many coaches believe, but then the players move on to more important things, namely, sports.

Each of the students represented in the three case studies in the following chapters had particular ideas about education. For two of them, education was a means to an end, and that end was a career as a professional athlete. For the third student, involvement in sports also was the means to an end, and his end was a college degree. These three students, one from each year of the research study,

enrolled in ICW during the academic years 2004, 2005, and 2006. In these case studies, I explore how they engaged with writing and how their writing improved while in the ICW course. Since the majority of students enrolled in ICW were African-American male student-athletes in revenue producing sports, two of the three case studies come from that student population. The third case study subject was also an African-American male student-athlete, but he participated in an Olympic sport, Track and Field.

TCU admitted all three student-athletes represented in this chapter under its exception policy,¹ and all three had incoming test scores and grades in the range for the "exception" student. Pamela Wuestenberg discusses the admissions practices for student-athletes at Division I-A institutions in her dissertation, "Admission Policies for Athletes: A Survey of NCAA Division I-A Admission Directors." TCU is no exception to the "exception" admits.

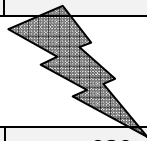
According to TCU's Admission Department webpage, the average SAT score for incoming first-year students is in the range of 1080 to 1250. The ACT equivalent range is 23-28 (TCU "Admissions") The students admitted to the ICW did not make the same cut-off marks as other traditionally-admitted students. Table 1.6 in Chapter #1 (reprinted partially below) shows how the sliding scale for the NCAA works. If a student earns a 2.0 GPA in high school, for example, he or she would need to earn at least a 1,010 on the SAT to be academically eligible under the NCAA rules.

¹ At TCU, an exception admit is a student who is admitted to the university even though this student would not be admitted based solely on his or her academic records (high school GPA or standardized test scores (SAT or ACT)). The university admits these academically underprepared students because these students bring something to the university that the university needs.

However, a student with the same GPA and test score results would not be admitted to TCU unless this student had an exceptional skill the university needed. The exception admits at TCU fall into three categories: athletes, music majors, and legacies. According to John Householder, admissions officer at TCU, student-athletes are not the largest number of exception admits to the university.

Table Interchapter.1: Division I-A
Sliding Scale Core GPA / Test Scores²

| Core GPA | SAT (verbal /math) | ACT |
|-----------------|-------------------------------|------------|
| 3.50+ | 400 | 37 |
| 3.525 | 410 | 38 |
| 3.500 | 420 | 39 |
| 3.475 | 430 | 40 |
| 3.450 | 440 | 41 |
| 3.425 | 450 | 41 |
| 3.400 | 460 | 42 |
| 3.375 | 470 | 42 |
| 3.350 | 480 | 43 |
| 3.325 | 490 | 44 |
| 3.300 | 500 | 44 |



| | | |
|-------|------|----|
| 2.225 | 930 | 78 |
| 2.200 | 940 | 79 |
| 2.175 | 950 | 80 |
| 2.150 | 960 | 80 |
| 2.125 | 960 | 81 |
| 2.100 | 970 | 82 |
| 2.075 | 980 | 83 |
| 2.050 | 990 | 84 |
| 2.025 | 1000 | 85 |
| 2.000 | 1010 | 86 |

(NCAA Freshman-Eligibility Standards)

² Table 1.6 is truncated for space. The complete table appears in Appendix E.

Due to the Buckley Amendment,³ Patrick Miller, University Registrar at TCU, could not provide the precise SAT / ACT score or high school GPAs for the students enrolled in ICW throughout the three-year study. He provided, however, aggregate data that shows the students' incoming test scores and GPAs. The median SAT score (for those few students who took the exam) was 850. The average ACT score (which was by far the most common entrance exam taken) was 19. The students' median high school GPA was a 3.0. However, this figure becomes problematic as each student went to different high schools and those schools have various "rigor" quotients. To be clear, however, the students enrolled in ICW somehow made the cut-off to be NCAA eligible, but they would not have been eligible to attend TCU without the exception allowances.

For several reasons I chose these specific men, D'Ante, Sean, and Eric, to represent the majority of students enrolled in ICW: the range represented in their writing ability, their student-athlete status, their race, their particular sport, their willingness (or unwillingness) to conform to the "university standard" of language and literacy ability, and their gender. However, these three men also spent the majority of their secondary education experiences in Texas. Each student lived in a different area of the state, each attended public schools, and each took the same state-mandated benchmark and exit exams. While their public school experiences were similar, their performance on the state-mandated tests was very different, and

³ In 1974, the Buckley Amendment was designed to establish the rights of students, to inspect and review their education records, prevent the release of educational records to third parties without permission of the student, and to provide guidelines for the correction of inaccurate or misleading data through formal and informal hearings.

their preparedness levels coming into the ICW course varied significantly. Educational, cultural, and familial experiences were what each student brought to the ICW course, and these experiences also varied dramatically.

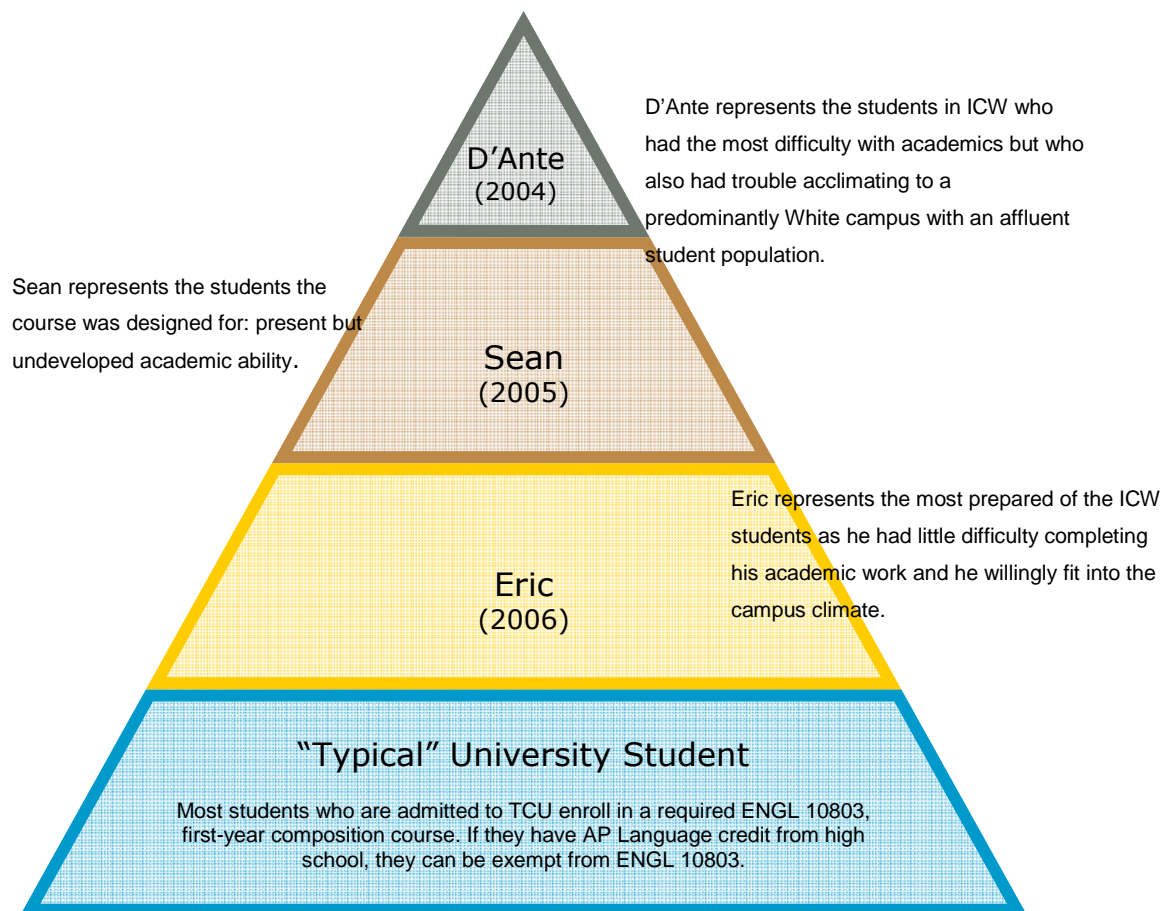


Fig. Interchapter.1: Pyramid of Preparedness

Interchapter Figure 1 depicts the preparedness levels of the case study subjects in this chapter when compared to each other and when all three are compared to the traditionally admitted first-year student at TCU. As Ellen Cushman recognizes in her book *The Struggle and the Tools: Oral and Literate Strategies in*

an Inner City Community, institutions can exercise power over others, over those indebted to the institution. The "others" in this case can be the student-athletes who are (who should be, according to some) indebted to the institution because they are receiving an education, a "full ride." Cushman argues, however, that "others . . . construct, manipulate, and negotiate the influences that institutions tend to exercise on them" (xiv). The three case studies in this chapter demonstrate—in increasing levels of adaptation—how the students in ICW negotiated their place in the academic institution while being "othered," to use Cushman's term. Case Study #1, D'Ante, was the least willing to adapt, and Case Study #3, and Eric, the most. Case Study #2, Sean, represented the majority of students enrolled in ICW who were willing to lose part of themselves as the price to pay for a degree and an opportunity to play Division I-A sports.

Each case study consists of five major sections. The first section, experiences with literacy prior to entering the university, features each individual's literacy experiences within the context of home and family, school, and athletics. The second section highlights each student's experiences and evidence of growth as a writer through four of the eight major assignments in the yearlong ICW course. The four highlighted assignments in this chapter include first-day assessment activities, a literacy autobiography, a position (argument) essay, and a rhetorical revision. The third section reveals each student's perception and his experiences within the composition classroom throughout the yearlong course and includes a description of each individual's challenges, problems, and moments of clarity or confusion as

experienced within the context of completing an assigned task. The fourth section outlines how participation in varsity sports at a Division I-A institution affected individual student learning. Lastly, the fifth section outlines my perceptions of and experiences with each student's literacy development in the composition classroom from a teacher's perspective.

In these case studies, I refer to certain written documents, interviews, observations, and photographs that are artifacts in this study. At the beginning of each semester, I obtained informed consent from each student enrolled in ENGL 10703-ENGL 10803 to use student work for this research.⁴ All written work has been preserved and is presented in its original state, which may include higher-order concerns (structural issues) as well as lower-order concerns (sentence-level issues) in the writing. In the rare instance that I have edited student writing for clarity, I have placed changes in [brackets]. In order to preserve the anonymity of each participant, persons and places he might have mentioned during our conversations or in class have been changed or concealed. Moreover, I identify each participant by a pseudonym.

⁴ See Appendix A for a copy of the informed consent form.

CHAPTER 4

CASE STUDY #1, D' ANTE (ICW, 2004)

*"When we treat man as he is, we make him worse than he is;
when we treat him as if he already were what he potentially
could be, we make him what he should be."*

--Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, German writer

*"The fewer rules a coach has, the fewer rules
there are for players to break."*

--John Madden, NFL Player and Coach

4.1 Introduction

As a first-semester first-year student, D'Ante, a sprinter on the university track team, enrolled in the Introduction to Critical Writing course sequence. If he could have avoided college writing altogether, he would have. He did not want to take the course, and he made that overtly clear as he walked into the classroom that first day of the fall semester, 2004. Through his body language (slouching in his chair, his back to the front of the room and to me), his lack of eye contact, and his unwillingness to answer even the most basic questions on that first day, he wanted to let me—as well as the rest of the class—know that he did not belong in that course. His outward appearance (a mouth grill, gold chains, throwback jersey, and baggy pants) disguised the student as well as the student-athlete. D'Ante looked like the stereotypical street thug he wanted us all to believe he was. D'Ante was of average

height, but thin, runner thin, his closely cropped hair hidden beneath a strategically angled, pristine white baseball cap. The white of the cap contrasted starkly against his very dark skin. However, a closer look at D'Ante's appearance—a closer look at his physique—showed another side to him, a side that most people might miss if they assumed the street-thug role was all that defined him. D'Ante's broad muscular shoulders stood in contrast to his slim torso. His body type demonstrated a commitment to his sport in that this type of body construction requires hard work, dedication, and a significant investment of time. It was clear, physically, that he worked hard to gain the full use of his body for his sport, that he was focused and driven to excel in an area that concerned his body. I wondered that first day, though, if he worked as hard to gain the full use of his mind.

D'Ante was a member of the first ICW course the university offered, and I had significant knowledge about each student who was enrolled in that course before the semester began. Through conversations with academic advisors about those students who needed to be enrolled in ICW, and by reading writing samples from potential students, samples that were gathered over the summer before classes began in the fall, I had a good sense of each student's writing ability, each student's individual academic need (based on an academic advisor's perception), and if the student was a student-athlete, I knew about his or her history in that sport. For example, I knew that D'Ante was a sprinter, that he had participated in the Junior Olympics, and that the university athletics department expected much from him in terms of his speed and athleticism. I also knew, based on conversations with his

academic advisor, D'Ante did not want to attend this course, as he had strongly disliked his high school English class experiences. With this knowledge, I had expectations about who he was before I met him.

Of the 45 students enrolled in the course during the three years of study, D'Ante was, at least at first impression, the least prepared student of them all. He did not have a background that supported literacy development, he had not always done well in school, and by the time he reached the university, he had very concrete ways of believing how his life would unfold, and being in school was not a part of that picture. Being enrolled in ICW during the 2004 academic year, however, D'Ante was with students very similar to himself. Table 4.1 on the following page outlines the demographic of the students enrolled in the ICW course in 2004.¹ In D'Ante's ICW class, 81 percent of the students were athletes and 81 percent were male; however, not all men enrolled in the course were athletes. The course also contained female athletes (one Anglo and one African-American) and three second-language learners. As noted in Chapter 3 (Methods and Methodology), for TCU these statistics were highly unusual for any given academic course. Nevertheless, the diversity of students in this course ultimately helped D'Ante connect in the academic classroom.

While D'Ante initially saw the ICW course as "a group for stupid people," he did learn that being with like-minded and similarly skilled students could benefit

¹ A comparative demographic chart covering four years of the Introduction to Critical Writing course appears in Appendix E.

him. With this particular demographic, D'Ante later said he felt "a little more at home."

Table 4.1: ICW 2004, Student Demographic

| Introduction to Critical Writing: 2004 | | |
|--|--------------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| • Male | 13/16 | 81% |
| • Female | 3/16 | 19% |
| Race | | |
| • African-American | 8/16 | 50% |
| • Anglo | 6/16 | 38% |
| • Asian | 1/16 | 6% |
| • Hispanic | 1/16 | 6% |
| • ESL | 4/16 | 25% |
| Disability | | |
| • Learning Disability | 4/16 | 25% |
| Athlete | | |
| Student Athlete | 13/16 | 81% |

4.2 Literacy before the University

Born and raised in a small town in northeast Texas, D'Ante lived in the same small community until he graduated from high school and then left for college. D'Ante considered his family "middle class" in what he termed, "the ghetto." D'Ante's mother did not graduate from high school, and she worked as a clerk in a local retail store. However, living with his mother and his two younger sisters, D'Ante noted that his mother was his major influence as he grew up. For example, maxims from his mother such as, "don't bite your tongue cause biting your tongue hurts (that ties in with speaking your mind)," populated his writing and his conversations. This influence—for the most part—was to keep D'Ante out of trouble, and according to his recollections, his mother's influence rarely had anything to do

with reading and writing. "She worked a lot," he noted, "and she had to take care of me and my sisters. She didn't have time to teach us to read or write. After I started school, she assumed I did my school work," he recalled, "and I let her assume that." D'Ante suggested that he did not always do his schoolwork, and there was not much academic accountability at home. He made it clear that literacy development at home was not his mother's priority, so he did not see real value in education. The implication here is that had literacy mattered more at home, it might have mattered more to him. This would support Deborah Brandt's idea that those who do well in school have lives outside of school that are "richly dependent" on literacy and literate activities (*Literacy as Involvement: The Acts of Writers, Readers, and Texts* 193). The opposite could be true as well: those who do not have lives richly dependent on literacy or literate activities outside of school may not be successful in school.

Academic literacy did not have a place in D'Ante's life because athletics and what he would call "confrontations" along with what some would term traditional teaching methodologies often got in the way. D'Ante described these confrontations in an early essay:

Back in grade school up to the eight grade I lived in the principal office. Most of the reason came from my extremely bad temper and mouth [. . .] If I was in class having an important conversation I consider it business. The teacher would tell me to quit with the excessive talking and I wouldn't. Me not stopping resulted into a confrontation that I often lost.

Confrontations such as the ones D'Ante illustrated in this short entry are what renowned Afrocentric educator Jawanza Kunjufu would call "showdowns." A showdown, Kunjufu writes, "is a power struggle, a rite of passage between African-American male students and female teachers" (19). Wrapped up in these confrontations are issues of youth rebellion, resistance (to authority, to change), and racism. These behaviors are not unusual for adolescents of almost any race or ethnicity, but what separates the showdown from typical youthful resistance is the difference in race and ideology between the teacher and the student. What D'Ante could not have understood or articulated at the time—but later was able to express—was that the teacher wanted him to conform to her notion of what a "good" student should do or who he should be. D'Ante, in retrospect, considered this a racial attack, and he fought back: he resisted the teacher's perspective and ideology. Lisa Delpit would not call this a "showdown," but "cross cultural confusion" (135). The showdown behavior, the confrontations with his teachers, would plague D'Ante throughout his academic career, he said, as he was unable or unwilling to learn the self-control being in educational settings required.²

In the third grade, D'Ante experienced what many young children experience in elementary school reading classes, being placed into homogenous reading groups, what D'Ante termed the "slow" readers' group. Educators term the grouping of

² While outside the scope of this dissertation, numerous studies have demonstrated that boys and girls learn differently and they exhibit different behaviors in a classroom. Many teachers expect children to behave in a similar manner, young boys behaving as young girls, passive and quiet. Studies note, however, that quiet and passive behaviors are not typically associated with boys, and the studies have found that boys do not do as well in elementary school because of these disparities. For one example, see Robert B. Chapman's article, "Academic and Behavioral Problems of Boys in Elementary School."

students based on skill level "tracking." While tracking is beneficial to teachers, it can have a detrimental impact on young children as it labels them, brands them to a certain ability level. The students then have a tendency to perform at that established level. D'Ante recognized that he was tracked into the "slow reader" group when his friends, he remembered, were in the "fast" reading groups. This separation from his friends and the label of "slow reader" impacted D'Ante's reading because he then *chose* to remain a slow reader, or at least he chose to not work hard enough that he could move to a higher reading group. He could have pushed himself harder, he said, but he chose not to. In other words, he resisted the authority the teacher had over him. "If that was all they thought I could do, that's all that I would do," he stated. Herbert Kohl would call D'Ante's rejection of his teacher's labeling, "not learning." The intentional choice to not learn, according to Kohl, "tends to strengthen the will, clarify one's definition of self, reinforce self-discipline, and provide inner satisfaction" (15).

D'Ante learned very early in his academic experience that he could find a way around whatever problem he encountered with teachers and with schoolwork. His teachers would assign books or shorter readings, for example, and since "everybody read the same books [in the class or in a particular grade]," D'Ante could usually find someone who had actually read the book and who would give him the main points. He did realize later, he noted, that by refusing to try harder, by remaining in what he termed "the slower" reading group, and by refusing to do the work required of him, he was hurting himself more than he was hurting anyone else.

The reasons for D'Ante's "failure," to use Kohl's term, might have been personal, social, or cultural, but whatever it was, the results of failure typically are a loss of self-confidence accompanied by a sense of inferiority and inadequacy. Kohl explains,

Not-learning . . . produces thoroughly different effects; it takes place when someone has to deal with unavoidable challenges to her or his personal or family loyalties, integrity, and identity. In such situations," Kohl writes, "there are forced choices and no apparent middle ground. To agree to learn from a stranger who does not respect your integrity causes a major loss of self. The only alternative is to not learn and reject the stranger's world. (15)

D'Ante was later able to articulate how his defiant nature hindered him in academics with teachers who espoused a traditional pedagogy and who wanted to treat each student the same, but that his defiant nature helped him succeed in athletics with coaches who understood how to help him channel his energy and who respected him for what he brought to the sport. During the interviews conducted for this case study, it was clear that D'Ante responded more favorably to male influences (his coaches) than he did female influences (his teachers). It was impossible to know, because he "couldn't remember" the race of his teachers or coaches, if issues of race affected his learning.

After elementary and junior high school, D'Ante noted, he "did not lose too many confrontations." This would confirm Kunjufu's idea that once young men

become a certain age, they no longer possess the "cuteness" and the "impressionability" they had as little boys. When these cute little boys grow up to become big, strong Black men, some teachers will pass the young men through in order to avoid confrontations and showdowns (90). It was difficult to understand D'Ante as "cute" and "impressionable" in the way that Kunjufu describes, and clearly D'Ante did not see himself in that way, but he later mentioned that many times in school he simply felt misunderstood by his teachers, that they had never taken the time to know him.

As a contrast to the typical high school teacher he said he encountered, D'Ante once talked about his high school football coach, how this coach did not tolerate confrontational behavior, but would give D'Ante the time and space to talk about whatever he needed to discuss as long as he did so in an appropriate manner in an appropriate place. D'Ante responded to and benefited from the coach's clear boundaries, but he also benefited from the coach's more open understanding that not all of his players were the same and that they could not be taught in exactly the same manner. D'Ante said, "Either I did what he wanted, or I didn't play. But, you know, he never asked me to do something that he wouldn't do or that he didn't believe I could do. He trusted me." D'Ante did not care if a teacher was mad at him or if a disrespected teacher did not respect him. He cared if he could not play football or run track. It mattered what his coaches thought of him. It was in athletics (as well as through his mother) that consequences began to matter.

Athletics was a way to channel some of D'Ante's aggression, and it was a way for him to win the "confrontations" that plagued him. In a journal entry in mid-October, D'Ante wrote, "im a very competitive person every thing i do i try to make it out of a competition. we can play cards or be watching a movie i will say who can look at the tv the longest with out blinking. you name it i just about can do it." If literacy development had been a competitive sport during his secondary education, or more accurately, if the culture and institutions placed as much value and expectation on literacy development as they do on sports, D'Ante's priorities might have been different. At the time, I questioned why D'Ante's competitive spirit had not helped him choose to learn, why he did not see a teacher's label as a "slow reader," for example as a call to get better, to compete. It was sometime later that I learned the answer.

D'Ante was an average student, by his account. He made Bs and Cs in high school and he passed the state-mandated exit examination after "a few" attempts, he said. However, in a class discussion late in the first semester, D'Ante and several other students acknowledged "passing" through high school because they excelled in sports, and, as one student noted, they passed because of their size and skin color. D'Ante also agreed that he had been passed through high school and that he believed it was because he was a Black man. Interestingly enough, however, D'Ante also made it a point to state that his high school was racially diverse with a 33 percent Black, 33 percent Hispanic, and 33 percent White student population. I wondered at the time if his experience at a predominantly White university affected the way he

remembered his high school experience. Additionally, I wondered that when his ICW peers stated that they had been passed through school because they were Black, if D'Ante felt he had to play along, even if this scenario was not true for him.

4.3 Growth as Writer through Four Assignments

Students enrolled in the ICW course completed eight assignments throughout the two-semester sequence. Each major assignment had a number of smaller writing, editing, and revising tasks that factored into the grade for the major assignment. The rationale behind the assignment sequence was that each assignment, each task, taught a new skill or it reinforced a previously learned skill. Many of the assignments were not typical assignments, in that they were not projects students had done before, and they were assignments the students did not expect. Four assignments of the eight did not change through the three years, and those are the assignments (and student-produced texts in response to the assignments) that are highlighted in these three case studies. The alternative assignments for 2004 included a service-learning project with a nonprofit agency, writing to and posting on blogs, a Rogerian argument, and keeping a media journal.³ I compare each student—even though they were enrolled in ICW during different years—because they all completed the same four assignments.⁴

³ For examples of the alternative assignments used in the ICW course study, see Appendix D.

⁴ Four of these eight assignments in the yearlong ICW came directly from the common syllabus used by most first-year composition faculty and teaching graduate students at TCU; two of these assignments were the same and two were modified. The common syllabus ensured that first-year composition students received equivalent learning experiences across the university. These full assignments appear in Appendix C.

4.3.1 In-class Assessment Activities

On the first day of the semester, in order to gain a clearer sense of the students' writing ability (apart from the summer writing exercise that I did not administer), I gave the students two brief in-class writing tasks. I used these pre-tests not only to gauge the students' writing ability, but also to analyze many factors about the students and their educational histories. In the first task, students wrote a short paragraph that served two functions: it introduced them to the course management system, eCollege, and it allowed them to introduce themselves to their classmates. While they had 10 minutes to complete the task, most students took only two or three minutes to write their introductions. The second writing exercise was a prompt-given 30-minute handwritten essay, and most students took less than 15 minutes to complete this. No student took the complete 30-minute period for the second task.

While each writing assignment in the ENGL 10703- and ENGL 10803-course sequence has student-learning objectives, the two first-day writing tasks are exceptions. The in-class writing tasks are assessment tools, and therefore, have ultimate teaching objectives. As Peter Mortensen notes, the designs of pre-tests are "inadequate to the task [as] such [assessments] cannot account for the complex interaction of oral and written discourse" that occurs in writing situations (115). By comparing the two samples, the handwriting, and the time on each task across the student population in that classroom, I was able to learn a great deal about each student. I looked for several indicators in the students' writing that would give me a sense of their ability; these markers also allowed me to tailor instruction to the

students' needs. The major points of interest in the student-produced text included the overall organization of the writing; higher order concerns (content, idea development, thesis or controlling idea); lower order concerns (spelling and mechanical issues, grammar); audience awareness; length of time the student took to produce text; handwriting; and the ability to decode the prompt.

These markers, according to basic writing theorists, help an educator understand a student's ability to write. For example, something as seemingly inconsequential as handwriting can often alert a teacher to a student's academic preparedness. The content of short writing pieces can, according to Mina Shaughnessy, "reinforce[e] the impression of the reader that the writer is 'slow' or intellectually immature. Yet the same student might be a spirited, cogent talker in class" (15). She notes that some basic writers, "seem never to have made the transition from manuscript to cursive writing, a change that begins for most students around the third or fourth grade" (15), and this could denote an intellectual confusion at this age as well. The intellectual development is stymied at this stage of academic readiness and that shows in the student's handwriting. It is important to keep Shaughnessy's notions in mind, although today they may not be quite as relevant as they were in her time. With the importance of the No Child Left Behind Act and its reliance on state-mandated tests, and the directive from school administrators and

state legislators that students pass these tests, public school teachers do not always have the time to teach cursive handwriting, so they rarely teach it at all.⁵

Conversely, using in-class writing texts can be problematic in a number of ways—if that assessment is the only marker of a student's ability, for example—but in-class writing exercises can be useful when understanding the way a student approaches a writing task. Using the in-class assessments, conversations with advisors, and the out-of-class assessments (the writing samples taken over the summer), allowed me to triangulate the information received from and about each student. I was not relying solely on one piece of information to understand the way the students in ICW constructed texts. Since 2004 was the first year the university offered the ICW course, I had no clear expectation about what the students knew or what they needed. These assessment tools proved to be invaluable.

The assessment prompts also had an intentionally positive focus about writing. Students do not usually realize it when they see this prompt, but this positive statement sets the tone for the semester and the fact that writing is not just what the student might have experienced in the past. After the 2004 class, however, I removed the last line of the prompt, "Please conduct yourselves accordingly," as this line assumed the students would behave badly, would write the wrong way, or would say something inappropriate. This one line negated the positive tone I had set for the

⁵ Depending upon the school district and its available funds for computers, teachers often teach keyboarding skills instead of cursive handwriting.

initial class meeting, and indeed, for the semester. This statement could also have caused students to perceive me as having a bias against them.

First day of class: Self Introduction

"Please tell us a little about yourself—where you are from, your major and minor, your hobbies (if desired), your family (if desired), and your hopes (or concerns) for this class. Keep in mind that this is a public forum and what you write will be visible to everyone in the class. Please conduct yourself accordingly."

Fig. 4.1: Self-Introduction Prompt (2004)

D'Ante wrote his self-introduction in just a few minutes as he had very little difficulty navigating the often-cumbersome course management system, and since we were in a computer lab, he turned his attention to the Internet and ESPN when he completed this first task. This is D'Ante's self-introduction to his classmates:⁶

Im that cat with the throwback and the matching hat. who got the lac
the the system in the back. and a gac to make the hatters stay away
from him, cause he dont really like them he like to bust at them. a
playah thats slim but i got some muscle. if i want it i get it cause im
out on my hustle

⁶ D'Ante's athletic academic advisor (who asked to be unnamed in this dissertation) translated this introduction in October 2007. The translation is verbatim and has not been edited: "I am that person who wears 'old school jerseys' and matching team hat. I drive a Cadillac with a loud, nice radio or sound system and a gun to ensure jealous people keep their distance. Because I don't like jealous people, but I like to shoot at them. I am slim but work out. And if I want something, I can get it because I am willing to do whatever it takes (legal or illegal)."

D'Ante produced a text I literally did not understand, nor was it one that I "expected to see," to use David Barton and Mary Hamilton's notion of expected literacy (427). I had expected—and indeed, received from D'Ante's classmates—a paragraph that supported the literacy practices of the (university) institution and that recognized the power relationship between students and me. As it was, my own stereotypical beliefs about student (in)ability clouded my perspective. While the paragraph was a way to introduce himself to his classmates (his intended audience), I expected, as most first-year students also expect, that I would be his audience (his real audience). D'Ante had written what I had asked him to write. He did not write what I had expected (but left unstated).

On the other hand, D'Ante's introduction paragraph supported the stereotypical notion one might have of him if one were only to look at him. The lack of expected form and structure in this one paragraph demonstrated a deficiency of skill in writing in an academic environment. In spite of this, in this one paragraph D'Ante also asserts skills in a poetic rap register that is creative though non-academic, creative though formulaic. While the rap register is his own, many of the words of his introduction are bits and pieces of rap lyrics. By not reading his text closer and by not reading his text out loud, I initially missed one of the most important aspects of his writing, an aspect that D'Ante understood very keenly: audience. As Robert Leamson writes in *Thinking About Teaching and Learning: Developing Habits of Learning with First-Year College and University Students*, speech in oral cultures is quite different from the speech in academia. D'Ante's

speech could be described as "performance" oriented, intended to affect the hearer in some way (27). When read out loud, one could hear the performativity. Additionally, the rap register, according to Dierdre Glenn Paul, "allows culturally appropriate and relevant pedagogical practices to exist in a classroom of 'urban centered' blacks and Latino youngsters . . . with literacy development practices that advance critical thought, and comprehension of cultural dynamics" (247).

The almost complete lack of punctuation and the lack of capital letters in this short paragraph made his introduction almost incomprehensible to someone expecting Standard Written English. It was incomprehensible to me, his teacher, but then, I was not the intended audience for that paragraph; he was following the prompt, and he introduced himself to his peers. The majority of his peers in this class were African-American male student-athletes with backgrounds similar to his own. In the 2004 class, of the total 16 students enrolled in the course, D'Ante was one of 13 male students, and he was one of eight African-American student athletes. D'Ante had a good sense of his audience and what language they would understand, and he used that language. However, D'Ante also used language to separate himself from authoritative figures around him. Although I did not understand it then, this separation from authority also demonstrated his unwillingness to conform to the academic culture.

Min-zhan Lu, in her essay "Writing as Repositioning," notes that there are two common resolutions offered to students who show such signs of dissonance (the type of dissonance D'Ante exhibited): one, she writes, is to "encourage students to

conform to academic ways of thinking and writing at the cost of rejecting all other discursive forms" and the other "recommends 'biculturalism,' which often means becoming discursive schizophrenics, writing alternatively as an 'academic' and a 'black' or a 'suburbanite' as one 'moves' in and out of the academy" (20). D'Ante was able to move between cultures, and unfortunately for him, many of his teachers, including me, had never recognized that he had this ability. After completing the introductory paragraph to their classmates, students completed the in-class essay.

First day of class: Writing Diagnostic

"In a short essay, tell me about your experiences as a writer. Most of us can remember a negative experience, but today I want you to focus on the positive experiences you have had with writing. Tell me about a situation in which YOU were proud of your writing. What were you writing about? What kind of process did you go through to achieve this kind of success?"

Fig. 4.2: 30-Minute Writing Diagnostic Prompt (2004)

It took about 15 minutes for D'Ante to write the six sentences in his in-class handwritten diagnostic essay. Figure 4.4 shows the amount of text D'Ante produced in this one writing exercise, and it shows his handwriting. In this exercise, D'Ante wrote about his love of rap music:

As an infant my mother would clean our house listen to rap music or rap videos. As she cleaned I would listen and find myself rapping or dancing w/the beat. I continued my acting for several years until I

realized I wanted to be a rapper. At the age of 13 I wrote my first rap song pertaining to school. As I kept on writing I could see my self progressing; so that's when I decided I wanted to be a rapper. Not only was I proud of my music but family, friends, and the community were also proud of it.

The dramatic differences in style between this piece of writing and his self-introduction to the class were startling. One audience was his peers where he could be more informal and use a language that was comfortable to him and to them, and the other audience, for the other piece of writing, was his teacher, where he formalized his writing by adding punctuation and by using complete sentences.

D'Ante mostly prints his in-class essay and that makes the writing easy to read. He had small handwriting; his six sentences only filling up about one-third of the unlined paper he used for his essay. While his writing was not adequate by academic standards, D'Ante knew how to address each audience, and there was ability present that his teachers might not have been acknowledged in the past. Indeed, D'Ante displayed a keen sense of code switching in these samples. Gone was the poetic register of his introductory paragraph, but he replaced that with another voice, a more academic voice.

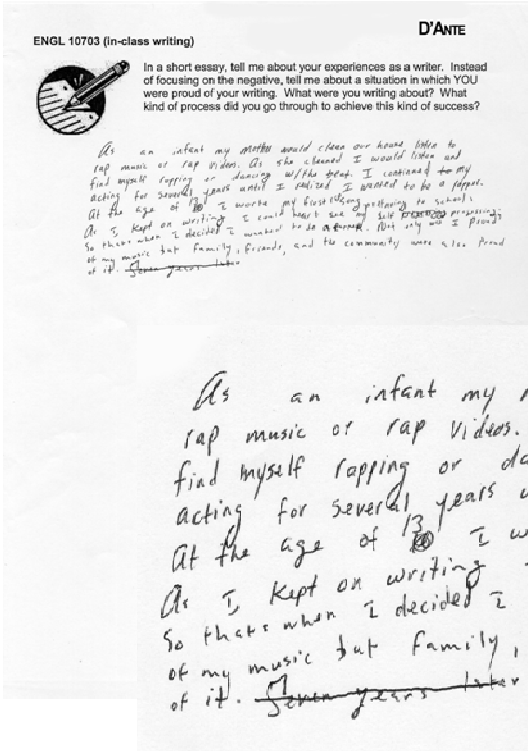


Fig. 4.3: D'Ante's Writing Sample

In this sample, D'Ante wrote about the stages of his life with seeming ease using transitional phrases that would keep his reader connected to the writing. The paragraph contained some sentence-level errors, but those were minor. D'Ante edited himself through this short paragraph, changing the age he became interested in rap music from 10 to 13. It is unclear from this one sample if he changed the text because of a simple writing miscue, or if was revising his history for greater impact. He crosses out the phrase "seven years later," and once the transitional phrase is gone, he stops writing. It is unclear why he stopped writing at this point; he could have thought he was out of time or he could have simply become bored with the assignment. Unlike most other students in the course who shifted the prompt from

success in writing to success in athletics, D'Ante was able to stay on topic (which would become increasingly difficult for him). It was in this one paragraph sample and from his self-introduction that D'Ante's need for recognition became clear. He enjoyed the attention he received from writing and rapping, he wrote, and attention from his "family, friends, and the community" was important to him. To understand D'Ante and his unique needs and talents, took significant reflection.

Suddenly, D'Ante's first day posturing of the street-thug who did not want to be in an academic classroom, a composition classroom, did not seem quite so valid, or at least it seemed contradictory. Even his writing samples contradicted each other. D'Ante wanted others to recognize him, to know him. He wanted an audience. The writing samples are effective first day exercises administered under a controlled and contrived situation. These writing samples did not *immediately* give me any real insight into his character or his ability to communicate.

4.3.2 Autobiographical Haiku and Literacy Autobiography

In order to help students focus their writing on a specific time or event, students in the ICW course began the semester by writing a literacy autobiography in which they explored their histories as readers and writers. The students were to be selective about the events they chose so they would not be tempted to write about their entire literacy history. To help them be selective and to focus their thinking on just one event, the students first wrote an autobiographical haiku (based on a column in the *Washington Post*). In the autobiographical haiku, students wrote about one moment in their lives that in some way defined how they saw themselves. They were

to use an example of how literacy defined them. Similar to the constraints one might use in a traditional Japanese haiku of three lines and 17 syllables, students could use no more than 100 words, so they had to choose their words carefully, thoughtfully, for greatest impact.

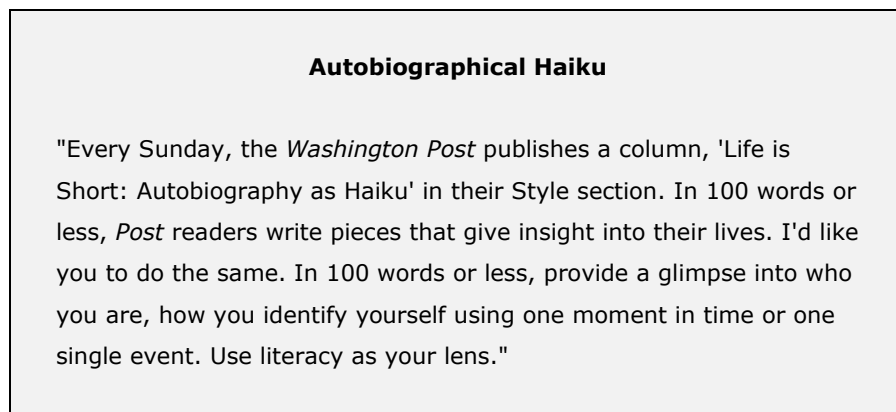


Fig. 4.4: Autobiographical Haiku Prompt (2004)

This short assignment included three main objectives: students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to write one focused paragraph about academic literacy, they should have been able to follow the writing prompt, and they should have strengthened their use of Standard Written English. The Autobiographical Haiku assignment was worth 10 percent of the Literacy Autobiography unit grade.

The autobiographical haiku is an example of a simple assignment that teaches an important writing skill—writing about one focused subject. As with all out-of-class assignments, this autobiographical haiku went through peer review and in-class workshopping. Students read Anne Lamott's essay from *Bird by Bird*, "Shitty First Draft" before they began this writing assignment. Reading Lamott's essay

encouraged the students to understand drafting and the process of writing. The essay helped them understand that they should not expect their writing to be perfect. Many of the students had the mistaken notion that "good writers" produced perfect text the moment they sat down to write.

The same day students received the assignment, I took photographs of each student that would supplement their haiku, and we used the photographs in other graded and ungraded assignments throughout the year. D'Ante's bold and daring facial expression in the photograph (signified by the lack of a smile and the seriousness of his expression) seemed to coincide with his writing about himself. Indeed, the tone of the haiku mirrored his expression in the photograph. The haiku, however, did not follow the assignment. Instead of writing about a moment in his life that concerned academic literacy, D'Ante wrote about himself. This is D'Ante's autobiographical haiku:

I'm diabolical, exquisite, wise, generous young man. I'm exquisite because God created me and no one else is like me. He created me tall, dark, and handsome. God blessed me with a talent to be athletic. He just blessed me in more ways I could say. I believe in helping individual out when they're trying to help themselves. I'm wise because I listen. My mother gave me excessive knowledge about the world that I go by for example: don't burn your bridges. I'm diabolical because I will hold a grudge. My advise to everyone don't cross my path the wrong way.

While D'Ante ignored the prompt to write about academic literacy, he did display significant bravado in his haiku: he knew himself and his abilities. He did not shy away from them. In fact, he acknowledged his own wisdom and talents. By calling himself "diabolical" in the first line of his haiku, and by ending the paragraph with advice to "not cross my path," D'Ante also provided a frame—a literary convention—for the short paragraph that set up boundaries for himself and for his reader. If a teacher only looks for a standard academic form of writing (a paragraph, for instance), or looks for the lack of sentence-level errors, the teacher could well miss the sophisticated writing strategies that D'Ante employed. However, he still needed to learn to follow a writing prompt, to follow authority.

The autobiographical haiku is a precursor to the first formal academic assignment of the semester: the Literacy Autobiography. Writing a narrative about the self is not typically difficult for students in the ICW course, as they know themselves and their histories. Many of these students know what they do well (athletics), and they are typically at ease to discuss and write about those things. What is difficult for them—and indeed, for many first-year students—is producing focused writing. Throughout the year, D'Ante routinely shifted assignment prompts to something else, often to something easier, to something more interesting to him. Underprepared writers like D'Ante can have different responses to writing prompts. Ignoring a writing prompt might mask a student's lack of experience in decoding that assignment, particularly when that assignment involved academic writing, or it might be a defiant move, a move of resistance. Ultimately, though, D'Ante did not meet all

the objectives of this assignment. He was able to write a focused paragraph, but his work was off-topic. Through revision, peer review, and conferences, his use of Standard Written English improved. After producing the autobiographical haiku, students took the skill of focusing on their one subject to their next assignment, the Literacy Autobiography.

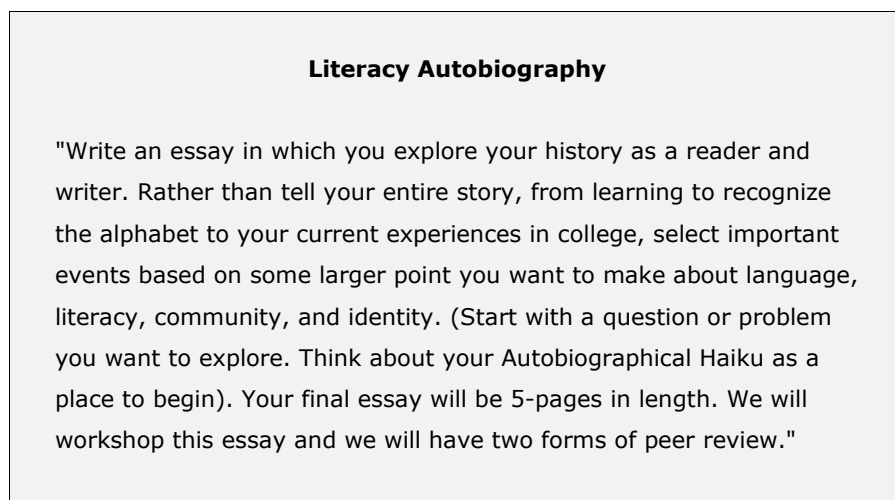


Fig. 4.5: Literacy Autobiography Prompt (truncated) (2004)

After completing this unit, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to define literacy in terms of reading and writing, to make a strong point about how literacy experiences shaped them as individuals, to be able to offer concrete and developed examples to support claims about literacy, and to strengthen their use of Standard Written English. The Literacy Autobiography (and all associated work in this unit) was worth 20 percent of the overall semester grade.

The first half of the semester, particularly with the first assignment, the students had the opportunity to demonstrate basic writing and essay construction

skills: thesis statement, topic sentences, paragraph construction, introductions, and conclusions. Students also began to use tools that would help them in their ability to produce academic prose: brainstorming and invention activities, multiple forms of peer review, and reflection strategies. In fact, the Literacy Autobiography assignment is a writing task that asks students to think back about their reading and writing experiences and formulate a theory about how those experiences defined them as students, as citizens of a culture, or as members of a community. Literacy narratives have significant benefit to students, and according to Mary Soliday, they place "writers at crossroads between worlds (their current world and their remembered world)" (512). She states that when writers evaluate their experiences from an interpretive perspective, they achieve narrative agency by discovering that their experiences are, in fact, interpretable. Literacy narratives expand students' sense of personal agency, she says, when they discover that through their own stories they can engage in a broader critical dialogue with each other. Soliday is right when she says students can engage in critical dialogue with each other, but first a trust needs to develop between class members. While D'Ante and his peers wanted to talk about themselves, they were not comfortable or confident writing about their experiences, as others would read (and possibly judge) that writing. As a class, we engaged in a significant amount of reflection, private and public, that encouraged students to understand that they each had similar experiences and fears, that they were not alone.

The reflection activities were difficult for some ICW students. While student-athletes frequently use reflection activities in their sports, they are not accustomed to

using reflection in their academic work. They watch films and tapes of games and performances, learning what they did wrong (to not commit that error again), or they are learning what they did well (to repeat that action). Therefore, reflection was not a new experience for most of these students, but writing about the reflection was. Early in the year, D'Ante struggled greatly with reflection activities, again resisting what was required of him. He did not trust his peers, the process, or me. Reflection activities encouraged him to open himself to others (and to himself), and he did not want to do that.

After multiple drafts, a one-on-one conference with me, in-class peer review, and whole-class workshopping, D'Ante submitted his literacy autobiography. I have included the essay in its entirety here to not only demonstrate the whole of his writing, but also to demonstrate his deductive writing style. Once again, D'Ante did not follow the prompt, to write about academic literacy. Instead, he focused on street literacy, what he termed "morals." At the time, it was hard to know if D'Ante's resistance was to reflection or to authority. He later stated that he felt the information he provided in his essay was much more important than the information the prompt requested. D'Ante's literacy autobiography, in its entirety, appears in Appendix F.

While he changed his essay topic and wrote about "street literacy" instead of "academic literacy," he was able to make points about how his knowledge of the street helped him survive. He offered concrete and developed examples to support his claims. His use of Standard Written English improved, but his word choice and his tone were not in an acceptable academic register.

Using narrative techniques, D'Ante constructed his literacy autobiography. It was not particularly linear and it had more than one focal event, but D'Ante provides some unique details to his story—his nuanced definitions of "see" and "look"—for example, which take more than one read to fully comprehend and are by far more sophisticated than the prose constructed by many first-year composition students. Once I recognized his story-telling ability, I was able to look again at his work and evaluate it differently, understanding, of course, that I would have to construct future assignments that would anticipate this writing strategy. However, in order to keep D'Ante (and several of his classmates) from failing the course, I modified assessment criteria to match what the students had done. As much as I learned to anticipate his narrative form, I also understood what he would need to produce academic writing in his English course and in other classes, and that other instructors might not appreciate his episodic writing style, the tone of his writing, or even his choice of words.

4.3.3 Position Essay

By the beginning of the spring semester, students in ICW were much more comfortable and confident in their writing abilities. After strengthening their use of writing strategies such as brainstorming, freewriting, and working through many smaller, low-stake writing tasks, the students moved to the second semester where their writing tasks shifted from writing about themselves to writing about subjects that interested them. The students also began to write in a more formal academic genre, often using outside source material. The second half of the ICW course is

more in line with the traditional first-year composition course. While students engage in paraphrase and summary activities during the first half of the course, these texts are typically popular culture periodicals or texts found on the Internet. The second-half of the course focused more specifically on writing in an academic genre, and this meant learning how to find, read, and evaluate scholarly academic sources. The position essay, as a basic argument essay, sought to incorporate these skills through analysis, summary, and paraphrase.

