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INTERDISCIPLINARY WRITING: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE OF WRITING IN UNIVERSITY CLASSES

The University of Arizona

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INTERDISCIPLINARY WRITING: STUDENTS' PERCEPTIONS OF THE ROLE OF WRITING IN UNIVERSITY CLASSES

by

Suzanne Cook Padgett

A Dissertation Submitted to the Faculty of the
DEPARTMENT OF SECONDARY EDUCATION
In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements For the Degree of
DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY
In the Graduate College
THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

1982
As members of the Final Examination Committee, we certify that we have read the dissertation prepared by Suzanne Cook Padgett entitled Interdisciplinary Writing: Students' Perceptions of the Role of Writing in University Classes and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Margaret B. Fleming  
Date: 7-16-82

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Date: 11-16-82

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Date: 11-16-82

Final approval and acceptance of this dissertation is contingent upon the candidate's submission of the final copy of the dissertation to the Graduate College.

I hereby certify that I have read this dissertation prepared under my direction and recommend that it be accepted as fulfilling the dissertation requirement.

Margaret B. Fleming  
Dissertation Director  
Date: 7-20-82
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SIGNED: Suzanne Cooke Padgett
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ABSTRACT

This study provides a description of the writing done by Freshman English students in classes other than English at The University of Arizona. The study involved three aspects of observation and documentation of writing habits: a Questionnaire administered to 1,442 students, a Writing Checklist completed by twenty-three students over a one week period, and case study interviews of five students. All three aspects were considered in the findings for the following research questions:

What kinds of writing tasks are students doing in classes other than English?

How frequent are these tasks?

What quantities of writing are being done?

To what audiences are the students writing?

The population for the study is representative of the university. The task of Taking notes was the most frequently occurring by far. Journals and Creative writing were the least frequent, also by a wide margin. Students felt that teachers were more concerned with content than with presentation. Little in-class time was spent on pre-writing activities. The highest responses were to questions about students' values and attitudes concerning writing. More school writing seems to take place on Monday and Wednesday, with Friday the lowest week day work response. Little work in writing occurs on the weekend.
All three aspects point to similar conclusions: students are not writing very much, they are not writing in very many different modes, they are not getting very much guidance in their writing, and they are not getting very much affirmation for writing as a valid cognitive skill in the classroom. Some students are receiving some of these benefits, but the majority of university students are not.

Little research has been done on university students to determine how much and what kinds of writing they are doing in classes other than English. If our society continues to value writing as an important skill, universities must re-examine the role of writing in college classes. Without the process of discovery that occurs when writing, the student's education and cognitive growth are greatly limited. Writing is a valuable cognitive aid that must be used in all departments.
CHAPTER 1

THE PROBLEM TO BE STUDIED

Introduction

Scribendo discis scribere:
One learns to write by writing.

Language is a method of organizing and understanding our experience. We take in information all the time, and we use language to give order and structure to this information. Bruner (1968, p. 107) suggests that a person "of intellectual discipline is one who is a master of the various functions of speech, one who has a sense of how to vary them, how to say what he wishes to say." Hayakawa (1964, p. 15) adds that "widespread intraspecific cooperation through the use of language is the fundamental mechanism of human survival." He goes on to quote Alfred Korzybski (Hayakawa 1964, p. 19): "Man's achievements rest upon the use of symbols," the symbols that we create when we capture language on paper. Britton (Everitts 1970, p. 28) asserts that by writing, people "shape their experience in order to make it available to themselves to learn from." Writing is an important part of language use, perhaps the final product as words are selected and captured on paper. The Bullock Report (1975, p. 7) agrees that writing is an integral part of the language process: "We believe that language competence grows incrementally, through an interaction of writing, talking, reading, and experience, the body of resulting work forming an organic whole."
act of writing, then, is the final step in a process of assimilation and organization, a step that gives coherence and form to learning. The symbols that we create on paper signify our competence both in the act of writing and in the subject being addressed. Our grasp of the subject matter improves as our ability to write about it improves. No person is learned in a field without the ability to discuss that field in writing.