Making Knowledge by Taking a Position

"Write an essay in which you assert and support a position on a complex issue, using all of the elements of academic argument we have learned in class. Your purpose in this essay is to persuade an educated audience that your position is reasonable and worth consideration. To do so, you must show that you know the opposing arguments and acknowledge their validity as well as provide authoritative evidence (*ethos, logos, and pathos*) to support your position. Your final essay will be 5-pages in length. We will workshop this essay and we will have two forms of peer review. You will use three scholarly outside sources (not the Internet), and a Works Cited page is required."

Fig. 4.6: Position Essay Prompt (truncated) (2004)

After completing this unit, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to take a stand on a controversial issue; to locate and select appropriate material from the university library (databases and physical book stacks) and Internet; to draw generalizations from multiple sources (e.g. identify common "issues" after reading multiple sources); to present differing perspectives on an issue

fairly; to summarize, paraphrase, and quote sources using appropriate documentation style; to integrate their own language with the language of sources; and to strengthen their use of Standard Written English. The position essay assignment (and all related course work in this unit) was worth 20 percent of the semester grade.

Since 81 percent of the students enrolled in this course were student-athletes, and in order to help these students see beyond themselves as athletes and as individuals who had interests outside of sports, I limited the subjects they could explore in this position essay assignment to exclude anything sport related. (Students who were not actively participating in a sporting event or sport clubs could write about sport-related subjects if they wished.) Anabolic steroid use among professional athletes is what precipitated the ban on essay topics. On the day we brainstormed essay topics, 10 of the 16 students chose to write about the use and abuse use of anabolic steroids. I wanted the students to write about a subject that interested them, but they needed to move beyond a subject they all had researched before. Aside from sport-related topics, the students could chose almost any controversial essay subject they felt strongly about and one in which they could argue for one perspective of this issue. Of the 16 students, D'Ante was the only student who challenged this requirement to modify essay topics.

He initially wrote his draft essay on the abuses of anabolic steroids in track and field, defying the class mandate that students not write about this subject or anything else sport related. I gave him an option to revise his draft essay so he could participate in peer reviews, conferences, and so he would not fail the assignment. In

his second attempt at this essay, he wrote about the legalization of street drugs, but the writing was slow coming. He would submit one paragraph or one page (of a five-page essay) for peer review or conference review. After a few weeks of work, he finally had enough "parts" to construct a complete essay.

While D'Ante's essay is a challenge to read in spots, he was able to do what many students in the ICW class could not do: produce text, even if he did so slowly. He met the required essay page length of five pages. More importantly, however, he made a convincing argument for the legalization of drugs. In many ways, this essay proved D'Ante to be anything but an "underprepared" writer. He could be a disinterested writer, and he could be a lazy writer, but he could write when he had something to say. He was, to use Marilyn Sternglass's term, a "novice writer" (5). While D'Ante's argument was convincing, a reader would still have to struggle to understand the prose.

In this essay, D'Ante used the required number and types of outside source material. He did not always cite his sources appropriately, but he did use them effectively. In other words, he had control of his sources; the sources did not control him, as is typical with many writers as they begin to incorporate other texts into their work. Many basic writers (ab)use source material to make claims they could make themselves, but they do not trust their own voices. They want to rely on the voice of experts. D'Ante did not do that; he used his source material to support his claims. His claims were not always clear, but they were his. For example, when discussing the legalization of certain drugs, D'Ante writes,

People that are against drugs are quick to say drugs are harmful, and the reason to why drug users kill. A lot of researches have been done over drugs. Scientist have found drugs to be helpful to people, and harmful to those who misused them. 'Any drug can be used successfully, no matter how bad its reputation, and any drug can be abused no matter how acted it is '(Trebach 255).

D'Ante tried to conform to proper MLA documentation style, and he had many of the same challenges that most first-year students make when documenting their sources. In the example above, the dangling quotation is common in first-year prose, but D'Ante knew that the quotation would support his claim about drug use, and he cited the source properly. The point is that he tried to do document his sources in the way that was required of him. However, while he tried to incorporate in-text citations, he did not include the required Works Cited page for his essay even though we had discussed in class and in conference sessions how to do one and why it was important.

D'Ante used his *ethos* as a health-conscious athlete to lend credence to his claims, and he used his experience with illegal drugs to enhance his credibility. For example, he writes:

Sports cause stress for some individuals. A lot of time when individuals are good in a sport, they tend to get looked at by numerous of people. If they perform well they get praised, if they perform poorly they get cursed. So to get through this, they take some

kind of substance, and most of the time it is tobacco. It's a fact that tobacco kills more people a year than drugs. Studies show that 65 of youngsters are current cigarettes smokers (Miller pg4).

As this paragraph demonstrates, D'Ante had a difficult time keeping his writing under control as his topics shifted from sentence to sentence. While his topic was interesting, and it was clear to me that he had done some research and thinking on the subject, he had difficulty forming focused paragraphs. (The autobiographical haiku was structured to help him learn this important skill.) His paragraphs would contain multiple subjects, but since the subjects were related in a tangential way, D'Ante kept the subjects combined. The ideas are clear—he writes in a linear manner about stress, athletes, "trash-talk," substances used for stress release, tobacco as an example, and the dangers of tobacco. His logic is clear, but he simply needed to slow down and take on each subject individually. At the sentence-level, D'Ante struggled with pronoun confusion, the use of contractions, homonyms, and slang speech in his writing. As D'Ante worked through the essay and became more and more excited about his subject, the more his written voice lost its formality. In other words, the more he wrote, he wrote like he spoke. This one paragraph represents the issues D'Ante had with his writing, and it demonstrates his tendency to write quickly, striving to get as much information into a sentence as he can:

Drugs can be very dangerous, whether they are prescription or not. One over dose and the out come can be fatal, brain damaging, and a negative turning point in some one life. Drugs

can make a person go from rags to riches, and riches to rags. Most jobs have drugs test. An individual could have a million dollar job, and a happy family. If that person fails that drug test, he could lose his job. I have witnessed what weed (weed in embodiment fluid) do to people. It makes them think they are people that they aren't. I've seen people stick their heads through windows, and jump off a house when they smoke weed. Some drugs make people engage in activities they wouldn't normally do if sober. There are pills that make a person unconscious of what's going on around them. There's this one pill called a Mickey. If you put a Mickey in a person's beverage, and they drink it, they become unconscious. When they become unconscious, a person can do whatever they desire to that person. That's how a lot of date rapes occur. So why are we in favor of the legalization of drugs? It's simple. You choose the path you walk.

D'Ante did not fall back on that tried-and-true writing form many students learn in primary and secondary schools: the five-paragraph essay. While there is nothing inherently wrong or incorrect about the five-paragraph essay *per se*, standards for first-year composition at TCU expected students to move beyond that formulaic writing style. Still, for many students enrolled in ICW, writing formulas proved to be very helpful. They needed the models of appropriate academic writing. D'Ante did not need or want the model. In this assignment and throughout the year,

D'Ante strove to break out of the status quo, or what he considered the status quo. He attempted to move beyond the formula on his own. He gained control of his voice by using a method that Rebecca Moore Howard calls "patchwriting" from source material. "Patchwriting," she says, "involves a process of being able to selectively choose texts that one wants to interact with, which could be considered a legitimate part of the learning process, regardless of whether those texts are cited properly" (215).

D'Ante was learning that there were other methods and other styles of writing, of communicating. His understanding of writing, the process of writing, and way it allowed him to communicate was surprising based on the first-day writing assessment activities. D'Ante strived to control his work, but when he had passion about a subject, he wanted to write as much as he could about his chosen subject as quickly as he could. He wanted to prove to his audience (his teacher, perhaps) that his knowledge, this *ethos*, was based on research and personal experience. Again, he demonstrated his need for acknowledgement.

Unlike most of the assignments D'Ante submitted for grades, his position essay did meet the objectives of the assignment. While he struggled some with the topic of the essay, he did take a stand on the legalization of street drugs, and he found appropriate source material to support his claims. He was also able to integrate his own experiences and his *ethos* into the subject. Peer review, conferences, and in-class workshopping continued to help D'Ante improve his academic writing style.

4.3.4 *Rhetorical Revision*

As the last graded assignment for the academic year, students constructed a rhetorical revision of their position essay. The revision could be in almost any form they chose, but the medium and the audience had to change from the ones they used for the position essay. Common rhetorical revisions might shift the topic from the traditional academic essay to a billboard, a television commercial, a brochure, or a t-shirt. Students created the revised text, they planned an in-class presentation of that text, and they wrote a two-page essay defending the rhetorical choices they made revising their position essay to another object.

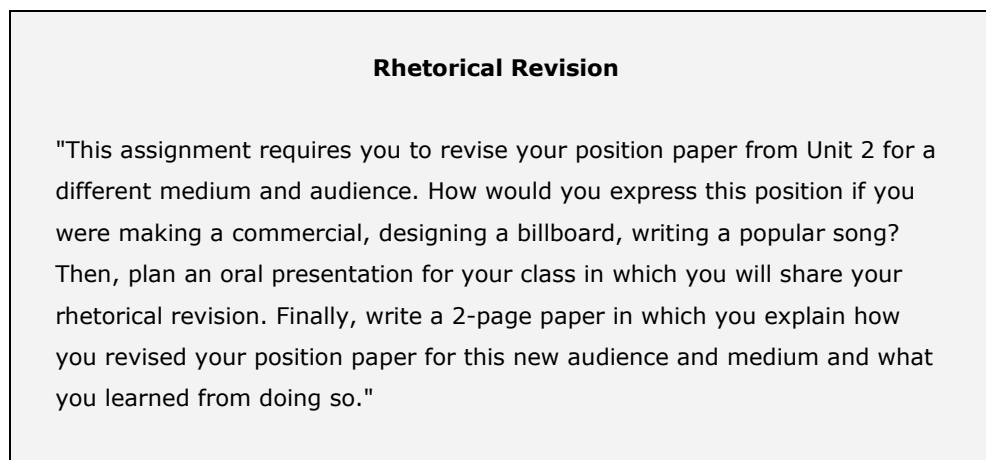


Fig. 4.7: Rhetorical Revision Assignment Prompt (2004)

After completing this unit, students should have been able to demonstrate changes that reflect a writer's concern for a specific audience, to exhibit changes appropriate to an alteration in medium, to express a position, to include evidence to support that position that is appropriate to the medium chosen, to be well planned,

While the look of this poster/billboard may seem overly simplistic, D'Ante made some conscious rhetorical choices in constructing this text, and he was able to articulate those in his presentation. He chose the red background, he stated, because red "gets your attention" and "it reminds me of being really angry." The cartoons he chose to display on his mock-billboard were inclusive of a number of sports: football, baseball, track and field. The editorial and political cartoons and graphics came from a variety of publication types: newspapers and magazines. The periodicals represented a broad range of people who might be impacted by steroid usage, from children to professional athletes. D'Ante's keen understanding of the controversy surrounding anabolic steroids allowed him to produce a text that could reach a broad audience. He discussed this controversy in his oral presentation—and he alludes to the controversy in the title of his poster, "Steroid to Live or Corrupt the Sports"—that steroid use by professional athletes can make athletic events even more exciting. "Men run faster and are stronger," he said at his presentation, "[The athletes] make and break records, and that brings fans and money into the sport." Conversely, he understood how the issue of anabolic steroids could destroy or corrupt the game by, as he said, "making it all unfair for the rest of us and for those who watch us." He also noted how much children look up to and admire professional athletes, and in his presentation he described how young boys, looking to men like himself and the other male student athletes, would be tempted to also use drugs and to cheat their way into record books and halls of fame. Interestingly, even though this ICW course had two female athletes enrolled, and allegations were common

during this time of Marion Jones's steroid use during the 2000 Olympic Games, D'Ante did not consider female athletes a part of the athlete group in his billboard.

For the class presentation, students were to dress professionally. Most students wore their regular, everyday clothes of shorts, t-shirts or jeans even though they owned nicer clothes. (Student-athletes wear slacks and sports jackets when they travel with their teams.) On his presentation day, D'Ante wore black pants and a white button-down shirt. Even in his presentation, D'Ante demonstrated his all-or-nothing spirit. There was no gray area for him. He would follow another's direction or direction from his peers if he felt that direction was important to him.

The objectives for this assignment should not have been difficult to meet. Since this was the final assignment of the yearlong course, students had much practice in writing to multiple audiences. Even though D'Ante ignored 50 percent of the population when he devised his poster, excluding women and girls as audience members, he tried to stretch his definition of who might be interested in collegiate-level and professional sports from only male athletes to boys who might be interested in sports.

4.4 Student's Perception / Reflection

As a final exam in the yearlong ICW course, students wrote a reflective essay about the activities, projects, and essays they wrote that impacted them the most through the yearlong course. The students received a list of the objectives of the course and the major and minor activities that were assigned to them during the year. A truncated version of the assignment appears here.

Final Exam

". . . Please write about how your personal view about writing has changed over the semester. Use examples from your work to elaborate. What are the dominant patterns that emerge from your work? What has been the most meaningful to you? Where did you learn the most? Why did you choose these four or five items? Where have you found the most growth and development as a writer? Keep in mind that this is not a 'I like this' or 'I didn't like that' kind of essay. I am looking for synthesis and reflection between your texts. The essay should be five-pages long and is due on the final exam day for this course."

Fig. 4.9: Final Essay Exam Prompt (truncated) (2004)

After completing this final exam, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to synthesize four or five items around a common theme, to follow the prompt, and to use Standard Written English. The final exam was worth 10 percent of the overall second semester grade.

Earlier in the year, reflection activities had been difficult for D'Ante, but by the end of the academic year, May 2005, he had become more comfortable in the academic setting, with me, with his peers, and with the processes required of him in a collegiate classroom. For his final reflective examination, D'Ante was able to bring together specific activities and objectives of the class that affected him the most. In his final exam, a five-page essay, he wrote about himself as an athlete and how that athlete can become "smarter." An athlete becomes smarter by "wanting something more of myself . . . by making some changes in my life." The elements of the course

that helped him the most, he wrote, were writing about himself and reading the Anne Lamott essay "Shitty First Draft." About Lamott's essay, D'Ante wrote:

Threw out the course, I have learn different method to help improve my writing skills. The Shitty First Draft had to be the best for me. I use to try to write my draft with no errors, not knowing the true meaning of a first draft. I thought that was how a draft was supposed to be done. When I read Anne Lamott paper on her troubles with a first draft, that help me a lot. It helps me knowing that every one struggles on a first draft. Reading how Lamott let her fingers take control, and the next day make her correction help me out. I strongly agree when she said, "just get something down on paper". I use to sit down for a long time, thinking how to get a good start. Lamott problem getting started was having voices in her head. . . . Sometimes when writing, I tend to go back to my old habits. When that happens I just remember Shitty First Drafts. I use to get frustrated, when people bragged, on how easy writing was to them. I would think why it isn't easy to me. But when I read Shitty First Drafts, Lamott said all good writers have them, which help me out.

D'Ante did address his frustration in the course and in the way he felt the assignments limited him, and then he wrote about why he did not follow the prompts on most assignments, a constant source of concern for me and a constant grade reduction for him. "I wrote about what I wanted," he noted, "because I had gotten

discombobulated" when reading the assignment handouts. This supports the notion that underprepared writers often have a difficult time decoding academic assignments, and that as faculty, we should be more cognizant of this lack of skill. Instead of asking for clarification, he did write what he wanted to write, but he tried to stay in line with what he understood the assignment to be. The frustration he experienced was soothed when he spoke with me about his work, but it was a conversation that I initiated. He wrote, "I stayed [after class] and talk to you, I was headed down the right write path."

One formal essay assignment stood out for D'Ante the most, the Autobiographical Haiku. He felt the assignment was "fun and easy, and at the same time pointless." Looking back on the assignment, he remarked, "it was smart and helpful. . . . The haiku was also entertaining. It kind of upset me. I wanted to brag on myself. I made the haiku harder than it was. I was trying to jot so much flattering word down about myself. 17 syllables [or 100 words] wasn't enough to describe myself."

It was a difficult year of resistance and showdowns, but ultimately D'Ante was able to learn to focus his writing more than he had, he developed a stronger academic voice than he had previously, but he also recognized that adding the role of student to the definition he had of himself was not all that bad. D'Ante ended his essay, "It didn't make sense to me why you always asked what we thought about certain things. Now I understand everyone is going to have there own opinion about things." D'Ante needed to be heard, and because it had happened so infrequently in

his academic experience, he remembered when it happened in this course. D'Ante felt heard in the year we spent together. Whereas previously he had experienced language and language teachers as divisive forces, he found in this classroom—where his opinion was valued—that he had something significant and important to contribute.

4.5 How Sports Involvement Impacted Student Learning

For many student athletes, academics take a secondary role in their lives, as athletics are a primary responsibility. D'Ante was this type of student-athlete. He understood that the only reason he attended TCU was his athletic ability. As a participant in an Olympic sport that was in season most of the academic year, D'Ante had as rigorous a training schedule as most student-athletes involved in revenue-producing sports. His daily practice schedule did not interfere with the ICW course, but his travel schedule did, particularly in the spring semester. While he could not fail the course based solely on absences, as the majority of his absences were university-sanctioned, the quality of his work suffered because he had not been in class. D'Ante was caught in one of the most common student-athlete traps: What is his role at the university? Is he a student? Is he an athlete? His athletic ability got him into the university, but his academic ability would have to keep him there. He entered the institution behind his peers in terms of his academic preparedness, yet coaches, staff, and faculty expected him to be able to complete his academic work with little extra assistance and still compete at a very high level. "The institution let them in and it was up to them to stay in" was the common sentiment from faculty

across campus about students like D'Ante. Yet for someone like D'Ante, underprepared and overly defiant, succeeding in academics *and* athletics by himself would be an all-but-impossible task.

In the spring semester 2005, D'Ante missed five weeks of instruction (10 class sessions) mainly due to out-of-area track meets, but he also had an injury and a death in his family. Since most of these absences were university sanctioned (sport-related travel and sport-related injury), the time he missed could not be counted against him.⁷ He was allowed to makeup any missed work, but without additional (time intensive) instruction, he was unable to adequately complete the work required of him. Even though the Athletic Academic office at TCU required D'Ante (as well as most other student-athletes) to spend approximately 10 hours per week in a mandatory study hall, D'Ante could not do by himself what was structured to do in a classroom environment. He struggled to complete the work. He often turned in his assignments incomplete and not always to the best of his already limited ability, but he did attempt to do the work required of him. Some faculty met with D'Ante privately as much as his (and their) schedule would allow, but given meetings with coaches, trainers, doctors, and advisors (meetings he did not feel he could ever miss), he did not always have the available time for additional academic conferences.

During the spring semester, in the midst of his sport-related travel and between all his missed classes, D'Ante's a photograph appeared in the campus

⁷ The Department of English at TCU has a general policy that states that in a Tuesday / Thursday course, a student can miss no more than six (6) classes (three weeks of instruction). If a student misses more than six class, he or she automatically fails the course.

newspaper. In this photograph, readers could see D'Ante, through the bent arm of another runner, while they were running a relay race. This image depicts D'Ante as focused on what he was doing, running, directed and strong. Gone was the bravado of the first class day, the posturing that indicated that he would not change himself in order to conform to the university environment. Instead, he was doing what he did best: he was running, and he looked powerful, strong, and confident.

This photograph, though, allowed D'Ante to see himself differently. He was not just an athlete in this photograph. He was a student-athlete. He was a student-athlete at an NCAA-ranked Division I-A institution, and he was one of the fastest runners in the nation. Of course he had seen images of himself in action prior to this photograph appearing in the university newspaper, in high school publications or in publications related to the junior Olympics or in snapshots from family and friends, but in this specific photograph, he saw himself differently, he said. He saw himself as a college student who happened to be a first-class sprinter. He saw himself in his track uniform, "TCU" emblazoned across his chest, and he felt the pride for and in the institution for the first time in eight months. He could see in this one photograph how the institution could be proud of him, and it made him want to take on the challenge of collegiate-level academic work. In the ICW course, both D'Ante's writing and his attitude improved. However, continued success in a university would prove to be very difficult for D'Ante due to this past educational background and his attitude. The photograph came a little too late in the year to improve D'Ante's academic performance very much.

4.6 Teacher / Teacher-Researcher Reflection

The year with D'Ante was a challenge to my ability to teach and my ability to reason and work with students who were different from not only me but also from most students and faculty at TCU. He was even a challenge to most of his teammates. D'Ante had a hard shell around him, an attitude that made teaching him to write more effectively a difficult task. He came into the course with an ability I did not expect and could not read. His paragraph of introduction to his classmates confounded me. Yet on the same day, he wrote another sample that was fairly close to what any first-year student would produce. However, I remembered Mina Shaughnessy's words,

Get[ting] a closer look will reveal very little that is random or 'illogical' and what [basic writing students] have written. And the keys to their development as writers often lie hidden in the very features of their writing that English teachers have been trained to brush aside with a marginal code letter or he scribbled in Junction to "periphery!" Such strategies ram at the doors of their incompetence while the keys that would open them lie in view. (5-6)

I knew he (and his writing) contained interesting and thoughtful information, but I had to somehow crack into that hard shell to find out what it was.

D'Ante gave me the key to understanding him on the first day of class. In the longer diagnostic essay, he wrote about becoming a rapper. He said, "Not only was I proud of my music but family, friends, and community were also proud of it." He

desired respect, he needed others to see him, he wanted to be heard, and he knew he had something of significance to "say." In *Reading Don't Fix No Chevys: Literacy in the Lives of Young Men*, Michael Smith and Jeffrey Wilhelm note that young men, particularly young Black men, "want to be appreciated and known as individuals, and they [are] cynical in general about the teachers' desire to know or deal with them as individuals" (100). As the year progressed, D'Ante felt heard; he felt that his teacher and his classmates listened to him. He felt respected. Interestingly, as Smith and Wilhelm continue, "when teachers or other adults did express interest in students and their lives, the students responded with tremendously positive emotion" (101). D'Ante responded positively. He thrived in an environment that did not stereotype him or teach in the same manner he had always been taught.

In addition to the regular academic tasks the students in this course were required to do, the 2004 class participated in a service-learning activity with a nonprofit organization in Fort Worth, Texas, in which the ICW students exchanged letters with members of H.O.P.E. Farm Inc. H.O.P.E. Farm is an organization dedicated to helping single mothers rear their sons. It teaches, mentors, trains, aids, and guides young boys and men (from 5 to about 15) to become strong and responsible young adults. The 2004 ICW class and the boys at H.O.P.E. Farm participated in *Writing Partners*,⁸ a letter exchange program developed by Write to Succeed, Inc. D'Ante's writing partner was Alonzo. About Alonzo and the service-learning experience, D'Ante stated, "I like how I write to Alonzo and he writes back.

⁸ Selected alternative assignments for the ICW course appear in Appendix D.

He likes hearing what I have to say. He listens. And he writes his letters like I do!" This short activity allowed D'Ante to realize that writing could be a nonacademic activity, that in writing, he could change people or situations around him. In fact, when Alonzo wrote to D'Ante and said, "I want to be like you!", D'Ante felt a responsibility to be a better writer, a role model, as he knew a young boy was looking up to him.

Through a tumultuous year of learning to assimilate into an "academic" culture, D'Ante, through the service-learning project, learned that many of the injustices he had faced were common for other young men his age (and younger, as for Alonzo). Of course he had always known this, but meeting with and writing to Alonzo allowed D'Ante to "see" those issues from a new perspective, from the perspective of an 8-year old boy, and through his writing, D'Ante received empathy and understanding from Alonzo. Interestingly, Alonzo received empathy and understanding for D'Ante, something D'Ante said had never happened to him before. Their writing partnership was a true "partnership." Linda-Adler Kassner would say that for underprepared students such as D'Ante, those who "ha[ve] a pretty good handle on the idea that American culture is fundamentally inequitable," a service-learning project is a pragmatic way of teaching as it helps students articulate their perspective in a language that will be heard" (553).

All of this is not to say that working with D'Ante was easy. It was not. It was challenging and exhausting. D'Ante did not suddenly become an excellent writer or a student who would suddenly have all the skills he needed for the rigors of a

university education. The year in the ICW course allowed D'Ante a moment to relax into a system that was foreign to him, to find his way among college students very different from himself. He learned that he did not want to acclimate to the university standard of who he "should" become. In that decision, he continued to engage in "showdown" behavior, resistance, and confrontations. Nevertheless, he began to understand that, as his mother often told him, those decisions had consequences and that he had to pay the price for the decisions he made.

CHAPTER 5

CASE STUDY #2, SEAN (ICW, 2005)

"You may have to fight a battle more than once to win it."

--Margaret Thatcher, former Prime Minister of England

*"If you're not making mistakes, then you're not doing anything.
I'm positive that a doer makes mistakes."*

--John Wooden, legendary UCLA Basketball Coach

5.1 Introduction

TCU's football program had a history of winning seasons, conference championships, and bowl wins. The 2004 season, however, was not one of those years. The team lost a significant number of accomplished game starters to professional contracts, to graduation, and to career-ending injuries. In 2004, the football team lost 6 of its 11 football games ("National Champs 2005 NCAA Preview: TCU"). Even with this one losing season, TCU was able to recruit what coaches termed "stellar athletes" for its 2005 class. This ability to recruit talented athletes, coaches claimed, was because of the team's overall record of conference championships and bowl wins. While TCU is a Division I-A institution, it is a small Division I-A school, and the football program cannot rival powerhouse programs such as the University of Texas, University of Southern California, Florida State, or Michigan. Those BCS (Bowl Championship Series) championship winners often

recruit the best high school athletes in the country, who are often also better students than the student-athletes smaller schools are able to recruit. As the 2005 football season began, the new recruits recognized the pressure to help the team turn around and to "break the BCS," something TCU had never accomplished. For these students, the line that separated "students" from "athletes" blurred, and it blurred even before their arrival on campus. Sean, a running back from a large town in southeast Texas was a member of this recruiting class.

Before the fall semester began, local and some national news outlets had written that Sean would be the next "potential superstar" to come out of the university's football program. He was the talk of fan forums and blog posts months before his arrival at TCU. Many fans on these forums and blogs compared Sean to former TCU running back and current San Diego Chargers star, LaDainian Tomlinson. Sean was a gifted athlete. He held state track and field records for his speed and jumping ability, and the predictions for his athletic success at the Division I-A level were rampant. Based on these athletic skills, the university admitted him to the institution its exception policy, as his high school GPA, SAT / ACT scores were too low for unconditional admittance. As with D'Ante, being a gifted athlete allowed him entrance into the university, but it would not be enough to keep him in the institution. At the beginning of the 2005 academic year, Sean was not yet ready to tackle the academic work a university would require.

On the first day of the fall semester 2005, I knew what the press reported and fans expected about Sean and his classmates: they were athletes before they were

students. However, I did not recognize him when he came into the room. With such pre-(academic) season build-up, I expected a Superstar, not the young man who walked into the classroom. He blended into the group of athletes as they entered the classroom together. Sean, tall, slim, and very dark skinned, was model handsome. On the first day of classes, he wore a plain white t-shirt tucked into his football program-issued warm-up pants. He was clean cut, clean-shaven. He had no visible tattoos and wore no jewelry. Unlike most 18-year old first-year students, Sean had a steady gaze; he made and held eye contact. He exuded confidence. He shook my hand and introduced himself. He did not flinch or shy away from questions or directions. Sean was polite, answering "Yes, ma'am," or "No, ma'am" to almost any question I asked him. I understood that he was a celebrated athlete, but Sean did not openly wear this label, at least not on the first day of classes and not before the first football game of the season. On the first day of the semester, fall 2005, I did not know if the humble and respectful young man who came into the class was the "real" Sean or if it was the Sean of pre-season football hype.

Sean did not seem particularly interested in being in the Introduction to Critical Writing course, but he did not seem disinterested, either. Because the football players and basketball players of the 2005 class dominated the room with their bulk and number, Sean (and the others) had the need to act out, to play, and to control the room with their presence and their voices. The student-athletes in this year's class had the need to adopt what Orlando Patterson has called the "cool pose" (par. 20). In one aspect of this "pose," Black men adopt the iconic images of Hip-

Hop or sports stars, as that is the image many of their White classmates would expect of them. Within this pose, academic achievement is not important, or at least it could not seem to be important. Patterson notes that what is interesting about this "pose" is that it is "self destructive" and young Black men know it (par. 18). Secondly, Patterson writes, "black [students] who do well are derided by fellow blacks for 'acting white' " especially at "mix-raced schools" (par. 19). However, as the semester wore on, and particularly in the second semester of the course, most of the students in ICW replaced this pose with a willingness to learn. This was true not only of Sean but also of the majority of his classmates.

For Sean and other student-athletes in this course, the "cool pose" was another form of what Kunjufu has called, and D'Ante blatantly displayed, the "showdown" (19). These students expected me and other faculty members to believe they were not capable of academic work, that they would be the stereotypical "Black men from the 'hood." At the time I was unaware the students had this belief; it was through interviews with Sean and others that these ideas surfaced. It was significant that the 2005 class was more diverse than the 2004 class had been. The 2005 class had 15 students and 10 of them were student-athletes. The 2004 class, on the other hand, had 16 total students, and 13 of them were student-athletes. However, the physical size of the student-athletes in the 2005 class gave the perception to other students and to me that there were more of them than there actually were.

Table 5.1: ICW 2005, Student Demographic

| Introduction to Critical Writing: 2005 | | |
|--|--------------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| • Male | 12/15 | 80% |
| • Female | 3/15 | 20% |
| Race | | |
| • African-American | 10/15 | 67% |
| • Anglo | 4/15 | 27% |
| • Asian | 1/15 | 7% |
| • Hispanic | 0/15 | 0% |
| • ESL | 2/15 | 13% |
| Disability | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 5/15 | 33% |
| Athlete | | |
| Student-athlete | 10/15 | 67% |

Of the 15 students enrolled in the 2005 ICW course, 10 of them were student-athletes. Of those 10 students, seven played football. These were the "stellar athletes" recruited to bring the football program into prominence.¹ The demographic breakdown of this particular class—even with the "stellar athletes" enrolled—was much more diverse than the 2004 course had been and was more diverse than the 2006 course would prove to be. Table 5.1 depicts this diversity. Unlike the 2004 class where 81 percent of the students enrolled were student-athletes, the 2005 class only enrolled 67 percent student-athletes. A full one-third of the students enrolled in the course were second-language learners or students with learning differences. All these students were in some way marginalized at the institution. Because the class was more diverse, Sean (and his peers) did not feel quite as conspicuous or as "tracked" as the student-athletes had in 2004.

¹ The 2005 class also had two players on the men's basketball team and one female tennis player.

Sean was, however, the type of student the Introduction to Critical Writing course was designed for, one who had some writing ability but whose ability had not been fully developed (see the Interchapter Fig. 1). Sean could have enrolled in a traditional first-year writing course and with a lot of work he could have passed that course. However, the added time in ICW allowed him to develop his writing skills. The yearlong course also allowed Sean time to focus on football, particularly during his first semester as a college student.

5.2 Literacy before the University

Sean's family was, according to his understanding, a typical middle-class family. Sean lived with his mother and two older brothers in a large city in southeast Texas. Sean's family was close, he said. They attended church each Sunday, he was heavily involved in academic and social activities through high school, and as he stated, he had "lots of friends and girlfriends." Sean had a deep connection to his community, to his friends, and to his family. Until his arrival at TCU, he had always lived in the same neighborhood.

Sean's mother graduated from high school, but she was not an active reader at home. She did not expressly encourage her sons to engage in literacy activities, but she also did not discourage those activities. If they needed her to help them with their work, however, she was available. She believed that education was important, but according to Sean, she believed schools and teachers should supervise that education. As a single mother of three sons, Sean's mother needed to rely on the community "to help raise up her boys," Sean explained, and this community included the school

system. "At least," he said, "[teachers] should know what they are doing. My mom didn't know what the schools wanted, so she left it to them." It was clear to him, he noted, that his mother used the resources available to her: the school system, the church, the community. For Sean, his mother's rigid ways of compartmentalizing the world around her made sense, as she needed and used those resources to benefit her family.

Sean's mother was the authoritarian figure for their household. About his mother, Sean said, "She expected us to work as hard as she did. With her, you know, there was no 'I'll do it later,' and there was no talkin' back to her. You did what you had to do and you did it right the first time." From his mother, Sean noted, he learned discipline. He also learned how to rely on others for assistance. It was interesting to learn that Sean showed the same characteristics as his mother.

Sean credits his mother as one of his major influences, as "she gave us the best she could, and she sacrificed a lot for us." While he never went into much detail about his parents' relationship, and he never explicitly mentioned his father, Sean did write about his parents in an early assignment, alluding to a sacrifice she made for her family:

When I was 17 life started good as the years before but eventually it would be cut short due to the incarceration of my mother. My mom and dad had a bad relationship and things escalated from fights and arguments. She was taken away while I was at school. It was during my junior year in football season.

It was the extended community that helped Sean and his brothers through the difficult time of their mother's incarceration, but Sean relied most heavily on his oldest brother. As Sean later wrote in an essay, "My brother step up and became the father of the house to me and still managed to kick it with me as a older brother. Now he is my best friend." "My oldest brother had a football scholarship to [REDACTED], and he majored in finance. My second oldest brother, the middle brother, spent time in jail for drugs," Sean mentioned in one of many required course conferences. He continued, "I could have gone either way. I chose to follow my oldest brother's path."

Sean later recognized that it was the involvement with his brothers, especially his oldest brother, which helped him make decisions to be a "good student" and to strive for a football scholarship. In many ways, Sean's brothers were what Deborah Brandt has termed, "literacy sponsors" ("Sponsors of Literacy" 167). Sean's brothers assumed responsibility for Sean's education, for his growth. Without their support and assistance, he noted in our last interview, Sean would not have arrived at TCU.

Sean's elementary school experiences were "normal," he said, but the one thing he recalled were the positive literacy experiences associated with winning contests in elementary school. These competitions excited Sean, as, like most children, he liked winning, and he liked receiving those external symbols of reward: trophies and ribbons. Sean participated in a school-wide spelling bee, a competition to determine the student who read the most books, and a contest to see who would get the highest score on the state-mandated benchmark exam: the TAAS. "My

elementary was called ██████████ Elementary and we were known for the school with the smart people and rich families," Sean wrote. "We were in a school where everyone wanted to win [these] contests. And for most people [in the school]," he stated, "reading a lot and getting high marks wasn't difficult."² It might not have been difficult for most students to do the work required to win a contest, but it was unusual for one student to win all the contests in a single year: "There had never been a kid to get all three awards in the same year, but me. That year I was already motivated to get just one award, which was the spelling bee. I thought that year that the spelling bee was the greatest thing any kid could ever have, and I was determined that I would be the award winner that year."

In order to prepare for the spelling bee, Sean would read with his mother and his brothers every night. "Preparing for it," Sean wrote, "I studied all the big words in the books we read. (Because I figured that's where the judges would get their words.)" Preparing for the spelling bee with his brothers and his mother also gave Sean an added benefit, as he read a number of books he might not have read if it were not for the contest. Ultimately, Sean won the award that year for the most books read. "In order for us to win that particular award, we had to write a detailed page summary about each book we read," he said. However, since this award was

² According to Cruse and Twing in their article "The History of Statewide Achievement Texting in Texas," beginning with the TABS (Texas Assessment of Basic Skills) test in 1979, then moving through the TEAMS (Texas Educational Assessment of Minimum Skills) test in 1984, the TAAS (Texas Assessment of Academic Skills) test in 1990, and lastly, the TAKS (Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills) test in 1999, the State of Texas has a history of mandating state proficiency exams for its public school students. The most current tests, the TAKS, are administered each spring to 3rd grade students (reading), 5th and 8th grade students (math and reading), and to 11th grade students (reading, writing, math, science, and social studies). The 11th grade tests function as an exit exam from high school. However, beginning in 2002, exit level students who fail any subject in the TAKS will continue to retest until they pass that subject (1-6).

not one that he had planned to win, he said he did not pay attention to the scoring. As he said, "The people who counted how many books one person read never said who was in the lead. Everyone who entered and tried to win was placed in a grouping. For example, it ranged from 0-10 to 11-20 to 21-30 and so fourth. I never knew I won until I won."

Lastly, Sean won the award that year for the best essay written for the TAAS exam.³ "My last award," he wrote, "was that I scored a four on my TAAS. There were many other kids who scored a four also on there TAAS but my paper was chosen as the best one throughout the district. This felt really good because this wasn't a goal of mine. It just happened from hard work and preparation."

Sean's Middle School / Junior High School experience was not quite as rewarding, however. Middle School brought the same issues and problems that many adolescents face at this stage of their emotional, physical, and cognitive development. Sean, like other boys his age, wanted to belong to a peer group, and he did not want to stand out from those peers. Nevertheless, by this time of his life, he said, he had begun to receive some attention for his athletic ability. He was a starter on his junior high school football and basketball teams, and in the world of adolescents, this was an important feat. Like other boys his age, sports became important to Sean during adolescence, more important than academic achievement. Even though he had played football since he was in elementary school, he began to

³ Examiners scored the writing components to the TAAS exams in much the same way as other proficiency writing exams: holistically. The TAAS exam was scored on a scale of 1-6, 6 being the highest score.

see his skill as a runner develop when he was in middle school. His older brothers played sports, so Sean played them, too. The inclusion he felt in athletics was not enough to shield him from the challenges—and the experiences of exclusion—other middle school events brought his way.

About such an event, Sean wrote, "After school had been in session for about a month and I was just getting use to the new people, new environment, finding my classes on time and getting familiar with my teachers." He continued, "then something bad happen we had to read one article from our school newspaper in front the student body."

Reading aloud is difficult for many students as they are self-conscious about what they do not know. Sean was no exception. As he wrote, "When it was my time to read on stage, I was froze because of all the people I saw and most of the upperclassmen sat in the front. I think it was easier for them to make fun of whoever was on stage." He went on,

When I started to read my chosen article I am very well starting off, but that was until I came across a word that I really could not understand nor pronounce. Right after that all my words were running together and even then the easy words were hard to pronounce. After I was done reading I walked offstage as quick as possible but before I could even get off, the crowd started to make fun of me and make strange noises with every step I made. That was the worst school year

of my life because everybody walked around acting like they were choking themselves because of what I did on stage in the 6th grade.

In elementary school, Sean was able to be successful in literacy activities because those activities had fairly low-stakes. He was able to prepare and focus on ways to succeed. Indeed, his preparation and focus allowed him to win contests he had not considered winnable. In middle school, however, he had a different peer group and different peer pressures. Sean's teacher asked him to read a random article in front of people who were older and who were more critical than his elementary school peers had been, and he was not prepared. His peers were also more critical, he noted, because he was also an athlete. He was beginning to be labeled, he thought, as the middle school equivalent of the "dumb jock."

By the time Sean reached high school, he had begun to recognize his athletic abilities, and sports occupied a large portion of his time and interest. As Sean's focus began to be more closely connected to sports, his teachers' focus, he said, also became more focused on sports and his ability to succeed in that aspect of his life. Sean's mother, however, still believed that the school would handle the academic side of Sean's development. "Yea, the 'no pass / no play' rule really didn't apply to me at home," Sean said.⁴ "My mom saw that I was gettin' passing grades on my

⁴ According to the "Transcript of Press Conference by [Governor] Mark White about the 'No Pass / No Play' Rule," that was enacted in 1985 under then-Governor Mark White, the "no pass / no play" law addressed declining test scores and literacy rates among Texas students. The "no pass / no play" law barred students from participating in extracurricular activities for six weeks if they failed a class. Texas was the first state to pass such a mandate.

work and she didn't worry about it. What she didn't know was that the teachers were just giving me the grades. I was passing," he said, "she just didn't know *how* I was passing."

Sean's high school football coach, however, was focused on his grades—not for the sake of Sean's eligibility to play under the "no pass / no play" law, but because Sean's academic success was important. Sean appreciated his coach's desire to see him succeed, and in many ways, he would later comment, that role reversal between what would appear to be important to the teachers and to what his coach found to be important confused him. The coach not only wanted Sean to pass academically so he would be eligible to play football, but also because education would give him a better future. His teachers, on the other hand, wanted Sean to pass the classes because, according to Sean, they believed that participation in sports was his only alternative for a future. It was the irony of the role switch that surprised and confused Sean. "Coaches have a reputation of being focused on sport. Teachers have a reputation for being unhappy about sport," he explained.

Sean also said that these teachers feared him. In a required conference, while discussing one of his assignments, Sean said, "I've never been real heavy, Miss, and I'm not that big," Sean said, "but I am really dark. Some white women are afraid of that—they don't challenge or question me." Sean recognized, too, that his teachers saw football as his only way "out of the 'hood, but I didn't live in no 'hood. I lived in the suburbs," he said. He felt they did not offer him any other option for success.

At the time, it was difficult to believe that women—of any color—would fear Sean, as he was a kind, respectful young man, and it is difficult to understand that an educator would limit a student as much as Sean felt his teachers limited him. I speculated at the time if his college teammates and some of their experiences were fueling this interpretation. But for Sean and for most of his classmates—student-athlete or non-student-athlete, male or female—how they felt about their high school teachers had much to do with how much they learned in high school and how much they brought with them into their collegiate experiences. If Sean did not respect his teachers because he felt "passed through," then he, much like D'Ante had, *chose* not to learn in those classes. By making this choice, Herbert Kohl states, Sean (and students like him) were able to maintain "inner satisfaction," and they could choose to dismiss what that teacher had to offer (15). Robert Leamson supports this notion when he writes, "How students feel about a teacher has, for good or bad, a powerful influence on how they listen, whether they work at the course content, and how much they learn" (71). In many ways, Sean resisted his teachers as much as D'Ante had. However, instead of a "showdown," Sean resisted with a smile and a handshake.

5.3 Growth as Writer through Four Assignments

Like the 2004 class ICW class, students in the 2005 ICW course completed eight assignments. Four of the assignments remained the same as the previous years' assignments (the literacy autobiography and autobiographical haiku, the position essay, and the rhetorical revision). The alternative assignments included an essay based on a photograph (using Wendy Hesford's work in *Framing Identities*), an

Autoethnography, a letter-writing portfolio, and the maintenance of a media journal on a public blog.

TCU created the Introduction to Critical Writing course for students like Sean, students with ability, but with ability that was under developed. Sean began the year-long course with good skills—had he worked hard, he could have passed the traditional one-semester course without too much difficulty, but his advisors knew he would not have the time to give to a traditional writing course with the football pressures on him, so his academic advisor placed him in ICW. Sean's transformation as a writer through the eight assignments was not as dramatic as the transformation D'Ante underwent because Sean did not have as far to move, not only in terms of his writing skill but also in terms of his willingness to adapt to the university culture. However, Sean was able to learn a lot about writing and about himself through this course.

5.3.1 In-class Assessment Activities

Just as I had with the 2004 ICW class, I used the writing samples Athletic Academic Advising administered to incoming first-year student-athletes to verify that students enrolled in the 2005 course needed to be enrolled in ICW. I also compared those samples with the texts that students produced the first day of the fall semester: the same two brief in-class writing tasks that I used in the 2004 class. In the first exercise, students wrote a short paragraph that introduced them to the course management system, eCollege, and allowed them to introduce themselves to their classmates. I allotted 10 minutes to this exercise. The second writing exercise was a

prompt-given 30-minute handwritten essay. The in-class writing tasks had the same teaching objectives through all three years of the study: to demonstrate overall organization of the writing, higher order concerns (content, idea development, thesis or controlling idea), lower order concerns (spelling and mechanical issues, grammar), audience awareness, length of time the student takes to produce text, handwriting, and the ability to decode the prompt.

Since the university first offered the ICW course in 2004, and since I had no clear expectation about what the students knew or what they needed at that time, the teaching objectives for these samples were important. In 2005, the teaching objectives were just as important because I could then make a comparison with the previous years' data. The 2004 class established the standard that I could reasonably expect from students in subsequent ICW courses. Beginning in 2005, I changed the in-class writing prompt slightly by removing the last line of the original prompt, "Please conduct yourselves accordingly," as this line assumed the students would behave badly, would write the wrong way, or would say something inappropriate.

First day of class: Self Introduction

"Please tell us a little about yourself—where you are from, your major and minor, your hobbies (if desired), your family (if desired), and your hopes (or concerns) for this class. Keep in mind that this is a public forum and what you write will be visible to everyone in the class."

Fig. 5.1: Self-Introduction Prompt (2005)

Sean produced this introduction for his classmates:

My name is Sean. I am from [REDACTED], Texas which is way south. I play football. My favorite subject in school is English. I like to read about sports figures, all the legends from football, basketball, and track stars. I enjoy spending time with my family. I am not very hard to get along with and very fun to be around.

Sean's writing was clear and to the point. He did not elaborate in his introduction; he simply stated facts about himself. I recognized no discernable tone or emotion in this short paragraph. However, I did wonder about English being Sean's favorite subject. Clearly, he had a good sense of audience, or he had a good sense of humor. I would learn that he had both. It was surprising to me that given all the media attention Sean had received, he did not elaborate more on his athlete status. Unlike D'Ante, who directed his introductory paragraph to his classmates (his intended audience), Sean directed his comments to his teacher (his real audience). Sean produced a paragraph that a teacher would "expect" to see from a first-year student in a composition course (Barton 427). He produced a paragraph that accomplished its purpose, an introduction, and he did so in clear and straightforward writing.

First day of class: Writing Diagnostic

"In a short essay, tell me about your experiences as a writer. Most of us can remember a negative experience, but today I want you to focus on the positive experiences you have had with writing. Tell me about a situation in which YOU were proud of your writing. What were you writing about? What kind of process did you go through to achieve this kind of success?"

Fig. 5.2: 30-Minute Writing Diagnostic Prompt (2005)

Students also produced an essay in a timed 30-minute in-class writing diagnostic that helped me understand something about their writing ability. In this one sample writing exercise, Sean would tell me a lot about himself, maybe more than he thought he could. For an in-class time writing assignment, Sean did a fully acceptable job, and at a level of writing I would expect to see from almost any first-year student at TCU. He told a story about himself and his relationship to writing. He provided a clear example. He focused on his subject and did not drift into unrelated tangents. However, he had some difficulty with homonyms, there were a few simple grammar problems, and he dropped a few words as he wrote, but these minor concerns are not uncommon for timed writing or for first-year students. What he chose to write about, however, told me a lot about how he viewed academic work, his relationship to his teachers, and his home life.

This was Sean's writing diagnostic essay:

In my senior year in high school we had a major paper due at the end of the year. We had to pick a book and do a critical analysis on it. Our

project had to consist of 7 pages a works cited sheet. I did not start writing my paper until the night before it was due, and what made it worst is we had to submit our papers to a website by 12 midnight. So that made me have less time to do it. I wrote my paper on Frankenstein by Mary Shelley. This was one of my favorite books of all time and I knew the book in and out. When I started to finally write my paper I could not find my notes or my thesis statement to start. I really thought I would never get finished with it. I eventually found everything and got my work completed and turned it in on time. I knew that I had rushed this paper and most likely would not pass. I begged my teacher to bare with me on any mistakes I made. Once I got the paper back I did not even want to see grade. I then took a look at it and my grade was a 96.

It took Sean about 10 minutes to write these 14 sentences. Sean used expected Standard Written English with very little slang. His writing was clear and easy to follow. As far as his writing sample, he wrote his essay using mostly capital letters. Even so, his handwriting was not difficult to read. He used the entire page to write his essay, leaving only a small amount of space for a left margin, and he kept his writing on a level plane. He made very few changes to his text, as noted by the lack of crossed-out words or letters. The lack of corrections or changes in his writing signifies that his narrative was easy to write.

Since he had to submit his *Frankenstein* essay online by midnight and he was working on the essay at home the night it was due, I could assume that he had a computer at home and that he had Internet access. Access to a computer and the Internet often demonstrates economic stability, but more importantly, it shows access to literacy tools that not all underprepared students have.

As I would come to understand about Sean, if he could prepare and plan, he felt comfortable and would succeed. It was when he did not feel the work mattered or when he felt rushed that he would procrastinate and not prepare. When he procrastinated—as he did in this *Frankenstein* essay—he often used his charm with this teacher to avoid expected consequences, and in this case, he was looking for a high score on quickly assembled work. Sean learned that procrastination could pay off, that when he waited until the last minute and charmed his teachers he could get the score he wanted. He later noted about this essay assignment and about writing assignments in general that "teachers don't really read the work anyway, so there is no reason to really put any effort or time in to it." He continued, "As long as they can look at it quickly and not notice any spelling mistakes or missing commas, they will pass you." Unfortunately, I was later to learn, many students have this impression of their English teachers.

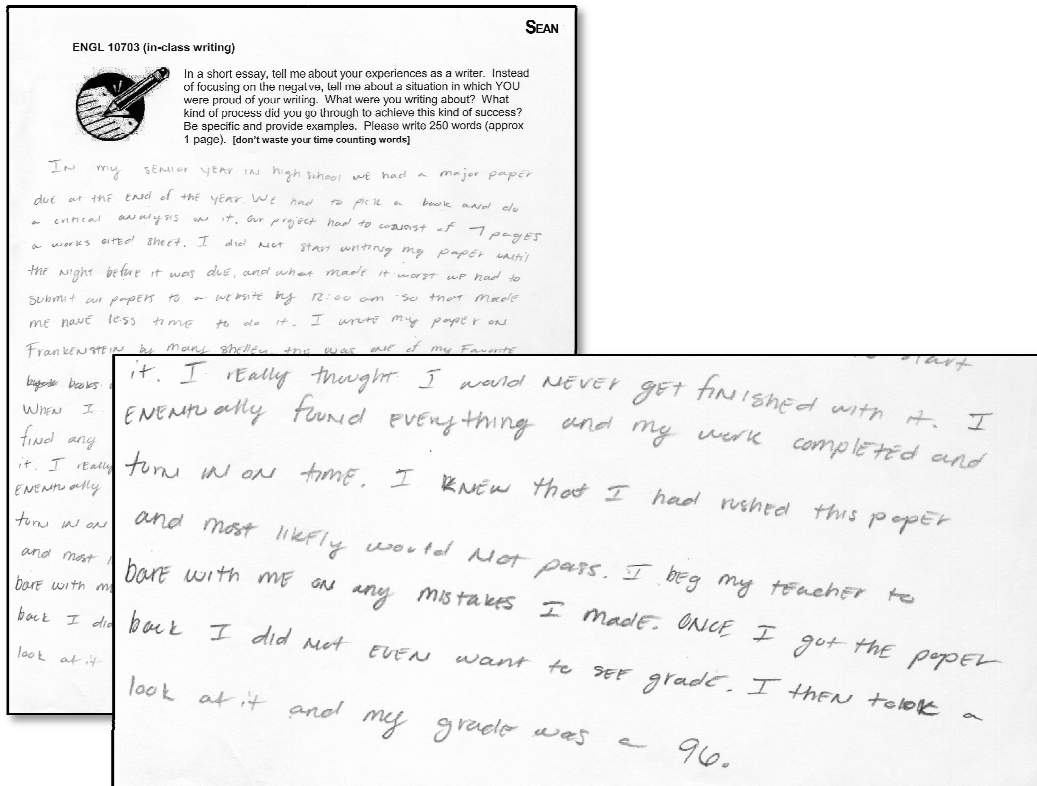


Fig. 5.3: Sean's Writing Sample

5.3.2 Autobiographical Haiku and Literacy Autobiography

The Autobiographical Haiku assignment remained the same in 2005 as it had been in 2004.⁵ In order to help students focus their writing on a specific time or event, students in the ICW course began the semester by writing a literacy autobiography in which they explored their histories as readers and writers. The students were to be selective about the events they chose and not write about their entire literacy history. To help them focus their thinking on just one event, the students first wrote an autobiographical haiku (based on a column in the *Washington Post*). In the short one-paragraph assignment, students wrote about one moment in

⁵ The complete assignment prompts appear in Appendix C.

their lives that in some way defined themselves, and the example needed to include literacy. Unlike a traditional Japanese haiku of three lines and 17 syllables, students could use no more than 100 words.

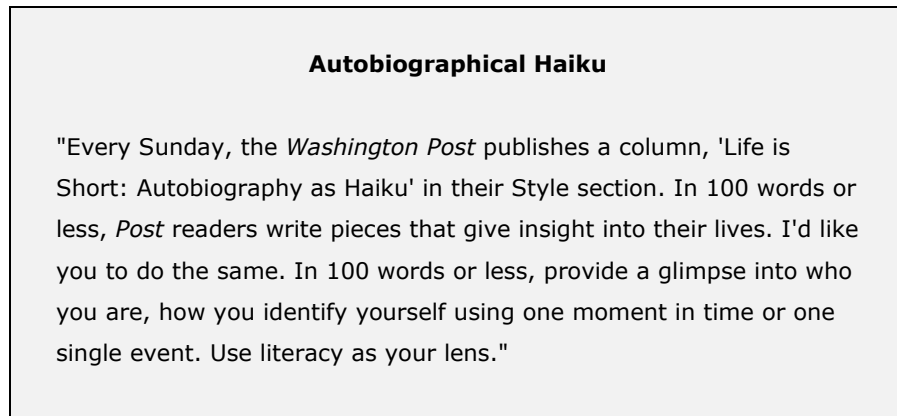


Fig. 5.4: Autobiographical Haiku Prompt (2005)

Remaining focused on one subject was as difficult for Sean as it had been for D'Ante. Instead of writing about a single moment in time, a moment that involved academic literacy, Sean wrote an autobiographical haiku about himself and his mother. This is Sean's haiku:

Living life sometimes you take things for granted. Everyday you let things go by with thought and you try and live it to the fullest. When I was 17 life started good as the years before but eventually it would be cut short due to the incarceration of my mother. My mom and dad had a bad relationship and things escalated from fights and arguments. She was taken away while I was at school. It was during my junior year in football season. I thought I wasn't able to go along from then.

My brother step and became the father of the house to me and still managed to kick it with me as a older brother. Now he is my best friend and I will never let my mother out of my sight again and every time I get a chance I say "I love you mama".

Sean's movement away from academic literacy was an example of what was important to him, and literacy was not it. He also had difficulty limiting himself to 100 words. Sean was able to meet some of the objectives of this short assignment. He did write one focused paragraph, but like D'Ante, Sean shifted the subject to something that was more interesting to him than what had been assigned. He also wrote 50 percent more than what the assignment required. While his writing was clear, he did not strengthen his skill to write a tightly focused paragraph.

He later stated that he made the connection between academic literacy and his mother's incarceration as his mother went to jail when he was in school. He associated academics with his mother's incarceration. However, for many of the students in ICW, Sean included, understanding the term "literacy" presented problems. Because most of the students in the class did not fully understand the term, they shifted the prompt to something they did understand. Sean understood academic literacy well enough, but academic literacy reminded him of his mother and she became the focus of his paragraph. As a class, we used the idea of "multiple intelligences" as defined by Viens and Kallenbach (based on Howard Gardner's work) to understand the basic definition of literacy. In other words, through "multiple intelligences," one can have sport literacy, financial literacy, musical

literacy, or even academic literacy. After completing the haiku, students then began work on their literacy autobiographies, which focused their attention on academic literacy.

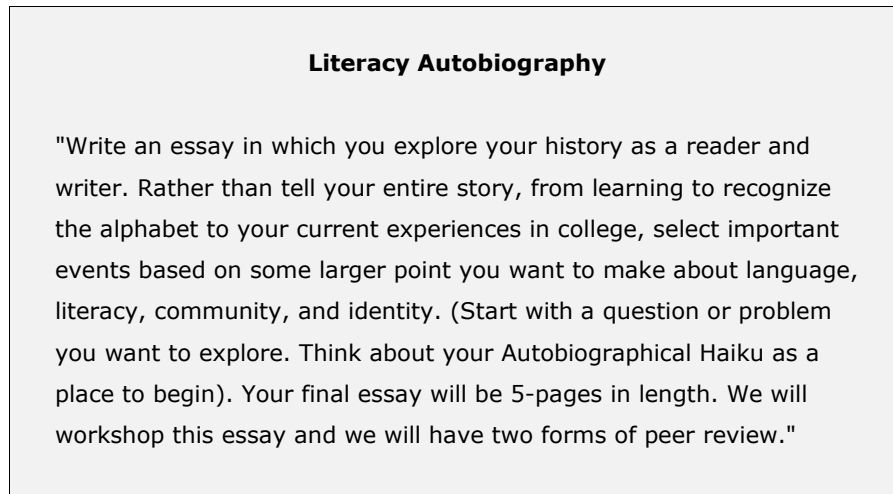


Fig. 5.5: Literacy Autobiography Prompt (truncated) (2005)

The literacy autobiography assignment remained the same as that for the 2004 class. After completing this unit, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to define literacy in terms of reading and writing, to make a strong point about how literacy experiences shaped them as individuals, to be able to offer concrete and developed examples to support claims about literacy, and to strengthen their use of Standard Written English. The literacy autobiography (and all associated work in this unit) was worth 20 percent of the overall semester grade.

After multiple drafts, a one-on-one conference with me, peer review, and whole-class workshopping, Sean submitted his literacy autobiography for evaluation, or, more accurately, he submitted three separate essays that, when combined, could

have produced the literacy autobiography: he submitted a positive literacy experience, a negative literacy experience, and a two-page reflection essay which could have been expanded to become a literacy autobiography. In order to understand the notion of synthesis, however, Sean needed to work through the steps of identifying separately a positive literacy experience and a negative literacy experience. Although the course had a slower pace than a traditional composition course, we were still moving too quickly for Sean and his classmates to grasp the notion of synthesis. Sean could not write the synthesis until he wrote the specific details of each experience, and instead of writing those in a draft format, he wrote them as formal essays. He had a difficult time with the assignment, but his work—indeed, the additional work he put upon himself—demonstrated his willingness to do what was required of him. Instead of this assignment being like many other assignments he had received from various English teachers, assignments that he did not think were important outside the classroom, he took time and effort with his literacy autobiography, as he saw the value in the work. During a conference about this essay, he stated, "I like this essay; it's different. I like writing about my past. It helps me understand what's happening now."

By the time he was able to identify and write about two specific literacy experiences—the positive experience and the negative experience—Sean was able to construct a synthesis, which was the original assignment. In this synthesis essay, he was able to expand on the issues of reading aloud and how difficult that continued to be for him through middle and high school. Interestingly, though, he begins the

synthesis essay with the idea that his literacy experiences are negative—this in spite of the fact that his elementary school experiences were very positive and rewarding. Sean's complete synthesis essay appears in Appendix F.

Sean begins this synthesis essay with the idea that literacy has been a negative experience for him. When he says, "In the third grade I wasn't the brightest speller and I could not pronounce words very well," he is negating the positive experiences from an earlier draft when he writes about winning three separate awards for his school, one of which was the spelling bee. Interestingly, Sean highlights another reading session in this essay. However, unlike the reading example he gave of reading newspaper articles in front of his junior high school peers, Sean tells a story of reading *Macbeth* in front of his high school principal and says that being successful in this endeavor made him feel "smarter and even better as a person." Sean ends this assignment with a positive experience and this, he later stated, was a part of his overall "strategy" for this assignment. He wanted to, as he said, "end the essay with a bang!"

While in high school, Sean engaged in a service-learning experience. He learned the importance of reciprocity when he read to elementary school children and they taught him how important it was to read and connect with an audience. He was able to teach children what he knew about reading and writing. He understood the power and the importance of sharing himself in that manner. It was clear to Sean (and to me) that the more he thought about his literacy experience, the more he remembered.

Sean was able to meet some of the objectives of this assignment. Writing a stand-alone synthesis essay proved very difficult for Sean. He had to write two separate essays, the positive and the negative literacy essays, before he was, as he said, "into" his subject enough to understand it from a distanced perspective, and only then could he produce the "synthesis." In the synthesis essay, Sean focused so intently on synthesizing information that he forgot many of the standard conventions of academic writing: most importantly, he forgot paragraph breaks.

5.3.3 Position Essay

Just as in 2004, the second half of the ICW course is the more in line with the traditional first-year composition course. While students engaged in paraphrase and summary activities during the first half of the course, the second half of the course focused more specifically on writing in an academic genre, which involved learning how to find and evaluate academic sources. The "position essay," as a basic argument essay, sought to incorporate the skills of analysis, summary, and paraphrase. The students chose a topic they felt strongly about and argued for one perspective on this controversial subject.

Making Knowledge by Taking a Position

"Write an essay in which you assert and support a position on a complex issue, using all of the elements of academic argument we have learned in class. Your purpose in this essay is to persuade an educated audience that your position is reasonable and worth consideration. To do so, you must show that you know the opposing arguments and acknowledge their validity as well as provide authoritative evidence (*ethos, logos, and pathos*) to support your position. Your final essay will be 5-pages in length. We will workshop this essay and we will have two forms of peer review. You will use three scholarly outside sources (not the Internet), and a Works Cited page is required."

Fig. 5.6: Position Essay Prompt (truncated) (2005)

Since 67 percent of students in the ICW course were student-athletes, I limited the scope of their essay topics; students who were actively involved in varsity sports at the university level could not write about anything sport-related. To be fair to all students, and to not just limit student-athletes, no student could write about those worn-out topics students like to write about gun control, death penalty, and under-aged drinking, for example. There is much debate in the profession of compositionists whether an instructor should limit essay topic choices or whether the students should be able to choose their own subjects. As a rule, I steer students away from those tired and overdone essay topics, as it does not teach them to think about anything new or different. I agree with David Bleich when he says, "Students want a chance to write about racism, classism, and homophobia; tackling difficult subjects would challenge the hegemony" ("Literacy and Citizenship: Resisting Social Issues" 163). When I limited the students' essay topic choices, they had an opportunity to

stretch their boundaries and learn something new. As a class, we brainstormed topics that would be appropriate for this assignment which could be something related to an academic major or a potential major, an out-of-school interest or hobby, or a national issue. Sean chose to write about tattoos.

After completing this unit, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to articulate a position in a controversial issue; to locate and select appropriate material from the library and Internet; to draw generalizations from multiple sources (e.g. identify common arguments within their chosen subject after reading multiple sources); to present differing perspectives on an issue fairly; to summarize, paraphrase, and quote sources using appropriate documentation style; to integrate their own language with the language of sources; and to strengthen use of Standard Written English. The position essay assignment (and all related course work in this unit) was worth 20 percent of the semester grade.

In the Autoethnography assignment, the assignment just prior to the position essay, Sean wrote about being a "Black Athlete." The Autoethnography assignment was designed as a first-person account with very limited use of outside sources. Unfortunately, Sean used several sources in this essay, and he plagiarized parts of the work. There are many possibilities why Sean cheated on this assignment. Perhaps he did not know how to do the work required of him, maybe he did not think I would actually read the essay (as he already stated, he did not believe teachers actually read their students' work), perhaps he was confused about summary and paraphrase, or maybe he had time management issues. All of these could be true, but as Sara Lipka

notes in her *Chronicle of Higher Education* piece, student-athletes (from recruitment to graduation) are under "huge stress from conflicting pressures of academics and sports" (par. 1). With Lipka's words in mind, Sean could have felt overwhelmed and he took the easy way out. He never stated why he cheated on this essay.

Sean's type of plagiarism is not to be confused with the "patchwriting" Rebecca Moore Howard writes about and the kind of work D'Ante constructed; instead, Sean "borrowed" material from Internet sources and claimed the writing as his own. He received a failing grade on that assignment, but given the nature of the ICW course and the emphasis of learning through revision, he revised the essay receiving additional help not from on-campus academic services (the Writing Center, for example), but from me. He learned to trust his own voice and how to use source material appropriately. Sean noted that he had never had a teacher fail him, then help him learned what he missed. As he began to write his position essay, an assignment that required synthesis of outside source material, Sean was wary. He did not want to plagiarize again, so he chose not to use source material at all. He felt safer relying on his own opinion. It is important to recognize here that these assignments overlapped. As Sean was failing and revising the Autoethnography essay, he was also writing the position essay.

It is clear, however, that as the year progressed, Sean's ability to write in a linear manner increased. Revising his texts helped with this process. Sean was able to see writing as a series of smaller steps. In terms of simple mechanics, he was able to construct complete paragraphs with controlling topic sentences, he was able to

write a thesis statement that helped him stay focused on his essay topic, and he was able to work through some of the sentence-level issues that had plagued him. Most importantly, however, Sean was learning to not fear the writing process. He was beginning to have fun with words. While he was fearful of plagiarizing and concerned about not being "cool" in front of his teammates, he did want to become a better writer.

As he produced text and revised texts, he became more aware of what words could do. He also became more cognizant of form and structure in writing. In the introduction to his position essay, he used this awareness:

Ever since the beginning of time, both women and men marked their bodies for a certain purpose. Sometimes it would be for ownership to another, or that marking would symbolize a meaning. These tattoos could tell a person from another. Not only could the tattoo exemplify something but also where exactly the tattoo was on the body. I feel that getting tattoos are a perfect way to describe a persons beliefs and their way of life. I still wonder if it is a sin, what are the stereotypes of tattoos, and what is the reasons of why people get them. Tattoos are markings on a body painted in with permanent ink and result in swelling occasionally. Tattoos range from the craziest pictures to the most breathtaking portraits.

The revision of this essay and the ultimate inclusion of source material were moving Sean closer and closer to what traditionally-admitted students could produce. Sean

revised this essay. (Essay revision as an option for all students enrolled in ICW, and depending upon the situation, I sometimes required a revision.) A traditionally-admitted student might not receive the opportunity to revise and relearn, but the nature of the ICW course, and the extra time students had to learn specific writing skills, allowed Sean and his classmates the time for reflection and revision.

5.3.4 *Rhetorical Revision*

As the last graded assignment for the academic year, students constructed a rhetorical revision of their position essay. The revision could be in almost any form they chose, but the medium and the audience had to change from what the ones used for the position essay. Students created the revised text, planned an in-class presentation of that text, and wrote a two-page essay defending the rhetorical choices they made revising their position essay to another object.

Rhetorical Revision

"This assignment requires you to revise your position paper from Unit 2 for a different medium and audience. How would you express this position if you were making a commercial, designing a billboard, writing a popular song? Then, plan an oral presentation for your class in which you will share your rhetorical revision. Finally, write a 2-page paper in which you explain how you revised your position paper for this new audience and medium and what you learned from doing so."

Fig. 5.7: Rhetorical Revision Assignment Prompt (2005)

Sean's position essay was about tattoos, yet he produced his rhetorical revision about God, "Do You Believe?" Since Sean felt that tattooing was a sin against the body (and against God), he believed the subjects connected closely enough to meet the assignment requirements. When asked about the topic switch, he said, "I thought we could choose our own subject. I didn't know it had to be the same as the other one." As with D'Ante at the end of a very long and trying semester, I chose not to challenge Sean's decision to change the subject of the rhetorical revision. I had chosen different battles throughout the term; this one was not that important. As I would learn, however, Sean had put very little effort into this assignment, and I did not need to ignore his mediocrity. He needed to be challenged on his mediocre work, and I did not challenge him. Sean chose a black background for his image so "everything would stand out." On his poster / billboard, he placed images cut from a campus magazine. The cover of this magazine showed two photographs of a six- or seven-year old young girl, before and after her adoption. This magazine appeared one week before the rhetorical revision was due in class. Sean recalled that he read the article about the young girl, and he felt "the images show how we need God." He argued, too, that both images could show "both sides" of the God story. "You are either for him or against him," Sean said.

Sean cut images out of campus newspapers and magazines for his poster (which appears on the next page). Even with an explanation during his oral presentation, it was difficult to understand the audience, the purpose, and the message of this poster. Sean was unable to articulate why he made the rhetorical

choices that he had. He seemed to bluff his way through the presentation. Sean mentioned that the black background made the words "stand out more," but this was also after a few of his classmates had presented their work and had made similar claims. Sean did not put any real time or energy into this rhetorical revision, and he put even less time and energy into his presentation.



Fig. 5.8: Sean's Rhetorical Revision

Sean barely met the objectives for this assignment. He did the work, but he could not (or would not) articulate the rhetorical decisions he made during the poster process. He did not elaborate or explain his choices in both the oral presentation and in the reflection essay that accompanied the poster. By this point in the semester, Sean was tired of school and of the scrutiny he received inside and outside the classroom. Even though our class was small, he did not want to be the object of another's gaze; he did not want any more of the "surveillance" I mentioned in the Introduction. While I could look at the poster and understand many of his choices (because I had gotten to know him, and having read all his work from the first of the

academic year), he needed to be able to articulate those choices aloud and in writing. He did not.

5.4 Student's Perception / Reflection

As a final exam in the yearlong stretch course, students wrote a reflective essay about the activities, projects, and essays they wrote that affected them the most. The students received a listing of the objectives of the course and the activities that were assigned to them throughout the year. After completing this final exam, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to synthesize four or five items around a common theme, to follow the prompt, and to use Standard Written English. The final exam was worth 10 percent of the overall semester grade.

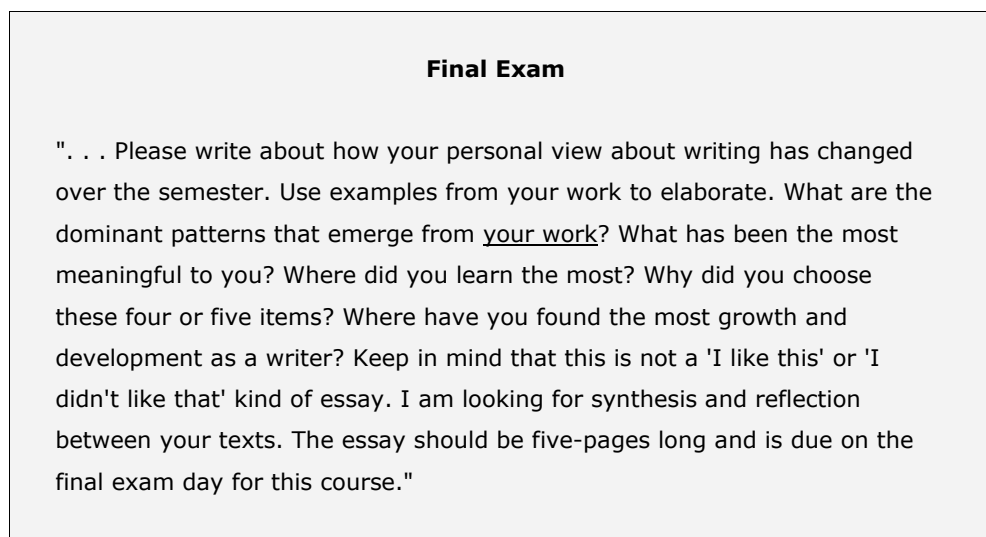


Fig. 5.9: Final Exam Essay Prompt (truncated) (2005)

By the end of the year, Sean's ability to synthesize had greatly improved. In his final exam, he was able to identify specific elements and activities of the course

that had been beneficial to him. In his essay, he did not merely list the items; he synthesized them around a common theme: being creative with writing. He chose to connect writing to music, the autobiographical haiku, the Autoethnography assignment, and peer review. Like many students in the 2004 and 2005 class, Sean mentions reading Anne Lamott's "Shitty First Draft" essay as something that was meaningful to his growth as a writer. Sean's ends his reflective essay with this paragraph:

Now the semester is completed, and there is so much to go back and look at. I'm proud of myself because of the things I've learned and skills I have. I feel I can apply what I have learned in English to life. For example, when I would work on my papers in sections this made me take things slow and in light of taking things works. If I feel the need to rush, I will get in line is "a shady first draft." My skills I have learned. I will always incorporate them in the things I do in life.

Even though he initially failed the Autoethnography assignment because of plagiarism, he still mentions this assignment as significant to his growth as a writer throughout the year. While it was not pleasant at the time, he accepted the consequence of his actions. He also learned how to write more effectively using his own words. While he does not mention it specifically in this short essay, Sean indirectly addresses the issue of procrastination. He was unable to wait until the last minute to turn in his work in the ICW course. If he turned it in late, I did not accept it. While the grade for the course was not important enough to keep Sean on top of

his work, the Athletic Academic Advising office's threat of telling coaches about his lack of academic progress was. Sean wanted to play sports, and he knew that unless he did his work to an adequate level, he would not play.

Sean was able to grow through this year of writing, and if nothing else, he learned to slow down and take pride in his work. Being in a slower-paced class helped him embrace his ability to communicate through writing, but in important ways, it also helped him come to terms with the contradictions that defined him. He found that with a lot of effort, he could be both a student and an athlete.

5.5 How Involvement in Athletics Impacted Student Learning

Unlike many first-year student-athletes on the TCU football team, Sean did not redshirt his first year. He was an active player in each of the team's 12 games during the 2005 season, and as an active player, he traveled when the team traveled. The TCU football team played six "away" games during 2005, and Sean was present for each of them. Since Sean's English classes met on a Tuesday / Thursday schedule, he only missed two class days for travel-related purposes.

Sean worked very hard at keeping on schedule with his academic work. He knew that as a first-year student and an active player on the university's football team, he would have to balance his time carefully. Beginning in the fall semester 2005, Sean kept a student planner that outlined his schedule, assignments and homework due dates. (TCU provides simple date planners for all first-year students.) This planner also marked his practice days, game days, required time in the weight room, and required time watching films with his teammates. The planner outlined

meetings with his position coach, his academic advisor, and the team doctors and trainers. Sean learned that having a schedule was helpful. However, he also learned that keeping the schedule accurate was very hard work. Many times, he had not anticipated how long an activity would take him, and often he would have to miss one appointment because of another. By the end of the first month of the fall semester, Sean had lost his planner and was relying on his academic advisor to help him remember what he had to do.

While he made it to class, his homework or his writing drafts often did not; he rarely seemed to have the time to devote to homework (for the ICW course or for any of his classes). The team practiced, had required weight room time, met with trainers to assess and monitor injuries, and watched game film. They ate together, had classes together, they lived in the same dormitory together, and they had mandatory study hours together. These study hours in the university's Athletic Academic Center should have been a time for Sean and his fellow student-athletes to complete their schoolwork. The Athletic Academic Office requires first-year student-athletes—regardless of their incoming GPA—to spend a mandatory 10 hours per week in study hall. This study hall—devoted solely to student-athletes—became a time for the students to play, talk with each other, and relax. Not much schoolwork was accomplished there, even under the supervision of hall proctors. Sean had good intentions as he began the academic year. Nevertheless, the sport—and his peers—very quickly got in the way. It was in Sean that Shulman and Bowen's notion of the

"culture of sport" became clear (73). After some time on the football team and in the company of other student-athletes, academic success became less important.

While enrolled in this course, Sean was a first-year student and a highly visible student-athlete. His visibility and the complex notions of surveillance became problematic for him toward the end of the first semester. Everyone seemed to know his identity, from students to faculty, from fans to scouts. They knew how he was doing in coursework and on the field, and they seemed to know what coaches expected from him. The pressure was intense, to be sure, and it certainly affected his academic performance.

5.6 Teacher / Teacher-Researcher Reflection

Being the highly visible athlete he was, Sean felt the pressure to perform on and off the field, and those pressures were considerable. He had the pressures that most first-year students face, but at the same time, he seemed to carry the weight of the football team on his shoulders 18-year old shoulders. After the fall semester and after the football season ended, Sean could settle down to being a traditional a first-year student (but given his status as a "stellar athlete," he would never be "traditional").

However, one incident occurred at the end of the fall semester that was the major impetus for the change that would occur in Sean's writing throughout the spring semester. After the Air Force Academy's football team suffered an embarrassing 48-10 loss to TCU late in 2005, Fisher DeBerry, the former football coach for Air Force, made what many considered to be racist comments about the

student-athletes on TCU's football team (Roeder par. 3). DeBerry stated that the Horned Frogs' defensive success was attributable to the fact that the team starts 11 African-Americans players. He said, "Afro-American kids can run very, very well [. . .] That doesn't mean that Caucasian kids and other descents can't run, but it's very obvious to me they run extremely well" (par. 3). The implication that Sean and his classmates took from this statement was DeBerry was looking for an excuse why his team lost, and he blamed the loss on the TCU football players' speed. Interestingly, the football players in ICW during this time agreed with DeBerry; they understood they were faster runners and better athletes than the Air Force Academy team. They were better athletes, Sean noted, because they were better athletes, not because they were African-Americans.

The comments upset Sean, and as a way to redirect his anger, he wrote a letter to DeBerry. This letter, one of four each student wrote as part of an ongoing letter-portfolio project, explained to DeBerry how offensive what he had said was to the entire TCU football team.⁶ Sean learned through this letter project—and specifically this letter to Coach DeBerry—that writing that has a clear purpose and a clear audience can be highly effective. Sean was able to see the value written communication by this one assignment. Linda Adler-Kassner and Susanmarie Harrington would say that the Sean's literacy, his academic skill, improved because the writing had context (35).

⁶ Sean's letter was mailed to DeBerry at the Air Force Academy. It is unclear if DeBerry received the letter. He never responded to Sean.

Ultimately, even with the other composition problems he faced through the course, this letter affected him the most profoundly. He later noted, "I never thought I could write to [Coach DeBerry] like I did. I felt really good about myself." Sean took his ability to write in a context that was important to him into the next semester, and his writing improved significantly.

CHAPTER 6

CASE STUDY #3, ERIC (ICW, 2005)

"None of us has gotten where we are solely by pulling ourselves up from our own bootstraps. We got here because somebody bent down and helped us."
--Thurgood Marshall, former Supreme Court Jurist

"When everyone is thinking the same, no one is thinking."
--John Wooden, Legendary UCLA Basketball Coach

6.1 Introduction

In 2006, the university basketball team had experienced losing seasons for five straight years. Because of these losing seasons, the coaching staff had difficulty recruiting talented basketball players who were also academically eligible to play at the university. After the graduation of effective players, a few injuries, and some scandals regarding formerly-eligible players, the team regrouped in 2006 and recruited a number of young basketball players who showed promise on the court and in the classroom.

At the same time, as the third year of the Introduction to Critical Writing course began, assumptions for and about the course shifted dramatically across campus. Instead of the ICW course reaching the needs of various types of students who were underprepared in their writing, many faculty began to see the course as a

class for solely for student-athletes, particularly for Black student-athletes, and even more particularly for Black student-athletes who were, as one professor noted, potential "problems" in the classroom. A number of faculty members were reluctant to advise their non-athlete students into the course, even if the students needed a class that would give them additional time and practice to improve their writing. Eric, a basketball player from west Texas, was a part of this class.

On the first day of the 2006 ICW course, I knew about most of the students who enrolled in the class. Many of them I met during the summer when they toured the Center for Writing on campus, and as in previous years, I had read their writing samples prior to their enrollment into the ICW course. Eric, however, was a last-minute addition to the course, and I did not know anything about him, and I did not know he played basketball until he told me.

Standing just under 6 ft. tall and slight, even under the bulky jacket he wore every day, he did not look like the majority of basketball players I had seen come through my classes. Eric had light skin, and if he had not told me, I would have made the incorrect assumption that he was Hispanic or of Spanish descent. Like other student-athletes, Eric had tattoos on his arms and shoulders that ranged from a depiction of Christ on the Cross to his mother's name. He wore diamond stud earrings in his ears. On the first day of class, he sat in the back of the room, quiet, not speaking to anyone. He responded to questions if asked directly, but he did not volunteer any information. He did not speak to his classmates or to me, but he was

quiet and attentive, taking in the information around him and writing in his student planner.

Many first-year students desire to fit into a crowd and be like everyone else, but Eric was different. Eric was a very good basketball player (according to the same fan website that touted Sean), but unlike many student-athletes who were enrolled in the ICW course, he did not want to be defined solely as a student-athlete. He wanted other people to notice his intelligence, his integrity, and his kindness instead of his race or his ability to play with a ball. He resisted singular labels. He was more than a basketball player, he said, or more than a Black man. He did not want to be defined as an "only." However, like the majority of traditional college students, Eric desired to fit into the mainstream of campus, to be a "typical college student." Therefore, being enrolled in ICW was a mixed thing for him. On one hand, he fit in to the group of students who needed additional help with writing and he blended into a class of his peers, both in terms of athleticism and in terms of race. On the other hand, being enrolled in the ICW course, Eric stood out amongst his campus friends, with non-athletes, as "special," or as one in need of remediation.

These labels were difficult for Eric, as he played on a basketball team that had not had a winning season for several years. Under the intense surveillance, from alumni and fans, the basketball team had difficulty recruiting and retaining eligible student-athletes. If that were not enough, Eric's father was the new assistant basketball coach, and that is how Eric played for TCU. He did not want to be defined as an "only," but there he was "only at TCU because of his father," "only a Black

man," "only a basketball player." Yet, in stark contrast to his 2006 ICW class cohorts, Eric was excited about the opportunity the ICW course offered him, and he wanted little to do with what one academic advisor would call the "buffoonery" provided by Eric's classmates.

With faculty perceptions across campus limiting the student population pool, admitting the 14 students who ultimately enrolled in the 2006 ICW course was a challenge. Based on faculty perceptions, the course became difficult to fill.¹ Table 6.1 outlines the demographic of the 2006 ICW course. Of the 14 students in the class, 12 were student-athletes: 11 African-American men and one African-American woman. The two non-athlete students included one white man and one Asian woman. Of the 12 student-athletes, 10 played football, one ran track, and one played basketball. The basketball player, Eric, is the subject of this case study. While a class size of 14 students seems small by comparison on most college campuses, it is important to remember that the physical size of the students enrolled in the course made the class feel bigger. Ten of the 14 students enrolled in the course played football, and they were offensive and defensive linemen. Their size could be intimidating.

¹ During the time of this study, the Introduction to Critical Writing course was a closed class that required an instructor's permission to enter. The course was never open to the general student population.

Table 6.1: ICW 2006, Student Demographic

| Introduction to Critical Writing: 2006 | | |
|--|--------------|------------|
| Gender | | |
| • Male | 12/14 | 86% |
| • Female | 2/14 | 14% |
| Race | | |
| • African-American | 11/14 | 79% |
| • Anglo | 2/14 | 14% |
| • Asian | 1/14 | 7% |
| • Hispanic | 0/14 | 0% |
| • ESL | 0/14 | 0% |
| Disability | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 2/14 | 14% |
| Athlete | | |
| Student-athlete | 12/14 | 86% |

It was in the 2006 ICW class that as the teacher (and teacher-researcher), I began to recognize the problems that "tracking" students can produce. While tracking is beneficial to the teacher, as she or he teaches one type of student at a time, it is harmful to students. It was harmful to D'Ante when he was a young boy, and it was harmful to these young men who sat in the ICW classroom in 2006. The students enrolled in this particular course were segregated from other students on campus more than any other ICW class had been. The students took classes together, competed on and off the court or field, some of them disliked one another based on this competition. In fact, 12 of the 14 students had been in classes together, and only with each other, since June of that year. They had not had much involvement with students outside the world of athletics, and by September, they were tired of each other. This fatigue—even early in the academic year—caused conflicts.

6.2 Literacy before the University

Just as Sean and D'Ante had before him, Eric considered his family "middle class." "We were just like everyone else," he said. "My parents had two kids and we had a dog. Pretty normal." Due to his father's profession as a collegiate-level basketball coach, the family did not often live in the same place very long. Eric lived with his parents and his younger brother in a number of cities around the United States. Occasionally, because of his father's job, the family did not live together. Although Eric went to several schools in his elementary and middle school years, he said, he never worried about fitting in or getting behind in his schoolwork. "My mom was really good at keeping me on track," Eric noted. He added, "My family was always the thing that never changed. Cities and schools changed all the time. Family didn't."

Eric's parents met while in college where his father had been a nationally-recognized college basketball player. After their respective graduations, they married. His father worked at several Division II and Division III universities, moving up through the ranks as a college basketball coach, while Eric's mother stayed home to rear the two boys. Education was important to his parents, Eric said, "because they wanted me and my little brother to have an easier life than they had, you know? They felt being in school, you know, would help us succeed [in life], that it would open doors. It was never a question that school was more important than basketball."

In some significant ways, Eric and Sean had much in common. Both had what Deborah Brandt termed "literacy sponsors" in that each had family and community members in their lives who supported their literacy skills in and out of school. They each did well in school, as each had assistance at home with their schoolwork. D'Ante, on the other hand, did not have the same kind of literacy sponsors. Eric had what Brandt has termed "accumulated literacy" ("Accumulating Literacy: Writing and Learning to Write in the Twentieth Century" 649). With this familial history of education, Eric's entry into literacy and ultimately into a collegiate environment was easier in many ways, as his family expected him to attend college. His parents had attended college; his aunts and uncles were college graduates. Within Eric's family (and even Sean's family), a college education was one of several common denominators that bound them together.

As a young boy, Eric had many positive literacy experiences, and most of them revolved around his family, as he said that elementary school was "not eventful." However, in an early essay assignment, Eric describes how his father read to him every night at bedtime, and that time with his dad meant a great deal to him. Eric wrote:

When I was very little, my dad would read me many stories to put me to sleep at night. This was very exciting for me. I couldn't wait until my bedtime came around, so my dad could read me a story about a great NBA star, or an action thriller, or even a hilarious comedy. I loved to read Dr. Seuss books or hear stories about Michael Jordan

the most. The stories were very interesting to me; sometimes we would stay up late reading for hours. That's why now, I love Michael Jordan, and had aspirations of playing in the NBA. My dad read to me and told me the many great things in the world that I could become. I thank my dad for exposing two different pieces of information about life in showing the many opportunities there are in America for me to succeed in.

For many young children, having a parent or sibling read to them is important, as it fosters a bond between the parent and child. It also develops reading and listening skills. In Eric's case, reading at night cemented the bond between father and son, a bond that would ultimately revolve around basketball. Nevertheless, Eric was quick to recognize that their time together started between the pages of a book and not on a basketball court. Eric's mother was also a part of this learning. Each morning at breakfast, Eric said, she would ask him ("quiz him," he said) about the contents of the previous night's story. "At first that was fun," he said, referring to the quizzing he received each morning, "then, as I was in school, it got to be like taking a test. Not so fun." Unlike D'Ante and Sean, Eric had much academic accountability at home in terms of his education and his schoolwork. Deborah Brandt's idea that those who do well in school have lives outside of school that are "richly dependent" on literacy and literate activities (193) is illustrated by a student like Eric.

What Eric did not realize at the time was that his parents recognized his lack of progress as a reader. He liked listening to the stories, but he had significant

difficulty reading himself. As a way to supplement the education he was receiving in school, his parents tried—by reading to him every night and quizzing him the next morning—to teach him to read at home. Late in elementary school, Eric learned he had dyslexia.

Through one-on-one counseling with a learning disability specialist, Eric learned strategies that would help him succeed academically. Eric needed additional time to complete reading exercises, and he thrived under a highly structured class design. His elementary and middle school teachers could accommodate these needs, as the classes were small. However, once he attended high school, his teachers could not easily accommodate his need for additional time and attention. Eric's mother filled in those gaps.

Eric's mother was highly instrumental in his quest to succeed academically. In a conversation during the second semester of ICW, Eric recalled, "She wouldn't let me go outside and play basketball with my friends. There was never an exception. I always had to get my schoolwork done first. No matter how long it took me. I hated her at the time." During his youth, Eric remembered his mother creating boundaries where, as a typical teenager, he had wanted none. Late in the year, I asked Eric how he felt about her that day. "Today?" he answered, "I'm so glad she was hard on me." Eric's mother gave him additional time, attention, and an incentive, basketball.

As he got older, Eric found his father was "hard on him" athletically. It was difficult, Eric said, to have a basketball coach for a father. Eric's father had won many awards and broken records as a collegiate player, and he felt the pressure to

live up to the legacy his father left. Even as a young teenager, Eric knew he had skill and promise as a basketball player, but he also knew that he was not in the same league as his father, and, he said, he felt the expectation from family, friends, and neighbors to assume his father's role. Later Eric would state, as a college player himself, that he did not believe his father placed the pressure on him to succeed, but that he placed the pressure on himself.

As Eric moved into high school, the family lived in a rural area of Texas that, according to state standards, had "low performing" high school campus ratings.² The dropout rate was high, and the pass rate for the state-mandated exit exams were about the lowest in the state. Yet the school had excellent basketball and football programs. Eric attended this school for three years, passing his subjects and playing basketball. Even though he continued to struggle with reading, he did well in his school subjects with very little effort because, as he noted, the teachers did not expect much. His "doing well" in academics, then, was relative. Unlike D'Ante and Sean, the lack of teacher support was not due to race (or perceived racial injustice). In Eric's case, the apathy was in direct relation to the school facilities and the lack of resources. Eric's high school is a key example of the idea that low-performing school, inner city school, and schools with resources often have the least prepared or least effective teachers. More experienced teachers often move to higher-performing school or schools with greater resources (Sanders and Herting 147-48). In spite of

² For a school to have been considered "low performing," according to Texas Educational Agency materials, it must have "below 50 percent passing any subject on TAAS; above 6 percent dropout; below 94 percent attendance rate" (Cruse and Twing par. 1).

low-performing schools and weak teachers, Eric passed through school because of his own inner drive. Given his parents' struggles and encouragement to receive a quality education, Eric understood that he was not working as hard as he should, but he saw no need to. His teachers, he noted, did not push him. "They really didn't seem to care," he said. "They just had other things to do and other students to handle. The students were wild!" During his junior year of high school, Eric decided that he would attend an "alternative" high school his senior year. He wanted a better education, an education that would prepare him for college, and he wanted to play basketball. He decided—with his parents' support—to attend a military academy in a state near extended family.

In an in-class journal entry, where students would free write about a specific word or topic, Eric wrote this about the word, "clarity":

this moment clarity means clearness of thought clearness of apperance and what that means to me when i see that its means your free. when i was going to that school to get my education and play basketball i had alot of things on my mind because it was a different situration for me that i wasnt use to i was for away from my mom and i was at a place where i didnt like so i always had alot of stuff on my mind but now since i made that scarfice and i am at a better play i am free and i'm at a place to get an better education. the way i am going to use clarity today is that im going to keep free minded and just keep clear when anybody is talkinfg to me or anything.

Eric made a deliberate choice to move away from his family so he could attend a military prep school, a decision which allowed him a better education, stronger preparation for college-level work, and time to learn discipline and direction. For Eric, the decision was clear.

6.3 Growth as Writer through Four Assignments

Like the 2004 and 2005 classes, students in the 2006 ICW course completed eight assignments. Four of the assignments remained the same as the previous years' assignments (the literacy autobiography and autobiographical haiku, the position essay, and the rhetorical revision). The other four assignments included an essay based on a photograph (using Wendy Hesford's work in *Framing Identities*), a photography assignment (TCU Community), a project where students documented themselves (in brochures), and an annotated bibliography.

6.3.1 In-class Assessment Activities

During the summer 2006, the Athletic Advising Department asked incoming student-athletes for a writing sample. As in the previous two years, I was able to compare those samples with the texts that students produced the first day of the fall semester. For Eric, however, there was no summer writing sample. I was only able to assess his writing ability based on the first-day class exercises. On the first day of the fall semester, I gave the students the same two brief in-class writing tasks as I had the 2004 class. In the first exercise, students wrote a short paragraph that introduced them to the course management system, eCollege and it introduced themselves to their classmates. I allotted ten minutes to this exercise. The second writing exercise

is a prompt-given 30-minute handwritten essay. The in-class writing tasks had the same teaching objectives through all three years of the study: overall organization of the writing, higher order concerns (content, idea development, thesis or controlling idea), lower order concerns (spelling and mechanical issues, grammar), audience awareness, length of time the student takes to produce text, handwriting, and the ability to decode the prompt.

First day of class: Self Introduction

"Please tell us a little about yourself—where you are from, your major and minor, your hobbies (if desired), your family (if desired), and your hopes (or concerns) for this class. Keep in mind that this is a public forum and what you write will be visible to everyone in the class. Please conduct yourself accordingly."

Fig. 6.1: Self-Introduction Prompt (2006)

Eric produced this introduction for his classmates:

My name is Eric. I am from [REDACTED]. I attended [REDACTED] High and played basketball during the time I was in high school. I love to listen to all forms of music except gangster rap my favorite group is Third Day, it's a christian group. I am a nice person and a gentleman im a laid back relaxed person.

Unlike many other ICW students, Eric went into some detail in his introduction. The details in his writing were markedly different than the details his classmates were

able to produce in the same exercise. His details and his behavior during this exercise would separate him from his classmates. He not only mentioned his love of music, but he also provided an example, a comparison even, as a contrast. D'Ante wrote his brief introduction to his classmates; Sean wrote his introduction to his teacher as it seemed he wanted to impress with this emphasis on "English being [his] favorite subject." Eric, on the other hand, seemed to write his introduction to a non-specific, non-person audience. The words seem flat and devoid of emotion. Even with this lack of audience awareness, Eric produced text that I would "expect" to see in a first-year student's self-introduction (Barton 472). It is interesting to note that during this short writing exercise, when his classmates were loud and energetic—playing with one another, singing, laughing—Eric stayed to himself, quietly completing this writing task. While the other students rolled around the room in their chairs, Eric stayed at the back of the room and watched.

Secondly, students produced an essay in a timed 30-minute in-class writing diagnostic that helped me understand something about their writing ability. Since I had not received a previous writing sample from Eric, this one became important to gauge his ability and his preparedness for the course.

First day of class: Writing Diagnostic

"In a short essay, tell me about your experiences as a writer. Most of us can remember a negative experience, but today I want you to focus on the positive experiences you have had with writing. Tell me about a situation in which YOU were proud of your writing. What were you writing about? What kind of process did you go through to achieve this kind of success?"

Fig. 6.2: 30-Minute Writing Diagnostic Prompt (2006)

Eric described a course he took over the summer, prior to enrolling in classes for the fall 2006 semester. In Eric's writing diagnostic essay, he writes:³

This summer in my introduction to TCU class we had to write a paper about everything we did in class. The paper was about six pages long and it went in many steps instead of just writing one big paper we took information that we learned in the course and added it in our paper for example one of the topics we talked about in the class was time management in college. So in our paper, we had to set out a plan on how we was going to manage our time with sports but also school by planning your schedule's out. It made the transition much easier because you knew were to be at any giving time throughout the day.

³ During the summer term 2006, underprepared student-athletes took a graded University Program course ("College Learning Techniques") that, while available to any student who wished to enroll, was solely populated with underprepared student-athletes. This class—lasting throughout the months of June and July before two-a-day practices started for the football team—introduced students to campus, helped them find buildings and services, and allowed them to be more "at home" in an unfamiliar place.

After we finished our paper it was a set out plans on how we were going to be successful in college.

It took Eric about 10 minutes to write these five sentences. Eric used expected Standard Written English with very little slang. His writing was clear and easy to follow even though it was riddled with run-on sentences. He provided an example of when he experienced writing, but he is not clear that this experience made him proud as a writer. However, he does write about a recent experience. This short essay explains Eric's intent to be successful in college. Indeed, of the three case studies, Eric is the only student who wrote to his current situation in college. The prompt actually asked for a prior experience, something in the student's past, and all students answered that prompt. Eric took it one-step further, though. He wrote about a recent past experience and connected that to his future as a college student.