Problem

It is widely believed and accepted that most students improve their writing skills and their grasp of a subject by writing about it. But few studies have been conducted that investigate Freshman English students to see just how much writing these students are doing in classes other than English. Therefore, this study has attempted answers to the following questions:

1. What kinds of writing tasks are students doing in other classes?
2. How frequent are these writing tasks?
3. What quantities of writing are being done?
4. To what audiences are the students writing?
5. Do the kinds and amount of writing vary greatly from high school to college?

Background

Richard Lloyd-Jones, Associate Director of the University of Iowa's Institute on Writing, has observed in a recent interview (Time 1980, p. 92), "In the 12th century, you could have 50 to 60 scribes take care of all the business of the Court of Chancery in England. Only in the 20th century have we had the notion that everyone needs to do it."
This notion has led to more education for all citizens and, in recent decades, to more emphasis on the basic competencies. While writing skills are among the competencies most highly prized, they are often the skills most lacking in students. As a result, much more time, attention, and money have been focused in recent years on the improvement of writing skills and on research into the process of writing itself. A recent featured article in *Time* (1980, pp. 88 ff.) highlights some of the changes:

A notable step was taken in 1978 when Congress added writing to the list of topics eligible for Government grants. In the past year, requests for applications to get federal help for basic skills training soared from about 2,000 a year to 14,000. Last year the National Endowment for the Humanities doled out $2.4 million for projects to improve writing, double the amount of the year before. In Detroit, the high school system has introduced writing proficiency tests for graduates. . . . Ohio schools are offering Young Authors programs, including publication of student writing and conferences at which they can discuss their work. More than 200,000 students from grades 1 through 12 in 35 states are engaged in the Individualized Language Arts Program, funded by the Government. . . . The Bay Area Writing Project has spread from Berkeley, California, to 74 communities around the country. Its aim is to teach writing teachers how to teach writing.

A major feature of many of these changes and new programs is the insistence that writing should not be confined to English courses but should be an integral part of all course work. This approach, often called "writing across the curriculum," originated at Minnesota's Carleton College but has spread across the country as writing teachers at all levels have insisted on support and reinforcement from colleagues in other disciplines. In Britain the work of Nancy Martin and James Britton with the Schools Council Group has studied writing in all disciplinary areas.
Purpose

The purpose of this study is to provide a descriptive study of the amount and kinds of writing done by Freshman English students in classes other than English at The University of Arizona in Tucson.

Significance

Although in recent years the area of writing competency has received much research attention, many research problems and questions remain unanswered. One such problem is related to the need for data about the individuals who are being assessed, the students themselves. Most research has been gathered about the process of writing itself, what happens in the student's mind during composition and how that process is transmitted to paper. Very little attention has been given, however, to just how much writing students are doing. It is a relatively simple matter to observe writing in an English class. The need exists for more definition of the kinds and amount of writing done in classes other than English, to determine if writing is given any status as a valid method of reinforcing and integrating learning in all areas or if it is isolated solely as a chore of the English classes.

By examining student responses as to the place and value of writing in their other classes, the study describes the existing situation and assesses the amount of writing experience the students are receiving. This may result in revision or reassessment of the need for writing experience in all classes, as was illustrated in the Intercollegiate Writing Committee's study at The University of Arizona (1979) and recommended by The University of Arizona Faculty Senate (1978).
Nature of the Study

The study uses the methodology of descriptive research. Several kinds of course writing are examined to determine their frequency of use. Further, these writings are studied to determine kinds of intended audience.

Definition of Terms

1. Writing - A three part process including pre-writing activities (such as examination of models, discussion, and reading), writing (the act of capturing language in written form, whether on paper, blackboard, or other media), and re-writing (evaluation, polishing, reworking).

2. Audience - The reader for whom the student prepares the written work.

3. Interdisciplinary - Applying to other classes offered by the University outside the English department.

4. Freshman English classes - English 104, the second half of the two-course required Freshman English series.

5. Other classes - Any class a student may be enrolled in that is not Freshman English.

Assumptions

Substance Assumptions:

1. The population studied is representative of the university as a whole.

2. A need exists for the study of interdisciplinary writing.

3. Practice in writing helps with understanding content in classes other than English.
Methodological Assumptions:

1. An experience rating scale is a valid and reliable methodology for collecting data for the study.

2. Students respond accurately and realistically to the questionnaires.

3. Students being interviewed in case studies are not influenced by the fact that their writings are being read and evaluated by another person.

Limitations

The following are the major limitations of this study:

1. The small number of subjects in case studies is necessary to study the accumulation of written work they produce. The results may not be statistically generalizable to the general population but will be used to furnish more individualized responses.

2. It is impossible for students not to focus on writing while they are being interviewed about writing by virtue of their participation in the study.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

In the introduction to *The Composing Processes of Twelfth-Graders*, Janet Emig (1978, p. 5) remarks that "alchemy is ... an apt metaphor to characterize the current state of our knowledge about how students compose. The writer’s hope and ambition for this study is that it may provide one rung of a ladder up from alchemy, so the learning and the teaching of composition may someday attain the status of science as well as art." Until recently little attention has been given to composition research. Other aspects of language were more widely studied and reported on. Until the late 1950's, structuralists such as Bloomfield (1953), Pike (1959), and Fries (1964) were the leading commentators on the use of language. Following them was the transformational-generative movement, with such people as Chomsky (1972), Hunt (1965), and O'Hare (1971). More recently has evolved a view of language wherein semantic constraints prevail in describing the form of utterances, with reports by such people as Halliday (1973). Language had moved from a static and precise form to one more evolving, from a prescriptive treatment to one more descriptive, from an emphasis on the final product to one more on the process of composing. Composition research has expanded greatly, and writing has joined speaking, listening, and reading as the fourth natural process of language.
Recent Composition Research: An Overview

The last decade or so, which Emig has characterized as "amazing" in the field of composition research, demonstrates some of this new focus on writing process. The quantity of attention given to composition is itself a change. The contrast of writing for product versus writing for process is a key change, as Emig pointed out. Britton (1970) and Moffett (1968) have given attention to the relationship between the writer, the audience, and the subject matter. The composing process itself -- how people write, what they do when they are writing -- has been explored by researchers such as Emig (1978), Graves (1978), Britton (1970), and Cooper and Odell (1977). The developmental aspect of composition has been examined by Loban (1961). The basic elements and errors of the writing process have been examined by Shaughnessy (1977) at a time when there is an even greater demand for basic writing skills. Other disciplines have become involved in the composing process, through such theorists as Langer (1953) in philosophy, Bruner (1968) in education, Harding (1963) in literature, and Sapir (1970) in linguistics. People like Britton and Moffett have given attention to the functions of writing, in attempts to clarify and categorize the types of writing. Heeding Dewey's admonition (1929) that education must be conceived as a continuous reconstruction of experience, writers such as Macrorie (1970) and Elbow (1973) have developed experiential writing courses and reported on their students' success. Researchers are now looking more to the use of writing in other disciplines. Backed by the Bullock Report (1975) on the need for interdisciplinary skills, people such as Fillion (1979), Marland (1977), and
Martin (1976a) have opened the door for further study. All of these aspects and others typify the kinds of work now being done that are amazing in their departure from previous efforts.

Three researchers, in particular, might be examined as representative of this new kind of research: James Britton, Janet Emig, and James Moffett. Britton (1970) describes four categories of writing in terms of their intended effect on the audience: expressive, argumentative, descriptive, and narrative. Moffett (1968) has a similar progression of four kinds of discourse, even more selective and public: reflection, conversation, correspondence, and publication. The terms may differ, but the movement from the center of the self outward is the same. Piaget (1955) called this assimilating the world to the self and accommodating the self to the world. Britton remarks that children "shape their experience in order to make it available to themselves to learn from" (Evertts 1970, p. 28). Emig (1971) reflects this movement also when she describes the two modes of writing as reflexive and extensive. The reflexive mode is self-sponsored; the audience is the writer; the style is personal; and the message is about personal experience. The extensive is school-sponsored; the audience is others; the style is impersonal; and the purpose is to convey a message to others. Britton (1970) calls these two modes spectator and participant and defines them similarly. These three researchers and writers are all attempting to get inside the process of writing, to figure out what happens during the composing itself, and to see what kinds of functions the writing serves.