Eric does not explicitly state why taking the summer course and learning time management techniques was positive to him, though the skills he learned were beneficial. Unfortunately, the idea of his essay, that creating a schedule would be enough to be successful in college, was a bit simplistic. Schedules can make life easier, especially for busy people, but unless one recognizes the hard work it takes to keep the schedule accurate and clear, the schedule does not help. Similarly, many students— Eric included—often believe that because they understand the basic structure of writing, that writing should be "easy." Many times they do not recognize the hard work of writing.

Eric filled the page with a combination of cursive writing and printing. While I understood that Eric had a learning disability, I did not recognize evidence of one in this sample. His writing was clear; he did not transpose letters; his spelling was fine. He revised his writing as he continued through the essay, exchanging "In" for "This," for example, "After" for "At the end." He did not seem to move back through the essay to edit his work, as he has a number of run-on sentences that at a second look he could have modified. What I did not recognize at the time, however, was the unevenness of his writing. Much of his writing was very informal and colloquial—much like the writing that D'Ante produced—and some of his writing was polished and clear, like Sean's writing. These two samples did not give me as much insight into Eric as the same type samples had for Sean and D'Ante.

6.3.2 Autobiographical Haiku and Literacy Autobiography

The 2006 ICW class produced an autobiographical haiku and a literacy autobiography with the same requirements and standards just as the classes in 2004 and 2005 had. This short assignment included three main objectives and after completing this assignment, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to write one focused paragraph about academic literacy, they should be able to follow the writing prompt, and they should use Standard Written English. This assignment was worth 10 percent of the literacy autobiography grade.

Autobiographical Haiku

"Every Sunday, the *Washington Post* publishes a column, 'Life is Short: Autobiography as Haiku' in their Style section. In 100 words or less, *Post* readers write pieces that give insight into their lives. I'd like you to do the same. In 100 words or less, provide a glimpse into who you are, how you identify yourself using one moment in time or one single event. Use literacy as your lens."

Fig. 6.4: Autobiographical Haiku Prompt (2006)

It was not as difficult for Eric to remain focused during this writing exercise, as it had been for Sean and D'Ante. Eric did have a little difficulty staying within the 100-word limit. This is Eric's Autobiographical Haiku:

In fact me as a person occurred last year when I chose to go to a military prep school. Being a school there for one year changed my life because I couldn't do the normal stuff regular high school students were doing. I had to wake up at six o'clock every morning. I had to do everything the military officers said, and I couldn't watch TV or anything. I just played basketball and went to my aunts on the weekends. After this experience, I've learned he should always be thankful for everything you have been given and never take anything for granted because you could be in a worse position.

Eric does not write about literacy directly, but he does connect writing to a school experience. Oddly, this short paragraph is devoid of much emotion. He stated the facts about himself and little else. He is able to reflect on an experience that changed

and challenged him, and the experience provided him with a perspective few high school students have. As the year would progress, Eric's ability to describe his emotions would be a skill that would become important to him and important in his writing. What I would later learn about Eric is that he had desired deeply to connect emotionally through his writing. His daily journal entries were filled with emotional descriptions. However, he worked very hard at not using emotions in the writing he turned in for grades. In a conference during the first few weeks of class, he noted that writing without emotion was "school writing." He believed that the academic standard was the goal he should strive to reach. This confirms what Shaughnessy stated, that "for the basic writing students, academic writing is a trap, not a way of saying something to someone" (7). By including emotion in his work, Eric wanted to "say" something to someone, but he had believed he could not because school writing contained no emotion.

As with the 2004 and 2005 classes, the autobiographical haiku was followed by the literacy autobiography assignment. After completing this unit, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to define literacy in terms of reading and writing, to make a strong point about how literacy experiences shaped them as individuals, to be able to offer concrete and developed examples to support claims about literacy, and to strengthen their use of Standard Written English. The literacy autobiography (and all associated work in this unit) was worth 20 percent of the overall semester grade.

Literacy Autobiography

"Write an essay in which you explore your history as a reader and writer. Rather than tell your entire story, from learning to recognize the alphabet to your current experiences in college, select important events based on some larger point you want to make about language, literacy, community, and identity. (Start with a question or problem you want to explore. Think about your Autobiographical Haiku as a place to begin). Your final essay will be 5-pages in length. We will workshop this essay and we will have two forms of peer review."

Fig. 6.5: Literacy Autobiography Prompt (truncated) (2006)

Eric does make some interesting rhetorical choices in this essay. He writes about how he "expected success" when he was young, and just as Sean had, Eric won a spelling bee when he was in elementary school. These outward displays of success—ribbons and trophies—were significant to Eric's growth as a reader and writer. Eric also had an experience that mirrors an experience Sean had: reading aloud in front of other people. The self-consciousness Eric says he felt was enough to be a "negative experience" in his literacy history.

I have reproduced Eric's entire literacy autobiography here to demonstrate the detail of his writing. This sample also demonstrates something I would not realize until much later: Eric received a significant amount of help with this essay. Eric's complete literacy narrative appears in Appendix F.

Eric uses some important rhetorical strategies in this essay to help him stay focused on his essay topic. He defines terms and he follows a predictable format. He took his essay through multiple peer review sessions, attended Writing Center

tutorials on writing, and met with a writing tutor specifically hired to work with student-athletes. He met with me twice about the essay. At the time, given that this was a first formal writing assignment and the fact that he asked for and received significant help in his writing, I did not recognize that he might have received too much help with his writing. It was later, during the second semester that I noted the differences in his writing style, when he received too much help and when he had not received any.

6.3.3 *Position Essay*

The readings for the 2004 and 2005 courses were based on popular culture periodicals (*Newsweek*, *The Wall Street Journal*, campus, and local newspapers). However, the readings for the 2006 class came from *Gig: Americans Talk about Their Jobs*, by John Bowe, Marisa Bowe, and Sabin Streeter. The essays in *Gig* related to jobs that Americans hold and these jobs ranged from restaurant dishwasher to professional athlete, from drug dealer to UPS delivery person. The students wrote about a collection of professions.

After completing the position essay, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability support a decision to engage in a particular profession; to locate and select appropriate material from the library and Internet; to draw generalizations from multiple sources (e.g. identify common "issues" after reading multiple sources); to present differing perspectives on an issue fairly; to summarize, paraphrase, and quote sources using appropriate documentation style; to integrate their own language with the language of sources; and to strengthen use of Standard

written English. The position essay assignment (and all related course work in this unit) was worth 20 percent of the semester grade.

Making Knowledge by Taking a Position

"Write an essay in which you assert and support a position on a complex issue, using all of the elements of academic argument we have learned in class. Your purpose in this essay is to persuade an educated audience that your position is reasonable and worth consideration. To do so, you must show that you know the opposing arguments and acknowledge their validity as well as provide authoritative evidence (*ethos, logos, and pathos*) to support your position. Your final essay will be 5-pages in length. We will workshop this essay and we will have two forms of peer review. You will use three scholarly outside sources (not the Internet), and a Works Cited page is required."

Fig. 6.6: Position Essay Prompt (truncated) (2006)

For the position essay in 2006, I did not limit the choice of essay topics as I had in the previous two ICW courses. Since the students in the 2006 course read *Gig: Americans Talk about their Jobs*, they drew their position essay subjects from that book. In other words, they chose topics related to a profession outlined in the book, a profession they might want to enter someday. Eric chose to write about teachers. In a journal entry about this assignment and the readings, Eric wrote the following, but without a title and without further contextualizing details, it would be impossible to know he was writing about teaching and teachers:

reading the three gigs i connecting them as they all worked hard at there job because when reading them people didnt really relized how

hard they worked to get the money they were paid and its like people in the outside world only see's the benefits instead of the hardwork but not only that people don't realize that whoever stuff we use to get sales they work hard at that but people just throw them away like brochures.

This entry allowed Eric to think through this issue before he actually had to write about it formally. From the initial journal entry, Eric produced this opening paragraph for his position essay:

In this society, having teachers is very important. Without teachers, no one would be able to learn. Everybody needs to have the basic skills of learning to survive in life. In order for people to be able to learn, it is necessary to have the best teachers possible, which is why teachers have to go through interviews to make sure they are certified for the job. Also, to entice good teachers to stay, schools must provide teachers with a comfortable environment. Teachers and students must also develop good relationships in order to foster a good learning environment. Finally, parents must be actively involved in the education process, because we should not leave the entire responsibility of children's education on the teachers.

Eric wrote this introductory paragraph, but it was still difficult to know what he was trying to explain. Knowing about the journal entry helped, but any audience outside of his instructor or his classmates would not have access to that information. His

writing was not controlled by a single thesis statement or idea, nor were his paragraphs controlled by a single idea, or topic sentence. The two samples show, though, how Eric made the transition from draft to final essay.

In his position essay, Eric worked hard at integrating source material into his essay, and for the most part, he did that well. He had difficulty citing the primary book, *Gig*, as it was an anthology of short essays, and many of those essays did not have listed authors or did not list an author's last name. Eric did not include a Works Cited page with his essay.

Along with the sloppy citation method, Eric also made some broad, sweeping unsupported claims in this essay. For example, he made the assertion, "Without teachers, no one would be able to learn," and he was unable to support that sweeping claim with any evidence. He did, however, attempt the work. Eric was able to fulfill the requirements of this assignment in terms of number of pages written and the required number of primary and secondary sources, and he was able to follow a structure that came easily for him: the five-paragraph essay. It was also clear, based on the sheer number of mechanical and grammatical problems that Eric did not receive as much outside help with this essay as he had with previous assignments. There were sentence level errors in this work that did not appear in his Literacy Autobiography, for example. Had he received some additional help, a trained tutor could have alerted him to the five-paragraph form and encouraged him to develop those ideas further or could have helped him modify his thesis so he could move beyond that formula.

Instead of relying on *Gig* and some Internet sources, Eric showed some ingenuity in this assignment. He interviewed one of his professors, and he asked this professor about the demands and rewards of teaching. Eric then incorporated that interview into his essay. He wrote,

Teachers like working in this profession because of the positive feedback they get from students. Teachers like to make a difference in a student's life when it comes to helping students learn and watching them succeed (Brownhill, Wilhelm, and Watson 6). According to [REDACTED], professor of communication, "I enjoyed being in the classroom helping students make sense of my class, as a professor I like sharing my experiences in being open with my students." ([REDACTED]).

Eric does fall back on the tried-and-true five-paragraph form. In some ways, he seemed to be regressing in his writing skill. In retrospect, I attribute this regression to his ongoing and escalating disappointment and disillusionment in basketball. Eric began to do the minimum amount of work required to pass the course. However, unlike D'Ante or even Sean, Eric was able to produce those minimum expectations for this assignment and venture into the campus community to find a resource for this work.

6.3.4 *Rhetorical Revision*

As the last graded assignment for the academic year, students constructed a rhetorical revision of their position essay. The revision could be in almost any form

they chose, but the medium and the audience had to change from what they used for the position essay. Students created the revised text, they planned an in-class presentation of that text, and they wrote a two-page essay defending the rhetorical choices they made revising their position essay to another object. Eric's position essay concerned the need for teachers in the lives of average citizens, and his rhetorical revision was about stress. When asked why the change in topic Eric replied, "well, teachers experience stress, don't they? This t-shirt is a reminder to take care of yourself and not be stressed. I feel everyone should be stress free and not have to deal with stress."

Rhetorical Revision

"This assignment requires you to revise your position paper from Unit 2 for a different medium and audience. How would you express this position if you were making a commercial, designing a billboard, writing a popular song? Then, plan an oral presentation for your class in which you will share your rhetorical revision. Finally, write a 2-page paper in which you explain how you revised your position paper for this new audience and medium and what you learned from doing so."

Fig. 6.7: Rhetorical Revision Assignment Prompt (2006)

Eric's rhetorical revision essay provides insight into the choices he made for his t-shirt design. He wrote, "While making my t-shirt, the point I wanted to make with the color, images I used, was to get the audience attention by saying stress is not the answer." He goes on to write about how the black background allows all else on

the design to "standout even more." The reversed Nike "swoosh" was intentional, he noted, as he wanted audiences to "notice the shirt." Eric goes on to write, "I used the three people to show everyone they are different colors to show different races because everyone feels stress sometime," he said. The multicolored horizontal stripes on the shirt, he wrote, relate to the many levels of stress one can feel.



Fig. 6.8: Eric's Rhetorical Revision

Eric presented this poster at his formal presentation to his classmates. He articulated his rhetorical decisions to the class discussing his use of color and style, the graphics of the t-shirt design and the audience for this particular t-shirt. Eric focused explicitly on Aristotle's appeals as he spoke. He said, "my *ethos* is that I feel stress, and you feel stress, so teachers also feel stress, and *pathos* is that you all know Nike, and *logos* is that my message is clear."

However interesting his rhetorical revision turned out to be, without being at the presentation and hearing what he had to say about his work and without reading the essay that accompanied the t-shirt design (that outlined the rhetorical decisions he had made, what he had intended for his t-shirt, and for whom it was intended), one would be unable to glean the "we all have stress" message from this t-shirt design. While it was interesting, it was not effective, and that lack of effectiveness showed in his final grade for this assignment and in the course. It was here as a teacher that I held firm to the assignment and to my expectations for the work he produced. Eric had the ability to accomplish the assignment; he could have done better work, and I was not going to reward him for mediocrity.

6.4 Student's Perception / Reflection

As a final exam in the yearlong stretch course, students wrote a reflective essay about the activities, projects, and essays they wrote that affected them the most. The students received a listing of the objectives of the course and the activities that were assigned to them throughout the year. After completing this final exam, students should have been able to demonstrate their ability to synthesize four or five items around a common theme, to follow the prompt, and to use Standard Written English. The final exam was worth 10 percent of the overall semester grade.

Final Exam

". . . Please write about how your personal view about writing has changed over the semester. Use examples from your work to elaborate. What are the dominant patterns that emerge from your work? What has been the most meaningful to you? Where did you learn the most? Why did you choose these four or five items? Where have you found the most growth and development as a writer? Keep in mind that this is not a 'I like this' or 'I didn't like that' kind of essay. I am looking for synthesis and reflection between your texts. The essay should be five-pages long and is due on the final exam day for this course."

Fig. 6.9: Final Exam Essay Prompt (truncated) (2006)

In this last essay of the year, unlike Sean and D'Ante, Eric acknowledged the emotional impact of writing in his reflection. This is in stark contrast to the almost emotionless first-day writing exercises. Nevertheless, the skills he focused on in this reflective essay were the more practical skills: he wrote about the haiku, the collages made in Photoshop, making his experiences significant to an outside audience, analyzing photographs, and writing letters. Of the three case studies, Eric is the only one who referred to the nature of the ICW stretch course as being helpful to his learning because the course lasted one full academic year. The introduction to Eric's final exam essay explains much about him, as it points directly to five specific assignments, but it acknowledges his need to express emotions:

Throughout the past [two semesters] we was able to do a lot of different projects in class but also away from class that helped too become a better writer and expand on emotions that I never thought

could be reached, the five items that meant the most to me was the haiku, the collages we made from photo shop, I learned how to take my experiences and make them significant to an audience different than me, I learned how to analyze photographs and write letters.

Analyzing photographs is one activity that affected Eric the most, as he wrote about it several times in this one essay. He believed, he said, that the ability to analyze visually helped him to analyze traditional texts (books, articles). He found them "easier to understand" when he used the tools he learned with visual analysis.

While the visual rhetoric assignments are not a part of the case study analysis, it is important to recognize here that the analyzing of images and the taking of photographs was a way to work with Eric's learning disability. The ICW course allowed him to read other types of texts. Indeed, he was able to understand more about the world around him, the people around him, and even himself through this work. Eric wrote,

I learned by taking simple pictures that defines you as a person, but also has a meaning too you in away no one else knows. The viewer had too really look at it from a different perspective because the pictures that where connected in a way had a lot of different meaning too them and you wanted to figure that out as audience member.

Eric was able to articulate the change he went through in the Introduction to Critical Writing course. He wrote,

Over the semester my personal view about writing has changed. Instead of just writing about particular point of my life in just writing papers, I was able too expand in many different areas of writing. I stay consistent with expressing my feeling and letting my audience know how I have feel in different situations and how I was feeling in that particular time in my life and how I am feeling now, so throughout my work I really tried too stay consistent with that because most of our projects were expressing our feelings and showing what we value the most as an individual, because everybody does not have the same values.

While he was not obvious friends with his classmates, he did grow to understand them through writing, peer review, and again, the visual work done in class: "The struggles [my classmates] may have faced, the things that mean's the most too them, and the success they have had as individual. I understand it." It was through his involvement with his classroom peers and with me that he began to trust others around him.

6.5 How Involvement in Athletics Impacted Student Learning

As a member of the basketball team, Eric could have missed numerous classes in the fall semester as well as the spring semester due to their extensive travel schedule. He did not. He was very careful about being present in each class. Throughout the year, he missed only two classes because of basketball games or mandatory basketball practice. Although practices should not have been scheduled

during class time (between 8:00 a.m. and 1:00 p.m.), sometimes they were, and there was little Eric could do about those "additional" practices. Alex Kellogg notes in his *Chronicle of Higher Education* article that universities "regularly flout the rules" when it comes to the time student-athletes spend participating in their sports as there are few consequences for the coaches or the programs who choose to do so (A33). Eric and other student-athletes elected to skip class in lieu of "mandatory" practices because they often did not see it as a choice. Athletics, not academics, was number one. It was through these "mandatory" practices that Eric (and other student-athletes) began to realize the power their coaches had over them. The coaches had more power, Eric realized, than his professors did. Part of this was due to the timing of games that particular season and the team's schedule. The ICW class met on a Tuesday / Thursday schedule, and the team would often travel on Fridays for Saturday games, or if they had a mid-week game, he could typically attend class before the team left. Even during time the team had mid-week travel, Eric had his work done before he left. If something was due, he turned it in early.

Involvement in basketball was stressful for Eric, though. It was unclear at the time if the stress he felt came from the team (it was a losing season), the game itself, or the fact that his father was a peripheral member of the coaching staff. In a journal entry early in the academic year, he wrote:

right now i have alot of anger building up because one of my dreams was to play college basketball but not only that make it to the ncaa tournament and be playing in march. i never thought my fist year of

college basketball would go in this direction being a freshmen and wanting it more then some of the older guys i just think it is horrible. i just hope when my time comes and im one of the older guys i still have the same dreams and still have the same hunger as i do now because it doesnt take much if u put your mind to it.

Interestingly, his rhetorical revision project should have been about the profession of teaching, but he ultimately created a t-shirt that described the stress he felt as he played (or did not play) for the university's basketball team.

However, late in the spring semester of the yearlong course, Eric wrote about his experiences being a student-athlete, and how disillusioned he was being in college playing a sport he once loved. He compared his high school experience as a student-athlete to this first-year as a collegiate student-athlete. The change in his writing was significant. He wrote with clarity and insight. Clearly, when Eric could use his emotions to guide his writing, his writing improved dramatically.

When I started playing High school basketball, it got a little bit more serious because that's when you're ranked as a player on how well you compete on the court. High school is the time when I had to show all of my skills, hoping to get recruited by the best schools. There is quite a bit of pressure that comes with that because I want to perform my best every night in hopes that all of the dreams that I once had as a young kid would come true. I'm from [REDACTED], which is a major basketball state. The fans love basketball more than any other sports.

They are considered die-hard fans and will fill up any High School or College Gym just to see a game. It was very competitive for me during high school because basketball was taken very serious. However, I enjoyed it because it was fun and I was playing basketball with my friends.

In retrospect, I should have opened the assignments more to Eric and his classmates. When they wrote about something that mattered to them (unlike the readings from), their writing improved. In even more journal entries during the spring semester, Eric wrote about basketball and how difficult it was to juggle both the athletic and academic demands on him. He does allude to the notion here that many times his academic work was not completed fully or sometimes in a timely manner, as athletic commitments took priority:

In our lives as scholarship players, our first obligation is to basketball because that is what is paying for us to be in college. But most of us know that basketball is only a tool that is getting us the opportunity to get an education that we may have not have been able to afford. Sometimes, it can be a double edge sword because in order to do well in school, I have to have time to give to do my schoolwork. The basketball schedule is so demanding, it makes this very hard to do. Many people on the outside think that student-athletes have it very easy but they are so wrong. I would like people to understand that it is definitely not a free ride to receive a scholarship for basketball.

Of all the students interviewed and studied for this dissertation project, Eric was the one who was the most disappointed in the student-athlete experience. However, he was the one most excited to be gaining an education. Eric was also the student who was most affected by the pressure to be both a student and an athlete at a Division I-A institution.

6.5 Instructor Perspective

Eric was one of the few ICW students who did not stand out among his peers. He blended in, as that is what he wanted; he did not want to be under constant scrutiny. Many of his peers in the three-years of the course were often larger-than-life, their confidence and their egos filling up the available space in the classroom. Many of these students were loud, boisterous, energetic, players, bluffers. By contrast, Eric was quiet, he stayed to himself, and he did his work. He had focus and dedication to both his sport and to the academic work required of him. Unlike many of the other students, Eric understood that he would never become a professional athlete. He simply liked playing basketball.

Of the three case studies, and indeed, among the other 44 students enrolled in ICW, Eric had the most "academic" writing style. He needed to improve his writing, as all the students did. Eric did not seem to change as much as Sean or D'Ante had changed in their writing. Eric did not have as far to move to reach the "academic standard." It is clear, however, that Eric's writing improved over the course of the year, and as the instructor, I was fortunate to witness that transformation. Robert Leamson, in his book *Thinking about Teaching and Learning*, notes that

how students got to be [the way they are] is certainly some mix of nature and nurture. But anyone who has had the opportunity to teach the same students at both the beginning and the end of their college career will have noticed changes that are significant and sometimes dramatic. Students' genetic endowments not having changed, we can safely conclude that their college experiences the teachers they had and the courses they took—have had considerable impact. (2)

The additional time and the additional attention he received from his classmates and his instructor benefitted Eric greatly. The course encouraged him to write every day. As Leamson notes, "Daily immersion in a discipline, even a difficult one, involves representations being repeated until [...] the complex has become familiar" (15). In other words, the daily writing activities made him a better writer.

During the 2006 year, I introduced several New Media components into the ICW course. One of the students' first assignments was to produce a photo-collage in Photoshop.⁴ Students found five copyright-free photographs through an Internet search engine, and they combined those with a quotation about education. They were also to integrate their autobiographical haiku into the collage.

The Photoshop assignment excited Eric in a way that other assignments did not. As he worked in the New Media Writing Studio, he was able to articulate how working on the collage helped him in his writing. At one point, Eric had not saved his work and through a common technological glitch, he lost his file. He had to

⁴ Selected alternative assignments appear in Appendix E.

reconstruct the collage from the beginning. Instead of remaining frustrated at having to do the work again, he realized that in recreating the collage he was making a better document. He told a classmate, "By doin' it again, I make it better . . . I like this. I can see how this'll help writing." Where the majority of other student-athletes in the ICW course were kinesthetic learners, Eric was a visual learner. If he could "see" the outcome, he could understand the process to arrive to that outcome. Mary Hamilton would support this claim as she argues "the visual data students produce can be used to focus and extend knowledge in two ways: by identifying the elements of literacy practice more closely, and by challenging and elaborating underlying concepts of *practice* and *event*" (18).

In his collage, he combines photographs of trees, what he called "the trees of knowledge," along with this autobiographic haiku and a quotation about education and literacy. "These trees show different seasons and at different times of day," Eric said. Eric chose these details, he continued, because "knowledge happens all the time, and there is no limit on knowledge."

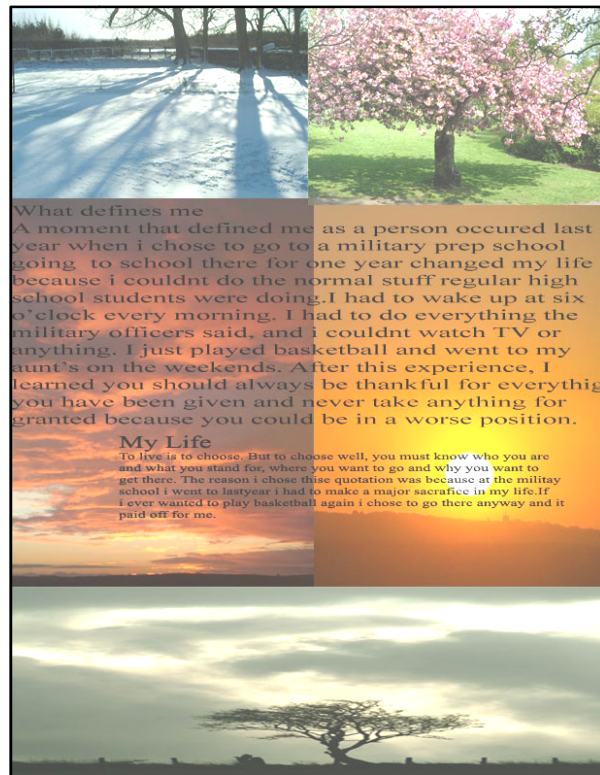


Fig. 6.10: Eric's Photoshop Collage

The inclusion of New Media components into the Introduction to Critical Writing course helped students such as Eric who had a need for alternative assignments, assignments unlike the ones he received in high school. In these assignments, Eric felt he could express himself more effectively and with greater effect.

INTERCHAPTER

CONCLUSION TO CASE STUDIES

*"Defeat is not the worst of failures.
Not to have tried is the true failure."
--George E. Woodberry, Poet*

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 highlighted three individual students and how their writing changed over the course of one year in the ICW course. These students completed the same four assignments, and they each completed complementary alternative assignments. Through it all, each student learned more about himself, his peers, his teachers, and the institution. Most importantly, however, each student learned more about writing and about his own writing process. It was not always easy, but ultimately, it was effective: they learned. While the assignments (traditional and alternative) helped in that goal of better writing, the most effective tool were the one-on-one conferences held throughout the semester with each individual student about each major assignment. In these conferences, the students could be more themselves and avoid the "cool pose" they had in class (Patterson). They could be more forthcoming about their lack of skill in writing, and they were more receptive to instruction when away from their peers. Neal Learner, in his article "The Teacher-Student Writing Conference and the Desire for Intimacy," makes the argument that conferencing has always been an effective tool when students are from varied

backgrounds and have varied levels of preparedness in the classroom. He also claims that teacher-student conferencing allows educators to connect with students and it "provides a promise for teaching and learning" that cannot be replicated in a classroom (205). As Learner notes, conferences with students are a wonderful way to connect with them, and this connection, the relational pedagogy I will discuss in the next chapter, can be replicated in a classroom. For some academically underprepared student-athletes, conferences offered an alternative space to learn. Conferences also invite students to join the academy.

Kelvin Monroe, in his College English essay "Writin Da Funk Dealer: Songs of Reflection and Reflex/Shuns," comments that when he was an undergraduate student at a large Midwestern University, he rarely had conferences with his professors. He notes, "I began to study the responses I received to my requests for a little extra time with these profs outside class. I saw the white students having coffee with their profs, talkin about school stuff—at least it appeared that way—or chillin with their profs outside of class. Not me" (104). Monroe, I must note, is African-American. He calls this lack of concern that many professors have toward African-American students a "violence to academic neglect" (104). The conferences with students from ICW sought to negate this "violence" and include them in the work of the institution: education.

Another benefit the conferences had was to smooth the transition from high school to college. For the student-athletes who participated in revenue-producing sports at TCU, a predominantly White campus, the transition from high school

student to college student was significant. It was also significant for their 42 ICW peers. These students needed a place to navigate the change from one set of expectations to another, and the conference sessions allowed each student to do that. The conferences provided students an opportunity to learn about their new academic culture in a nonthreatening and supportive way. The conferences also provided a "literacy sponsor," to use Deborah Brandt's term. That literacy sponsor would be me, the instructor of the ICW course.

In *Literacy as Involvement: The Acts of Writers, Readers, and Texts*, Brandt notes that in order to be literate, one must pull away from the demanding solidarity with the social world, to put deliberate space and time between oneself and others (*Literacy as Involvement: The Acts of Writers, Readers, and Texts* 1). In other words, to be "literate" (as the academy defines the term), one must be willing to forego some part of one's heritage and culture. The three case studies represented in this dissertation demonstrate three levels of willingness to change. Eric was the most easily connected to the university culture, as he had "literacy sponsors" as parents, and his life was "richly dependent" on literacy as he grew up (Brandt "Literacy as Knowledge" 193; *Sponsors of Literacy*). His parents were college graduates, and he had always expected to attend college. The transition to the culture was not difficult for him.

Sean, on the other hand, had some difficulty transitioning from one culture to another, but football pressures could have been the cause of those problems. He came from a home that valued education, even though not all members of his family

knew how to attain it. He was willing to lose a part of himself to gain something more, something that would benefit him: a chance to play Division I-A football and a college degree.

Lastly, D'Ante had the most difficulty losing himself in the academic culture. He fought to retain his sense of self, and he defied anyone to change or challenge him. He knew himself and he liked himself as he was. He was, however, so much out of his comfort zone that the rebellion and the showdowns gave him a way to save himself in the midst of a very difficult year. For D'Ante, the college education and running at a Division I-A institution was too high a price to pay for the changes in himself he would need to make.

The next chapter, Chapter 7, provides an analysis of these case studies and what future educators can learn from them. It will also highlight some alternative assignments and pedagogical strategies that worked with the students enrolled in ICW throughout the three years of the study, including the non-student athletes, female students, and second-language learners.

CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS AND ANALYSIS: UNDERPREPARED STUDENTS: DO WE PUSH THEM OR PULL THEM TO SUCCEED IN THE WRITING CLASSROOM?

"Nothing is particularly hard if you divide it into small jobs."
--Henry Ford, Automobile Manufacturer

"Pick battles big enough to matter, small enough to win."
--Jonathan Kozol, Educator

"A coach is someone who can give correction without causing resentment."
--John Wooden, Legendary UCLA Basketball Coach

7.1 Introduction

The subjects of three case studies in Chapters 4, 5, and 6 (D'Ante, 2004; Sean, 2005; and Eric, 2006, respectively) represent the 45 students in the Introduction to Critical Writing course throughout the time of this dissertation study. These young men embody a wide range of ability as they entered their first year at a university, with D'Ante being the least prepared and Eric being the most ready to tackle the university work required of him. Sean represents the mid-range student, the student with undeveloped ability. Each of the men played a different sport (track and field, football, and men's basketball), and each had a different goal for his future. D'Ante and Sean believed they would one day be professional athletes, and Eric used his skills at basketball to earn a college education. Although these three men had

many similarities, their differences—between each other and between their classmates—are what inform the findings of this dissertation. The findings fall into three major categories: students and their identity formation, the conflicting roles of a "student" and an "athlete," and students' responses to alternative pedagogies.

In writing about the world of student-athletes at a NCAA-ranked Division I-A university, it is very difficult to focus only on the student when a student-athlete may often see himself as only athlete. The sport supports this label of "athlete" particularly, as one coach noted, "academics is a plus, athletics is a must." While it is not the responsibility of faculty to change perceptions of community members, coaches, or fans, faculty can begin to change the institutional perception of student-athletes. As I have tried to make clear elsewhere in this dissertation, much is at stake in the world of intercollegiate world athletics, and education rarely tops the list.

7.1.1 Entering the Conversation

In "Being a Writer vs. Being an Academic: A Conflict in Goals," Peter Elbow focuses on the "conflict between the role of writer and that of academic" (72). He describes his goal of teaching first-year students as getting them to "feel themselves as writers and feel themselves as academics," but he recognizes this may be an idealistic goal that some students will not reach (73). By using the term "academics," Elbow is not suggesting that all students will join the academy professionally; rather, he wants students to engage important issues through critical writing and reading in order to position themselves within others' ongoing conversations. He also wants them to see the value of academic writing, as he says, "Insofar as I want them to

internalize the role of an academic, I should teach my students always to situate themselves and what they have to say in the context of important writers who have written on the subject: to see the act of writing as an act of finding and acknowledging one's place in an ongoing intellectual conversation" (78).

Elbow makes a good point, but it is a point lost on the majority of students enrolled in ICW the three years of this study. The ICW students had little desire to "join a conversation" with an academic, whether that academic was in a text or face-to-face in a classroom. The conversations academics were having were not the conversations the student-athletes were having. By encouraging student writers to join academic conversations, Elbow implies that the academic conversation has more value than conversations the students might otherwise hold or that the academic conversation is more important or worth joining. The implication is also to abandon the non-academic conversations, as they are relatively unimportant. The student writers might disagree with this notion. The student-athletes in this study certainly would. The student-athletes were disconnected from academic conversations at the university, and throughout their educational histories, they had been left out of those conversations and decisions. The student-athletes in ICW saw themselves as athletes, not as academics, not as writers. Yet they were literate in many ways. To ask them to abandon their current method of communication for a new method was unreasonable, at least at the beginning of a semester. By asking students to accept academic discourse as a way to communicate and make meaning of the world, we quickly force them to abandon many of the beliefs and values that they bring with

them. We are "deculturing" and, to use Patricia Bizzell's term a bit differently, we are "deracinating" them so that they can join our community (22). Simply inviting the students to join in the conversation, however, was not enough. The conflicting roles the students occupied caused problems, significant problems. Even though I had taught first-year composition for several years, and even though I did not strive to change the students in some radical way, and even though I felt I had the credibility, the *ethos*, to "invite," my simple invitation was largely ignored, as the students did not trust me. They did not know me. The invitation causes significant challenges, particularly for one ICW class.

Mid-way through the fall 2005 semester, the ICW class—Sean's class—was having considerable difficulty understanding why they were enrolled in ICW. By mid-October, the newness of a university experience had begun to wear off only to be replaced by what they felt was the drudgery of coming to class and completing coursework. These were the "stellar athletes" who saw themselves as athletes, not as students. While only 47 percent of the students in this class were football players, their physical size, and their larger-than-life egos dominated the room. The TCU football team had a major upset win over nationally ranked University of Oklahoma, and they were feeling invincible. The win over Oklahoma also solidified the "I am an athlete" role they each assumed. Community, fans, alumni, faculty, and university staff reinforced these roles, too, by talking about the "big game" and rarely mentioning academics. As first-semester first-year students, they believed they had nothing to gain by a writing course and everything to gain by playing football.

The basketball players were feeling the same way, but unlike the football players who had been willing to sit through the course because they had to (in order to play football), the basketball players did not want to be in the course from the first week of the semester, and they skipped class as much as they could. They wanted to be involved in their sport, not in a class of struggling writers. As one student, Timothy,¹ noted in a first-week journal entry,

Today is the first day of September which means the basketball season starts in exactly 64 days! I cant wait until the [stadium] is filled to the top with my Mom, whose my number one fan, one the first row with her shirt that says "Thats my baby # [REDACTED] [REDACTED]" embarrassing me but at the same time supporting me the best way possible. Coach [. . .] is very excited and has high expectations for this year, I think that is why he works us so hard. If that's not the reason I dont know what could be. My mom and my daughter is pretty much all the family I have. My daughter hasnt seen a basketball game yet but im pretty sure she will enjoy her Daddy shooting, dribbling, and passing.

Timothy, who ultimately showed promise as a writer, was more interested in his infant daughter watching "daddy shooting, dribbling, and passing" than he was passing a course that would keep him eligible to play that sport.

¹ All names, except where noted, are pseudonyms.

Additionally, the second-language learners had difficulty in the course, as they could not understand the language. In this particular ICW course, two languages battled for dominance in the room: standard academic discourse (White English) and slang (Black English). The second-language learners understood neither. They also did not understand the blatant disrespect for authority and disregard of traditional academic rules the student-athletes exhibited.

By mid-semester, the Caucasian students also had difficulty in the course. They understood they needed the additional time the course allowed, as their writing lacked the sophistication and polish of other first-year students. However, they felt out of place, as race had become a very large "elephant in the room," as Travis Mann, the *ethnographic researcher* who studied the 2005 course for this master's thesis, later described. Probably for the first time, these upper-class White students were not the ethnic majority in their classroom, and they were, probably for the first time, experiencing racism and discrimination. The African-American men—those men who did not want to be in the room at all, those men who were more interested in collegiate athletics—dominated the room with their lack of interest, their apathy, their disrespect, and their "buffoonery," to quote their academic adviser. These men were the majority in the class. As in most classes, the majority ruled.

Fall 2005 was the semester Travis Mann, a TCU graduate student, studied the ICW class for his master's thesis. Each Tuesday, he sat in the back of the computer lab we used as a classroom and watched as the class struggled and failed to move beyond the identities of "student-athletes" or "remedial writers" in order to form a

collective community of writers. While he tried to remain silent, Wendy Bishop's "white-coated clinician" (74), the students and I were always aware of his presence. From the students' perspective, Mann's gender gave him the "unofficial authority" role in the classroom, and this was supported by impressions he gave the first day of the fall semester. If there was a conflict or question, the students often looked to him seeking his direction, as he had inadvertently assumed the "leader" role on the first day of class.² Mann tried to step away from that role, but it was difficult, as first-day impressions were a challenge to overcome. So he watched the class interactions, he read student writing, and he took notes.

All this is to say that the first eight weeks of the fall 2005 semester were very difficult. The diversity in this particular course demanded an alternative pedagogy as each segment of the student population figuratively cried out for what it needed. No one needed the same type of instruction. No one in the class, the student-athletes, the African-Americans, the students with learning disabilities, the second-language learners, the non-athlete students were feeling heard. They were not connecting to each other. They did not want to join any conversation with me or even with each other. The 17 of us, 15 students, the graduate-student researcher, and me, had entered into the contact zone.

² On the first day of the fall semester, after I had talked to students about the syllabus, the course, its content, requirements, and after I discussed the brief history of ICW at TCU, Mann introduced his research study. Instead of simply introducing the study, he also spoke of his extensive experience teaching a course "just like the ICW course." What he had meant to explain was that he had taught basic writing courses at a local community college. Mann did not realize how different and how difficult a class of student-athletes would be, and in this lack of awareness, he implied that he had much more experience than I had as instructor of such a course. The students remembered this throughout the semester of Mann's study. As a beginning researcher, Mann overstepped his bounds and inserted himself into the class.

Mary Louise Pratt defines "contact zone" as "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power, such as colonialism, slavery, or their aftermaths as they are lived out in many parts of the world today" (236). With this definition in mind, the contact zone is an appropriate metaphor when discussing students who, for a wide variety of reasons already discussed in this dissertation, enter the university unprepared for what they will face. The student-athletes were also contending with the "colonization, slavery, or their aftermaths" in the complex world of intercollegiate athletics (Hawkins 223).

As a member of the academy, I represented the dominant culture of higher education, and I was asking them, at least indirectly, to become like me, and I was meeting significant resistance. Employing the notion of the contact zone explains where clashes occur between the dominant culture and other cultures within classrooms, and looking through the contact zone lens allows scholars and instructors to see differences that resist homogenous assumptions. Many basic writing students come from cultures that conflict with the standardized culture created within the academy, and while many composition teachers assume students will readily accept the values of writing and reading once they enter the classroom, many of those composition instructors are wrong. I did not assume that students in ICW would "readily accept" the values of my classroom. However, I did expect certain levels of engagement and certain standards of decorum. Many times students struggled to learn how to write because their values were different from those in

higher education, and their home communities did not value writing. This was the case for D'Ante. Literacy experiences had not been valued at home, as his mother "worked a lot" and she did not know he was not doing his schoolwork. This is one reason D'Ante's year at TCU was so difficult. He was asked to value something other than what he had valued previously in his life. D'Ante is but one example of a student's unwillingness to change. The entire 2005 ICW class were also examples of this resistance.

About the same time as the ICW class was imploding, the assorted factions of the class having various problems, through the nonprofit organization, Write to Succeed, I facilitated literacy workshops at a local battered women's shelter.³ Each week, volunteers went to the shelter (with journals and pens to give to shelter residents) and wrote literacy narratives with the sheltered women. Initially, the women in shelter resisted writing, as they were embarrassed by their (in)ability to produce text. With encouragement, warmth, and kindness from the workshop volunteers, the women began to produce text.⁴ The hour-long workshops were periods of laughter and reflection in the midst of tragedy and pain. The workshops were times of writing, praising, clapping, crying, loving, supporting, and healing. In these workshops, anything the women wrote—no matter how eloquent or how simple, no matter what language, no matter what style—was praised and applauded.

³ Write to Succeed, Inc., established in 1997, is a nonprofit organization based in Texas. Write to Succeed and its volunteer staff facilitate writing programs and pedagogies that benefit underserved writers of all ages.

⁴ The women in the shelter rarely (if ever) knew that the Write to Succeed volunteers were university instructors. To the women in the shelter, we were simply "other women." In these workshops, there was no separation based on class, education, race, or ability. We existed and worked together.

Women could read their work out loud to others if they desired, or they could keep it private. They chose what they would do with their writing. They made choices about what was best for them. The only requirement we had in these sessions was that we never discouraged another writer. Anything the women produced was cause for celebration. We celebrated because the woman produced something. We celebrated if the woman drew pictures. We celebrated if she wrote her prose in her native language. We celebrated because the women chose to do something positive for themselves. We celebrated because, in many ways, we were the same: each woman in the shelter or each woman who had volunteered in these workshops knew what it was like to be beaten (literally or figuratively). We knew what it felt like to be powerless in a system dominated by those who cared little about who we were or how we fared in their system. We understood each other. We respected each other.

The workshops at the women's shelter were highly successful, yet stressful, as we never knew what women would write and how their trauma would surface in their writing (we were not trained counselors). The facilitators simply listened and supported. The women's words were their own, and we did not censor them at all. Through this work, however, women's lives were dramatically changed by writing. Women who had suffered horrific violence (to their minds and to their bodies), women who had survived through the violent deaths of their children, women who endured the loss of home and family, income and sense of self, were writing. The writing was helping them heal. Women kept their journals and they continued to write in them long after they left the shelter.

One of the assignments we used with women in the shelter was derived from George Ella Lyons' poetry template from *Local Learning: Poetry and Sense of Place: Where I'm From*, students filled in answers on a blank template.⁵ The Write to Succeed facilitators used this prompt as it was not difficult to do, no one has to write complete sentences, and the final product can be a strong and emotional poem. The prompt began,

I am from _____ (specific ordinary item)
 From _____ and _____

I am from the _____ (home description)
 _____, _____, and _____ (adjective, adjective, sensory detail)

I am from the _____ (plant, flower, natural item)
 The _____ (plant, flower, natural item)

I'm from _____ (family tradition) and _____ (family trait)
 From _____ (name of family member) and _____ (another one)

Fig. 7.1: "Where I'm From" Poetry Template

Women wrote about their own families of origins, about the places of their births. They used concrete and abstract terms. They created metaphors and similes. The women gave their readers a glimpse into themselves and their lives. The writing they produced was beautiful. At each reading of a women's poem, we (the audience of readers and writers) cheered and clapped, both for the writer and for the writing she

⁵ The complete full-page prompt appears in Appendix D.

had produced. At the end of each literacy workshop, each woman received a certificate of completion in a very brief graduation ceremony. As each woman received her certificate, we all applauded and cheered, calling her by her name. We wanted each other to succeed. We all wanted each woman to succeed.

Oddly, the shelter residents and the students in ICW had much in common. Each person in each group was in a foreign and temporary place. Each had seen herself or himself in another of life's roles, but those were not the roles they then occupied. They were lost and battered, physically and mentally, as well as literally and figuratively, and they were striving to recreate themselves. The writing prompts used in the women's shelter had been successful. I wondered if they would be as successful in the ICW classroom. I wondered if the pedagogy of support the nonprofit volunteers embraced would work in a classroom of apathetic, confused, and angry first-year writing students. I realized that the apathetic writing students needed the same support the women in shelter needed. Both groups needed to be heard, accepted, praised, supported, validated, and rewarded. The "Where I'm From" poetry template was enough to jump start the class.

The day that I introduced the "Where I'm From" poetry template to the ICW students, several had arrived significantly late for the 75-minute class. They ignored my greetings. They had forgotten their homework. They talked about an upcoming football game. I gave them the "Where I'm From" template which had been copied onto green paper, and told students not to think about the questions too deeply, and to write the first things that came to mind. The *ethnographic-researcher* also

attempted the assignment. Everyone had to write quickly. They could write whatever they wished within the parameters of the prompt, and nothing they wrote could be wrong. I provided the same kinds of instructions the nonprofit volunteers gave at the women's shelter with this same writing prompt. Most students completed the assignment quickly without much difficulty. David, however, spent a few moments filling in the blanks on his green worksheet.

David, a football player from East Texas, had been a quiet but disrespectful presence in the class from the first week. He was having difficulty fitting into the culture of the predominantly white campus. He was not playing football as he had envisioned. He was a redshirt freshman and the coach, David later told me, "barely knew [his] name." He was no longer the "big dog" on his campus. As the reality of the ICW class and its function became as clear (as a remedial course on a campus that did not offer remedial courses), and as his lack of football playing time (as a redshirt freshman) became clear, he resisted where he felt he could: in the classroom. David came to class late, and he rarely turned in work on time. While he never overtly challenged authority in the room, as he was always polite. His lack of engagement, though, was clear to everyone in the class. After completing the "Where I'm From" poetry template, David realized that without trying too hard, he could produce interesting text that others appreciated. Something in the assignment sparked his interest. He was able to draw upon a place he knew and loved, and he could express it to others. Even though he had been disengaged from the class all semester, David volunteered to read his work to his peers:

I'm from big trees, pine trees, and woods,

I'm from family gatherings and Baptist church and love.

I'm from Lobo Country. Tough, true, and smart.

I am from failure and graduation. I am from the love-below and the hate-above. I am from where I was, not where I'm at.

When he finished reading, we applauded him and his writing. At first, the applause was forced, as students will do for each other, but as the images from David's words filled minds, the applause became more sincere. These handclaps were hearty and strong, as the other students were impressed. It helped that I was overly excited by David's poem and I modeled excited behavior, much like a cheerleader might. His peers were surprised at what David had written. He was surprised at what he had written. In that moment, David was no longer an apathetic football player stuck in a basic writing course he did not like. Suddenly, he was a writer. Everyone in the class took note of how smoothly his words flowed from him as he read. When David finished reading, other students turned back to their worksheets and tried to mimic what David had produced. David recognized that his peers—all the various groups of them in the classroom—saw him differently, that he had, in fact, affected them.

The basketball player, Timothy, not to be out done by the football player, David, attempted his own, "Where I'm From" poem. "After I got into it," he later stated, "it was kind of neat. When the other students read theirs, it sounded really cool. When I looked back at mine, I found a way to fill in some of the blanks that I had left blank after listening to other people read their green sheet." The text that

Timothy produced revealed more about his community and his self-image that he had revealed in the class before:

I am from gold chains, slabs, and big bodies, (Large cars)

I am from the jungle, krunk, wild, and dangerous.

I am from the Oak trees and steep cliffs.

I'm from gambling and hustling.

From Butah Man and Low Key. I'm from loyal and fake.

From being strong and never scared. I'm from Baptist.

I'm from Oak Cliff and West Dallas.

I'm not a statistic, I'm my own man.

I am from the home of the brave.

As we applauded Timothy, other students completed this in-class writing task and offered to read their poems. They wanted the applause, too. The Anglo students read. The second-language learners read. The other football players read. After each person read her or his poem, we cheered and clapped. We were hearing, together, that each of us had a story to tell, an experience that needed explaining.