For the classroom teacher, all these changes present a marked contrast to the traditional lessons of grammar and the five paragraph
essay which Emig (1971) calls the Fifty Star Theme because of its nationwide use. Emig has suggested several implications of the new research for the classroom. Primarily she feels that the teaching of composition is still basically uni-modal, that extensive and other-directed writing occurs far more frequently than reflexive or a combination of the two. Also Emig feels that teachers neither read nor write enough. They are not aware of composition research, and they are not regular, practicing writers. As a result, they underconceptualize and oversimplify the composing process. As far as classroom procedures go, more time needs to be spent on prewriting and on revision. Directions for writing need to be clearer and less abstract. Emig also deplores what she calls "neurotic" grading procedures that only identify errors and give no guidance. The product is stressed much more than the process.

Barnes (1971) in Language, the Learner, and the School, observed teachers in the classroom and reported that generally what the teacher teaches is not the same as what the pupil learns. The teacher tends to teach in his/her own frame of reference, relying heavily on technical and pedagogical language. Language then becomes an instrument of teaching instead of an instrument of learning, with more concern given to the teacher's information than to the student's thought or reasoning. Obviously, teachers need to be readers (of everything, especially composition research) and writers (of all sorts, especially their own assignments) in order for changes to reach the classroom.

We are trying to climb the ladder out of "alchemy" and hope to grow more scientific about our knowledge of the composition process.
We are definitely on the way, as the abundance of new research has demonstrated. Much of this, however, has centered on the fields described here. These have had a great effect on classroom instruction, but most of that instruction has remained largely confined to the English classroom. With more knowledge now available, greater attention now needs to be given to writing practices in other classrooms than just English.

**The Functions of Written Language**

Language is often studied in terms of its four aspects: speaking, listening, reading and writing. Classroom teachers for many years have encouraged skill acquisition in these areas individually, but studies in recent years have focused on the integration of language skills and the dependence of each on the others. Sapir's well-known work, *Culture, Language and Personality* (1970) speaks of language as a great force of socialization, a uniformizing agent. He feels that language is the most potent single factor for growth of individuality, that language constantly declares the psychological pace of society's members:

> The gift of speech and a well-ordered language are characteristic of every known group of human beings... Of all aspects of culture, it is a fair guess that language was the first to receive a highly developed form and that its essential perfection is a prerequisite to the development of culture as a whole (Sapir 1970, p. 1).

Emig (in press, p. 5) describes Vygotsky's comments on initial language acquisition and repeats his assertion that "Gestures are writing in air, and written signs frequently are simply gestures that have been fixed."
These written signs or codes are symbols of our language and of our cultural acquisition.

Our culture today has varied demands on language skills of its citizens. Though more means of communication are available than ever before, "outside education and employment the ordinary demands of life still expect an easy ability to cope with print" (Marland 1977, p. 16).

Marland goes on to explain:

We have moved away from the oral tradition, and now the purposes for which speech is required and the mode necessary for many of these purposes seems to me to require the sustenance of a wider literacy. There is no returning to the oral tradition of rural areas, nor is it honest to claim that the average person today feels at ease with fluent speech if he or she cannot read and write to a similar level of competence (Marland 1977, p. 17).

Mina Shaughnessy's thorough study of the problems of basic writers describes the errors of these students in a basic writing class and talks about

... a more immediate reality -- namely, the fact that a person who does not control the dominant code of literacy in a society that generates more writing than any society in history is likely to be pitched against more obstacles than are apparent to those who have already mastered that code (Shaughnessy 1977, p. 13).

Just as Britton asserts that by writing, people "shape their experience in order to make it available to themselves to learn from" (Evertts 1970, p. 28), so Emig agrees when she suggests the implications for the use of writing in schools:

Writing represents, of course, powerful, if not unique, ways of constructing reality and of acting upon the world. Consequently, writing can itself serve as both an aim and a major process of education (Emig in press, p. 1).

In expanding on this assertion, she continues by listing some of the implications for the classroom:
1. Although writing is natural, it is activated by enabling environments;
2. These environments have the following characteristics: they are safe, structured, private, unobtrusive, and literate;
3. Adults in these environments have two especial roles: they are fellow practitioners, and they are providers of possible content, experiences, and feedback;
4. Children need frequent opportunities to practice writing, many of these physical (Emig in press, p. 8).

Martin (1976b) talks about the roles of language in the classroom and suggests that most school writing is not genuine communication, that teachers deal only with the surface features of writing and are seen more as assessors than as communicators. Martin calls for a variety of audiences and purposes, with the students at the center of their own learning, drawing on first-hand experiences. McCrimmon calls the process of writing "a process of making choices. Often the writer does not know at the beginning what choices he will make, or even what his choices are; but each fresh choice tends to dictate those that follow, and gradually a pattern begins to emerge and the constellating fragments fall into place" (R. Graves 1976, p. 5). In this cognitive choice, the student is surveying his culture, assimilating information, integrating knowledge, and transmitting the results in symbolic form on paper. The writing process is, then, a combination of cultural representations, cognitive procedures, and communication.

Writing as a Cognitive Process

Winterowd (1968, p. 20) defines Aristotle's rhetoric as "the faculty . . . of discovering in the particular case what are the available means of persuasion." It is this process of discovery that is the immediate purpose of writing. Longinus remarks that the sublime comes
about through the elevation of the mind expressed in the proper style (Winterowd 1968). Joan Didion (1968, p. 335) echoes these ideas in her definition of "Why I Write:" "I write entirely to find out what I'm thinking, what I'm looking at, what I see and what it means." Frye's (1964, p. 17) treatise on imagination warns that "intellect and emotion never get together in your mind as long as you're simply looking at the world." He says that imagination is the "power of constructing possible models of human experience" (Frye 1964, p. 22), cognitive models that allow and encourage intellectual discovery.

James Britton (1970) describes language as a means of organizing a representation of the world and our experience; from the representation we can generate expectations concerning the future and make a cumulative record of the past. All representations are affected by the experience and personality of the individual; the ability to speak and to reason are dependent on "the ability to generate and use symbols, the ability to create representations of actuality" (Britton 1970, p. 14). Britton feels that it is not just a matter of gaining new experience but making something of that new experience in light of the familiar and also modifying the total picture to be consistent with the new.

Gatherer takes this concept a step further when he states, "The ultimate sign of understanding a subject is the ability to convey one's knowledge in effective representational or transactional language" (Marland 1977, p. 44). The Bullock Committee avoids the usual controversies about language and thought relationships by explaining:

... it is enough to state what would be generally agreed: (a) that higher processes of thinking are normally achieved by the interaction of a child's language behavior with his
other mental and perceptual powers; and (b) that language behavior represents the aspect of his thought processes most accessible to outside influences, including that of the teacher (Bullock Report 1975, p. 49).

Luria and Yudovich take a more distinct position when they affirm that:

Written speech is bound up with the inhibition of immediate synpractical connections. It assumes a much slower, repeated mediating process of analysis and synthesis, which makes it possible not only to develop the required thought, but even to revert to its earlier stages, thus transforming the sequential chain of connections in a simultaneous, self-reviewing structure. Written speech thus represents a new and powerful instrument of thought (Luria and Yudovich 1971, p. 118).

Jerome Bruner has described three phases of cognitive growth: the enactive, the iconic, and the symbolic (Bruner 1972). Moffett (1965, p. 246) explains these three phases of a young person's growth:

First he knows things by manipulating them with his hands, then he begins to classify and interpret the world by means of image summaries, and finally he can carry out logical operations in his head modeled on his earlier physical manipulations.