Interestingly, as David, Timothy, and the other students were completing the "Where I'm From" template, Travis Mann was completing the same form. However, Mann found it a difficult experience. As he relates in his own work,

Less than two minutes after Lynne [the pseudonym I used for his Mann's study] . . . handed out the in-class writing assignment, I was stuck. I had no idea what to write in the blanks on the 'Where I'm

From' sheet. She had asked us to fill in the blanks with the first thing that came to our mind.

Few words came to mind to fill in the numerous blanks. This assignment, I reasoned, must be too hard for these students who were enrolled in this 'stretched' version of Texas Christian University's first-year composition class. . . . But as I looked up from the paper that was causing me frustration, I noticed that many students seemed to experience little difficulty filling in the blanks of their 'Where I'm From' sheet. Although a couple of students were asking for help from the instructor, the majority were quickly writing answers, easily moving through this assignment. Again, I thought about what the instructor had said: 'Just write the first thing that comes to mind.' Although I am an experienced writer of professional and academic prose, my 'first things' were not coming, yet these students who had been identified as underprepared for first-year college composition seemed to work through a difficult exercise with no problem. I looked back at the paper.

Still, nothing came. My mind ran diagnostics of my writing process, trying to understand why I could not come up with words to fill in the blanks. In the background, I heard Lynne ask for volunteers to read

their work. I was surprised when [David], a student I noted early in the semester who did not seem particularly interested in class, much less writing, volunteered to read. His previous classroom behavior had led me to my early conclusion: he consistently did not pay attention, nor did he seem to want to participate; many times, he arrived late to class, and, invariably, asked for an extension on his assignments. As I was still working on my own sheet, I half listened to him, expecting to hear exasperation . . . (Mann 1-2)

Mann's experience with this simple worksheet illustrates the difficulty many have with writing. We assume it should be done a particular way, often, the "right" way. Mann assumed that since he was a "writer," this work should have been easy for him. It was not. However, the students, who were tired of being wrong in that academically defined "right" way, flourished under the notion that "nothing you write will be wrong." Since the students wanted no part of the academic conversation they had been invited to join, the choice of words came easily to them, because those words were their own.

What I would realize about David, Timothy, and all the other students in that year's class of ICW was that they each had images and ideas in their heads they did not know how to express. The poem template illuminated their abilities for me, as much as it showed themselves and each other. They had resisted becoming a part of an academic conversation, because academic conversations—to their minds—were predicated on notions of "right" and "wrong," on the institutional way or the student

way. Through these poems, they could join with each other in conversations, and they could join with me. In fact, the students in ICW eventually invited me to join them in *their* academic discourse.

I wish I could say that after this one day in October 2005, the class changed, that suddenly the students were willing to come to class on time and do the work required of them, that they stopped resisting me and each other. Life is rarely that simple. This poem, this one day, however, broke through issues of race, of gender, of sport vs. nonsport, of language. Everyone attempted this in-class assignment, and they each produced interesting text. Something as simple as filling in a worksheet unified a very diverse classroom. It was an assignment the students had not fully expected.

The in-class "Where I'm From" assignment served as a primer for David and the other students to think and write about themselves and their families. In much the same way the Autobiographical Haiku preceded the Literacy Autobiography assignment, the "Where I'm From" assignment preceded their Autoethnography assignment. The "Where I'm From" template helped the students generate ideas and images of themselves so that they could begin thinking more about their families and how to write about their identity. Using primers like the "Where I'm From" allowed the students in the class to make meaning about themselves that they could transfer to their longer texts. Using these primers helped the students see themselves as writers.

7.2 Inventing the University and Inventing the Self

In Chapter 1 of this dissertation, I used a quotation by Edward M. White to explain how the promise of higher education is one that many strive for; however, the reality of higher education, for some, is out of their reach. White said, "American education is subject to two contrasting and underlying motifs: egalitarianism, the argument that everyone should have opportunities for success; and elitism, the restriction of opportunities to the most 'deserving'—which often means to those from a relatively privileged home" (qtd. in McNenny and Fitzgerald 19). As this dissertation has attempted to prove thus far, student-athletes do not often fall into the "most deserving" category that White describes. Yet, they are a part of an institution. They are not simply athletes. They are students who strive to fit into a campus culture that often only accepts them for their athletic ability.

It is easy to understand how a student-athlete can form his or her identity. One forms an identity based on how successful one is in a given area. For student-athletes who are successful on the court or field, that identification can make sense. Secondly, the "success" of athletics is often measured in extrinsic rewards. As children, young athletes earn ribbons and trophies when they win contests. In high school, a basketball player might earn a letter jacket when he or she completes a season, win or lose. In university athletics, especially those ranked Division I-A by the NCAA, student-athletes not only win ribbons and trophies for being successful, but they can also win bowl or championship rings and other high-dollar examples of achievement. Student-athletes also gain public recognition when they are successful

in their sport. When football players exit the tunnel from their locker room and rush onto the field at the beginning of a football game, the band plays and the crowd roars. The cheerleaders turn back flips. For those who play basketball, a team could make its way to the "Sweet 16" or the "Final Four" of March Madness, and the entire country, seemingly, stops what it is doing to see who wins that final game. The players on those winning teams? They end up with their pictures on Wheaties boxes. For success in the academic classroom, there are no equivalent extrinsic rewards. One can feel good about achieving an "A" on an essay or understanding a complicated theory, but no one applauds when that happens. The band does not play. There are no cheerleaders.

Clearly, external rewards are important for success, on the court or in the classroom. Who would not want to be celebrated in such grandiose ways for being skillful at something? If they could choose, most 18-year old young men and women would certainly choose the success –maybe not the work required—of the field or court over that of the classroom. Many student-athletes make that choice, so they see themselves as athletes. However, students can choose to occupy both roles simultaneously.⁶ Many of these student-athletes need a model of academic success that does not contradict their athletic or cultural identity.

In "Modeling a Writer's Identity: Reading and Imitation in the Writing Classroom," Robert Brooke addresses a student's sense of identity when he says,

⁶ At the completion of this dissertation, November 2008, Florida State University football player, Myron Rolle, achieved success in both athletics and academics. A starting safety for the FSU's nationally-ranked team football team, Rolle was also named as a 2008 Rhodes Scholar.

Composition teaching works, in the modern sense, when it effectively models an identity for students which the students *can in some way accept*. It works when part of their identity becomes a writer's identity, when they come to see that being a writer in their own way is a valid and exciting way of acting in the world. (40, my emphasis)

Through employing writing assignments like the ones I used in my classes, particularly the primers that opened each unit (the Autobiographic Haiku for the literacy narrative and the "Where I'm From" poem for the autoethnography assignment), students begin to explore what it meant to have an identity as a writer. In many cases, this was a student's first exploration of himself through the lens of literacy. That exploration may present significant challenges by forcing him to look beyond his world into other worlds so that he could then make meaning.

Additionally, it is important to recognize here Peter Elbow's ideas in *Writing Without Teachers*. In this book, he argues that traditional teaching methods—and sometimes traditional teachers—can inhibit student writers. By promoting ways for students to develop their confidence as writers (through freewriting, multiple drafts, as well as evaluating and nonevaluative feedback), Elbow argues that developing a student's confidence is crucial to successful writing, and his text pays close attention to how a community of writers also has an impact on student writing. I would argue that increasing a student-writer's confidence can also lead to his or her inclusion in an academic community. When they are confident, they are not fearful or uncertain.

The assignment types Elbow describes, freewriting, multiple drafts, and multiple types of feedback are not "non-traditional" assignments any longer. These are strategies used by most composition faculty. However, the way in which teachers use these tools can be—and often has become—traditional. The traditional assignments allow for student interaction with texts, with other students, and with various forms of language and writing, but they do so in predictable ways that do not (usually) allow students their own voices, their own opinions, or their own ways of knowing. To use these traditional methods of writing instruction, the pedagogy must become unusual, or at least different from what the students experienced in primary and secondary school. Examples of this non-traditional approach might include the use of audio responses in addition to the traditional markings on a student document. A teacher could use online responses, required conferences, music, or New Media.

7.3 Pedagogy

Educators have known since Dewey that students learn in a variety of ways, that not each student will learn at the same pace, in the same way. However, current pedagogy does not always reflect this knowledge. With the students enrolled in Introduction to Critical Writing through the three-years of this study, I engaged in what I call "relational pedagogy," a combination of critical pedagogy and feminist pedagogical principles. Addressing these issues in depth is outside the scope of this dissertation; however, I will provide brief descriptions of critical and feminist pedagogies, and then I will explain how relational pedagogy functioned in the ICW

classroom. The assignment alternated between traditional and non-traditional, yet throughout the relational aspects of the pedagogy remained constant.

7.3.1 Critical Pedagogy

The term, "critical pedagogy" does not have a single definition as the word and its meaning has undergone significant change since Paulo Freire coined the word decades ago. However, the phrase "liberatory education" comes closest to defining the word in modern-day usage. I use this definition throughout this research study. Students in America today, in 2008, do not need emancipation from dictatorial or fascist regimes. The government does not tell modern-day students that they cannot go to school or choose the career they desire. Students in this country today do not have to contend with challenging or overthrowing the government to ensure all citizens have fair and just rights. Critical pedagogy is today's university is a tool that helps raise students' critical consciousness regarding oppressive social conditions. Students, however, often do not consider their experiences, their lives, a part of an "oppressive social conditions." Critical pedagogy encourages students to ask questions, seek answers, and avoid accepting the status quo without thought or question. Student-athletes in the revenue-producing sports do experience life in a "dictatorial or fascist regime." Athletic departments and coaches do tell students-athletes when they will go to school (around team practices and game times) or what they will study (majors must not interfere with practice or travel schedules). When an 18-year old man accepts a scholarship from a university, he does not always immediately realize how much control over his life he is giving away. The fact

remains, many student-athletes do not see their experiences as oppressive or exploitive even though others, those outside the complex world of intercollegiate athletics, might.

For Paulo Freire and Donald Macedo, being literate is not the equivalent of emancipation; it is in "a more limited but essential way the precondition for engaging in struggles around both relations of meaning and relations to power" (2-3). To be literate is not to be free, and when using critical pedagogy, feminist and relational pedagogy, a faculty member is not trying to *free* the students or even encourage them to *free* themselves, as that would imply the students are enslaved. Rather, critical, feminist, and relational pedagogies allow one, according to Freire and Macedo, "to be present and active in the struggle for reclaiming one's voice, history, and future" (2-3).

Once again, however, most of us are not living in a society that needs to be freed from unspeakable injustices. With this in mind, some of the critical pedagogical techniques can be more subtle change in the lives of students. Some of the critical pedagogical methods might be encouraging freewriting in class, using nonacademic writing assignments, using service learning in a classroom, negotiating point value on assignments, negotiating assignments, negotiating classroom policies (apart from institutional policies), using some of those feminist pedagogical techniques of peer review and collaborative work, of bringing the outside "real world" into the "real world" of the institution. Critical pedagogy, in this case, would be using evaluation methods with students but giving them a voice in how the work

is evaluated, by encouraging students to evaluate one another in collaborative work. It might mean encouraging them to write letters to the editor, for example, to the student newspaper or the city paper or even to national organizations. I have used blogs in my composition classes numerous times and encourage students to be a part of the blogosphere is a way for them to make their opinions and voices heard. What they have found in these blog exercises is that they are misinformed about many of the things they believe. By teaching students to move outside the zones of information they already know and understand, they begin to realize there are other voices and that those voices have something significant to say, then their communities have been expanded. One could say similar things about the sequencing of assignments, using primers to ready students for more rigorous academic work, including low stakes assignments, and collaborating on rubric design with students. Each of these examples allow students some control over their work.

7.3.2 Feminist Pedagogy

Resisting the status quo, ways of doing, knowing, and being is standard operating procedure for feminists because of their decades of struggle for gender equality. This lived experience complicates and informs the theories of resistance in critical pedagogy. In order for students and class groups to "resist" master narratives within a critical pedagogy, they must first have a critical understanding of their own authority, some level of empowerment from past experiences, and a self-referential definition of a socially constructed sameness or difference in relation to others. The feminist era of relationality—knowledge-making based on relating to other

perspectives—prepares students for informed resistance. Susan Hunter argues that teachers should "encourage students to subvert and critique the dominant system, even as they prepared to participate more fully in it" (242).

7.3.3 Relational Pedagogy

A relational pedagogy, true to its name, is based in the feminist theory of relationality. It asks students to see themselves as a part of the social structure they occupy. Writing topics, for example, will come from the writer's own life, from his or her own experiences. This approach to writing allows students to see the value of their own experience. While critical pedagogy does espouse the goal of social critique, feminist relationality provides a helpful bridge between student-generated meaning and the many college assignments that may span the distance between student experience meta cognitive social critique. In the ICW class, writing about the self preceded writing about others, and writing about one's own opinion came before writing about and with source material.

A relational pedagogy also relies on the feminist concept of connected knowing—meaning-making through context and collaboration—as a way to make college-level writing experiences more personally relevant and more diverse for all students. A relational pedagogy seeks to engage students in breaking away from adversarial and status quo arguments and moving toward exploratory analysis, but does so by rhetorically analyzing existing points of view and standard positions. To demonstrate this, in the spring semester each year I taught the ICW course, students could not choose to write about any of the overused subjects students like: abortion,

gun control, death penalty, and underage drinking. Instead, students had to choose a subject that was unique to them, a subject within their majors, the subject of a hobby. It was here that I could capitalize on students' knowledge, on their place in a community.

David Bartholomae notes in his work "Inventing the University" that how a writer thinks of his or her position inside a given community is important. This was true of the ICW students. They were often outside the academic community. However, relational pedagogy invited them inside (sometimes repeatedly). Bartholomae writes, "I think that all writers, in order to write, must imagine for themselves the privilege of being 'insiders'—that is, the privilege both of being inside an established and powerful discourse and of being granted a special right to speak" (644). In 2005, when Travis Mann observed the course, he noted relational pedagogy at work. He wrote,

From the beginning of this class, [Billie] both extended an invitation and granted students permission to begin thinking of themselves as 'insiders,' able to write within a college classroom. She called them 'writers' from the very beginning of the semester. They wrote to her and she wrote back. She established collaborative working relationships among them as students and with her as the instructor. Her assignments granted these students 'a special right to speak' by focusing first on them as writers. They then built upon their individual

experiences in order to connect them to other individuals and ideas through writing. (118)

Relationships are important in teaching. Susan Miller makes an important note that there is no teaching without a relationship and that even if the relationships include nurturing mother-types or even if they do not, the students still have something to learn. That relationship does not have to be a parental one or does not have to be one in which the instructor is friends with the students, or even one that is conflict-heavy, as the 2005 ICW class had been, but the relationship needs to be there nonetheless. There needs to be a sense of trust and a sense of predictability within the class and within the relationship between instructor and student. The relationship will never be equal in the sense that both the instructor and the students have the same authority and autonomy, as this can never happen because evaluation also has to happen. Elbow argues strongly against evaluation of student writing, but we work within a system that requires it. Students need to know how they are progressing, institutions award credit hours for the work, and a grade is something that students expect. Evaluation must happen, and in that evaluation is power. The power differential between teacher and student keeps the relationship separated. A move in critical pedagogy would be to negotiate the criteria for a grade, and in the ICW classes, I frequently did this. Grading rubrics were constructed together, and students had some control over what parts of an assignment held the most weight. There still needs to be a grade, and there will also be the separation between the grader and the graded. However, the relationships between students and instructors

can become mentor/mentee relationships, and it is in these relationships that student awareness of the world can be impacted.

I would argue against Jeff Rice, Director of Composition at the University of Missouri, Columbia. In 2005, Rice used his blog, *Yellow Dog*, to discuss issues related to composition pedagogy. For Rice, and many other compositionists, the teaching profession is simply a job, that there are no (or should be no) relationships that happen in a classroom. To have a relationship, he argues, means to give value to the student and not to the work. In this way, personal subjectivity cannot cloud one's response to students and their writing. But by devaluating the student and looking only at the student's work and as accepting that teaching is merely a job, the instructor is not knowing who that student is, and is not accepting that student as having any knowledge or perspective that can be (or even needs to be) honored or challenged. Rice, typically, makes very interesting points about the field of composition and rhetoric.

7.4 Practical Aspects of Teaching Underprepared Student-Athletes

The practice of instituting an alternative pedagogy into already established curricula can be difficult, but it is necessary. The practicality of creating courses for underprepared students (not only student-athletes) can move beyond the remediation of a "basic writing" course with its focus on current traditional rhetoric-type pedagogy, but can include something as simple as the stretch course, the one-year version of a first-year composition course.

7.4.1 *The Stretch Course*

Begun at Arizona State University in 1994, the stretch model of first-year composition offers a college-level introduction to reading and writing, providing students with experience and practice at skills that may be unfamiliar (Arizona State University). Since writing and reading are foundational to academic success, the program, the additional time and the additional practice help students succeed. Along with TCU, several other NCAA-ranked Division I-A Institutions have implemented the stretch model for their underprepared students.⁷ At these institutions, however, the courses have not been overpopulated with student-athletes. The course can include students who have the need to move through the course at a slightly slower pace than the traditional first-year composition course (second-language learners, students with learning differences, returning students).

The students who enroll in the stretch course at TCU are students who need additional help with their writing, particularly if they are going to be successful in college. The students who enroll in this course are also students who did not do well in a traditional academic environment in their primary and secondary school experiences. Clearly, a single pedagogical style does not work for all students. Indeed, those teachers who focus simply on the eradication of error in a student's writing are teaching students that writing must be perfect; therefore, the writing—as

⁷ Several other Division I-A Institutions that have implemented the stretch course for first-year composition: IUPUI, Arizona State University, University of Washington, Boise State University, Southern Illinois University, Carbondale; Northern Illinois University; and the University of Virginia.

is perfection—is an impossible task. Mina Shaughnessy notes that there is "no quick way to undo this damage. The absence of errors, it is true, does not count much toward good writing, yet the pileup of errors that characterizes basic writing papers, reflects more difficulty with written English than the term 'error' is likely to imply" (11).

In the stretch course at TCU, and at most other institutions that use this model, students do twice as much writing as students who enrolled in the traditional one-semester first-year composition course. Through the years of this study, the students in ICW completed eight major assignments (twice the number of a traditional course). Four of these assignments were similar (or the same) as students enrolled in ENGL 10803. However, four of the eight assignments were significantly different than the assignments taught in high school or in a traditional first-year composition course. The balance allowed me to measure the students' progress against the progress of traditionally-admitted students in ENGL 10803. However, the alternative pedagogies allowed the students enrolled in ICW to view and to experience writing differently. The stretch course also offered additional time to work on reading skills, skills that underprepared students often lack.

It is interesting to note that the stretch model is not labeled a "basic writing" course at TCU or any of the other institutions that use this model. Much history and mental baggage comes along with the basic writing phrase in composition studies. As Andrea Lunsford argues in "The Content of Basic Writers' Essays," "much evidence now points to the connection between poorly developed writing skills and

poor self-image, lack of confidence, and lower levels of cognitive development" (284). She suggests that the field of composition needs to conduct research that "will probe the relationships among self-image, cognitive style, perceptual system, and development of writing abilities" (284). Lunsford bases her arguments on a study in which she compared basic writers' perceptions of themselves against more skilled writers' perceptions. Even though this article is more than 25 years old, the composition profession has made some strides in this direction, but more research and application need to be undertaken. Therefore, students enrolled in the ICW course were not labeled as "basic" or "remedial" writers. This is similar to the phrasing that Write to Succeed volunteers used at the women's shelter. If we needed to collectively name the women, they were never "battered women" or "victims of domestic violence." They were women in shelter or they were survivors. The change in terminology provided power from which to grow. At the domestic violence shelter, facilitators were careful to not label the women as battered or as victims. They were survivors. They were victorious. They were alive. With the students in ICW, they were never "basic writers." They were always "writers."

7.4.2 Faculty

Just as extended time to learn the skill of writing is important, the appropriate faculty member to facilitate / teach this course is just as important. Not anyone could (or should) teach this course. For as the students enter the "contact zone," I would argue that faculty also enter the zone with them. Without proper training and an

inclusive perspective, the "do no harm" edict becomes clear. Students can be further harmed with an instructor using a traditional pedagogical style.

An instructor for this type of course with underprepared students would need five traits to teach this course (and these students) effectively. First, one must be willing to listen to what the students say, explicitly and implicitly, and balance these with what the institution demands. The instructor must, secondly, understand the difficulties the students have in the institution, but then must be willing to refuse to victimize them further by making excuses for them in the classroom. Thirdly, one must adopt the "John Wooden" theory of coaching: that if one has not learned, the educator has not taught (Nater and Gallimore). Fourth, the educator must be willing to invest time in creating a relationship with the students. Lastly, one must remember that one cannot teach what one does not care about to people one does not care about.

To begin with the obvious, teachers who respect themselves respect their students; a corollary is also true. Empowering teachers are compassionate and attentive, and though the educational philosophy and pedagogical styles may vary, they affirm their students' curiosity for knowledge. They demonstrate their commitment to reading carefully their students' essays and expressing concern when they see that someone is in crisis. Simply, they focus their time and attention on the student.

Time is a significant consideration when teaching student-athletes. As D'Ante and Sean demonstrated, student-athletes travel on university business. At TCU, but

probably most other Division I-A institutions, students are not penalized for missing courses when they are participating in intercollegiate events. However, the students still miss classes, and if the students are academically underprepared, they may not be able to learn the missed material on their own. Faculty must be willing to accommodate these absences with tutoring sessions, conferences, or some other alternative means. With this in mind, adjunct instructors or even graduate student instructors do not always have the added time in their schedules to accommodate the training and travel schedules of student-athletes.

7.4.2.1 The Super Teacher

It is crucial to recognize, however, that to teach an alternative writing course with underprepared students, one does not have to be what Ryan Skinnell termed a "super teacher." Skinnell notes that these "super teachers are only super in that they completely forgo any personal life outside their classrooms. It seems to me," he writes, it "reinforces the idea that to be a good teacher, one must neglect anything that isn't specifically and evidently beneficial to their students."

Unfortunately, the American culture has seen a number of super teachers in recent times through films and television. Hillary Swank in the 2007 film *Freedom Writers* and Michelle Pfeiffer in 1995's *Dangerous Minds* denote a caricature of the super teacher. In these two cases, young, beautiful Anglo women set out to save the economically poor and minority teenagers from their lives, from themselves, and from their cultures. In the ways that these films are inspiring, in many more ways are they highly insulting. Films like these support notions of a white savior and that

minority children cannot survive without the intervention of someone white, beautiful, young and female. In both films, the teachers dedicate themselves (and their sometimes limited resources) to the betterment of students.

While these two films are based on true stories, most educators do not have to become the "super teacher" to become effective with students. One must simply be "real" with them. Movies like *Freedom Writers* or *Dangerous Minds* are problematic, as are many "feel good" films that promote the stereotype that inner city teenagers (black or Hispanic) are not literate and cannot achieve much in life with the infusion of a white teacher, typically white female who "cares" them into success. These are inspiring films for Anglos. It makes them (us) feel that there is hope for us, that we can help those less fortunate than we are. While there is nothing wrong with this need to help others who are less fortunate, what is unfortunate are the racial demographics that are portrayed in these films. The implicit arguments in these films contain the belief that the model of the white teacher can "save" young teens, that these teens need saving, and that to succeed, the "at risk" students must lose themselves (in some part) and their culture to achieve the standard the teacher presents.

If a student must lose himself or herself in an attempt to be a part of the academic institution, or to join the academic conversation, they need models as Brooke mentioned (40). Sometimes, students need a model that can demonstrate more than academic conversations; they often need a model that is authentic to them. Mina Shaughnessy also points out that beginning writers need to see the reality of

their instructors. During the first half of the 2005 ICW class, that "teacher as real" model did not happen. I was too self-conscious with the graduate student researcher making notes about my pedagogy and my demeanor with the ICW students. Therefore, I behaved as I had seen other teachers behave with their students: aloof, superior, separate, forced. Many times, I adopted the persona of superiority, of the academy. Students resisted me when I wore this role. Additionally, this was a highly visible course on the TCU campus. Many faculty and administrators were watching this course, not only as a course that had potential for failure, but also as a potential model for future remedial courses. In my frustration, I wrote the following in my teaching journal:

[The students] have resisted and behaved badly because they were afraid of failure, because they had so many other pressures placed on them, and because by behaving badly, they could gain a little respect from their peers by not appearing 'stupid.' Yet we all knew what was going on.... we all knew about the resistance and the face-saving. The students and myself, we all knew. And we all knew that many times they just played me. They sometimes played me because they are in a system where everyone is played in some manner because someone has to win and someone loses. That's just the way it is. They put on a face that allowed them to survive a difficult and foreign system and that face was one of belligerence and defiance. But I wore a face, too.

My face was one of the educated, of the elite. They would never see themselves in my face because they couldn't see through the mask.

Look how we all lost.

How could I expect them to remove their masks if I didn't remove mine? Removing my mask would have been to tell my story (or part of it), to be real to them, to be a little vulnerable. Yet I couldn't. I feared. I failed. I failed them.

Yes, the students in this class—during that first semester of the 2005 ICW year—behaved "badly," in that they were late to class, they did not pay attention, they did not do their work, they plagiarized, they were disrespectful; they behaved in ways that other students at TCU did not behave. Yet I kept Jawanza Kunjufu's admonition in mind: "Ineffective teachers are more concerned about behavior management, while coaches," on the other hand, "are more concerned about bonding and intellectually challenging students. The latter eliminates or greatly reduces behavioral problems (72).

7.4.2.2 Teaching as Coaching

A relational pedagogy can also include a coaching pedagogy. Gloria Ladson-Billings describes the type of educator who gets to know her or his students as a "coach." Coaches, she says, "believe that their students are capable of excellence" (21) Additionally, she notes, coaches, understand the subject matter and pedagogy,

but also understand the need to bond with students first. "Coaches care," she says, and they "respect, and appreciate the culture of their students. They fully understand that there can be no significant learning until there is a significant relationship" (Ladson-Billings 21-23). Carl James would take this a step further when he says, "For some students, coaches are 'a father figure.' This is an indication of how much these educators were not only teacher-coaches, but functioned as some of their most important family members, socializing them into their 'values,' helping them to pursue their athletic aspirations, and helping them to make major decisions" (174). The students had coaches that fulfilled the roles to varying degrees. They did not need another coach or another parental figure; they needed a safe place to learn without fear of embarrassment or ridicule.

Additionally, instructors must be aware of the reasons why many faculty members expect so little from their students. Often gender plays a significant role in the perceptions educators have of students, as many have lower expectations for young men than for young women, particularly when race is also a factor in perception, as noted in D'Ante's experiences with his primary and secondary school teachers. Educators can often have lower expectations for minority students than they do for majority students. If a faculty member is aware of students' incoming ACT / SAT scores or their high school GPAs, those, too, can preclude the possibility of improvement. If an educator engages in what Ladson-Billings calls "teacher lounge talk," then the negative perceptions and comments about students' ability can begin to factor into the educator's perspective. The students' appearance, particularly

if it is unlike the appearance of the majority student, can also affect perception. An educator must also be aware of what Kunjufu calls the "halo effect," the tendency to label a student's overall ability based on the one characteristic. For many, the halo effect is racism in the classroom. We can define D'Ante's experience in school as he "halo effect."

7.5 Assignments

7.5.1 Traditional and Alternative Assignments

George Hillocks, in his essay "Teaching, Reflecting, Researching," describes a teacher, Mrs. A, who teaches in the sense that she conveys information to students who must write it down. And she does this "masterfully," he writes. "Her presentations flow smoothly without any of the same tactic convolutions so common to normal conversation. She orchestrates the classroom discourse with students adding words at certain points. 14 of 26 students respond at least once" (18). While there is nothing inherently wrong about this teaching style, it is a passive one, and it is one in which students do not form their own opinions. They accept what they are told—the "banking model"—without much question. It is also the model that Elbow declares "inhibits student writers." In this model, there is clearly a right and a wrong way to write or communicate. Anything that the teacher does not recognize, or teach, is wrong. Critical and relational pedagogies allow students to move beyond what they have always done by encouraging them to use their existing knowledge and applying that to the new information the in a classroom.

That is not to say, however, that traditional assignments such as literacy narratives, argument essays, or even grammar drills are ineffective. The most traditional assignment can be modified to engage a student differently, in a way that will help her understand and apply the studied material. For example, the current traditional rhetoric model of grammar instruction supposes that there are right and wrong ways of writing. Rote drills and worksheets can help students remember how to use a comma, or where to place an apostrophe, but these are drills they also receive in their elementary school education. By repeating the same drills year after year, students assume they know the material (so they do not attempt to do it again), or they assume they will never understand it (and they stop trying to learn it). While the skills of learning comma usage and apostrophe placement are important in academic discourse, learning them while racing each other down a hallway can be a unique method of teaching the same material.

The 2005 ICW course had such grammar races. Student-athletes in the ICW classes were not passive learners. They practiced and excelled in their sports by using their bodies. To sit in a classroom and passively accept information was a difficult task for most of these student-athletes. As Julie Cheville noted in her study on female basketball players, student-athletes depend on their bodies to understand how they play the game of basketball. Their work on the court is highly physical *and* mental. The use of their bodies coincides with the use of their minds. Yet in the classroom, their work is mental, often very passive, with little connection to the body. In this separation of mind and body, between classroom and court, "cognition

[is] detached from concrete activity and interaction" (35). She argues that academic instruction—particularly writing instruction—can improve by using alternative pedagogies that allow students do use their already-developed skills of "body knowledge" (37).

Instead of keeping students in a passive learning mode, we moved to an active learning model, a contest that allowed students to use their bodies and their minds to understand simple grammar rules. The point of the contest was winning. I created sentences containing comma errors on PowerPoint slides. The students divided into two teams, and one person from each team had to race to the end of a (short) hallway, touch the screen, and define the comma problem. If the student answered correctly, the team received one point. If the student answered incorrectly, that team lost one point. At the end of the race, the team with the most points received a slightly higher grade on that current assignment. This exercise helped the students in ICW in three ways. First, the teams were mixed with student-athletes, second-language learners, white and black students, and students from a variety of varsity sports. In these games, each person lost his or her exclusive group and they joined another inclusive team. Second, they received an extrinsic reward for succeeding in the exercise (additional points on an assignment). Lastly, they learned the proper use of commas in a fun and decidedly different way than what they had expected.

Additionally, in a writing classroom, students expect to write, and they often dread the experience. In the ICW classes, since we had our classes in a networked

computer lab (see Figure 3.2 in Chapter 3), freewriting in online journals was a very easy way to start each class. I sometimes wrote a single word on the board and the students would write about that word in any way they wished. An example of this writing would be Eric's explanation of the word "clarity." He described the word in basketball terms, being "clear" about how the season would turn out. Sometimes, the students wrote in response to assigned readings. Other times, the students constructed private entries about anything they wished to explore. (These were entries I would never see.)

Freewriting and even pre-writing are traditional methods of writing instruction. Pre-writing and freewriting were important parts of nearly every class session throughout the three years of this study. At the end of the term, the act of freewriting was one that many students acknowledged as a helpful tool. As Sean noted in his final exam essay about alternative strategies that helped him learn:

Other things that guided me to become a better writer was our daily logs and listening to music. Writing daily as we did help to broaden my ideas and sharpen them. Listening to music helped with the flow of what I was typing. The type of music of the class listened to made the distinct difference between me aggressively or not. For example, when we listened to Alicia Keys my mood was changed into more of a caring and loving style. This was also my favorite time to write. Times when we listen to music such as; Bruce Springsteen, it did not have you effect on my writing style.

By playing music each day as students did their daily freewriting, I was comparing two activities for them: one thing they liked (music) with one thing they did not (writing). By the end of the semester, as Sean's paragraph describes, the students felt comfortable with the writing, as they were comfortable with the music. Most of the time, the students chose what we heard in the classroom. On the days they did not bring CDs to class, I played something I liked. Freewriting each day, with or without music, allowed students to become familiar with the starts-and-stops of writing. As Leamnson notes, "[d]aily immersion in a discipline, even a difficult one, involves representations being repeated until certain sets of synapses have been stabilized. The complex has become familiar" (22). Indeed, athletes recognize the need for practice and repetition.

Many times, the students brought rap or hip-hop music to class with them. I played what they brought. By playing music they liked, they assumed power over the space we were in and what we did in that space. About rap and hip-hop music, Kermit Campbell notes that "hip-hop has, in other words, humanized not just blackness—for the civil rights movement did that—but ghetto blackness, given it a name, an identity, a voice, and a viable economy of expression" (328). For many instructors, an opportunity to learn about an alternate culture, to allow the students to teach about an alternate culture. Campbell continues, "hip-hop has made suburban youth aware of the lived experience (the actual and the embellished) of their inner-city counterparts, giving them cause to seek alternatives to the banality of suburban middle-class life" (328). When honoring and accepting hip-hop language, for

instance, we (students and instructors) recognize that not just one literacy exists, and that the "standard" for writing can shift.

The point to these two examples is that traditional, tried-and-proven methods of writing instruction can be transformed into alternative methods that reach particular student groups. The student-athletes were highly physical young men and women, and connecting the mind and body exercises that helped them learn. The non-athlete students in the course gained by these physical learning exercises even if they were not kinesthetic learners. For them, this was a fun game that was different from their usual classes. It broke the monotony of typical academic instruction.

Throughout the three years of the ICW course, students engaged in assignments not typically a part of first-year composition program at TCU. The students engaged in service-learning projects, letter-writing portfolios, New Media (Photoshop and Social-Networking), visual rhetoric, and Autoethnography assignments. These alternative assignments allowed students to practice the elements of good composition in a manner that did not necessarily include academic writing. They were able to translate the skills, for example, from Photoshop to the written page. Working with New Media allowed students to think differently about the work they produced. As one student in the 2006 ICW class noted, "Working with images [manipulating them] helps me think broader about writing and about myself as a writer." When discussing the revision of a text, as another example of traditional pedagogy, students will often make simple sentence-level changes, surface changes, to their work. However, when working with Photoshop and losing his entire

document, one student exclaimed, "I really like doing this over [after he completely lost his first version by not saving it properly] because now I see the work differently. I can do a better job now." As educators, we know that revision improves writing, but the student had to experience a completely "starting over" before he understood the notion of (re)vision.

Working with Photoshop or some other alternative pedagogical tool does not make the dread of writing go away for underprepared students. When the 2006 class began to discuss the essay that accompanied the Photoshop collage, I knew that the students had made concrete and important connections between the work they were doing on the collages and their writing, but when we discussed their writing in class, the students were not engaged in peer review and the discussion of formatting and content development. When I began to actually walk them through the process of editing and revising, suddenly folks got sleepy. Eyes drooped. Heads rested on the backs of chairs. Trips to the bathroom suddenly became urgent. I should have realized that the one exercise would not erase at least 12 years of (uneven) writing instruction.

However, students also responded favorably when they were allowed to take ownership of their work and create the work they desired to create. As noted in the case study chapters, one assignment—the position essay—was one that students could not choose anything they wished. They had to avoid certain overused topics and topics that would limit their scope of academic writing. During the first half of the stretch course, students had a difficult time finding essay topics that were not tied

to subjects they had already addressed in high school essays. But as David Bleich and Keith Gilyard recommend, "students need to engage in discussions of culture, ideology, hegemony, and asymmetrical power relations (all seem to be removed from texts they normally generate in class)" and that students want a chance to write about racism, classism, and homophobia" (Bleich "Literacy and Citizenship: Resisting Social Issues" 163; Gilyard 47). Bleich goes on to state that tackling difficult subjects would challenge the hegemony" (Bleich "Literacy and Citizenship: Resisting Social Issues" 163). Lastly, as Smith and Wilhelm note, students are generally "much more willing to put in the effort needed to gain competence when they had the chance to express themselves in ways that mark their identity" (105).

Additionally, other forms of "alternative pedagogies" exist for writing classes. John Trimbur, for example, believes that collaborative learning in multiple configurations of small groups is highly beneficial to student learning (216). These configurations could include small groups, groups comprised of only students, groups comprised of teachers and students, or groups that involve community members. Kenneth A. Bruffee supports the notion that students and teachers of literature and writing must begin to develop awareness and skill that may seem foreign and irrelevant to our profession. Writing groups, Anne Ruggles Gere's passion, are ways for students and faculty to coach one another on writing and speaking. Peter Elbow argues that faculty can create a much more effective learning environment than the classroom in which several games are played: cooking and growing metaphors, scaffolding, doubting and believing games.

7.6 Conclusion

If institutions of higher education recruit underprepared student-athletes to fill revenue-producing sport rosters, universities have a responsibility to not only provide an athletic arena for the student-athletes to succeed, but the institutions also have an ethical responsibility to educate these students. One way institutions can do this, apart from segregating student-athletes in their own athletic centers and in their own classes, with athletic advisors and with discipline-based tutors, is to provide specially-trained faculty in the university's writing program, as writing is foundational to success at college. Ann Ruggles Gere recognized in "Kitchen Tables and Rented Rooms: The Extracurriculum of Composition," that if writers can do well in a first-year (or lower-division) composition course, they have a much better chance of doing well in their other courses and of graduating from the university (280).

The results of this three-year longitudinal and ethnographic study found that first, academic preparedness matters to a student-athlete's success in higher education. This is not new information. However, as educators, we must be aware of the kinds of education that university students receive, and we must be willing to modify what we do in the classroom to supplement or replace what students learn in primary or secondary schools. We have to remember that one type of pedagogy will not reach all students. The three case study subjects in this dissertation, D'Ante, Sean, and Eric, had varying levels of academic preparedness when they entered the Introduction to Critical Writing class, and in many ways, all three struggled with

writing. The pedagogy of the classroom had to be negotiated to be effective for the students in those three years of this study.

All three case study subjects entered the conversation of academic discourse in different ways and for different reasons. Many of the students enrolled in ICW, with these three subjects as representative examples of the whole, had never felt invited into the academy until the ICW course. For some students, particularly the 2005 ICW class, that invitation came about in an unorthodox way, the "Where I'm From" poetry template. With that template and the work students produced, they entered into a conversation with each other and once they were comfortable as a group, they invited me to join them. The power in the collective relationships shifted that year: I did not invite the students to join me in academic conversations. They invited me to join them in their versions of academic conversations, and we grew from that place.

All three case studies, D'Ante, Sean, and Eric, had conflicting roles within the academy. Educators and citizens alike ask the question, are young men like D'Ante, Sean, and Eric students or are they athletes? The community asks that question. Faculty members ask that question. Even the students ask that question. As young men entering a foreign space, knowing who they are and why they are there is important. The irony of Myles Brands' "Academics First" speech is not lost on the student-athlete. More often than not, these young men understand the sole reason they attend a university is to play a sport. They understand the mantra one coach uses: "Athletics a must; academics a plus." However, it is up to faculty to help

student-athletes, indeed, all students, understand their shifting roles, from athletes to students, and that these young men and women can occupy both roles simultaneously. One does not negate the other.

The case studies demonstrated that traditional pedagogy does not often work for underprepared student-athletes. The students resisted doing what they had done before in their primary and secondary educational experiences. They needed a new way of learning, one more in line with who they were, what they valued, and that incorporated their own language. They wanted to be invited to join the academic conversations, but they also wanted their own languages to be heard and honored.

CHAPTER 8

CONCLUSION: "ATHLETICS IS A GOOD SERVANT, BUT A BAD MASTER."

"I'm delighted to have you play football. I believe in rough, manly sports. But I do not believe in them if they degenerate into the sole end of any one's existence. I don't want you to sacrifice standing well in your studies to any over-athleticism; and I need not tell you that character counts for a great deal more than either intellect or body in winning success in life. Athletic proficiency is a mighty good servant, and like so many other good servants, a mighty bad master."

--Theodore Roosevelt

Theodore Roosevelt's Letters to His Children

8.1 Introduction

Walking through any major bookstore during the months of July or August, and glancing past the rows of house and home magazines, computers and technology periodicals, music and art journals, fitness monthlies and men's magazines, one notices the special magazine rack—the rack placed in the center of the store's periodical section—the special rack that holds nothing but magazines devoted to college preseason football. Magazines about specific conferences (Big 12, PAC-10, Conference USA), about specific schools (the Universities of Texas, Florida, Nebraska, or Southern California), and about specific bowl predictions (which team will go to the Sugar Bowl, the Orange Bowl, or Rose Bowl) occupy these carefully-

placed magazine stands. From the magazine covers, strong young men from well-known colleges and universities look back at potential magazine buyers or football fans. Some of these covers depict young men grimacing. Some men have expressions that denote anger. Some even display smiles. The young men in these magazine cover photographs, however, have hopes for a professional football career. These young men are caught in the momentum and power of their sport, captured, agile, and strong, representing football, their respective universities, and themselves. These young men seem to have the best of life before them: a professional football career, millions in salary and endorsements, fame, glory, and maybe in some cases, even a college education. The contradictions inherent in these images can be startling to someone willing to look beyond the glossy covers and the fervor surrounding collegiate sports.



Fig. 8.1: College Football Magazine Covers (2007)

Nowhere in the magazine aisles can one find popular magazines devoted to an academic conference instead of a sport-related one. There is no "Big 12" or "Mountain West" of academics. There is no magazine that outlines strategies universities must undergo to become part of the "Top 10" academic schools in the country. There are no writers offering advice to university presidents or provosts about how to improve retention or how to attract top-caliber high school students. There are no fantasy charts or fan magazines that diagram the ins and outs of academic recruitment and retention. While there might be academic decathlons in higher education, there are no popular culture magazines published specifically to determine the nation's decathlon bowl contenders in history or geology or political science or literature. There are no journals with the smiling (or even grimacing) faces of young men and women achieving the pinnacle of their young academic careers: earning a university education. The contradiction and confusion in these magazine covers is clear if one looks at popular magazine covers as a barometer of public interest. That barometer rarely registers university reputations and academic rigor.

One must recognize the sheer number of people the collegiate football industry employs to produce these fan magazines; they are industry stakeholders. These stakeholders, by definition, those who have something to gain or lose by involvement in this sport industry, include writers, photographers, agents, ad directors, art directors, editors, artists, sales professionals, editorial assistants, fact checkers, advertising sales, administrative assistants, printers, drivers, food service workers, and cleaning staff. What about the people directly involved in the sport

each Saturday afternoon? Coaches, referees, equipment manufacturers, hot dog vendors, program manufacturers, tailgate party suppliers, photographers, security personnel, and team paraphernalia producers also have a stake in collegiate sports. Even at the university, personnel factors into the big business of collegiate sports: presidents, senior staff, administrative assistants, grounds keepers, videographers, equipment managers, trainers, academic advisors, and academic tutors. Thousands, if not tens of thousands, of people depend on college athletics for their livelihoods. In effect, then, tens of thousands of workers and their families depend on the abilities of a few thousand 18-22 year-old men who excel on the field, but who—in increasing numbers—flounder in the classroom. Football, in this example, is no longer a Saturday afternoon pastime for college students. It is no longer merely entertainment for sport fans. It is no longer merely a game. It is an industry. It is a machine. Therein lays the dilemma for NCAA-ranked Division I-A institutions and it has been a dilemma since the beginning of college sports. This dilemma raises several specific—and difficult—questions:

- How does the university accept the responsibility of educating students who play revenue-producing sports?
- How does the institution balance the needs of the reality TV watching masses, donors and alumni, current and future students, when it vacillates between producing semi-professional athletes or educated students?

- How can faculty navigate the ethically murky waters of high-profile sports and teach students who might not be prepared to do college-level work?
- What programs and pedagogies are in place to prepared student-athletes for the academic work they will need in order to graduate with a marketable skill, aside from athletics?

It is easy to understand the public's love of college sports and the public's general privileging of sports over education. Sports fascinate, excite, include, equalize. Sports unify. Collegiate sports are "reality TV writ large," according to Myles Brand, President of the NCAA (Fain A34). Indeed, the general public's seemingly insatiable appetite for reality television and the voyeuristic tendencies inherent in this "sport" allow the general public—in this case, those non-athletes, or those former athletes reliving their "glory days"—to need more and more of what Brand calls "content" (A35), and this content has nothing to do with course grades or learning outcomes. Fans become invested in the lives and activities of the athletes; each field goal, each pass, or each coaching decision is dissected and discussed on fan boards, magazines, and newspapers. These Monday morning quarterbacks become members of the team, in their own minds, at least. They have a stake in the outcome of a player's athletic performance, not in his academic performance.

The public looks for a winner, something or someone it can stand behind. What better avenue for winners than collegiate athletics? Winning has always been important in college sports, as one historian of higher education notes: "The games

had to be won, and Americans lack the psychology for failure" (qtd. in Sperber *Beer and Circus* 23). Indeed, the 1930s began with a quotation most commonly attributed to Vince Lombardi; "Winning isn't everything, it's the only thing."¹ One only has to step onto a youth sport field or court to see how important athletics are to many American citizens. At these youth games, no matter the age or even the sport, the goal for many parents and coaches is to win the game at any cost. While the children might want to play and have fun, the adults make the game a competition. In that decade and the ones that followed Lombardi's quotation, the college sports' obsession with victory often undermined the educational objectives of university administrators, as well as the health and welfare of the workers, or what Sperber calls the "vocational" employees, in the college sports industry, the student-athletes (Sperber *Beer and Circus*).² So this begs the question: are the students on the cover of these magazines college students or college athletes? This question is not as simple as it might first read. Of course, these young men are both students and athletes, but they typically do not occupy these roles equally, nor does the system they have been drafted into support this choice.

¹ The quote most likely was coined by former Vanderbilt and UCLA football coach Henry "Red" Sanders, who is credited by his players with first employing the slogan in the 1930s while coaching prep school football in Georgia.

² Sperber, in *Beer and Circus*, discusses "subcultures" he assigns to university students. The "vocational" student is the student who learns a skill, who will be a laborer. "Vocational" is the category Sperber uses to discuss student-athletes, as they are learning a trade when they play intercollegiate sports; the trade is the sport itself. Other categories Sperber coined include the "collegiate," the "rebel," and the "academic." Each group has its own problems and potential solutions. He makes it clear, however, that the subcultures do not usually overlap.

Many reading this dissertation may ask, "What does all this talk about power and sports and athletes and magazines have to do with the teaching of writing?" I could answer, "everything," for it is the discussion of these overlapping and overarching issues that leads to student engagement in writing within a specific rhetorical framework, the writing classroom. The writing classroom, though, can transform from the traditional classroom to the field or court, from the locker room to a boardroom, from the office to the arena. When students gain skills and confidence in their ability to communicate with others, particularly through the written word, they have gained the power to control their futures. This means, as educators, we meet our students where they are, as they are. We must learn what each student has to offer the academy besides an ability to play with a ball. We must meet these students sometimes more than half way as they "invent the university" for themselves (Bartholomae 273).

If we can look beyond the ego of a stellar athlete, if we can ignore the bravado of a young man when his image appears on a national magazine, if we can pardon their beliefs that they can only be an athlete or a rapper, we can begin to know the students in our classroom. When we know this student, or when we know an entire class of students, we can begin to recognize who they are and why they are. Once we know them, we can teach them. To teach them without knowing them, without knowing their histories or their interests, we are only supporting the traditional pedagogy that did not work them in earlier grades, in earlier years. For the most part, students want to learn, but they want to learn, sometimes, on their terms.