This movement from the concrete to the abstract is reflected in the writing process of the student:

A series of writing assignments is a series of thinking assignments and therefore is a sequence of internal operations. All stages of a developmental sequence are crucial and none can be left out. Teachers have got to become more sophisticated about this sequence and more aware of the effects in the student of his trying to do what we ask (Moffett 1965, p. 246).

Bruner (1972, p. 166) feels that "what is significant about the growth of mind in the child is to what degree it depends not upon capacity but upon the unlocking of capacity by techniques that come from exposure to the specialized environment of culture."

These techniques certainly including writing, as Mary Beaven (n.d., p. 5) points out:
The writing process may be seen as an externalization of inner, reflective thought processes. Writing slows down thought processes, brings ideas from the preconscious mind to the conscious, and forces the writer to think about ideas before placing them into juxtaposition and connecting them. Such mental activity throughout the composing process makes writing a powerful vehicle through which to order the mind and foster the reflective processes that contribute to conceptual complexity.

Peter Woodford talks of writing as a learning process, a way of testing, probing, and thinking, rather than simply spelling, punctuation, and rules of grammar:

The power of writing as an aid in thinking is not often appreciated. Everyone knows that someone who writes successfully gets his thoughts completely in order before he publishes. But it is seldom pointed out that the very act of writing can help to clarify thinking. Put down wooly thoughts on paper, and their wooliness is immediately exposed. If students come to realize this, they will write willingly and frequently at all stages of their work, instead of relegating "writing up" to the very end and regarding it as a dreadful chore that has very little to do with their "real" work (Woodford 1967, p. 744).

Michael Marland remarks that "only through language can we hypothesize, and the ability to hypothesize is the central ability of developed thought" (Marland 1977, p. 18). The Bullock Report (1975, p. 49) also comments:

The effort to formulate a hypothesis, to put into words some possibility we have envisaged, results in a "spelling out" to which we may then return, in the light of further experience and in search of further possibilities. By a kind of spiral, the formulation itself becomes a source from which we draw further questions, fresh hypotheses. The statement we have made becomes an object of our own contemplation and a spur to further thinking. It is probably true to say that the higher thought processes become possible to the child or adolescent who in this way learns to turn his linguistic activities back upon his own formulations.

These ideas and conceptions of writing as a learning process are more and more being considered in classroom teaching. A new
textbook for freshman composition that deals with writing in the arts and sciences builds its lessons on these principles:

1. Writing, like learning, is not an entity but a process.
2. Writing is a way to learn, not merely a means of communicating to others what has already been mastered.
3. Writing and learning are connected interactive processes. Students, therefore, need instruction and practice in cooperative procedures for learning from each other.
4. Writing in every discipline is a form of social behavior in that discipline. Students must learn the particular conventions of aim and audience within each discipline, and they must also learn to control the common conventional features of the written code: spelling, punctuation, and conformity to standard English usage (Maimon 1981).

Frank Smith (1979, p. 18) reinforces this perspective when he talks of writing as a process of discovery:

Writing is not simply a matter of putting down on paper ideas which we already have in our heads. Many ideas would not exist if they were not created on paper. . . . We do not even know what we are capable of thinking unless we begin to manifest ideas in some observable way. When ideas are on paper we can do more than just contemplate them. We can work on them, mold and manipulate them, and build up a structure of new thought.