A critical pedagogue understands this and moves out of the way of students' learning. If students understand why they are being asked to learn something and if the reasons given do not conflict with deeper needs for self-respect and loyalty to their group (whether that be an economic, racial, or ethnic group), as Shaughnessy notes, "they are disposed to learn it" (125).

Throughout this study, when students felt heard, they opened up and began to learn. This was true for most of the 45 students enrolled in ICW throughout the three-year study. Perhaps it was the most profound with D'Ante. It was the last sentence D'Ante wrote for the course that remains with me both as a teacher and as a researcher. D'Ante ended his final exam essay noting, specifically, how he was surprised that "you always asked what we thought about certain things." This implies to me that his primary and secondary school teachers did not ask his opinion about the subjects at hand. David Bleich addresses this issue, the issue of listening to what students have to contribute to the classroom and to the research, when he writes,

Contributing one's words to a conversation is an interpersonal act that *counts*. No matter how rapidly one's conversation is forgotten, it still marks a key moment of a social achievement, the establishment of an intersubjectivity, the reidentification of a human relationship. (*The Double Perspective: Language, Literacy, and Social Relations* 66)

Through the showdowns with D'Ante, through the challenging of my authority as a teacher, through the culture shock he and I both experienced in this course, D'Ante's

writing improved. More importantly, from my perspective, he felt heard in this course, and it was "being heard" that helped him to change.

It is cliché to note that if one student was affected by a certain type of pedagogy, then that pedagogy had value. In the case of the ICW students throughout this three-year study, most of them were positively affected by the course and by the alternative strategies used within that course. The cliché is no longer cliché.

"Playing in the Prose" is a study of one Division I-A institution that admitted underprepared students into the institution so these students could play football and men's basketball. The institution understood its responsibility, however, and provided a specialized class for these (and other) underprepared students. TCU is not the only institution to enroll academically underprepared student-athletes, as indicated by the graduation rates of student-athletes described in the Introduction to this work.

The first-year, freshman, classes at seven NCAA-ranked Division I-A institutions across Texas (both public and private) offer examples of students in varying levels of academic preparedness, and in many ways, these students compare to the students at TCU. This comparison allows the work in this dissertation to expand past one institution. In fact, most Division I-A universities in Texas have a demonstrated need for alternative pedagogies and programs not only for its underprepared student-athletes but also for its underprepared non-athlete students.

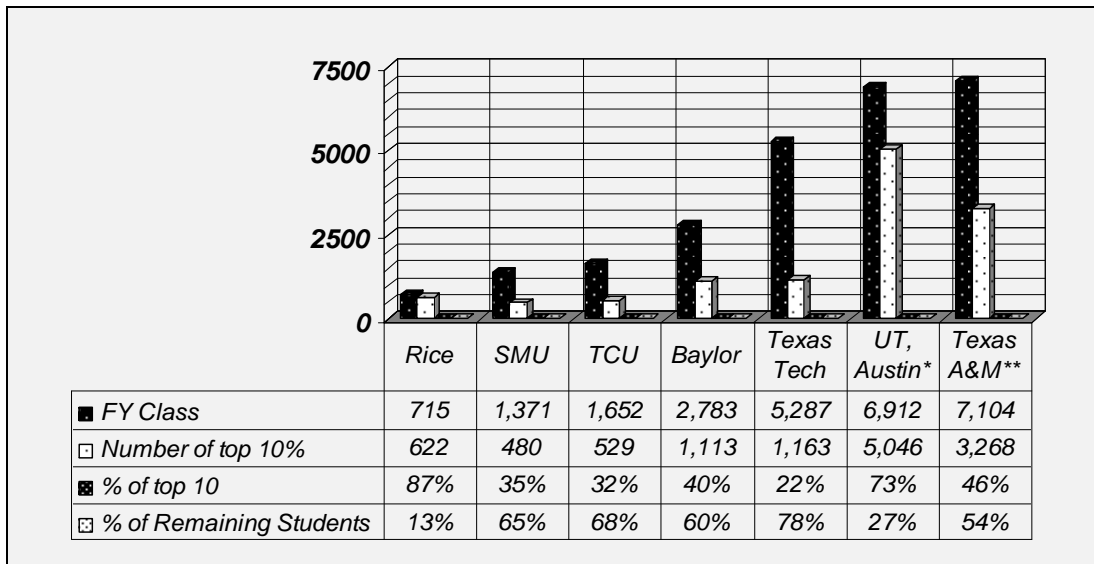


Fig. 8.2: Comparison of Class Size, NCAA-Ranked Texas Universities
 (*) 2005 Data (**) 2004 Data

For example, by looking at the number of students the top 10 percent of their high school class who entered several Texas universities in 2006, I can support the potential need for alternative programs and pedagogies in these institutions. Those institutions include private universities, Baylor, Rice, Southern Methodist, and Texas Christian, and public universities, Texas A&M, Texas Tech, and the University of Texas Austin. As Figure 8.2 shows, the class size for first-year students can range dramatically between these seven institutions, from 715 at Rice University to 7,104 at Texas A&M. Yet the percentage of first-year students who were in the top 10 percent of their high schools' graduating class ranged from 87 percent to 45 percent at these same institutions. The remaining 90 percent of first-year students could potentially benefit from alternative programs and pedagogies. Student-athletes in the

revenue-producing sports usually come from the bottom 90 percent of their high school graduation classes.

However, to assume that students who graduate in the top 10 percent of a high school graduating class do not need additional instruction in writing can be a bit misleading, as it depends on rigor of each individual school's curriculum, the teachers, and the majority of students in the school. Part of the admission procedure at most universities is to rank the rigor of high school curricula to account for differences. Since universities do not publish the number of exception admits in their University Factbooks, it is difficult to know exactly how many students might be underprepared in writing. However, based on the admission data from these same university Factbooks, researchers can draw certain assumptions.

For example, Rice University enrolled 715 first-year students in 2005. Of these 715 students, 622 of them were in the top 10 percent of their high school classes, and this is 87 percent of the total class size. The remaining 13 percent could be students who might benefit from an alternative approach to first-year composition. However, Rice University is not a typical example of a selective university that admits *underprepared* students. While Rice may admit underprepared students (or underprepared student-athletes), the number of these exception admits is relatively low. The 13 percent of students at Rice University who were not at the top of their high school graduating classes probably would not need the stretch course; although, if the university admits underprepared students could, they could easily be integrated into traditional classes.

Even though Rice is a private institution, along with Baylor, SMU, and TCU, the need could still exist for alternative programs and pedagogies for a particular type of student. These universities are Division I-A institutions that probably admit highly qualified athletes who are academically underprepared. On the other hand, universities such as Texas Tech, University of Texas, and Texas A&M, public institutions, demonstrate much higher numbers of potentially underprepared students. Of Texas Tech's incoming first-year class of 5,287 in 2005, 78 percent of them, or 4,124 students, might have need of an ICW-type program. While the University of Texas admits a very high percentage of top-ranking high school graduates³ who might not need alternative pedagogies, it also boasts one of the lowest graduation rates for its male student-athletes. Those students might need such a program.

8.2 Areas of Future Research

A subject as rich as the one studied here, student-athletes at Division I-A institutions, creates several areas of potential research, but they are outside the scope of this particular research study. I have touched upon these items in this dissertation, but they are subjects that need revisiting. There is much to learn from and about student-athletes. For example, research questions such as those that follow are outside the scope of this dissertation, as they require focused attention.

Being an educator is difficult enough, but when faced with a challenging course such as the stretch course or challenging students, such as those described in

³ The University of Texas at Austin has an admissions policy that grants the top 10 percent of that year's high school graduates from Texas guaranteed admission to the university.

this dissertation, the educator can experience compassion fatigue. Institutions have a responsibility to the students they enroll, but they are also responsible to the faculty who teach the higher-risk students. A research study could explore ways to keep compassion fatigue from taking dedicated and trained faculty away from the teaching of this time-intensive course.

Secondly, many of the students in the ICW study exhibited signs of "learned helplessness," a condition in which one has learned to behave helpless in certain situations. For example, if students have been told throughout their educational histories that they are not good writers, that they are not good students, that they should never consider college as an option (unless it is to play a sport), then that student can exhibit signs of depression and a lack of desire to change. When Martin Seligman conducted his studies by using electroshock on dogs, he found that after some time of painful shocks, if there was not ability to move away from those shocks, the dogs eventually accepted those shocks as normal behavior. A study on learned helplessness and writing would be to teach students how to fail, that failure is a part of life. However, failing in a writing task does not make one less able to be a college student.

An example related to this study of learned helplessness behavior in this dissertation study would be Timothy, the basketball player from Chapter 7. Timothy had potential to be a very good writer, but he did not have the discipline required to attend class and submit work. He failed the first semester of ICW, along with other courses he took that first semester. With those academic failures, Timothy became

academically ineligible to play, and he was cut from the basketball team. In a conversation with Travis Mann, the *ethnographic-researcher* who used Timothy in part of his thesis research, Timothy blamed his instructor for his failure in the English course. The shifting of blame and the lack of responsibility / accountability can be signs and symptoms of learned helplessness. Further research is needed to make a more direct correlation between underprepared student-athletes and this disorder.

Thirdly, researchers need to address the concept of surveillance and student-athletes. By surveillance, student-athletes, especially high-profile student-athletes are watched from the time they step on to a university campus until the time they leave. Every student-athlete movement is monitored by advisors, faculty, staff, trainers, and doctors. Even students and community members become unwitting participants in the surveillance of undergraduate students. While Kevin Foster has written a very strong article about surveillance in athletic academic centers and how it benefits student-athletes (particularly female African-American student-athletes), more research is needed. Foster's article describes how African-American female student-athletes need to be advised on their appearance and their behavior in and out of a classroom, on or off the court. Foster supposes a patriarchal method of "surveillance," and he believes this method is a positive one for the athletes and the institution. On the other hand, many student-athletes do not appreciate and do not need the kinds of surveillance they must endure if they are to be an athlete at a Division I-A institution. Surveillance, to put it another way, is a method of

segregation and infantilization. Student-athletes who enroll in Division I-A institutions are adults and should have treatment as adults. A follow-up to Foster's article would include exploring the ways other universities use surveillance on their student-athletes.

Lastly, since coaches in revenue-producing sports have such influence over the lives of student-athletes, alumni, faculty, students, staff, and community, and because universities at the Division I-A level invest so much of their sometimes limited resources in the coaches and in their programs, a research project might include evaluating the coaching staff, much as students evaluate faculty at the end of each semester.

Other research areas might include these questions:

- How does relational pedagogy increase retention among underprepared students, first-year students, returning students, or other student groups?
- How do the inclusion of New Media and other alternative programs benefit basic writers? What specific skills do they learn that translate to composition and to writing?
- How can engaging first-year students in a "photograph your community" exercise / assignment aid in university retention? How would the photographs of the non-athlete student and the student-athlete differ? In other words, how do they define their communities? How does this definition aid in student retention?

- How can the institution create a culture in which faculty / instructors avoid "compassion fatigue" when teaching underprepared students? How does the institution aid the instructor of the untenured faculty member avoid becoming a "super teacher"?
- How does an educator help the "learned helpless" student move beyond the helpless stage (with an external locus of control along with a lack of accountability and responsibility for one's actions) into an autonomous stage (with an internal locus of control along with accountability and responsibility for one's actions)?
- How far can an athletic department pursue the "surveillance" model Kevin Foster discusses in his work? At what stage do the student-athletes lose their autonomy and the institution gain too much control of their "property"? This research study would speak directly to Foster's work, as he believe the surveillance has a positive benefit to students as those who are under this scrutiny graduate at higher rates. He concedes that the higher graduation rates have a cost: the autonomy of student-athletes.
- How can a critical pedagogue or one using a feminist pedagogy adapt the coaching pedagogy for a classroom? How might the instructor and the students shift responsibility of learning and growth from an individual effort to a collective effort? How can the institution benefit from such a model?

8.3 Teacher Reflection

In this dissertation, I analyzed three students-- in one program-- at one university. I evaluated how alternative pedagogies helped these students succeed as writers and how this success translated to other arenas of those students' academic life. As I taught these three courses and worked with these students, I had little to guide me. I had read books about composition pedagogy and the teaching of basic writing. I considered myself a critical pedagogue who used feminist theories in her teaching. I was not prepared, however, for the intellectual, social, and all encompassing world of Division I-A athletics. Unless one grows up in that environment, it is difficult to understand. But there it was—the world of Division I-A sports, in a writing classroom, in the faces of 38 young men (of 45 students) over a three-year period. These young men had hopes for an education, for professional careers in athletics. They wanted to find their ways in the world with families and friends, careers and companies. Yet I had no idea how imposing and controlling this Division I-A world would be. I look back now and think those young men probably did not know, either. Yet there we were, together in a writing classroom. And we all survived. We thrived. During this time I asked myself a series of questions, and many of those questions concerned the racial and gender demographic of the classroom. Table 8.1 denotes the racial and gender differences in the Introduction to Critical course of the three years of this dissertation study, but it also includes the following year when Jason King taught the course. When one considers the unusual

nature (for TCU) of these courses, one has to consider the pedagogy required to teach the students in the course.

Table 8.1: Demographic Breakdown for ICW over Four Years (2004-2007)

| | 2004 | | 2005 | | 2006 | | 2007 | | Total | |
|------------------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|--------------|------------|------------|-------------|--------------|------------|
| Gender | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Male | 13/16 | 81% | 12/15 | 80% | 12/14 | 86% | 8/9 | 89% | 45/54 | 83% |
| • Female | 3/16 | 19% | 3/15 | 20% | 2/14 | 14% | 1/9 | 11% | 9/54 | 17% |
| Race | | | | | | | | | | |
| • African-American | 8/16 | 50% | 10/15 | 67% | 11/14 | 79% | 9/9 | 100% | 38/54 | 70% |
| • Anglo | 6/16 | 38% | 4/15 | 27% | 2/14 | 14% | 0/9 | 0% | 12/54 | 22% |
| • Asian | 1/16 | 6% | 1/15 | 7% | 1/14 | 7% | 0/9 | 0% | 3/54 | 6% |
| • Hispanic | 1/16 | 6% | 0/15 | 0% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 1/54 | 2% |
| • ESL | 4/16 | 25% | 2/15 | 13% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 6/54 | 11% |
| Disability | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 4/16 | 25% | 5/15 | 33% | 2/14 | 14% | 0/9 | 0% | 11/54 | 20% |
| Athlete | | | | | | | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 13/16 | 81% | 10/15 | 67% | 12/14 | 86% | 9/9 | 100% | 44/54 | 81% |

At the end of the three-year study, I constructed the demographic tables for each ICW course that allowed me to see all 45 students at one time, represented on one piece of paper. It was during the construction of these tables that I realized what percentage of each class was African-American, a student-athlete, a second-language learner, or female. I had a sense of the statistics and the balances / imbalances of the class demographics before I constructed the tables, but the tables provided specific numbers, and those numbers surprised me. The demographic tables allowed me to think differently about the courses and about the students. It allowed me to think about each student and his or her reaction to the course and to each other. I was able

to remember which assignments worked for the majority of students and which had not. I remember how much I learned about each student, about sports, and about myself during this period of time. As I have reflected back on the three years of this study, and the demographic table on the previous page, I have asked myself a series of difficult questions:

How would the course have been different if I had considered the numbers of African-Americans, of men, of athletes as I taught? Had I considered the demographic split of the classes being so heavily African-American male student-athlete, I would have been tempted to assign different reading and writing assignments. I might have fallen back on the notions that since the students were Black men, they needed to read texts by other Black men or texts that are from a "Black perspective." I could have done that, but since I am not an African-American man, I do not know that I could have taught those texts in a way that the students might need. I would have felt self-conscious in the attempt to teach this type of material to students who know what it is for African-American men in the American culture. I do not.

How will my teaching change in future years when I cannot help but know the significance of the racial and gender imbalance in the classroom? Each year I taught the stretch course, I was fully aware that the previous years' experiences were coming with me into the new class. In many ways, this was beneficial. Over the

years, I knew what to expect from students in terms of behavior that was common to them, to the type of writing they could produce, and the pressures placed upon them by the athletics department. On the other hand, the difficulties of each class—particularly in the fall semester—carried over year to year, as well. When using relational pedagogy, particularly in the first two years of the study, students were often open to accepting that "relationship" from me. For these students, the price of accepting the relationship was one that did not cost them; it benefitted them. The third year of the study (the academic year 2006), however, when I had anticipated the unquestioned acceptance of my pedagogy, I was surprised and not quite prepared to handle the rejection of that relationship offer. It was the third year of the study—the 2006 class—that issues of race and class were apparent. The students in this class were segregated unlike any of the classes before them, and they resented it. They resented being in a class of almost solely African-American male student-athletes. They resented being in the "stupid" class, and they resented a White female instructor. They wanted nothing to do with me, relationally. And therefore, they wanted little to do with writing.

How does the racial makeup of a class change the dynamics of the class?

Throughout the three years of this study, the class became increasingly more skewed to a demographic of African-American men. During the first two years of the study, the classes were racially and economically diverse. Each class also had students of both genders, students who participated in varsity sports and those who did not, and

students with learning differences. The demographic makeup of these two classes depicted the typical TCU class, only inversed. In the ICW classes, the African-American presence was the majority of students in the room. With this newly-defined majority, I taught the course differently. I privileged the voices of African-American men over, for example, the voices of Caucasian men. Since student-athletes were the majority of students in each of these classes, sports metaphors and sports examples became common when explaining a writing strategy or a reading concept.

One clear example of how the racial makeup of the course shifted the dynamics of the course is in the music we listened to each day as we started the class. At almost every class session, students would spend the first 5 to 10 minutes engaged in freewriting. Sometimes I would provide a subject and sometimes the students provided subjects. Their journal entries ranged in being accessible to everyone in the class, to only me, or only to the writer (private entries). Each day of writing, however, we listened to music. Since the majority of students in the class were African-American men, they sometimes listened to a certain type of music that was not music that the White students appreciated. Since the majority of the students in the class did appreciate hip-hop or rap music, that is what we, as a class, listened to each morning.

All those questions imply that being of color, being female, being a student-athlete, or having a learning difference negatively impacts learning for others in the

class. I do not believe that it does, and I do not want to paint that picture here. Indeed, there are no clear answers to these questions.

Lastly, I learned how much this course changed and challenged me. Denny Taylor and Catherine Dorsey-Gaines argue in *Growing up Literate: Learning from Inner City Families*, that ethnographers, those outside the studied community, must "deal on a daily basis with [their] own ethnocentrism and mental baggage. Reflection and introspection are continuous processes which must take place throughout the study" (xv). I found that in teaching this course over a three-year period just how much "mental baggage" I carried.

Professional educators are not supposed to focus on themselves as they teach. Good teaching, many critics argue, is about the student. In good teaching, the teacher is invisible. I no longer believe this to be true. The professional educator is as much a part of the classroom dynamic as any student. Similar to the reciprocity that comes in a service-learning exercise, there was reciprocity in the ICW courses. As a critical pedagogue, I knew I did not have all the right answers to all the questions all these students would ask. Each class session was an opportunity to find the answers to the students' questions together. Through the sharing of the responsibility and the power of a classroom setting, students began to trust themselves in an academic environment. They trusted who they were becoming.

8.4 Conclusion

As Theodore Roosevelt noted in *Letters to His Children*, "Athletic proficiency is a might good servant, and like so many other good servants, a mighty

bad master." He was warning his children then, before the true organization of intercollegiate athletics, that sports that can bring them great pleasure can also cost them a great price. Indeed, athletics can bring individuals and institutions significant advantages in terms of revenue, reputation, or rank. Athletics can also demand a too-high price for what it provides; for example, the surveillance of institutional property (in the form of undergraduate student-athletes) is another type of segregation and discrimination. The ethical dilemma institutions face when they admit underprepared student-athletes into their programs can demonstrate a university's priorities, and those priorities are not often focused on undergraduate education. Intercollegiate athletics are, to put it another way, the proverbial double-edged sword. On one hand, intercollegiate athletics provide students with the opportunity for education (if they pay the price of participating in a sport). On the other hand, participation in the sport often precludes the student-athlete from receiving much education.

As composition faculty, we have responsibility to the student-athletes in our classes, whether these student-athletes are academically prepared or if they are underprepared. In fact, we may have a stronger responsibility to those students who are underprepared, as they do not have the background or sometimes the desire to make it through a four-year institution.

We can maintain high academic standards and still work with what marginalized students need in order to succeed at the university. It is my contention that if we provide first-year college students with pedagogy and a curriculum that mimics what they experienced in high school, particularly if they were not successful

in high school, they will not succeed. We must be bold and offer students something other than what they have experienced. They need to learn to acclimate to a university culture. They need to be challenged. They need to be heard.

APPENDIX A

APPROVALS AND PERMISSIONS

UTA IRB Form #1A (Approval Letter)



THE UNIVERSITY
OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

Office of Research
Integrity and Compliance

Box 19188
202 E. Border, Suite 201
Arlington, Texas
76019

T 817.272.3723
F 817.272.1111
www.uta.edu/research

October 26, 2006

Billie Hara
Tim Morris, PhD
Center for Writing
TCU Box 297700
Fort Worth, Texas 76129

TITLE: *Playing the Field: Writing Instruction and Underprepared Student-Athletes*

Re: Exempt Approval

IRB No.: 07.032e

The UTA Institutional Review Board (UTA IRB) Chair (or designee) has reviewed the above-referenced study and found that it qualified as exempt from coverage under the federal guidelines for the protection of human subjects as referenced at Title 45--Part 46.101(b)(1). You are therefore authorized to begin the research as of October 20, 2006.

Please be advised that as the principal investigator, you are required to report local adverse (unanticipated) events to this office within 24 hours. In addition, pursuant to Title 45 CFR 46.103(b)(4)(iii), investigators are required to, " promptly report to the IRB any proposed changes in the research activity, and to ensure that such changes in approved research, during the period for which IRB approval has already been given, are **not initiated without IRB review and approval** except when necessary to eliminate apparent immediate hazards to the subject."

All investigators and key personnel identified in the protocol must have documented *CITI Training* on file with this office. The UTA Office of Research Integrity and Compliance appreciates your continuing commitment to the protection of human research subjects. Should you have questions or require further assistance, please contact this office by calling (817) 272-2775 or (817) 272-3723.

Yours sincerely,

Pat Myrick, CIP, CCRP
Director
UTA IRB Designee

UTA IRB Form #1A (Exempt Request) (pg 1)

IRB PROTOCOL # _____
FUNDED GRANT /
CONTRACT # _____

Office of Research Compliance
Phone (817) 272-3723
Fax (817) 272-1111

THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT ARLINGTON OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE

IRB FORM #1A
APPLICATION FOR EXEMPTION OF A RESEARCH PROTOCOL TO
THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS (IRB)

UTA faculty, staff, students, or employees who propose to engage in any research, demonstration, development, or other activity involving the use of human subjects must have review and approval of that activity by the Institutional Review Board, prior to initiation of that project.

Some research may be exempt from the HHS regulations for the protection of human subjects (45CFR46 46.101). If you believe you are exempt, then you should submit this completed form, along with finalized copies of all recruitment materials (e.g. telephone scripts, fliers, etc) and finalized copies of all tests, surveys, interviews, etc. to the IRB. The Board is responsible for safeguarding the rights and welfare of subjects who participate in the activity.

If you require further assistance in completing this form or need additional information, please contact the Office of Research Compliance at extension 3723.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Project Title:
Playing the Field: Writing Instruction and Underprepared Student-Athletes
 2. Principal Investigator:
 - a. Title: Billie Hara
 - b. Department: English Mail Route: TCU Box 297700, Center for Writing, TCU, Fort Worth, TX 76129 Telephone: (817) 257-6535 or (817) 991-0831
 3. In the absence of the Principal Investigator, identify contact person:
Name: Dr. Tim Morris Telephone: (817) 272-2739
 4. For non-faculty submitting a protocol, please identify the faculty member responsible for conducting the research:
Name: Dr. Tim Morris Title: Professor of English
 5. Expected Start Date: October 2006
 6. Expected Completion Date: May 2007
- Source: NIH (submit 2 copies of grant proposal) Industry Sponsored
 Local Departmental State Other

FUNDED GRANT / CONTRACT NUMBER:

UTA IRB Form #1A (Exempt Request) (pg 2)

IRB PROTOCOL # _____
FUNDED GRANT /
CONTRACT # _____

Office of Research Compliance
Phone (817) 272-3723
Fax (817) 272-1111

SECTION B: QUALIFICATIONS FOR EXEMPTION

7. Do you plan to conduct your research in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as research on regular and special education instructional strategies?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY
8. Do you plan to conduct your research in established or commonly accepted educational settings, involving normal educational practices, such as research on the effectiveness of or the comparison among instructional techniques, curricula, or classroom management methods?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY
9. Does your research involve the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior and it will **not** be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY
10. Does your research involve the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior and its disclosure outside of the research could not reasonably place the subject at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY
11. Does your research involve the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures, or observation of public behavior of human subjects that are elected or appointed officials or candidates for public office?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY
12. Does your research involve the collection or study of existing data that is publicly available or the information is recorded by you in such a manner that the subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects (this includes all documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens)?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY
13. Is your research project conducted by or subjected for approval by a Federal Department Head and is designed to study, evaluate, or otherwise examine public benefit or service programs, procedures for obtaining benefits or services under these programs, possible changes in or alternatives to those programs or procedures, or possible changes in methods or levels of payment for benefits or services under those programs?
YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

UTA IRB Form #1A (Exempt Request) (pg 3)

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Phone (817) 272-3723
Fax (817) 272-1111

14. Does your research protocol involve taste and food quality evaluation and consumer acceptance studies where: wholesome foods without additives are consumed, food is consumed that contains a food ingredient at or below the level and for a use found to be safe, or an agricultural chemical or environmental contaminant at or below a level found to be safe, by the Food and Drug Administration or approved by the Environmental Protection Agency or the Food Safety and Inspection Service of the U.S. Department of Agriculture?

YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

SECTION C: SUBJECT POPULATION

15. Does your research protocol involve children from 0-17 years of age?

YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

a. If you answered 'yes' to question # 16, please answer the following question.

Will you be observing public behavior of children and be participating in the activities being observed?

YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

16. Does your research protocol involve mentally incapacitated subjects?

YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

17. Does your research protocol involve (known) pregnant women as subjects?

YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

18. Does your research protocol involve prisoners as subjects?

YES NO DOES NOT APPLY

UTA IRB Form #1A (Exempt Request) (pg 4)

IRB PROTOCOL # _____
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Office of Research Compliance
Phone (817) 272-3723
Fax (817) 272-1111

SECTION D: DESCRIPTION OF RESEARCH

Please describe your research protocol in layman's terms. Include subject recruitment and the informed consent process.

By reading and responding to student writing over the course of an entire year, in the ENGL 10703/ENGL 10803 course "Introduction to Critical Writing," I want to determine if a course such as this one is beneficial to underprepared student athletes. Students admitted "by exception" populate the stretch course, ENGL 10703 and ENGL 10803. Most of these students are student-athletes in revenue-producing sports (football and men's basketball), but the course can also have students with learning disabilities, students with low TOEFL scores, or students who did not receive adequate high school preparation for college-level writing. However, the majority of students are "exception students." Students will sign a consent form that will allow me to use portions of their work in my own research on basic writers. They will choose a pseudonym that I can use in lieu of given names. There is no consequence or penalty for not allowing me to use their writing. Although the students will be enrolled in the course that I teach and I will have access to their work, I will not use samples of their work without proper consent. However, all students will be given the same assignments to complete. The course lasts two long semester, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007, and I will have access to the students and to their work for this academic year.

SECTION E: SIGNATURES

I UNDERSTAND THAT I AM RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ACCURACY OF THESE ANSWERS TO THE STATEMENTS MADE IN THIS FORM TO BE SUBMITTED TO THE INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS AND FOR THE CONDUCT OF RESEARCH.

I UNDERSTAND THAT I, AS WELL AS ALL HUMAN SUBJECT INVESTIGATORS INVOLVED IN THIS STUDY, MUST HAVE DOCUMENTED HUMAN SUBJECT TRAINING IN THE OFFICE OF RESEARCH COMPLIANCE BEFORE PERFORMING ANY HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH.

Principal Investigator

Date

Faculty Sponsor (If not the Principal Investigator)

Date

I HAVE READ THIS COMPLETED FORM AND ENDORSE THIS RESEARCH TO BE CONDUCTED.

Department Chairman or Dean or Director

Date

UTA IRB Form #1A (Exempt Request) (pg 5)

IRB PROTOCOL # _____
FUNDED GRANT /
CONTRACT # _____

Office of Research Compliance
Phone (817) 272-3723
Fax (817) 272-1111

UTA Annual Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure (pg 1)



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

Office Use Only
Research Integrity & Compliance Review: _____
CRI Review: _____

Annual Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure Academic Year 2005 - 2006

INTRODUCTION: A *conflict of interest* exists when a financial or other personal consideration may compromise, or appear to compromise, an employee's professional judgment in administration, management, instruction, research, and other professional activities. A *conflict of commitment* exists when an employee's outside professional activities interfere with obligations to students, colleagues, and the primary missions of the University. The Committee on Research Integrity (CRI), previously known as the Objectivity in Research Committee, is charged with oversight of UTA's conflict of interest and commitment program. Some requirements of this program, per federal law, are to maintain and enforce a policy on conflicts of interest, and to inform individuals of this policy. UTA and the CRI are responsible for knowing what conflicts might exist at the University and to manage, reduce, or eliminate those conflicts.

It is not the purpose of the CRI to hinder research or the entrepreneurial pursuits of the University community. In fact, it is understood that in today's research enterprise, *conflicts are inherent*. Conflicts frequently arise due to the interaction between employees' personal and/or financial interests, which are often closely tied to their University-based activities, and the opportunity to conduct externally sponsored research. In addition, positive research results often contribute to professional opportunities such as publication, grant renewals, promotion, tenure, etc. *These opportunities to receive financial, professional, and/or personal rewards do not necessarily constitute an unacceptable situation. An actual or potential conflict of interest or commitment exists when the CRI reasonably determines that these potential rewards, financial or otherwise, could affect absolute objectivity in the design, conduct, or publication of research activities, or in other academic and professional decisions.*

The key to handling these potential conflicts is *full disclosure* of the conflicting situation to identify it and allow the situation to be monitored and/or managed. The CRI is committed to moving research forward and fostering entrepreneurial spirit while maintaining objectivity and integrity. If a conflicting situation arises that will require management, the CRI will work in cooperation with the individual to devise and implement an appropriate plan. In many cases, merely disclosing all the facts of a situation will render it acceptable.

INSTRUCTIONS: Please complete and submit this form with any attachments directly to the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance at Box 19188 or fax to 817-272-1111. You will be required to submit a conflict of interest disclosure annually; in the interim, if there are any changes in your situation that would modify your answers on this form, please resubmit with the new information. If you have any questions or comments about this disclosure form, please contact the Office of Research Integrity and Compliance at 817-272-3723 or Dr. Dennis Marynick (CRI Chair) at 817-272-3814. For more information, and to review UTA's Conflict of Interest Policy, please see: <http://www.uta.edu/ra/RC/COI.php>.

General Information

Name: Billie Hara Department: English

Status: UTA Faculty Adjunct Faculty UTA Staff UTA Student Other _____

Title/Position: Ph.D. Candidate Phone: (817) 257-6535 E-Mail: b.hara@tcu.edu

Please check if you have one or more of the following:

Active Sponsored Project Active Human Subjects Protocol (IRB) Active Animal Subjects Protocol (IACUC)

Disclosure

1. Please list the percent time you spend in Outside Professional Activities. *Please answer this item only if you are a *full-time* UTA employee.*

Outside Professional Activities are defined as those activities that are within a faculty/staff member's area of professional or academic expertise and that advance or communicate that expertise through interaction with the industry, the community, or the public, and through consulting or professional opportunities, for which the individual is compensated.

0% 1 - 5% 6 - 10% 11 - 15% 16 - 20% 21 - 25% 26 - 35% 36 - 50% > 50%

Please describe your Outside Professional Activities: _____

2. Do you have a managerial or principal investigator role in an activity outside the University?

Yes (Please list in an attached written explanation.)

No

UTA Annual Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure (pg 2)



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

Office Use Only
Research Integrity & Compliance Review: _____
CRI Review: _____

Disclosure, continued

3. Do you or members of your immediate family (i.e., spouse or dependent children as determined by the Internal Revenue Service, or domestic partner) have an employment, consulting, or other financial relationship that includes ownership (at least 5% of equity or at least \$10,000 worth of financial interest) with any of the following:
- (a) a sponsor of your University teaching or research activities,
 - (b) a company that does business with the University that involves you as an employee of the University,
 - (c) an outside organization contributing gift funds to the University which are under your control or of direct benefit to your teaching or research activities?
- Yes (Please list each such arrangement in an attached written explanation.)
 No
4. A) Have you submitted a proposal to, or received an award from, any outside funding agencies?
- Yes (Please complete Questions 4B and 4C.)
 No (Skip to Question 5.)
- B) If yes, did you submit a proposal to, receive funding from, or conduct research which could benefit a company in which you had/have either a consulting arrangement or significant financial holdings (defined as at least 5% equity or at least \$10,000 worth of financial interest)?
- Yes (Please complete Question 4C.)
 No (Skip to Question 5.)
- C) If yes, were those arrangements or financial interests disclosed at the time of proposal submission?
- Yes
 No
5. Were you an inventor of intellectual property which has been or will be licensed through the University to any outside entity in which you (or members of your family, as described above) have an employment, consulting, or other financial relationship that includes ownership (at least 5% of equity or at least \$10,000 worth of financial interest)?
- Yes (Please list in an attached written explanation.)
 No
6. Did you create, discover, or reduce to practice an invention(s) to which title has not been assigned to the University?
- Yes, and University resources were used (Please list in an attached written explanation.)
 Yes, and University resources were not used (Please list in an attached written explanation.)
 No
7. A) Did you involve any of your students or staff in your outside consulting or pro bono activities?
- Yes (Please list in an attached written explanation and complete Question 7B.)
 No (Skip to Question 8.)
- B) If yes, was this arrangement prospectively approved by the UTA's Committee on Research Integrity (CRI)?
- Yes
 No
8. Please describe on an attached sheet any other relationships, commitments, or activities you or any members of your immediate family have that might present or appear to present a conflict of interest or commitment with your UTA appointment (such relationships might include financial or fiduciary interest or uncompensated activities).

Certification

In submitting this disclosure form, I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge and that I have read and understand the University of Texas at Arlington's *POLICY AND PROCEDURES FOR PROMOTING OBJECTIVITY IN RESEARCH BY MANAGING, REDUCING OR ELIMINATING CONFLICTS OF INTEREST*. I certify that I have disclosed all potential financial and commitment interests as required by UTA policy. I agree to comply with the provisions of the UTA policy to immediately report any changes in my financial interests. Furthermore, I agree to comply with conditions or restrictions imposed by UTA to manage, reduce, or eliminate actual or potential conflicts of interest and commitment.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

For more information, and to review UTA's Conflict of Interest Policy, please see: <http://www.uta.edu/ra/RC/COI.php>.

Committee on Research Integrity
Conflict of Interest and Commitment Disclosure Form
Revised 09/05
Page 2 of 2

UTA Informed Consent Form (pg 1)



THE UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS
AT ARLINGTON

INFORMED CONSENT

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: _____ Billie Hara _____

TITLE OF PROJECT: _____ Playing the Field: Writing Instruction and Underprepared Student Writers _____

This Informed Consent will explain about being a participant in a research project. It is important that you read this material carefully and then decide if you wish to participate.

PURPOSE: Because you are (or have been) a student enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803 at TCU, you have been selected to participate in a research project to explore how this course benefits first-year student writers. This research project will investigate how your writing ability has been impacted by this year-long course.

DURATION: Participation in this study will last the two semesters you are enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803, and it will entail occasional follow-up in the form of questionnaires and email correspondence. This study will end May 2007.

PROCEDURES: The procedures of this research study, which involve your responses as a TCU student, include completing the attached questionnaire and making yourself available for follow-up interviews and subsequent questionnaires. It also means that Ms. Hara will retain copies of your writing throughout the time you are enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803 and that she will use this writing in her research. Ms. Hara may request copies of other course-related writing while you are a student at TCU.

POSSIBLE RISKS/DISCOMFORTS: There are no known risks to participate in this research study.

POSSIBLE BENEFITS: The possible benefits of your participation in this study would be a modification to the course to benefit future student writers at TCU. Participation in this study will also help other faculty and administrators at TCU develop course materials that will clearly benefit students enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803.

ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES / TREATMENTS: There are no alternatives to participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in Billie Hara's office, TCU, Rickel #244-B, for at least three (3) years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, the UTA IRB, the FDA (if applicable), and personnel particular to this research (individual or department) have access to the study records. Your (e.g., student, medical) records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above. During the course of this research project, Ms. Hara will keep your identity confidential. You may choose a pseudonym if you wish. If you would like to use an anonymous name, please note that name here:

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS: If you have any questions, problems or research-related medical problems at any time, you may call Billie Hara at (817) 257-6535 (b.hara@tcu.edu), or Dr. Tim Morris at (817) 272-2692 (tmorris@uta.edu). You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at UTA (817) 272-1235 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject.

Last Revised 9/21/2006
Page 1 of 2

_____ Subject Initials

UTA Informed Consent Form (pg 2)

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: By signing below, you confirm that you have read or had this document read to you. You will be given a signed copy of this informed consent document. You have been and will continue to be given the chance to ask questions and to discuss your participation with the investigator.

You freely and voluntarily choose to be in this research project.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: _____ DATE

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER _____ DATE

TCU IRB Approval

TCU INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD Approval Form

Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval refers to research involving human subjects whether on or off campus. **Significant changes in design, participants, or measures must be approved by the IRB. Multi-year projects must be submitted annually for approval. Any unexpected adverse effects on human subjects due to the procedure should be reported immediately.**

Date: October 6, 2006

Principal Investigator: Billie Hara

Project Title: ENGL 10703/10803 Stretch Course Students

Multi-Year Project: Yes No

Approval Number: F06-11

Proposed Participants:

- TCU students, faculty, or staff
 Non-TCU Participants
 Special populations (e.g. children) – specify _____

Comments:

Committee Decisions:

- Approved, Minimal Risk
 Approved, Expedited
 Approved, Exempt Status
 Conditional Approval, with following stipulations:

 Not Approved, Comments:

Timothy Hulland
Chair

October 9, 2006
Date

TCU IRB Approval Protocol Request Form (pg 1)



INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

PROTOCOL REVIEW REQUEST

The TCU Institutional Review Board is responsible for protecting the welfare and rights of individuals who are subjects of any research conducted by faculty, staff, or students of Texas Christian University. Approval by the IRB must be obtained prior to the initiation of a project, whether conducted on-campus or off-campus.

Please submit this form electronically to the IRB Chair with a copy to Jan Fox; include any research-related materials such as informed consent forms, questionnaires, or other documents to be utilized in data collection or may be needed by each board member to review the research protocol. Send **one copy** of the complete proposal and a signed research protocol to the chair. Should data collection include videos or other types of media, one copy is required.

Date: July 26, 2006

1. **Project Title:** ENGL 10703/10803 Stretch Course Students
2. **List the name and Faculty/Students/Staff status of the person(s) conducting the research.**
 - a. **Principal Investigator:** Billie Hara
 - b. **Department:** Center for Writing / English
 - c. **Others:** None
3. **Project Period:** AY 2006
4. **Funding**
 - a. **Agency:** None
 - b. **Amount Requested:** None
 - c. **Due date for application:** None
5. **In a paragraph or two, summarize the objective(s) of the research, including what you expect to learn or demonstrate:** By reading and responding to student writing over the course of an entire year, in the ENGL 10703/ENGL 10803 course "Introduction to Critical Writing," I want to determine if a course such as this one is beneficial to underprepared student athletes.

TCU IRB Approval Protocol Request Form (pg 2)

6. **Describe subject population and plans for the recruitment of subjects and the consent procedures to be followed. Is participation completely voluntary? May subject withdraw at any time without a penalty? Will any kind of incentive be offered to participants? Where students are used as subjects, indicate alternatives available in lieu of participation. Include a copy of Informed Consent Form, which must include, at a minimum: statement of purpose of research, duration of participation for the subject, procedures, description of any experimental procedures, description of possible risks/discomforts and benefits, alternative procedures, measures to protect confidentiality, compensation, statement regarding voluntary participation, ability to withdraw without penalty, procedure for withdrawal, who to contact at the university should there be questions about the research, including investigator, director of ORSP, Committee Chair. This information should include name, title, address, and phone number of each contact. There should be space at the bottom of the form for the date and both the printed name and signature of the participant and the person obtaining the informed consent.**

Students admitted "by exception" populate the stretch course, ENGL 10703 and ENGL 10803. Most of these students are student-athletes in revenue-producing sports (football and men's basketball), but the course can also have students with learning disabilities, students with low TOEFL scores, or students who did not receive adequate high school preparation for college-level writing. However, the majority of students are "exception students." Students will sign a consent form that will allow me to use portions of their work in my own research on basic writers. They will choose a pseudonym that I can use in lieu of given names. There is no consequence or penalty for not allowing me to use their writing. Although the students will be enrolled in the course that I teach and I will have access to their work, I will not use samples of their work without proper consent. However, all students will be given the same assignments to complete. The course lasts two long semester, Fall 2006 and Spring 2007, and I will have access to the students and to their work for this academic year.

7. **Provide a brief summary of the procedures to be utilized during the course of the project. Specifically identify those procedures, tests, or activities, which will be used.**

Students in ENGL 10703 and ENGL 10803 will do the work assigned to them according to the course syllabus. However, throughout the academic year, I will retain copies of all student writing, informal and formal, graded and ungraded. These copies will remain in a locked cabinet in my office, Rickel #244-B.

8. **Describe how the procedures reflect respect for the privacy, feelings, and dignity of subjects, avoid an unwarranted invasion of privacy, and minimize risks as much as possible. If protected health information (PHI) is to be collected, describe the procedures of de-identification, the minimum information necessary to be disclosed, and who will have access to the information. In addition, describe conditions for a designated individual's access to the PHI.**

TCU IRB Approval Protocol Request Form (pg 3)

Because I am teaching the course, I will know the identity of all students enrolled. But I will use a student-chosen pseudonym in place of the student's given name in my work. All student work will remain in Rickel #244-B in a locked cabinet for three years. After this time, consent forms will be sent to TCU's IRB

9. **Describe and assess any potential attendant risks.* Indicate any physical, psychological, social, or privacy risks which subject may incur. (This includes any request for the subject to reveal any PHI and/or embarrassing, sensitive, or confidential information about themselves or others). If any deception is to be used, describe it in detail. Include plans for debriefing.**

There is minimal risk involved to students in this work. I will simply be looking at their course writing to determine how ENGL 10703 / ENGL 10803 benefits their writing ability.

10. **Describe the procedures to assure confidentiality in the use, storage, and disposal of the primary data. (Upon completion of the research, copies of subjects' signed consent and PHI authorization forms are to be delivered to the Office of Research and Sponsored Projects, Sadler Hall 208, for permanent storage). If PHI is to be re-identified at a later date, describe the procedures in doing so.**

Student writing will remain in a locked cabinet in my office, Rickel #244-B. After three years, I will forward appropriate data to the TCU IRB for storage

11. **Describe how the outcomes of this project will contribute to a professional body of knowledge and/or benefit human welfare.**

By understanding student-athletes' perceptions of themselves as students and as writers, I will be able to develop alternative programs and pedagogies that can benefit them. This is particularly true in their writing ability. This work will correlate with other surveys I'll administer to student athletes and to TCU faculty. Although reading student writing is only a portion of this survey-- as it's a portion of the course the students are in-- I will be able to make connections between this group of work and the other students.

12. **Provide proof that you have completed computer-based training on the Protection of Human Subjects at:**

* <http://cme.cancer.gov/clinicaltrials/learning/humanparticipant-protections.asp>

Name Billie Hara
Printed

TCU IRB Approval Protocol Request Form (pg 4)

Signature _____ Date: September 21, 2006 _____

TCU Box 297700 Ext. 6535 Email address: b.hara@tcu.edu

*DHHS regulations define "risk" as "the probability of harm or injury (physical, psychological, social, or economic) occurring as a result of participation in a research study. Both the probability and magnitude of possible harm may vary from minimal to significant"

TCU Informed Consent Form (pg 1)



INFORMED CONSENT

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: _____ Billie Hara _____

TITLE OF PROJECT: _____ Playing the Field: Writing Instruction and Underprepared Student Writers _____

This Informed Consent will explain about being a participant in a research project. It is important that you read this material carefully and then decide if you wish to participate.

PURPOSE: Because you are (or have been) a student enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803 at TCU, you have been selected to participate in a research project to explore how this course benefits first-year student writers. This research project will investigate how your writing ability has been impacted by this year-long course.

DURATION: Participation in this study will last the two semesters you are enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803, and it will entail occasional follow-up in the form of questionnaires and email correspondence. This study will end May 2007.

PROCEDURES: The procedures of this research study, which involve your responses as a TCU student, include completing the attached questionnaire and making yourself available for follow-up interviews and subsequent questionnaires. It also means that Ms. Hara will retain copies of your writing throughout the time you are enrolled in ENGL 10703/10803 and that she will use this writing in her research. Ms. Hara may request copies of other course-related writing while you are a student at TCU.

POSSIBLE RISKS/DISCOMFORTS: There are no known risks to participate in this research study.

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ALTERNATIVE PROCEDURES / TREATMENTS: There are no alternatives to participating in this study.

CONFIDENTIALITY: Every attempt will be made to see that your study results are kept confidential. A copy of the records from this study will be stored in Billie Hara's office, TCU, Rickel #244-B, for at least three (3) years after the end of this research. The results of this study may be published and/or presented at meetings without naming you as a subject. Although your rights and privacy will be maintained, the Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services, the UTA IRB, the FDA (if applicable), and personnel particular to this research (individual or department) have access to the study records. Your (e.g., student, medical) records will be kept completely confidential according to current legal requirements. They will not be revealed unless required by law, or as noted above. During the course of this research project, Ms. Hara will keep your identity confidential. You may choose a pseudonym if you wish. If you would like to use an anonymous name, please note that name here:

TCU Informed Consent Form (pg 2)

CONTACT FOR QUESTIONS: If you have any questions, problems or research-related medical problems at any time, you may call Billie Hara at (817) 257-6535 (b.hara@tcu.edu), or Dr. Tim Morris at (817) 272-2692 (tmorris@uta.edu). You may call the Chairman of the Institutional Review Board at UTA (817) 272-1235 for any questions you may have about your rights as a research subject.

VOLUNTARY PARTICIPATION: By signing below, you confirm that you have read or had this document read to you. You will be given a signed copy of this informed consent document. You have been and will continue to be given the chance to ask questions and to discuss your participation with the investigator.

You freely and voluntarily choose to be in this research project.

SIGNATURE OF VOLUNTEER: _____ DATE

I have discussed the above points with the subject or his/her legally authorized representative, using a translator if necessary. It is my opinion that the subject understands the risks, benefits, and obligations involved in participation in this project.

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: _____ DATE

Agreement to Participate in Dissertation Study (pg 1)

"Introduction to Critical Writing: Dissertation Project

I am asking for your participation in a dissertation project about "Introduction to Critical Writing." As part of this research, I would like to follow your writing progress while you are a student at TCU. I have secured approval for this request and this research from TCU's IRB board as well as the IRB board at the University of Texas, Arlington.

The purpose of the larger project is to gather data on the writing experiences of first-year students in ENGL 10703 course (Introduction to Critical Writing). ENGL 10703 has three primary goals: to give students extra time to succeed at general writing, to give students a lot of opportunities to be successful in ENGL 10803 (first-year composition) and to help students develop a writing style that will see them through other academic courses. The findings of this project should provide insight into how students and professors conceptualize student writing, how the program and the institution support writing instruction, and what the students want and need to support their writing. We also want to know if the goals of the course are appropriate to the students who enroll in the course.

Participation in this survey is voluntary; there is no penalty for choosing not to participate. Your involvement in this project would include occasional interviews with principal investigator (email or face-to-face), the sharing of writing from writing intensive courses (one sample per semester). If you are willing to participate further in this project or would like more information regarding further participation in this project, please send an email to Billie Hara at b.hara@tcu.edu.

If you have any questions about this research project or the results of this survey, please contact any of the following people:

Thank you for participating in this project:

Billie Hara
Texas Christian University
Ph.D. Candidate in English

| | | |
|--|--|---|
| Billie Hara Principal Investigator TCU TCU Box 297770 Fort Worth, TX 76129 (817) 257-6535 b.hara@tcu.edu | [REDACTED] Director of Composition TCU TCU Box 297270 Fort Worth, TX 76129 [REDACTED] | [REDACTED] Department Chair TCU TCU Box 297270 [REDACTED] |
|--|--|---|

Agreement to Participate in Dissertation Study (pg 2)

I agree to participate in Ms. Hara's dissertation project (please initial in the space provided):

_____ I agree to participate in this project, and I understand that my participation is voluntary and that there are no rewards or consequences for participation.

_____ I agree to supply Ms. Hara with copies of my writing on an as needed basis (approximately once per semester) while I am a student at TCU.

_____ I give consent to Ms. Hara to use my work in her dissertation project.

_____ If Ms. Hara chooses to use my work in her dissertation project, I can choose how she identifies me. Ms. Hara can use my given name or a pseudonym. (circle one).

_____ I would prefer that Ms. Hara use this name to identify me:

Signed,

NAME

DATE

ADDRESS

ADDRESS

Email Address

Photographic Release form (Used with TCU Community Project)



PHOTOGRAPHIC RELEASE FORM

"Exploring the TCU Community: Visual Depictions by First Year Students--A Pilot Test"

I, _____, give Texas Christian University, its employees, designees, agents, independent contractors, legal representatives, successors and assigns, and all persons or departments for whom or through whom it is acting, the absolute right and unrestricted permission to take, use and/or publish photographic images or pictures of me, whether still, single, multiple, or moving, or in which I may be included in whole or in part, in color or otherwise, made while I am a student at Texas Christian University through any form of media (print, digital, electronic or otherwise) at its campus or elsewhere, for art, advertising, recruitment, fund raising, publicity, archival or any other lawful purpose.

I waive any right that I may have to inspect and approve the finished product that may be used or the use to which it may be applied now and/or in the future, whether that use is known to me or unknown, and I waive any right to royalties or other compensation arising from or related to the use of the image or product.

I release and agree to hold harmless Texas Christian University, its board of trustees, officers, employees, faculty, agents, nominees, departments, and/or others for whom or by whom Texas Christian University is acting, of and from any liability by virtue of the taking of the pictures, in any processing tending towards the completion of the finished product, and/or any use whatsoever of such pictures or products, whether intentional or otherwise.

I certify that I am at least 18 years of age (or if under 18 years of age, that I am joined herein by my parent or legal guardian) and that this release is signed voluntarily, under no duress, and without expectation of compensation in any form (now or in the future).

Name (please print)

Signature

Date

E-Mail Address

Name of Guardian if subject is under 18 years old (please print)

Signature

APPENDIX B

INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL WRITING COURSE SYLLABI

ENGL 10703 Syllabi (Fall 2006) (pg 1)



Literacy & Identity

INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL WRITING

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

ENGL 10703 is a writing workshop designed to give you extensive practice in college-level critical reading and writing. But more than that, this course is one in which you will develop as a writer and will grow in your relationships with words. Through regular assignments of varying lengths and complexity, you will learn to position yourself within ongoing conversations about issues important to educated readers. In this course, you will engage in processes of invention, drafting, revision, and editing as you complete a range of writing tasks including exploratory writing, synthesis, analysis, and argument.

- To produce writing that goes beyond "high school" writing (however one might define that). In this course you will produce 35-40 graded and ungraded pages of writing.
- To learn key terminology for discussing writing and argument
- To practice analyzing and producing complex texts
- To practice doing secondary research
- To engage in the practice of textual revision
- To strengthen your ability to use Standard written English
- To participate in an oral presentation
- To work collaboratively on projects

REQUIRED TEXTS

- Bartholomae and Petrosky, *Ways of Reading (Words and Images)*, 2003
- Bowe, Bowe, and Streeter, *Gig*, 2001
- Raimes, Ann. *Keys for Writers*. 4th ed. Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
- Britenham and Hoeller, *Key Words for Academic Writers*, 2004.
- \$\$\$ for Copying

IMPORTANT INFORMATION

- Ms. Billie Hara
- Rickel Building #244-B
- Office Hours: T/TH 8:00 TO 9:00; M 2-3 (RCK 038) and *by appt.*
- Phone: 817.257.6535
- Email: B.Hara@tcu.edu

ENGL 10703
Syllabus
T/TH: 9:30 to 10:50
Fall 2006

INSIDE THIS SYLLABUS

Course Policies and Procedures2

- Attendance
- Tardies
- Books/Materials
- Paper format
- Late Papers
- Revisions
- Conferences

Course Policies3

- Class Decorum
- Other Issues
- Academic Dishonesty

Course Requirements4

- In-Class Activities
- Weblog
- Formal Essays
- Final Exam

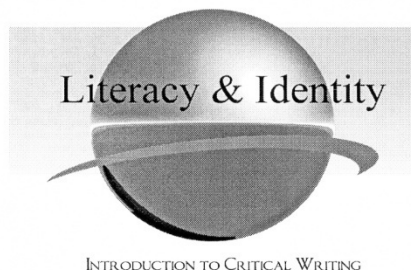
Grading5

- Criteria
- Grade Disputes
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- Center for Writing
- Disabilities Accommodations
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ENGL 10703 Syllabi (Fall 2006) (pg 2)



INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL WRITING

Course Requirements

Attendance:

Your attendance is essential in this course. Therefore, I do take attendance at every class meeting. I also adhere to the English Department policy that three weeks of absences (6 in a T/TH course) constitutes failure of that course. If you are absent more than 3 times in the course of the semester, expect a 5-point reduction for each absence to be levied against your final grade. But since everything you do in this course "counts," more than a week's worth of absences will

begin to affect your grade. Only official university absences—absences REQUIRED by an official body of TCU—will be excused (will not count against you). These absences must be documented BEFORE they occur, and work due during the intended absence must be submitted in advance. Extra-curricular (non-academic) activities, studying for another course, breaking up with a boyfriend/girlfriend, and very many similar issues are not sufficient cause to miss this class or to be late with an assignment. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated, and I reserve the right to ask the offender(s) to leave the class. I prefer not to hear excuses for missed assignments or classes. I live by the old standby rule, "90% of success is just showing up."

Tardies:

Please be on time for class. Tardies, if occasional and non-disruptive, are generally accepted in this course. HOWEVER, if they are frequent (once a week or more), or pronounced (10 minutes or more), then they will be counted toward absences. Keep in mind that students who are late are a distraction to me and to other students. Keep in mind, too, that in-class work is often assigned at the beginning of class and this work cannot be made up. Two tardies (10 or more minutes late) will count as one unexcused absence.

Books / Materials:

If you choose (habitually) to attend class without your books and appropriate materials, I will count you absent.

Paper Format:

All out-of-class writing, including rough drafts, must be word-processed and in the format discussed in class. (This is generally double-spaced, normal font [Times New Roman or Ariel] in a 12-point font, 1" margins.) When you submit essays to me for evaluation, you will do so in a simple pocketed folder. This folder will contain your drafts, peer reviews, drafts that I have seen, and often, will contain your research. You will submit TWO hard copies to me. One I will evaluate and return to you; the other I will keep. Almost nothing you hand in for evaluation will be handwritten.

Late Papers:

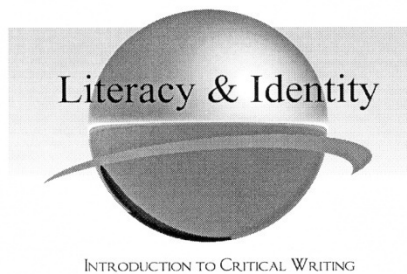
Papers are due at the beginning of class of the date on the appropriate due date. Because of my extensive revision policy, **late papers are not accepted**. So, don't ask.

Revisions:

You may revise your work throughout the semester. A revision is not simply a correction of surface errors (spelling, grammar, etc.), and it is not an opportunity to submit sloppy work. A revision is a re-seeing of your work and it is a significant change of your original document. Revisions will not allow you to gain points lost due to late work. In order to assure that you have revised substantially, I strongly suggest that you visit the Center for Writing before you submit your revision to be for a second evaluation. When you submit a revision to me, you must also include your original, graded, essay plus all the supporting material you submitted the first time.

Fall 2006 / 2

ENGL 10703 Syllabi (Fall 2006) (pg 3)



Course Requirements

Conferences:

We will have face-to-face conferences for each of your major projects this term. We will discuss the specific projects, but we'll also talk about your progress in the course. These conferences are meant to help you, one-on-one, with your specific writing concerns. They really are helpful. Missing conferences, however, will negatively impact your grade.

Class Decorum:

Disruptions and personal business will not be tolerated. If you are not interested in the topic at hand, simply leave rather than disturb the rest of the class with chatter, sleeping, etc. I prefer a casual atmosphere in class; however, that does not mean the course will be easy. I have very high standards and expectations, and I believe that you can do the work that I will assign to you. With that in mind, I am well aware that each of you has commitments beyond this English class. Part of being a successful student includes learning to balance all of those commitments. If you run into some difficulty here, let me know; we'll work out a solution.

Other (food, electronic devices):

Please recognize that there will be no food of any kind allowed in class (food, candy, chips, etc.). If you would like to have a drink (as I'll usually have one), please make sure that it has a secure lid. If it doesn't, I'll ask you to leave it in the back of the room until the end of class. Please make sure that all electronic devices are **OFF** when in class (pagers, cell phones, iPods, and the like). If a cell phone or pager goes off in class, I reserve the right to give the entire class a pop quiz.

Academic Dishonesty:

Refer to page 51 of the *TCU Undergraduate Studies Bulletin*. The following examples apply specifically to academic misconduct in composition courses:

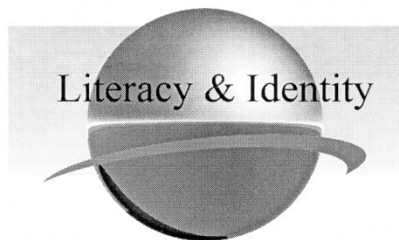
- Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit.
- Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.
- Fabrication and falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- Multiple Submission: The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.
- Complicity in academic misconduct: Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Ways to avoid academic dishonesty include allowing enough time to complete assignments, submit drafts when required, and seek advice from me, the writing center, or other competent sources.

All cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Director of Composition. Sanctions imposed for cases of academic misconduct range from zero credit for the assignment to expulsion from the University.

Fall 2006 / 3

ENGL 10703 Syllabi (Fall 2006) (pg 4)



INTRODUCTION TO CRITICAL WRITING

Course Assignments

PLEASE NOTE: You are given many chances to do well in the course. However, ALL assignments must be completed in order to pass this course.

In-Class Writing / On-Line Quizzes / Grammar Exams (10%)

Almost daily, you will be asked to do some in-class writing. These will generally be short responses to readings or to discussions. It is important that you come to class prepared and complete all assigned readings. You will also be required to participate in group activities throughout the semester including writing peer responses during workshops and as occasional homework. All these activities are important to your success in this course, and therefore, your work during these activities will be evaluated in order to determine 10% of your final course grade. In-class work cannot be "made up" for any reason, including any kind of absence or tardiness.

Letter Writing Portfolio (10%)

Over the course of this semester, you will write several different types of letters in which you make a claim and attempt to persuade your audience to do something about that claim, such as a letter of praise, a formal letter of complaint, and a letter to the editor of a community publication. You will even write letters to me and to a close family member. These must be done on time and in the format specified to receive full credit.

Formal Papers (70%)

You will write three formal essays and construct one visual project this semester (but you'll have lots of smaller assignments with each of these major ones). Each completed, formal essay will be approximately 5 to 6 pages long. You will be asked to submit rough drafts and to participate in peer review workshops before you submit your final papers. Your participation in the "draft stage" will determine a portion of your paper grade. Each essay will have a detailed assignment sheet that I'll give you later. All the assignments in this course must be completed (in the order they are given) to receive credit for the course. You will not pass the course without completing all assignments.

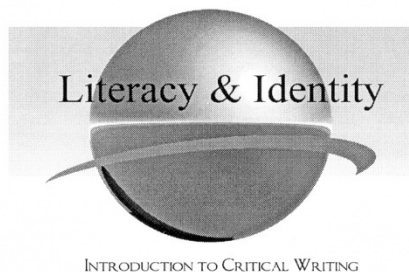
| | | |
|----------|-------------------------|-----|
| • First | "Photo Collage" | 15% |
| • Second | "Literacy and Identity" | 15% |
| • Third | "Framing Identities" | 20% |
| • Fourth | "Autoethnography" | 20% |

Final Exam (10%)

More detailed information will be given near the end of the semester. The final exam is a requirement of this course. Not taking the final exam constitutes failure in the course. The time for this final exam is scheduled for Thursday, December 14, 2006 (8:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.). Please don't make travel plans that conflict with this exam. I will not change the scheduled exam time for you.

Fall 2006 / 4

ENGL 10703 Syllabi (Fall 2006) (pg 5)



Course Assignments

It is very important that you know that it is your responsibility to earn the grade you need for whatever you might need it for. It is not my responsibility to keep you eligible to play a sport, receive a scholarship, enter the business school, join a sorority or fraternity, or please your parents. This is your job.

Grading Criteria:

A An "A" paper is an exceptional example of college writing. It shows a clear main idea that can be traced throughout the development of the paper to the end, with carefully thought-through transitions between paragraphs and sentences. The writer understands the mechanics of English grammar, punctuation, and spelling because there are few (if any) of these concerns in your essay. Generally, there are not many of these for any given assignment.

B A "B" paper is a good example of college writing. This paper also contains a definite and original thesis. The organization of the paper is good, although the supporting connections may not always be smooth. The writer's supporting points relate closely to the main idea of the essay. The language is generally clear, and the paper may contain more than a few mechanical errors.

C A "C" paper fulfills the basic requirements of the assignment but needs improvement in some areas. The essay shows a definite thesis that basically controls the essay's development. The paper has organization, but may not be adequate in some respects. The writer has organization, but may not be adequate in some respects. The writer has provided vague or inadequately explained supporting ideas. Sentence structure may be awkward, and the essay contains numerous grammar, punctuation, and spelling errors.

D A "D" paper is marginally acceptable college writing. The main idea of the essay is present, but it is difficult to follow through the paper's development. The paragraphs deviate from the main thesis, and the missing connections between paragraphs and sentences keep the paper from moving forward with any sense of direction. The paper contains major grammatical errors that seriously interfere with the paper's meaning.

F An "F" paper seriously falls short of work appropriate for college-level writing.

Grade Disputes:

In evaluating your work, I do my best to be both rigorous and fair. I use the following procedure for grade appeals. If you strongly disagree with a grade you have received in this course, and desire an appeal:

- Write a 250-word explanation why you believe the grade is inappropriate, using the criteria references in the syllabus and on the assignment sheet to support your assessment.
- When the explanation has been completed, deliver it to me and at that point we will schedule a conference to review your argument and discuss your options.
- If, at the conclusion of our conference, you still desire to appeal the grade, I will help you contact the Director of Composition to evaluate your request.

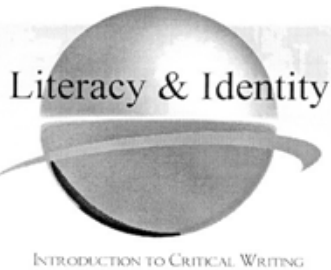
Grading Scale:

It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades. I will use the grade book on eCollege, but reserve the right to stop using it if the system proves to be too cumbersome. However, I will inform you of your grade during my office hours but not during class. If you have concerns about how to fulfill an assignment, or if you have concerns about your grade, please make an appointment to see me.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| Avg. | 98 | 95 | 92 | 88 | 85 | 82 | 78 | 75 | 72 | 68 | 65 | 62 | 0 |
| | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |

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ENGL 10703 Syllabi (Fall 2006) (pg 6)



Course Resources

Writing Center

The William L. Adams Center for Writing is an academic support service available to all TCU students, faculty, and staff. Writing Specialists and peer tutors are available for one-on-one tutorials from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Writing Center is located on the 2nd floor of the new Rickel Building (in the new sports complex, #244). Tutoring hours are also available seven days a week in the library computer lab area. Please see the Center for Writing

website for specific hours (<http://www.wrt.tcu.edu>). Drop-ins to the Rickel Center or the Library Annex are always welcome, but you may also make an appointment by calling (817.257.7221).

Americans with Disabilities Act

TCU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. The University shall provide reasonable accommodation for each eligible students who (a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, (b) has a record or history of such an impairment, or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment. Eligible students should contact the Coordinator of Students with Disabilities as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities (*TCU Undergraduate Studies Bulletin 28*).

Diversity Awareness

In this class, I will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Course Calendar

In the unit calendars, what we'll be doing each day, what you're expected to read for homework, and what you're expected to write is listed. The course calendar is very important, and you are responsible for completing all the assignments listed. I will often remind you of the reading and writing you'll need to complete for homework, but because we'll often become so engaged with our work in class, I might forget to discuss homework assignments. Therefore, I'm letting you know ahead of time that you are responsible for completing all the assignments listed in accordance with the due dates provided.

ENGL 10803 Syllabi (Spring 2007) (pg 1)

Introductory Composition

ENG 10803: Syllabus
T/TH 9:30 to 11:00

INSIDE THIS SYLLABUS

Course Policies and Procedures 2

- Attendance
- Tardies
- Books/Materials
- Paper format
- Late Papers
- Revisions
- Conferences

Course Policies and Procedures (cont'd) . . . 3

- Class Decorum
- Other Issues
- Academic Dishonesty

Course Requirements and Grading 4

- In-Class Activities
- Formal Essays
- Final Exam

Resources 4

- Center for Writing
- Disabilities Accommodations
- Diversity Statement
- Grade Disputes
- Grading Scale

COURSE OBJECTIVES:

ENGL 10803 is a writing workshop designed to give you extensive practice in college-level critical reading and writing. Through regular assignments of varying lengths and complexity, you will learn to position yourself within ongoing conversations about issues important to educated readers. In this course, you will engage in processes of invention, drafting, revision, and editing as you complete a range of writing tasks including exploratory writing, synthesis, analysis, and argument.

- To produce writing that goes beyond "high school" writing (however one might define that). In this course you will produce 35-40 graded and ungraded pages of writing.
- To learn key terminology for discussing writing and argument
- To practice analyzing and producing complex texts
- To practice doing secondary research
- To engage in the practice of textual revision
- To strengthen your ability to use Standard written English
- To participate in an oral presentation
- To work collaboratively on projects

IMPORTANT INFORMATION:

- Instructor: Billie Hara
- Office: Rickel Building #244-E (Center for Writing)
- Office Hours: T/TR 8:00 to 9:20 and by appointment
- Telephone: 817.257.6535
- Email: B.Hara@tcu.edu
- WebPage: <http://faculty.tcu.edu/bhara>

REQUIRED TEXTS:

- *Ways of Reading*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2005.
- *Key Words for Academic Writers*, Pearson/Longman, 2004.
- *Keys for Writers*. 4th ed. Houghton Mifflin, 2004.
- *Gig, Americans Talk About Their Jobs*, Bowe, Bowe, Streeter, 2000
- \$\$\$ for Copying
- Access to a computer with Internet access and access to your student drive

Course Policies and Procedures

Attendance:

Your attendance is essential in this course. Therefore, I do take attendance at every class meeting. I also adhere to the English Department policy that three weeks of absences (6 in a T/TH course) constitutes failure of that course. If you are absent more than 3 times in the course of the semester, expect a 5-point reduction for each absence to be levied against your final grade. But since everything you do in this course "counts," more than a week's worth of absences will begin to affect your grade. Only official university absences—absences REQUIRED by an official body of TCU—will be excused (will not count against you). These absences must be documented BEFORE they occur, and work due during the intended absence must be submitted in advance. Extra-curricular (non-academic) activities, studying for another course, breaking up with a boyfriend/girlfriend, and very many similar issues are not sufficient cause to miss this class or to be late with an assignment. Disruptive and disrespectful behavior will not be tolerated, and I reserve the right to ask the offender(s) to leave the class. I prefer not to hear excuses for missed assignments or classes.

Tardies:

Please be on time for class. Tardies, if occasional and non-disruptive, are generally accepted in this course. HOWEVER, if they are frequent (once a week or more), or pronounced (10 minutes or more), then they will be counted toward absences, and repeated absences will drastically impact your final grade. Keep in mind that students who are late are a distraction to me and to other students. Keep in mind, too, that in-class work is often assigned at the beginning of class and this work cannot be made up. With four tardies (10 or more minutes late), you will lose 20 points off your final course grade.

Books / Materials:

If you choose (habitually) to attend class without your books and appropriate materials, I will count you absent.

Conferences:

You will be required to have at least one face-to-face conference with me for each of your four major essay assignments. If you would like to meet more than one time, we can arrange that. Just let me know and I'll work with you. Keep in mind that these conferences are not punitive in nature; they are meant to help you, one-on-one, with your specific writing concerns. They really are helpful.

Paper Format:

All out-of-class writing, including rough drafts, must be word-processed and in the format discussed in class. (This is generally double-spaced, normal font [Times New Roman or Ariel] in a 12-point font, 1" margins.) When you submit essays to me for evaluation, you will do so in a simple pocketed folder. This folder will contain your drafts, peer reviews, drafts that I have seen, and often, will contain your research. You will submit a hard copy to me, and since this course has an eCollege component, you will submit one copy to the "drop box." This electronic version of your work will replace the second copy that the English dept. requires for its files.

Late Papers:

Papers are due at the beginning of class on the appropriate due date. They will be labeled appropriately, stapled if needed, and they will be in a folder if that has been assigned. Because of my extensive revision policy, **late papers are not accepted**. In the very unlikely event that I do accept a late assignment (verified issue through student life or verified university sanctioned absence are the only exceptions), your essay will be penalized one letter grade for every class day that I don't have your work.

Revisions:

You may revise any of your first three essays one time. These revisions are due one week from the time I return the original manuscript to you. A revision is not simply a correction of surface errors (spelling, grammar, etc.). A revision is a re-seeing of your work and it is a significant change of your original document. Revisions will not allow you to gain points lost due to late work. In order to assure that you have revised substantially, I strongly suggest that you visit the Center for Writing before you submit your revision to be for a second evaluation. When you submit a revision to me, you must also include your original, graded, essay plus all the supporting material you submitted the first time.

Course Policies and Procedures

Class Decorum:

Disruptions and personal business will not be tolerated. If you are not interested in the topic at hand, simply leave rather than disturb the rest of the class with chatter, sleeping, etc. I prefer a casual atmosphere in class; however, that does not mean the course will be easy. I have very high standards and expectations, and I believe that you can do the work that I will assign to you. With that in mind, I am well aware that each of you has commitments beyond this English class. Part of being a successful student includes learning to balance all of those commitments. If you run into some difficulty here, let me know; we'll work out a solution.

Other (food, electronic devices):

Please recognize that there will be no food of any kind allowed in class (food, candy, chips, etc.). If you would like to have a drink (as I'll usually have one), please make sure that it has a secure lid. If it doesn't, I'll ask you to leave it in the back of the room until the end of class. Please make sure that all electronic devices are OFF when in class. Please do not use the vibrate function on your cell phone. We can still hear, and you'll be tempted to look to know who called you. Please turn it off. If a cell phone or pager goes off in class, I reserve the right to give the entire class a pop quiz.

Academic Dishonesty:

Refer to page 51 of the *TCU Undergraduate Studies Bulletin*. The following examples apply specifically to academic misconduct in composition courses:

- Plagiarism: The appropriation, theft, purchase, or obtaining by any means another's work, and the unacknowledged submission or incorporation of that work as one's own offered for credit. Appropriation includes the quoting or paraphrasing of another's work without giving credit.
- Collusion: The unauthorized collaboration with another in preparing work offered for credit.
- Fabrication and falsification: Unauthorized alteration or invention of any information or citation in an academic exercise. Falsification involves altering information for use in any academic exercise. Fabrication involves inventing or counterfeiting information for use in any academic exercise.
- Multiple Submission: The submission by the same individual of substantial portions of the same academic work (including oral reports) for credit more than once in the same or another class without authorization.
- Complicity in academic misconduct: Helping another to commit an act of academic misconduct.

Ways to avoid academic dishonesty include allowing enough time to complete assignments, submit drafts when required, and seek advice from me, the writing center, or other competent sources.

All cases of suspected academic misconduct will be referred to the Director of Composition. Sanctions imposed for cases of academic misconduct range from zero credit for the assignment to expulsion from the University.



Course Requirements and Grading

In this course, you will be required to participate in class discussion/activities, post weekly responses to an on-line Journal, complete four formal writing assignments, a rhetorical revision of one essay, and complete a take-home exam. You will also give a grammar presentation at some point this semester.

In-Class Writing / On-Line Quizzes / Homework: (10%)

Almost daily, you will be asked to do some in-class writing. These will generally be short responses to readings or to discussions. It is important that you come to class prepared and complete all assigned readings. You will also be required to participate in group activities throughout the semester including writing peer responses during workshops and as occasional homework. All these activities are important to your success in this course, and therefore, your work during these activities will be evaluated in order to determine 10% of your final course grade. In-class work cannot be "made up" for any reason, including any kind of absence or tardiness. You also may be expected to take on-line quizzes throughout the semester. I will drop the lowest quiz grade.

Grammar Presentation (10%)

One time during this semester, you will present a grammar rule / mechanics rule to your classmates. You will present your subject in two ways: you will use a visual aid and you will produce a handout for the class. You will also construct three exam questions related to this grammar point. (These grammar questions will be combined for a class-wide test.)

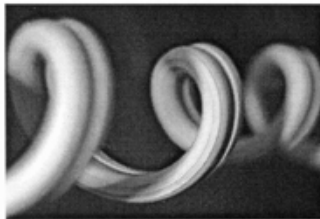
Formal Papers (70%)

You will write four formal essays this semester. Each essay will be approximately 5 to 7 pages long. You will be asked to submit rough drafts and to participate in peer review workshops before you submit your final papers. You will be expected to construct an annotated bibliography of your sources prior to submitting your final essay. Your participation in the "draft stage" will determine a portion of your paper grade. Each essay will have a detailed assignment sheet that I'll give you later. All the assignments in this course must be completed (in the order they are given) to receive credit for the course.

- | | | |
|----------|--------------------------------------|-----|
| • First | "Exploratory Essay" | 20% |
| • Second | "Position Paper" | 20% |
| • Third | "Rogerian Argument" | 20% |
| • Fourth | "Revision of Public Discourse Essay" | 10% |

Final Exam (10%)

A final exam is a requirement in this course.



Additional Resources

Writing Center

The Writing Center is an academic support service available to all TCU students, faculty, and staff. Writing Specialists and peer tutors are available for one-on-one tutorials from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. Monday through Friday. The Writing Center is located on the 2nd floor of the new Rickel Building (in the new sports complex, #244). Tutoring hours are also available 6:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. in the library computer lab area Sunday through Thursday evenings. Drop-ins to the Rickel Center or the Library Annex are always welcome, but you may also make an appointment by calling (817.257.7221).

Americans with Disabilities Act

TCU complies with the Americans with Disabilities Act and with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 regarding students with disabilities. The University shall provide reasonable accommodation for each eligible students who (a) has a physical or mental impairment that substantially limits a major life activity, (b) has a record or history of such an impairment, or (c) is regarded as having such an impairment. Eligible students should contact the Coordinator of Students with Disabilities as soon as possible in the academic term for which they are seeking accommodations. Each eligible student is responsible for presenting relevant, verifiable, professional documentation and/or assessment reports to the Coordinator for Students with Disabilities (*TCU Undergraduate Studies Bulletin* 28).

Diversity Awareness

In this class, I will establish and support an environment that values and nurtures individual and group differences and encourages engagement and interaction. Understanding and respecting multiple experiences and perspectives will serve to challenge and stimulate all of us to learn about others, about the larger world, and about ourselves. By promoting diversity and intellectual exchange, we will not only mirror society as it is, but also model society as it should and can be.

Course Calendar

In the course calendar that follows, what we'll be doing each day, what you're expected to read for homework, and what's you're expected to write is listed. The course calendar is very important, and you are responsible for completing all the assignments listed. I will often remind you of the reading and writing you'll need to complete for homework, but because we'll often become so engaged with our work in class, I might forget to discuss homework assignments. Therefore, I'm letting you know ahead of time that you are responsible for completing all the assignments listed in accordance with the due dates provided.

Grading Scale:

It is your responsibility to keep track of your grades. I will inform you of your grade during my office hours but not during class. The grade will be only rough running tallies or approximations of your actual grade. Later in the semester I will give you a grading rubric that will show you how your grade is determined (point system). If you have concerns about how to fulfill an assignment, or if you have concerns about your grade, please make an appointment to see me. In the case of a grade problem, please schedule an appointment at least 24 hours after the paper is returned. Be sure you have read my comments carefully, and be prepared to discuss how your paper fits the criteria given for that assignment.

| | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|------|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|---|
| Avg. | 98 | 95 | 92 | 88 | 85 | 82 | 78 | 75 | 72 | 68 | 65 | 62 | 0 |
| | A+ | A | A- | B+ | B | B- | C+ | C | C- | D+ | D | D- | F |

Lesson Planning Worksheet

| | |
|--|--|
| Week: _____ Day: _____ Date: _____ | <p style="text-align: center;">Description of Activities (including time estimates)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction/Motivation • Developing Readiness • Body of Lesson • Questioning • Integration |
| Goal: | |
| Assignments | |
| Announcements | |

APPENDIX C

CONSTANT ASSIGNMENTS:
ACROSS ALL YEARS OF ICW STUDY

Autobiographical Haiku Assignment

Autobiographical Haiku

Every Sunday, the Washington Post publishes a column, "Life is Short: Autobiography as Haiku" in their Style section. In 100 words or less, Post readers write pieces that give insight into their lives. I'd like you to do the same. Here are a few good examples:

LIFE IS SHORT

Autobiography as Haiku

Some mornings I wake up contented, fresh from a wispy dream I'll reconstruct throughout the day with a smile. I don't know why I still think about him, more than a year after he went back to Boston and I, nursing a tattered ego in Philadelphia, applied to graduate school on a lark. I packed up, moved to a crumbling high-rise with a fume-checked view of I-395, and got a master's degree. I long to e-mail him a triumphant "Look what I've done, I'm over you," but it's probably best to wait until that's true.

Charlotte Tucker
Alexandria



PHOTOS BY REBECCA FARRIS FOR THE WASHINGTON POST

First day of summer tennis and who is that? At least 6 feet tall, blond, curly hair, gorgeous blue eyes, and a smile to die for—totally glorious Andy Roddick appeal. It's love-all, and the game hasn't even started yet. I casually approach. "So, are you going to be a senior?" "No, a sophomore." And the score is love-almost 15.

Rochelle McCorkle
Annapolis

Laughter:

When I turned 50, my wife went along with my buying the red, two-seater convertible. After a meeting in Baltimore, as I was putting the top down, four ladies in their mid-seventies were walking by and slowed to admire the car. I thanked them as they told me how cute it was. As I buckled up, one of them added, "You're not so bad yourself." As part of my midlife crisis, I assumed women 25 years younger, not 25 years older, would admire the car. My 86-year-old father was impressed. My wife of 26 years just laughed.

Sadness:

We have just returned from an overseas vacation. My 4-year-old is playing with some "dress-up" clothes. She is my fairy godmother and must marry me off. But first she must make me beautiful through magic. She wraps me in parrot-green feathers and takes me aside to cast her spell. I expect her to wave her wand as fairies do in cartoons and movies. Instead, she uses it to frisk me like an airport security guard. She mimics the moves exactly, including the fussing over my shoes. After 9/11, this is how little fairy godmothers do magic.

DRAFT DUE: Thursday, August 28.

FINAL VERSION DUE: Tuesday, August 30th. You will bring hard copies to class, but you will also email a copy of your FINAL text to me AFTER class on Tuesday, August 30th.

We will construct a class-specific Autobiography as Haiku document using your documents and photographs. Remember, you can use no more than 100 words.

In-Class Writing Assessment:

ENGL 10703 (in-class writing)



In a short essay, tell me about your experiences as a writer. Instead of focusing on the negative, tell me about a situation in which YOU were proud of your writing. What were you writing about? What kind of process did you go through to achieve this kind of success? Be specific and provide examples. Write about 1 page. Don't worry too much about grammar or spelling. I'm looking at content right now. Please write legibly, and use the back of this paper if necessary.

ENGL 10803 (in-class writing)



In a short essay, explain to me how you would use writing to change something in the world. What is the problem? Who is affected by this problem? Who are the stakeholders in the situation? What are the potential solutions? What can YOU do? How can writing be a part of this change?

Final Exam

ENG 10803
Final Exam / Fall 2006



BACKGROUND:

Throughout the past 15 weeks, you have become more successful (and more comfortable) with the writing process, and you have done this in several ways. You have written essays about yourself and about a community you claim as your own. You have learned how to use framing devices in your work. You have used Photoshop and created collages. You have thought about audience, your own credibility as a writer, the logic of your message. You learned about the rhetorical situation and Aristotle's appeals. You have written about the positive and negative aspects of your literacy experiences, thus far. You have written a poem and a haiku about yourself. You have learned to analyze photographs (your own, the one I took of you, and photos of your peers). You have learned how to take your experiences and make them significant to an audience different from yourself. You have written letters. You have learned about reading theories and how those theories relate to writing strategies. You have written with both with pen and paper and on the computer. You have written almost daily. You have practiced revision strategies. You have strengthened your mechanical and grammatical skills.

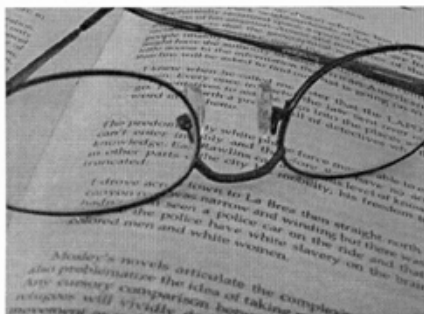
ASSIGNMENT:

With all that in mind, you will write an essay (approximately 1,000 to 1,250 words long [approximately 4 pages typed]) in which you discuss / analyze at least four (4) but no more than five (5) of the above-mentioned items. What is a common idea that you can build your essay around? In other words, synthesize the texts (your four or five items) around a common theme. With this synthesis in mind, you will then discuss how your personal view about writing has changed over the semester. Use examples from your work to elaborate (no need to quote, you can summarize). What are the dominant patterns that emerge from your work? What has been the most meaningful to you? Where did you learn the most? Why did you choose these four or five items? Where have you found the most growth and development as a writer? (Keep in mind that this is not a "I like this" or "I didn't like that" kind of essay. I am looking for synthesis and reflection between your texts.)

Literacy Autobiography (Assignment)

ENGL 10703
Assignment #1

Literacy and Identity



Write an essay in which you explore your history as a reader and writer. Rather than tell your entire story, from learning to recognize the alphabet to your current experiences in college, select important events based on some larger point you want to make about language, literacy, community, and identity. (Start with a question or problem you want to explore. Think about your Autobiographical Haiku as a place to begin.) It will take several drafts and a lot of feedback from readers to help

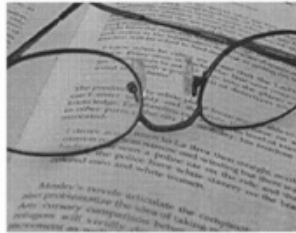
you discover and narrow in on the point you want to make and this assignment will have several small steps that you'll need to complete that will lead you to the final essay. You may also find that after you begin writing, the point you want to make changes.

In deciding what story you want to tell—what point you want to make—consider the degree to which your experience reflects some larger claim about these issues. Remember, too, that the authority in autobiographical writing comes from the care with which you select events to describe and the richness of the details you choose to present. Your goal as a writer is to enable the reader to enter your experience and to understand its importance.

- First draft due Thursday, September 9th. Draft should be 3+ typed, double-spaced pages.
- Second draft due Tuesday, September 21st and it will be a full 5-7 pages long.
- Final version is due on Wednesday, September 30th.
- For EACH peer review, please bring two (2) copies of your draft to class for a peer review (one letter grade reduction if you choose to avoid peer review). I will take one copy of your first draft essay with me, and I will also give you feedback on your work.

Literacy Autobiography (Peer Review #1)

Essay Diagnostic & Peer Review #1 Literacy Autobiography



AUTHOR: _____ REVIEWER: _____

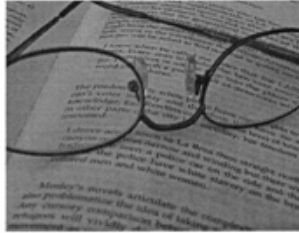
| | Inadequate | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
|---|------------|------|------|------|-----------|
| Essay makes a point about how individual literacy experiences are connected to community and cultural values. | | | | | |
| Essay in some way defines "community and cultural values." | | | | | |
| The evidence from your experience has been carefully selected to make a point about literacy. | | | | | |
| Literacy experience is presented effectively, using appropriate narrative techniques. | | | | | |
| Literacy experience is reflected on, not merely presented. | | | | | |
| There is adequate support for points being made. | | | | | |
| Material is organized logically. | | | | | |
| Sentences are clear, complete, and free of mechanical errors. | | | | | |

1. Please give the author three (3) suggestions how to make this essay stronger.

2. Please tell the author four (4) things that are done well in this essay.

Literacy Autobiography (Peer Review #2)

Essay Diagnostic & Peer Review #2
Literacy Autobiography



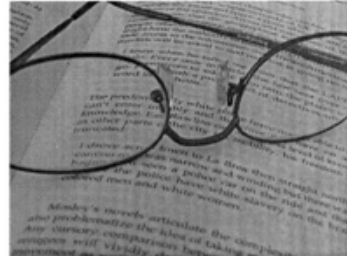
AUTHOR: _____

REVIEWER: _____

| | Inadequate | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
|--|------------|------|------|------|-----------|
| Essay makes a point about how literacy experiences are connected to community and cultural values. | | | | | |
| Essay in some way defines "community and cultural values. | | | | | |
| The evidence from your experience has been carefully selected to make a point about literacy. | | | | | |
| Literacy experience is presented effectively, using appropriate narrative techniques. | | | | | |
| Literacy experience is reflected on, not merely presented. | | | | | |
| There is adequate support for points being made. | | | | | |
| Material is organized logically. | | | | | |
| Sentences are clear, complete, and free of mechanical errors. | | | | | |

Literacy Autobiography (Cover Memo, First Draft)

ENGL 10703
Literacy Autobiography
Draft Cover Memo



Cover Memo

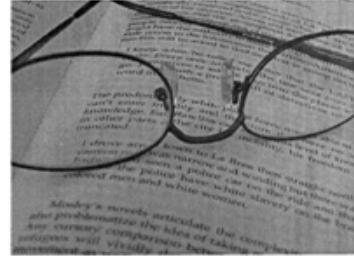
Literacy Autobiography: 1st Draft

Please construct this memo as you would any other memo (letter). If you like, you can use the "memo" template in Microsoft Word. You must use the proper letter format and use complete paragraphs. Please don't just answer these questions in a bullet point fashion.

1. In one or two sentences, state your main argument or claim.
2. In one or two sentences, describe your audience and the characteristics/values you will need to consider when constructing your argument.
3. Does your essay define literacy in a way that a person unfamiliar with your particular focus can understand? Briefly describe your plans to incorporate both the familiar literacy elements with the unfamiliar in your essay.
4. List three strengths and three weaknesses of your paper.
5. Briefly mention aspects of your paper on which you would like me to comment. Please be as specific as possible. If you are having problems with a particular part of your paper or if you have any urgent paper-related questions that you would like me to answer, mention those items as well.

Literacy Autobiography (Cover Memo, Final Draft)

ENGL 10703
Literacy Autobiography
Final Draft Cover Memo



Cover Memo

Literacy Autobiography: Final Draft

Please construct this memo as you would any other memo (letter). If you like, you can use the "memo" template in Microsoft Word. You must use the proper letter format and use complete paragraphs. Please don't just answer these questions in a bullet point fashion.

1. In one or two sentences, state your main argument or claim.
2. In one or two sentences, describe your audience and the characteristics/values you will need to consider when constructing your argument.
3. Does your essay define literacy in a way that a person unfamiliar with your particular focus can understand? Briefly describe your plans to incorporate both the familiar literacy elements with the unfamiliar in your essay.
4. List three strengths and three weaknesses of your paper.
5. The bulk of this memo will outline what you learned from this experience. Please be specific (use lots of details) about what you learned between this assignment and more traditional methods of writing.

Position Essay (Assignment)

ENGL 10803
Assignment #2 (Position)

Writing as Argument

In this unit, you will learn the principles of classical argument and you will write an argumentative essay on a topic of your choosing. This essay will allow you to express your own opinion on an issue while supporting that opinion with authoritative sources; you will also address the opposing view of your argument.



Essay Assignment:

Write an essay in which you assert and support a position on a complex issue, using all of the elements of academic argument. Your purpose in this essay is to persuade an educated audience that your position is reasonable and worth consideration. To do so, you must show that you know the opposing arguments and acknowledge their validity as well as provide authoritative evidence (ethos, logos, and pathos) to support your position. In general, address your argument to readers who have not yet made up their minds on the issue. For the greatest possible audience interest, you should avoid topics that are overused (e.g. gun control, abortion, capital punishment, etc.) Topics of current or local interest are often good choices.

- Your essay will be 6-8 pages, typed, double-spaced.
- You will use a maximum of 6 sources (only two of which can be internet sources).

Evaluation criteria for this essay:

- Argues a clear position on an issue related to topics of current or local interest.
- Provides adequate background to enable readers to understand the issue.
- Explains, acknowledges the merits of, and refutes opposing view(s).
- Makes what educated but skeptical readers would consider reasonable claims – claims presented with adequate evidence to be persuasive.
- Demonstrates adequate research and makes use of outside sources where needed to explain the issue, in acknowledgment of the opposing view, and in support of your position.
- Integrates outside sources effectively, including clearly distinguishing between outside sources and the writer's own voice.
- Uses appropriate MLA citation style in the text and in the list of Works Cited.
- Is logically organized.
- Sentences are clear, complete, varied, and relatively free of error

Position Essay (Peer Review #1)

ENGL 10803
Assignment #2 (Position Essay)
Peer Review #1

AUTHOR: _____

REVIEWER: _____



1. Has the author chosen an "arguable" point? If so, how can the author make this a stronger case? If not, how can this topic be changed into an argument?
2. Without asking your partner, who is the intended audience for this argument? How effective is the author in reaching this audience? What are the author's examples/evidence geared for this intended reader? On the other hand, how is the author working to reach the real reader?
3. What are some of the strengths of the essay?
4. What are some of the essay's weaknesses?
5. Is this topic sufficiently narrow? In other words, has the author chosen a specific, tangible audience for this argument? Is the audience plausible?

Position Essay (Peer Review #2)

ENGL 10803
 Assignment #2 (Position Essay)
 Peer Review #2



STYLE

| | |
|--|--|
| | Chronic punctuation errors, run-ons, sentence fragments, comma splices |
| | Quotations not well integrated into text. |
| | Chronic spelling or proofreading mistakes |
| | Passive voice overused, making the paper sound as if nobody wants to claim ideas |
| | Problems in tone; uneven, excessively casual, or geared to the wrong audience |

FORM

| | |
|--|---|
| | Thesis not well placed. |
| | Introduction wastes time getting to the point; thesis paragraph spins its wheels with vague conjectures ("All throughout time,") |
| | Organization problems at the level of paragraph construction |
| | Organizational problems at the level of the paper's architecture; paragraphs do not proceed in the most logical order for the argument. |
| | Paper not well-paced; minor points belabored and complex ideas rushed or not fleshed-out |
| | Conclusion AWOL, MIA, or POW, rushes or is a pat restatement of first paragraph |

CONTENT

| | |
|--|--|
| | You are missing significant components of this assignment. |
| | The pre- and post-papers do not clearly explain your position on the issue or give adequate support or reasons why (or why not) your position changed. |
| | Your synthesis paper does not explain the issues at hand, it does. Instead, explain your opinion on the issue. |
| | The synthesis paper is not organized around claims regarding the significant questions of your issues; it is a mere summary of each source. |
| | You do not effectively integrated source material, making clear distinctions between your language and the language of the sources. |
| | You do not use correct citation format within the text or in the list of Works Cited. |
| | Sentences are not clear, complete, varied, or relatively free of error. |

Position Essay (Cover Memo, First Draft)

ENGL 10803
Assignment #2 (Position Essay)
Final Cover Memo



Cover Memo

Literacy Autobiography: Final Version

Please construct this memo as you would any other memo (letter). That means, use the proper letter format and use complete paragraphs. Please don't just answer these questions in a bullet point fashion.

1. In one or two sentences, state your main argument or claim.
2. In one or two sentences, describe your audience and the characteristics/values you will need to consider when constructing your argument.
3. Does your essay define literacy in a way that a person unfamiliar with your particular focus can understand? Briefly describe your plans to incorporate both the familiar literacy elements with the unfamiliar in your essay.
4. List three strengths and three weaknesses of your paper.
5. The bulk of this memo will outline what you learned from this experience. Please be specific (use lots of details) about what you learned between this assignment and more traditional methods of writing.

Position Essay (Cover Memo, Final Draft)

ENGL 10803
Assignment #2 (Position Essay)
Draft Cover Memo



Cover Memo

Literacy Autobiography: 1st Draft

Please construct this memo as you would any other memo (letter). If you like, you can use the "memo" template in Microsoft Word. You must use the proper letter format and use complete paragraphs. Please don't just answer these questions in a bullet point fashion.

1. In one or two sentences, state your main argument or claim.
2. In one or two sentences, describe your audience and the characteristics/values you will need to consider when constructing your argument.
3. Does your essay define literacy in a way that a person unfamiliar with your particular focus can understand? Briefly describe your plans to incorporate both the familiar literacy elements with the unfamiliar in your essay.
4. List three strengths and three weaknesses of your paper.
5. Briefly mention aspects of your paper on which you would like me to comment. Please be as specific as possible. If you are having problems with a particular part of your paper or if you have any urgent paper-related questions that you would like me to answer, mention those items as well.

Rhetorical Revision Assignment

ENGL 10803
Assignment #4 (Rhetorical Revision)

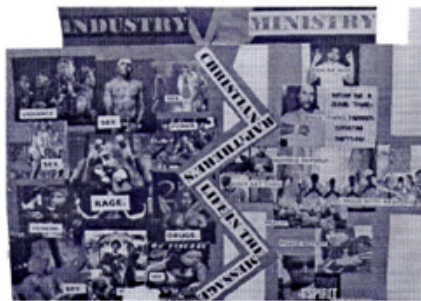
Making Knowledge through Revision

This final assignment attempts to bring together a number of knowledge-making activities from previous assignments. More specifically, you will revise your position paper for a different medium and audience, thus making use of both your skills of rhetorical analysis and your understanding of the effects of different media. The assignment has two parts—an oral presentation and a brief (2-page) paper that explains what the writer was trying to do in the revision.

The Rhetorical Revision

This assignment requires you to revise your position paper from Unit 2 for a different medium and audience. How would you express this position if you were making a commercial, designing a billboard, writing a popular song? After choosing a specific audience for your message and the new medium in which you want to state that message, make every effort to present your message in this new medium. Then, plan an oral presentation for your class in which you will share your rhetorical revision. Finally, write a 2-page paper in which you explain how you revised your position paper for this new audience and medium and what you learned from doing so.

DUE: Tuesday, May 3rd. We'll do presentations in class.



Christian Rap



Homosexual Adoptions

Rhetorical Revision Assignment (T-Shirt)

ENGL 10803
Assignment #4 (Rhetorical Revision)

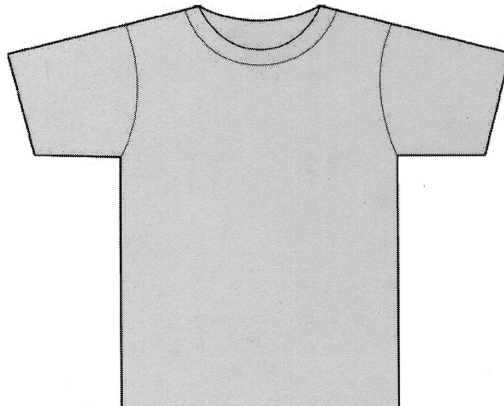
Rhetorical Revision: Making a Knowledge, Making a T-Shirt

For your last assignment, you will use the subject of your second essay (the position essay), to create a rhetorical revision. Using the same subject, you will reconsider your original subject for a new audience. Instead of writing a typical academic essay for an academic audience, you will create a T-Shirt design for an audience of your choosing.

You will also write a 2-3 page well-created, well-edited reflection in which you address the following issues:

- The point your t-shirt seeks to argue for audiences;
- Your own stake or investment in that point;
- Who your target audiences and other audiences are, plus a rationale;
- How and why—specifically—you designed and created your t-shirt the way you did (for example, why these words?, this font?, these images?, these colors?, etc.);
- The rhetorical situation your t-shirt seeks to address;
- The constraints and opportunities inherent in moving between the academic essay genre to the t-shirt genre;
- Your overall reflection on what you learned from the doing the work of this unit.

DUE: May 3rd, last day of class. You will present your work to the class.



(To find this t-shirt form, type in "t-shirt form" into Google images.
You can download your own copy to print on a poster board.)

Rhetorical Revision Presentation Evaluation

Rhetorical Revision Presentation Evaluation

| NAME | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 8 | 9 | 10 | 11 | 12 | 13 |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|----|----|----|----|
| Had a clear organizational strategy | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Message appropriate for audience | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Visuals and other "extras" used effectively | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rhetorical Revision clear and easy to read | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Displayed a professional ethos in language, speech, dress | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Rhetorical Revision a true revision of original subject | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| GRADE | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

| | |
|---|---|
| A | Exceptional work. Very few will earn this grade. |
| B | Very good, very effective presentation. Something was lacking somewhere (ethos, logos, pathos). |
| C | Adequate presentation, however, person missed a major component to presentation. |
| D | Not good, ill-prepared with message/audience. Not much understanding of the entire process. |
| F | Not acceptable work (individual or group) |

APPENDIX D

SELECTED ALTERNATIVE ASSIGNMENTS:
ACROSS ALL YEARS OF ICW STUDY

Letters as Argument (Letter #1)



Letters as Arguments: A Writing Portfolio

Letter to a Family Member

Over the course of this semester, you will write several different types of letters in which you make a claim and attempt to persuade your audience to do something about that claim, such as something you want or need from a family member, a letter of praise, a formal

letter of complaint, and a letter to the editor of a community publication. Although particular instructions are given for each letter, please note that all letters should adhere to the following guidelines:

Appropriately format each letter (including addressing it to the appropriate person and signing it after an appropriate conclusion).

Consider the type of letter in order to determine the length and organization of each (None of the letters should be less than one full page single spaced or two pages double spaced)

- If you type it, use either 12-point Times, New York Times, or Palatino font.
- If you handwrite it, make it legible and clear. Printing always works nicely if your handwriting is difficult to read.
- Commit few (if any) mechanical or grammatical errors.

Turn in two copies of each letter and a correctly stamped and addressed envelope, as one copy will be mailed

Your first letter assignment is to write a letter to a close family member describing your first week of university life and how you are adjusting so far. This assignment is a little less structured than some of the others letters you will write this semester, but that is because this person is close to you. You know what to say and how to say it. This is almost like writing a letter to home when you are away at camp. What do you enjoy here? What needs improvement? What has this person done to help you be successful TCU? Request something of this person. Thank this person. Persuade this person.

Draft Letter is due: Thursday, August 24th. (Bring two copies to class).

Final Letter is due: Thursday, August 31

Letters as Argument (Letter #2)



Letters as Arguments:
A Writing Portfolio

Letter of Appreciation:
Praising Good Service

Over the course of this semester, you will write several different types of letters in which you make a claim and attempt to persuade your audience to do something about that claim, such as something you want or need from a family member, a letter of praise, a formal letter of complaint, and a letter to the editor of a community publication. Although particular instructions are given for each letter, please note that all letters should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Appropriately format each letter (including addressing it to the appropriate person and signing it after an appropriate conclusion).
- Length should be no more than one page (typed).
- Use either 12-point Times, New York Times, or Palatino font.
- Commit no significant mechanical or grammatical errors.
- Turn in two copies of each letter and a correctly stamped and addressed envelope as one copy will be mailed

Since you have been paying close attention to the service you receive when you purchase something, order a meal, or complete a transaction with someone, writing a letter of praise should not be difficult. This letter might be a server at a local restaurant, the cashier, a bookstore clerk or mail room staff person. Perhaps you have spoken with a friendly and helpful college or university employee as you dealt with financial aid forms or ordered a transcript. Make an effort to learn the name of the person who waits on you at breakfast or provides good service when you get your latte. Find out who that person works for and write a one page single-space letter that compliments him or her. Describe the service you received, and when, explain in detail what pleased you about it, and thank the company or individual that employs the person who helped you. You may want to include praise for the establishment as a whole, but the bulk of the letter should be concerned with the particular individual you are praising. The letter should be addressed to the appropriate supervisor and correctly and include an appropriate salutation. The language of this letter should be slightly more formal than the first one as it will be designed for a professional audience, not a personal one. In addition, I will be looking for strong organization and clear, specific reasons for why this person is/was praiseworthy.

Draft letter is due Thursday, September 21st (bring two copies to class).

Your letter (along with stamped, address envelope) is due Thursday, Sept. 28st.

Letters as Argument (Letter #3)



Letters as Arguments: A Writing Portfolio

Letter of Complaint: Delivering a Negative Message

Over the course of this semester, you will write several different types of letters in which you make a claim and attempt to persuade your audience to do something about that claim, such as something you want or need from a family member, a letter of praise, a formal letter

of complaint, and a letter to the editor of a community publication. Although particular instructions are given for each letter, please note that all letters should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Appropriately format each letter (including addressing it to the appropriate person and signing it after an appropriate conclusion).
- Letter should be no more than one page long.
- Use either 12-point Times, New York Times, or Palatino font.
- Commit no serious mechanical or grammatical errors.
- Turn in two copies of each letter and a correctly stamped and addressed envelope as one copy will be mailed

Just as it is important to recognize exceptional service from working individuals, it is often necessary to communicate bad news, such as when an employee performs poorly or a product is substandard. A letter of complaint poses several important writerly challenges. To have any affect, a letter of complaint must sound reasonable and be clear and specific about what occurred (and who) was at fault. The author must consider his/her ethos, as anything perceived as whining or ranting will not have the desired effect, which is an apology, restitution, or at least the satisfaction of being listened to and respected as a consumer of services and goods. Your task is to write a one-page single spaced letter that clearly explains what happened and why you are unhappy. Apply this 5-step strategy to drafting your formal complaint. (1) Use a buffer—a neutral or positive statement designed to soften the impact. (2) Document the incident, failure, shortcoming, or inadequacy in detail, including date, time, location, event/occasion, circumstances and actions that transpired, words that were spoken. But no exaggerating, don't embellish or stretch the truth. If it was the worst meal you ever had in your life, say so, but be certain it truly was the worst. (3) Explain in specific detail what you had anticipated and how this performance or product fell short of those expectations. (4) Tell the reader what you want. If you want an apology, ask for one. If you want a replacement, say so. If you want your money back, tell them that. (5) Be courteous, be professional, and be adult about this. Don't rant and rave, distort, make unreasonable demands, or use profanity. Give your reader a chance to respond to your complaint or fix the problem.

Your Draft letter is due Tues, October 17th (bring two copies to class).

Your final letter (along with a stamped, self-addressed envelop) is due Oct. 24nd

Letters as Argument (Letter #4)



Letters as Arguments: A Writing Portfolio

Letter to the Editor: Commentary on a Current Community Issue

Over the course of this semester, you will write several different types of letters in which you make a claim and attempt to persuade your audience to do something about that claim, such as something you want or need from a family member, a letter of praise, a formal letter of complaint, and a letter to the editor of a community publication. Although particular instructions are given for each letter, please note that all letters should adhere to the following guidelines:

- Appropriately format each letter (including addressing it to the appropriate person and signing it after an appropriate conclusion).
- Consider the type of letter in order to determine the length and organization of each (None of the letters should be less than one full page single spaced or two pages double spaced)
- Use either 12-point Times, New York Times, or Palatino font.
- Commit no egregious mechanical or grammatical errors.
- Use a cover memo on the letter I am to grade that provides me with your name, this class title and section number, and the date as well as an explanation of who the letter is addressed to and what you struggled with most or considered most important to include in your letter and why.
- Turn in two copies of each letter and a correctly stamped and addressed envelope as one copy will be mailed

Find an issue in a local or national newspaper or magazine aimed at a mainstream audience. Look at articles of interest and read the "letters to the editor" section. These letters are published by everyday citizens like us. You might see if over a week or two you find some ongoing debate, a call and response pattern like your text talks about. Then enter the conversation by writing a 2 page (typed, double-spaced) essay/letter in reply to a commentary or letter to the editor that particularly interests you. Your letter should begin by clarifying your call to write, and then setting forth with a thesis and supporting statements that argue what *you* see as the best stance to take on the issue and why. This is an opportunity for you to voice your opinion publicly. You will need to convey sufficient context for readers to understand the subject and/or incident to which you are responding. You will be submitting these to your chosen periodical, so be sure to address the letter to the actual editor and provide a stamped and correctly addressed envelope. Even though it is addressed to the editor, don't forget to consider the larger audience as well, other subscribers, classmates, and at least one English teacher. Speak to your audience as equals, but you should clearly advance a position rather than try to placate everyone.

Note: I will give 5 points extra credit (added onto the score of this letter) for any one whose letter actually is published.

Your Draft letter is due November 9th (bring two copies to class).

Your Final Letter is due: November 16th.

Letters as Argument (Evaluation Rubric)

ENGL 10803
Letter Portfolio (Peer Evaluation)



1. Has the writer used the proper letter format? (Provide correction if he/she has not.)
2. Is the letter addressed properly (name and address of recipient)?
3. Has the author framed the complaint with positive comments about the store/service? If not, provide an example of how this writer could modify the letter.
4. Is the complaint specific? (Date, time, location, specific interaction with personnel, for example.)
5. Has the writer asked for resolution? This needs to be specific. What does the writer want for his/her trouble? If this is not included, how can you help the writer? Provide an example.
6. Is the TONE of the letter respectful, courteous, and professional? If not, how can the writer make this change?
7. How else can this letter be more effective?

Writing Partners (Service Learning Letter Exchange, Letter #1)

Writing Partner's Letters #1

Introduction and Inquiry

Your first letter to the boys at Home Farm is one of **Introduction and Inquiry**. As these students don't know who you are, it is your job to tell them. One way to begin your letter of introduction is to describe yourself, where you are from, why you are at TCU (this is a mandatory component to this letter), your decision process to get here, your interests (your interest inventory?), some of your interests and activities when you were a child (1st through 8th grade). In this letter, too, make a point to mention some of the academic work you are doing in this class (remember to scale it down to an elementary-age level). The point here is that you want to open as many doors as possible so that you and your partner have like interests and, therefore, have something to discuss. But be careful: instead of just listing the answers to the above questions, try and make the letter interesting. Make it flow (using transitions between subjects), and keeping your organization clear. It is also your job (as you are the older, wiser student), to set the tone for your future correspondence. If you write a series of short, choppy responses (to the above questions), you will receive a similar letter from the younger student. Your partner will be looking to you as an example of a "college student" who knows so much more than they do. You can teach them a lot (and learn a lot yourself) by refining what you already know.



The criteria -- nuts'n' bolts-- for your letter:

Because it is more personal, and often more sincere, your final letter must be handwritten. Be careful, however, that your handwriting be legible-- legible to a child. (I will be checking this in your drafts.) It must be at least two full, single-spaced (handwritten) pages in length. If your handwriting is exceptionally large, your letter must be at least three pages in length.

Since this is a young audience, some sort of visual component must be added to the letter. This is a chance for you to be creative. You can use interesting stationery. You can draw pictures along the margins, use stickers, colored pencils (not for the body text, but these can be used as emphasis on certain words). Make your letter LOOK interesting.

Some very important don'ts (and a few do's):

Since this is an informal letter, you may use informal (but grammatically correct) language. Keep your inquiry subjects tame. You must not discuss anything sexual, drug related, alcohol related, or violence related. This should go without saying. If your passionate

Writing Partners (Service Learning Letter #1)

interests are "Nine Inch Nails," body piercing, and/or your experience at last weekend's keg party, keep those thoughts to yourself. They are not appropriate for a young audience. No profanity (or what a teacher or parent might consider "profanity").

Other things:

The draft of this paper is due on Tuesday, February 1st. Since this draft is one that I will see and comment on, please *handwrite* (as you would the student letter), but double-space the work so I can add comments as I need to. Since I do not yet have student names, write your draft to a student to your same gender (unless you specifically want to write to a child of a different gender). I will have names and hopefully (hopefully) photos by Friday. You can then begin to tailor your letter to a specific child. I will return your drafts on Thursday, February 3rd.

The final version of your first letter is due on

Writing Partners (Service Learning Letter #2)

Writing Partner's Letters #2

Call to Social Action

Your second letter to the boys at Hope Farm is one in which you will respond to your partners letters, of course, and you will continue to ask questions and model answers in order to build your relationship. In large part, however, you will explain your current research project to your partner.

This has two components: visual rhetoric and a call to social action. Children view web pages all the time, they watch television, and they see advertisements. Visual rhetoric is as much a part of their lives as it is ours. Your job is to begin showing them how much they already understand about their world based on what they see (or what they don't yet recognize). Secondly, you will model the call to social action to this child. By modeling this behavior, you will be encouraging your partner to do something similar. Think about ways you can encourage your partner to see the world differently; think about ways you can encourage your partner to join you and others in the call to better their world.

The criteria -- nuts'n' bolts-- for your letter:

Because it is more personal, and often more sincere, your final letter must be handwritten. Be careful, however, that your handwriting be legible-- legible to a 4th grader. (I will be checking this in your drafts.)

It must be at least three to four full, double-spaced (handwritten) pages in length. If your handwriting is exceptionally large, your letter must be at least five pages in length. But please do not go over this page limit. Young reader cannot read as much as we might first think. Use your words effectively. **Please use standard typing/copy paper (not notebook paper).**

Since this is a young audience, some sort of visual component must be added to the letter. This is a chance for you to be creative. You can use interesting stationary. You can draw pictures along the margins, use stickers, colored pencils (not for the body text, but these can be used as emphasis on certain words). Make your letter LOOK interesting.

Don't forget to address a few of the questions from the elementary school students' letters. Begin a dialogue with your writing partner, and then segue into your narrative about your research topic (one way to do this). You can then conclude your narrative by asking questions about social action in the school, for example. The key to doing this effectively is having strong transitions between the segments of your letter.

Due date:



Writing Partners (Service Learning Letter #3)

Writing Partner's Letters #3

Writing is a Good Thing!

Your last letter to your Writing Partner has three components:

- Thanks the boys for their hospitality in hosting us last week at Hope Farm. Mentioning that wild dodge ball game might be a good thing to do. Think, too, about Mr. Randall's belief that these boys will grow up to be strong, ethical, proud, respectful, kind, intelligent men. As you write to your partner, think about ways that you can reinforce Mr. Randall's message.
- Respond to your partner's letters to you being specific about their writing and what they have taught you. Call attention to specific letters and examples they have written or things they said during our visit.
- Say "goodbye."



The criteria -- nuts'n' bolts-- for your letter:

- Since this is a "goodbye" letter, your tone must convey compassion and care, and your wording must be absolutely clear. As you already know, many of your partners want your relationships to last "forever." However, that cannot be (at least in this course context). Therefore, you have to be the one (the grown up one!) to very gently end your relationship with your Writing Partner.
- Visual appeal remains an important component to your letter. Continue as you have been-- be creative, use visually stimulating items that interest your audience, but most importantly, make your writing legible.
- Since this letter contains so many components, your finished product will reflect this in its length (at least 4 to 5 handwritten, double-spaced pages). Please use standard white typing paper and not notebook paper. As before, please do not use a pencil.

Due date:

"Where I'm From" Poetry Template

"Where I'm from"

I am from: _____ (specific ordinary item)¶
¶
→ From: _____ and _____ ¶
I am from the: _____ (home description)¶
→ _____, _____, and _____ (adjective, adjective, sensory detail)¶
I am from the: _____ (plant, flower, natural item)¶
→ The: _____ (plant, flower, natural item)¶
I'm from: _____ (family tradition) and _____ (family trait)¶
→ From: _____ (name of family member) and _____ (another one)¶
I'm from the: _____ (description of family tendency) and _____ (another one)¶
¶
From: _____ (something you were told as a child) and _____ (another)¶
(representation of religion or lack of it) (further description)¶
I'm from: _____ (place of birth and family ancestry)¶
From the: _____ (specific story about a specific person and a detail)¶
The: _____ (another detail of another family member) _____ ¶
_____ (location of family pictures, mementos, archives, and several more lines indicating their worth)¶
I am from: _____ ¶

Autoethnography Assignment (page #1)

ENGL 10703
Assignment #3 (Autoethnography)



Writing about the Self

For this assignment, you will have the opportunity to examine yourself and the forces that shape/shaped you. In other words, you get to describe yourself as a member of a group or subculture and then illustrate how that membership has contributed to the person you are today. Please note that by *subculture*, I mean **a group of people who share the same beliefs, values, and traditions** such that if you were ever to meet another member for the first time, you would have something in common. Please also note that by *subculture* I mean groups larger or more universal than "my family" or "my group of friends," so it follows the subculture you select must contain members you may never meet.

You are probably thinking (as I thought), "But I don't belong to a group or subculture." Yes, you do. A quick glance at the list below should reveal that, actually, you belong to quite a few.

- Cultures into which we are born: ethnic, regional, religious, political, economic, family type, socioeconomic, gender, racial, chronological
- Cultures that we choose: athletic, social, religious, political, recreational, social, political
- Cultures into which we fall: education, occupation, parenthood
- For additional help brainstorming potential subcultures, see "Brainstorming Handout."

All you need to do is establish yourself as a member of a subculture/group of your choice; describe that subculture/group; and then use short narrative examples, true stories from your life, to reveal the way in which that membership has affected you. Your descriptions and examples may include information you glean from research.

Assignment:

- You will write a 5-7 page essay
- Traditional MLA format
- You may use a photograph if you desire
- You will use two forms of peer review (both required)

Autoethnography Assignment (page #2)

- You will integrate two outside sources into your work, and these sources must support your claims about culture and community.

What an autoethnography is:

- An analytical/objective personal account
- About the self/writer as part of a group or culture
- Often a description of a conflict of cultures
- Often an analysis of being different or an outsider
- Usually written to an audience not a part of the group
- An attempt to see self as others might
- An opportunity to explain differences from the inside
- Sometimes a traditional essay answering the five Ws
- Sometimes a typical essay with topic sentences and three to five supporting examples
- Always an attempt to explain self to other
- An explanation of how one is "othered"

What an autoethnography is not:

- A traditional personal narrative
- A single event, incident, or experience
- Written to the self as the major audience
- A simple description or story

Autoethnography Assignment -- Peer Review (page #1)

ENGL 10703
Essay #3 (Autoethnography)
Evaluation Rubric



| | | | | |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|
| 1 (low) | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 (high) |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|----------|---------------------------|

- What is the writer's main point? (Thesis statement.) If the thesis statement is not clear, what do you think it **COULD** be? Please write the writer's thesis statement here, or write what you think it could be.
- On a scale of 1 to 5, how do you rate the author's opening sentence? How can you make it a five? What other sentence might you suggest that could be a better opening?
- The author will need know that you have selected the right sentence, so copy the author's thesis statement here. On a scale of 1 to 5, how effectively does this person trace this idea throughout the essay? Offer suggestions how this person could improve the flow and organization of the essay.
- One a scale of 1 to 5, rate the author's use of the introduction and conclusion as a framing device. Introduction: a brief overview of the essay contents. Conclusion: a "call to action" of some kind (not a restatement of introduction). How can it be stronger? Offer some clear advice.

Photo Collage Assignment (page #1)

ENGL 10703
Assignment #1
Documenting Ourselves

Photo Collage

For our first major assignment of the semester, you will write an essay about your literacy experiences, but you will also create a collage of what it means to be literate. This collage will incorporate at least five images, a quotation, and an autobiographical haiku that you construct. Along with this collage, you will write an essay about your process and about what you learned in this unit.



Haiku: (100 words)

Every Sunday, the Washington Post publishes a column, "Life is Short: Autobiographical Haiku" in their Style section. In 100 words or less, Post readers write pieces that give insight to their lives. I'd like you to do the same. In no more than 100 words, tell your readers something about you. Choose a moment that defines you who are and what you believe. You could choose a moment where you had to make a very important decision about your future or about your past. Pick one moment and write about it. Remember, no more than 100 words. (See handout for more information.)

Quotations: (one quotation)

See handout on "Literacy and Education." Choose one quotation that identifies what you believe the value of education and literacy to be for yourself.

Photos: (five images)

- Stock Exchange: <http://www.sxc.hu/>
- Free Photographs: <http://www.freefoto.com>
- Copyright Friendly: <http://www.pics4learning.com/>
- MorgueFile: <http://www.morguefile.com/>

All of these photo sites are free, but you may need to register with the site in order to copy the files. If you register, please write down your log-in name and password. As you find images you like, save them, but also write down where you found them. You will construct a "Works Cited" page of where you found your resources. For each image, you will need to identify the following information:

Photo Collage Assignment (page #2)

- Photographer (if known)
- Name / Title of photograph (if not provided, you may have to name it)
- Site where you found the photograph
- Date the photograph was published (if known)
- Date you accessed and saved the photograph
- Complete URL (<http://www.>)

Avoid using any text in the images. The maximum dimension for each image (height and/or width) is 800 pixels. Save these images as **jpg** files and save them to your student ("U") drive. Be sure and name them so you can find them again.

Project Report (four pages, 1000 words): This part of the assignment asks you to discuss your collage and the process of creating it. You should use the following sections in your report:

- **Meanings**
Provide an overview of the meanings or messages that you intended to convey in your collage. How does your collage present a specific interpretation of the quotation? What other interpretations are there, and why did you choose the particular interpretation that you did?
- **Processes**
Describe the process you used in creating the collage. How did you start? How did you know when you were done? What do you see as the strengths and weaknesses of the process you used? How does the process you used to create the collage compare to your creative process when writing essays?
- **Choices**
Discuss the reasons behind the choices that you made in the collage project. Why did you choose each image in your collage? What were you hoping to achieve with any modifications you made to the images? What alternatives did you consider?
- **Connections**
Explain what you learned from this experience with New Media. Write about what you learned about writing from this experience. What connections can you make between this experience and the writing you have done in the past?
- **Works Cited**

Due dates:

Photo Collage Assignment (Peer Review #1)

Peer Review #1 Photo Collage



AUTHOR: _____

REVIEWER: _____

| | Inadequate | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
|--|------------|------|------|------|-----------|
| Collage makes a point about how literacy in a way that an "average" reader can understand. | | | | | |
| Collage in some way defines "community and cultural values. | | | | | |
| The quotation has something to do with the photos chosen. | | | | | |
| The haiku, while not necessarily about literacy or education, makes a connection to the other elements of the collage. | | | | | |
| Literacy experience is reflected on, not merely presented. | | | | | |
| Material is organized logically. | | | | | |

Photo Collage Assignment (Peer Review #2)

Peer Review #2 Photo Collage



AUTHOR: _____

REVIEWER: _____

| | Inadequate | Poor | Fair | Good | Excellent |
|---|------------|------|------|------|-----------|
| Essay makes a point about how education and literacy. | | | | | |
| Sentences are clear, complete, and free of mechanical errors. | | | | | |
| The author has addressed each photo, quotation, and haiku in depth (with detail). | | | | | |
| The author has reflected on the elements of the collage and not merely listed those elements. | | | | | |
| There is adequate support for points being made. | | | | | |
| Material is organized logically. | | | | | |

Photo Collage Assignment (Peer Review #2)

1. Please tell the author two (2) things that are done well in this collage. Be specific.
2. What connections do YOU make in this collage? How do you “read” this author’s work? What is he/she trying to convey with the images, the haiku, and the quotation?
3. The author has FULLY explained the meanings and purposes behind the collage work. What did she/he neglect? Be specific. As the reader, you will notice things about the collage and about the writing that the writer didn’t expect. SPEND MOST OF YOUR TIME ON THIS QUESTION.

APPENDIX E

CHARTS AND TABLES

TABLE: NCAA Division I-A Sliding Scale (GPA / Test Score)

NCAA DIVISION I SLIDING SCALE
CORE GRADE-POINT AVERAGE / TEST-SCORE

As of August 1, 2008

| Core GPA | SAT (verbal /math) | ACT |
|----------|-----------------------|-----|
| 3.50+ | 400 | 37 |
| 3.525 | 410 | 38 |
| 3.500 | 420 | 39 |
| 3.475 | 430 | 40 |
| 3.450 | 440 | 41 |
| 3.425 | 450 | 41 |
| 3.400 | 460 | 42 |
| 3.375 | 470 | 42 |
| 3.350 | 480 | 43 |
| 3.325 | 490 | 44 |
| 3.300 | 500 | 44 |
| 3.275 | 510 | 45 |
| 3.250 | 520 | 46 |
| 3.225 | 530 | 46 |
| 3.200 | 540 | 47 |
| 3.175 | 550 | 47 |
| 3.150 | 560 | 48 |
| 3.125 | 570 | 49 |
| 3.100 | 580 | 49 |
| 3.075 | 590 | 50 |
| 3.050 | 600 | 50 |
| 3.025 | 610 | 51 |
| 3.000 | 620 | 52 |
| 2.975 | 630 | 52 |
| 2.950 | 640 | 53 |
| 2.925 | 650 | 53 |
| 2.900 | 660 | 54 |
| 2.875 | 670 | 55 |
| 2.850 | 680 | 56 |
| 2.825 | 690 | 56 |
| 2.800 | 700 | 57 |

| Core GPA | SAT (verbal /math) | ACT |
|----------|-----------------------|-----|
| 2.775 | 710 | 58 |
| 2.750 | 720 | 59 |
| 2.725 | 730 | 59 |
| 2.700 | 730 | 60 |
| 2.675 | 740-750 | 61 |
| 2.650 | 760 | 62 |
| 2.625 | 770 | 63 |
| 2.600 | 780 | 64 |
| 2.575 | 790 | 65 |
| 2.550 | 800 | 66 |
| 2.525 | 810 | 67 |
| 2.500 | 820 | 68 |
| 2.475 | 830 | 69 |
| 2.450 | 840-850 | 70 |
| 2.425 | 860 | 70 |
| 2.400 | 860 | 71 |
| 2.375 | 870 | 72 |
| 2.350 | 880 | 73 |
| 2.325 | 890 | 74 |
| 2.300 | 900 | 75 |
| 2.275 | 910 | 76 |
| 2.250 | 920 | 77 |
| 2.225 | 930 | 78 |
| 2.200 | 940 | 79 |
| 2.175 | 950 | 80 |
| 2.150 | 960 | 80 |
| 2.125 | 960 | 81 |
| 2.100 | 970 | 82 |
| 2.075 | 980 | 83 |
| 2.050 | 990 | 84 |
| 2.025 | 1000 | 85 |
| 2.000 | 1010 | 86 |

TABLE: Student Demographic, Academic Year 2004

| 2004 | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Gender | | | | |
| • Male | 13/16 | | 81% | |
| • Female | 3/16 | | 19% | |
| Race | | | | |
| • African-American | 8/16 | | 50% | |
| • Anglo | 6/16 | | 38% | |
| • Asian | 1/16 | | 6% | |
| • Hispanic | 1/16 | | 6% | |
| • ESL | 4/16 | | 25% | |
| Disability | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 4/16 | | 25% | |
| Athlete | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 13/16 | | 81% | |
| | Class Whole | | SA Total | |
| • Football ○ Male (27) ○ Female (0) | 4/16 | 25% | 4/13 | 31% |
| • Basketball ○ Male (5) ○ Female (0) | 1/16 | 6% | 1/13 | 8% |
| • Baseball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (0) | 2/16 | 13% | 2/13 | 15% |
| • Tennis ○ Male (1) ○ Female (1) | 1/16 | 6% | 1/13 | 8% |
| • Track ○ Male (3) ○ Female (2) | 2/16 | 13% | 2/13 | 15% |
| • Volleyball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (2) | 2/16 | 13% | 2/13 | 15% |
| • Ath. Trainer ○ Male (1) ○ Female (0) | 1/16 | 6% | 1/13 | 8% |

TABLE: Student Demographic, Academic Year 2005

| 2005 | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Gender | | | | |
| • Male | 12/15 | | 80% | |
| • Female | 3/15 | | 20% | |
| Race | | | | |
| • African-American | 10/15 | | 67% | |
| • Anglo | 4/15 | | 27% | |
| • Asian | 1/15 | | 7% | |
| • Hispanic | 0/15 | | 0% | |
| • ESL | 2/15 | | 13% | |
| Disability | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 5/15 | | 33% | |
| Athlete | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 10/15 | | 67% | |
| | Class Whole | | SA Total | |
| • Football o Male (27) o Female (0) | 7/15 | 47% | 7/10 | 70% |
| • Basketball o Male (5) o Female (0) | 2/15 | 13% | 2/10 | 20% |
| • Baseball o Male (0) o Female (0) | 0/15 | 0% | 0/10 | 0% |
| • Tennis o Male (1) o Female (1) | 1/15 | 7% | 1/10 | 10% |
| • Track o Male (3) o Female (2) | 0/15 | 0% | 0/10 | 0% |
| • Volleyball o Male (0) o Female (2) | 0/15 | 0% | 0/10 | 0% |
| • Ath. Trainer o Male (1) o Female (0) | 0/15 | 0% | 0/10 | 0% |

TABLE: Student Demographic, Academic Year 2006

| 2006 | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Gender | | | | |
| • Male | 12/14 | | 86% | |
| • Female | 2/14 | | 14% | |
| Race | | | | |
| • Af.American | 11/14 | | 79% | |
| • Anglo | 2/14 | | 14% | |
| • Asian | 1/14 | | 7% | |
| • Hispanic | 0/14 | | 0% | |
| • ESL | 0/14 | | 0% | |
| Disability | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 2/14 | | 14% | |
| Athlete | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 12/14 | | 86% | |
| | Class Whole | | SA Total | |
| • Football ○ Male (27) ○ Female (0) | 10/14 | 71% | 10/12 | 83% |
| • Basketball ○ Male (5) ○ Female (0) | 1/14 | 7% | 1/12 | 8% |
| • Baseball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (0) | 0/14 | 0% | 0/12 | 0% |
| • Tennis ○ Male (1) ○ Female (1) | 0/14 | 0% | 0/12 | 0% |
| • Track ○ Male (3) ○ Female (2) | 1/14 | 7% | 1/12 | 8% |
| • Volleyball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (2) | 0/14 | 0% | 0/12 | 0% |
| • Ath. Trainer ○ Male (1) ○ Female (0) | 0/14 | 0% | 0/12 | 0% |

TABLE: Student Demographic, Academic Year 2007

| 2007 | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Gender | | | | |
| • Male | 8/9 | | 89% | |
| • Female | 1/9 | | 11% | |
| Race | | | | |
| • African-American | 9/9 | | 100% | |
| • Anglo | 0/9 | | 0% | |
| • Asian | 0/9 | | 0% | |
| • Hispanic | 0/9 | | 0% | |
| • ESL | 0/9 | | 0% | |
| Disability | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 0/9 | | 0% | |
| Athlete | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 9/9 | | 100% | |
| | Class Whole | | SA Total | |
| • Football ○ Male (27) ○ Female (0) | 6/9 | 67% | 6/9 | 67% |
| • Basketball ○ Male (5) ○ Female (0) | 1/9 | 11% | 1/9 | 11% |
| • Baseball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (0) | 0/9 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% |
| • Tennis ○ Male (1) ○ Female (1) | 0/9 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% |
| • Track ○ Male (3) ○ Female (2) | 2/9 | 22% | 2/9 | 22% |
| • Volleyball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (2) | 0/9 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% |
| • Ath. Trainer ○ Male (1) ○ Female (0) | 0/9 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% |

TABLE: Student Demographic, Four-Year Total

| Total | | | | |
|--|--------------------|-----|-----------------|-----|
| Gender | | | | |
| • Male | 45/54 | | 83% | |
| • Female | 9/54 | | 17% | |
| Race | | | | |
| • Af.American | 38/54 | | 70% | |
| • Anglo | 12/54 | | 22% | |
| • Asian | 3/54 | | 6% | |
| • Hispanic | 1/54 | | 2% | |
| • ESL | 6/54 | | 11% | |
| Disability | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 11/54 | | 20% | |
| Athlete | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 44/54 | | 81% | |
| | Class Whole | | SA Total | |
| • Football ○ Male (27) ○ Female (0) | 27/54 | 50% | 27/44 | 61% |
| • Basketball ○ Male (5) ○ Female (0) | 5/54 | 9% | 5/44 | 9% |
| • Baseball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (0) | 2/54 | 4% | 2/44 | 5% |
| • Tennis ○ Male (1) ○ Female (1) | 2/54 | 4% | 2/44 | 5% |
| • Track ○ Male (3) ○ Female (2) | 5/54 | 9% | 5/44 | 11% |
| • Volleyball ○ Male (0) ○ Female (2) | 2/54 | 4% | 2/44 | 5% |
| • Ath. Trainer ○ Male (1) ○ Female (0) | 1/54 | .2% | 1/44 | 2% |

TABLE: Student Demographic in ENGL 10703-10803 (2004-07)

| | | 2004 | | 2005 | | 2006 | | 2007 | | Total | |
|------------------------|-------|------|-------|------|-------|------|-----|------|-------|-------|--|
| Gender | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Male | 13/16 | 81% | 12/15 | 80% | 12/14 | 86% | 8/9 | 89% | 45/54 | 83% | |
| • Female | 3/16 | 19% | 3/15 | 20% | 2/14 | 14% | 1/9 | 11% | 9/54 | 17% | |
| Race | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Af American | 8/16 | 50% | 10/15 | 67% | 11/14 | 79% | 9/9 | 100% | 38/54 | 70% | |
| • Anglo | 6/16 | 38% | 4/15 | 27% | 2/14 | 14% | 0/9 | 0% | 12/54 | 22% | |
| • Asian | 1/16 | 6% | 1/15 | 7% | 1/14 | 7% | 0/9 | 0% | 3/54 | 6% | |
| • Hispanic | 1/16 | 6% | 0/15 | 0% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 1/54 | 2% | |
| • ESL | 4/16 | 25% | 2/15 | 13% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 6/54 | 11% | |
| Disability | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Learning Dis. | 4/16 | 25% | 5/15 | 33% | 2/14 | 14% | 0/9 | 0% | 11/54 | 20% | |
| Athlete | | | | | | | | | | | |
| Student Athlete | 13/16 | 81% | 10/15 | 67% | 12/14 | 86% | 9/9 | 100% | 44/54 | 81% | |
| • Football | 4/16 | 25% | 7/15 | 47% | 10/14 | 71% | 6/9 | 67% | 27/54 | 50% | |
| o Male (27) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (0) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Basketball | 1/16 | 6% | 2/15 | 13% | 1/14 | 7% | 1/9 | 11% | 5/54 | 9% | |
| o Male (5) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (0) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Baseball | 2/16 | 13% | 0/15 | 0% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 2/54 | 4% | |
| o Male (0) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (0) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Tennis | 1/16 | 6% | 1/15 | 7% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 2/54 | 4% | |
| o Male (1) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (1) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Track | 2/16 | 13% | 0/15 | 0% | 1/14 | 7% | 2/9 | 22% | 5/54 | 9% | |
| o Male (3) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (2) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Volleyball | 2/16 | 13% | 0/15 | 0% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 2/54 | 4% | |
| o Male (0) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (2) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| • Ath. Trainer | 1/16 | 6% | 0/15 | 0% | 0/14 | 0% | 0/9 | 0% | 1/54 | 2% | |
| o Male (1) | | | | | | | | | | | |
| o Female (0) | | | | | | | | | | | |

APPENDIX F

SAMPLE STUDENT ESSAYS

D'Ante's Literacy Narrative (from Chapter 4)

D'Ante

Essay 1

I strongly believe in an eye for an eye because if you do something to me I'm going to get you regardless. This is just one of my morals. Embryo, fetus, infant, child, teenager, adult, senior, and death this is the life cycle for human being. Not every human being makes it through the cycle. Sometimes God calls a person number under. But when does your life really start. Is it when you come out your mother womb. Could it be your first memory. Maybe its when you become independent. Everyone is entitled to their own opinion about when life starts. For me life starts when you start to understand morals, and you live by your own morals.

As an infant my mother would spank me when I did something wrong. If I repeated the action she would spank me again. To avoid getting spanking I quit doing my wrong action. I didn't quit because I knew it was wrong, I quit because spanking hurt. As I got older and learn to use my head I start to learn about morals. I grew in a family who domination was C.O.G.I.C., (Church of God in Christ) and in my house hold we (me and my two sister [REDACTED] and [REDACTED]) learned about the Ten Commandments. I believe in God so I try to obey his

laws. What I don't tend to follow all the time is men law due to my morals. I strongly believe in standing up for what you believe in. If one of man law conflict with mine I will stand up for mine. To be honest I live on sayings my mother told me for example: expect the unexpected, see but don't look, hear but don't listen, business first bullshit later, make your bed lay in it, don't burn your bridges unless you have two, don't take no body shit, speak your mind and tell the truth, an eye for an eye, don't bite your tongue cause biting your tongue hurts (that ties in with speaking your mind), what don't kill only make you stronger, etc....A lot of her saying I turned into my morals.

I grew up in a small town [REDACTED], Texas. If you know the history of [REDACTED] you would no a lot of bullshit goes on there. The ethnical population is divide evenly between blacks, whites, and Hispanic. Either you stay in the projects or you don't. I'm proud to say I stayed in the gutter. Staying in the projects I learn quick see but don't look. If you see something you don't examine it. If you look at something you examine it. You can look at the wrong person the wrong way and get killed. Sometimes you can get killed just for seeing.

Back in grade school all the way up to the eight grade I lived in the principal office. Most of the reason came from my extremely bad temper and mouth. People use to say "All he need is a good

whopping" but that wasn't the case. My mother used to whop me I couldn't sit sometimes. My mother used to give a lot of knowledge as a child which I did at the wrong time. For example: she would say "business first bullshit later". If I was in class having an important conversation I consider it business. The teacher would tell me to quit with the excessive talking and I wouldn't. Me not stopping resulted into a confrontation that I often lost. In school and in the street I wasn't making wise decision. I start selling drug in the seventh grade to make money. Later my mother found out and cried. When I seen my mother crying that changed my whole life. I didn't like seeing my mother crying. She supported me physically and mentally. I was caught in the middle of making money or my mother happiness. I always played sports as a child and teenager in school and loved sports. I figured I can go pro in either football or track because I was the talk of the next [REDACTED] super star and I was. Since I had got focus on sports I got focus on books to get excepted into a good academic University. I never thought I would make it to college, but I did with family and friends supporting me. Expect the unexpected.

I take action in activities that aren't always right. I'm always ready to receive my consequences whether its good or bad. I make my bed so I will lay in it as I done plenty of times. I love to drive fast with my system turned up loud. One time on my way to Detroit for the Jr. Olympics I got pulled over in Arkansas for speeding. I was going

92mph in a 65mph zone. I new the consequences of speeding but I wanted to take that chance. When I arrived home I worked over time to pay the ticket off. I haven't got a ticket for loud music yet, but again I know the consequence. I always speak the truth an my opinion. My mother say my two cents is free. Sometimes I get into trouble for these actions. I believe in standing up for what you believe. In football practice the head coach ([REDACTED]) would talk to the team about certain issue. After announcing the issue he would asked if anyone had a problem. If I had a problem I would speak up. 98% of the time my opinion didn't matter, but I spoke up when no one else would when they did.

Sometimes I wonder have my life really started or is it just beginning. I get confuse at times about life. I wont to say my life will start as soon as I complete my task of getting rich. Obstacles in life stop some people form completing their task so I try to erase that thought. This is the autobiography of [REDACTED]. I'm 19 yrs old and my life has just begun. ♦

Sean's Literacy Narrative (from Chapter 5)

Sean

September 20, 2005

Critical Writing

2pp Synthesis

In the past most of my literacy experiences have been negative. I don't know exactly why but I think it is because I don't go well with reading and writing. Ever since I was in the third grade I stop feeling the need to read and write. In the third grade I wasn't the brightest speller and I could not pronounce words very well. I knew it was always one of my weaknesses but for some reason I always was being called on to read out loud for the class. It wasn't that I just didn't want to read I was just weak in that area. I have gotten better at reading out loud and saying words correctly but still to this day I always seem to have a bad self conscience of me messing up or sounding stupid.(Another thing that makes it hard for me to read well is when I read in front of large groups or someone that is important. For example the time I read out loud for all of the English classes in our mini auditorium was the worst thing I think that whole year. This was during the very beginning of my ninth grade year. We all were reading Animal Farm together because we all had to do it anyway. We read by popcorn style for example its random when your

name is called so that made it hard for people not to pay any attention. When my name was called my heart kind of froze because for one I wasn't really paying close attention and I didn't want to read anyway. When I started reading I just had that bad feeling that everybody was listening in very carefully because they were trying to see if I would mess up that was because I had a bad self conscience. I read for about a page and a half and felt good after I was done because I thought I was going to mess up worst and I didn't mess up at all. But that isn't the only that I encountered a bad literacy experience. My last year of high school in English class we read Macbeth out loud just in front of our immediate class not for the whole senior English class. My principle came to have a "sit in" in our class for some reason that day. It was also a difficult day because Macbeth was a pretty confusing book and difficult to pronounce words. When my named was called read alright compared to the times before I was put on the spot. Of course, I felt good after I was done reading because I felt smarter and even better as a person. But even though I have had more bad literacy experiences than good, I think that it has made me read better and feel more comfortable with myself at times. One time that was good was when I read for second and third graders at a nearby elementary when I was in the tenth grade. That experience made me feel really good about myself, because I knew that I had help people that day and I could see that they learn new things and really appreciated me coming to talk and read to them. Since that day I

have always kind of like to read out loud instead of to myself, reading out loud works better for me because it works on my vocabulary and another reason is because you can mumble words to yourself when you read silently but out loud you have to pronounce the words correctly. Reading to a young kids can do a lot for someone. I felt like the teacher when I would read to them and I could see how they would respond to what I was reading. I now see how teachers feel when they read to a normal class such as a high school class. As much as I wanted for them to listen to me and focus on what I was saying I now understand why teachers stress to us that we listen to what they have to say to us. When I read to the little kids I wanted to keep reading to them because of how they made me felt. All of them were sitting Indian style on the ground with their elbows on their knees, and their palms were on their faces. I felt like I was the most important person in the world to them. Even though I have more bad experiences than positive this one, will have more affect on me and dwell on my heart, and I will be more confident while reading to a certain group of people or important person. ♦

Eric's Literacy Narrative (from Chapter 6)

Eric

Literacy Autobiography

September 2007

My family, especially my father has been a big influence towards my literacy experiences. My mom and dad have degrees has a degree from the University of [REDACTED], and they have taught me a lot. My parents have been a big help in to my knowledge of education.

The meaning of synthesis is combining ideas to make a complex whole. So using the synthesis theory, all these different literacy experiences go together well to make a complex essay. My literacy experiences all have a lesson learned behind them, especially the positive ones. A positive literacy experience will be remembered forever, and because I have had so many, I can combine them all together to always be prepared for any literacy challenge. My positive experiences have stuck with me, and I can easily refer back to them when needed.

My positive experience of winning the spelling bee in the fifth grade at [REDACTED] was great for me because I felt that I was a smart student, and I proved myself and the teacher write by winning the contest. There were about 25 students, and everyone in the class had some intelligence. So winning the contest would not be an easy task. It came down to me and one the smartest kids in the class. I

remain confident in my abilities and ended up beating my classmate to become the winner. The word I spelled correctly to win the spelling bee was "flamboyant". I will always remember this because I won something I had a good chance of winning and I lived up to my expectations of being a capable student and winning an academic activity was the result.

My negative experience, which was to get up in front of a class and present some information during my young adult stage, is one that I will never forget. I couldn't handle everyone's eyes on me, and the dead silence, just expecting me to mess up so that would give them the opportunity to laugh. The solution to the problem would be to imagine, if I was in the room by myself practicing the presentation. I had practiced many times before, and I did it great when I was by myself. So when an audience is present, I should have believed in myself, because I had practiced to perfection already. You simply must believe, do what you're capable of doing, and never looked back.

My negative experience of having to make a poster presentation in front of the class as a young adult age was hard for me because I mentally couldn't calm down, and present the way I should have in front of the class. In eighth grade, every person in the class had to present, so everyone had plenty jitters. The only thing I was concerned about was what the class would think of me standing there presenting information; I didn't concern myself on the actual information and just being myself. When you be yourself, other peoples thoughts and words are irrelevant

to what your goal is. For example, if you're wearing an outfit that everyone thinks is ugly, but you love it, then you should believe in yourself and keep the outfits on. This way of thinking should have been my mindset, but because I was about 13 years old, I somewhat can understand now, why I became so nervous. Being so young, all I thought about is how my friends would look at me. I am at a point now where I don't get is nervous because my only focus is doing the job that must be done in order to get a good grade. I will admit I still get little butterflies, but I don't think about it and I just get it done.

In conclusion, my family and teachers helping me learn to become a better student and person has increased my knowledge of how to attack every day in the proper way it should be. I still sometimes they'll make the right decisions, but it's a working progress. ♦

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