In her article, "Writing as a Mode of Learning," Janet Emig explores some of the characteristics of writing that make it particularly effective in the learning process:

Writing serves learning uniquely because writing as process-and-product possesses a cluster of attributes that correspond uniquely to certain powerful learning strategies. . . . Writing is originating and creating a unique verbal construct that is graphically recorded. . . . If the most efficacious learning occurs when learning is re-inforced, then writing through its inherent re-inforcing cycle involving hand, eye, and brain marks a uniquely powerful multi-representational mode for learning. . . . Writing involves the fullest possible functioning of the brain, which entails the active participation in the process of both the left and the right hemispheres. . . . Writing can sponsor learning because it can match its pace (Emig 1977, pp. 122, 123, 124-5, 125, 126).
In the fall of 1977, The University of Arizona formed a Subcommittee on Undergraduate Writing Proficiency to address the writing needs of its undergraduates. The study was directed by the Subcommittee's basic assumptions:

-- that clear writing reflects clear thinking;
-- that the University of Arizona seeks to graduate students who have mastered those forms of written communication which are sufficient to their individual needs;
-- that an educated person is one who can write and think clearly and, therefore, can be a credit to the University of Arizona;
-- that the teaching of writing is the proper concern of all faculty members;
-- that improvement in writing skills results from the commitment and vigilance of the faculty, throughout an undergraduate student's career (University of Arizona, Committee of Eleven 1979, pp. 4-5).

Their assumptions echo and reinforce the attitudes of other writing researchers and point out the very important concept of all teachers, not just English teachers, having a role in the practice of writing.

Writing Across the Curriculum

Writing across the curriculum or interdisciplinary writing is part of the jargon developed in the last decade. Interdisciplinary has usually meant the crossing of two or more well-established disciplines. Hamilton (1980, p. 780) feels that "writing itself had no independent status in these fields of study. Writing was simply something one did to show one had been there, working, as in any other academic field whatever." Since then writing has become recognized as a discipline in itself. Many schools now distinguish between writing and literature, writing and reading, writing and speech, where these areas used to be all called English. "Whereas writing was once taken for granted as
proof of work done in traditional or in interdisciplinary fields, it now
is seen as a kind of study of its own crossing itself with any and all
of these areas of study" (Hamilton 1980, p. 780). Moffett also sees the
integration of discourse into all areas and speaks of it in this way:

Because one discourses in his native language about all
matters and at many abstraction levels, there is really only
one subject (aside from art, music, and physical education),
and that subject is discourse itself, of which science and
social studies are subclasses. The latter are correctly
viewed either as bodies of content (symbolized) or as ways
of processing information (symbolizing) (Moffett 1968, p. 212).

In talking about the teacher's approach to language, Marland (1977,
p. 68) also confirms this view:

Perhaps the most fundamental linguistic point for educators
is that language "is a means of categorizing and ordering
human experience. . . ." Therefore people who teach those
subject areas concerned with the analysis and categorization
of experience need to realize that they are not merely using
language as an expository device: the pupil must re-use it
to achieve the categorizing and ordering that is the intel-
lectual heart of the sciences, the humanities, and even
mathematics.

Harriet Baylor Press sees this need also to link the writing
tasks of students with work they are doing in other classes:

Students need to learn that skills in composition are useful
for essay exams and term papers in other courses and that
other professors are as concerned about their writing as
their English professor is. Such understanding will give
them the incentive to retain and apply what they learn in
composition. Conversely, students need to be shown that
the information they acquire in other college courses is
useful to them in composition. With such understanding it
is almost certain that their themes would be more interest-
ning and complex, let alone easier for them to write (Press
1979, p. 310).

Other writers also suggest the interaction of writing and specific sub-
ject areas. Donald Graves (1978), in his well known article "Balance
the Basics: Let Them Write," discusses the interrelationship of writing
with journalism, reading, and mathematics, while he goes on to discuss the value of writing to the skills of analysis and synthesis. Hamilton (1978, pp. 32-33) remarks on the particular value of writing to science:

Writing is an integral act of science as it is of nearly every other studied form of human inquiry. Writing is the way by which the scientist comes to know his work most fully; it is his most thorough way of understanding what he does... by writing, the scientist formulates his knowledge most thoroughly and forms coherence out of pieces. Without writing, the scientist has only an outline of his method, the experience of his work, a collection of data, an organized array of insights and intuitions, and a formulation, in as reductive terms as possible, of the relationships he verifies. Though they signify much, these possessions do not suffice. They are either too loaded with the texture of the work or too stripped of it.

These principles of analysis, organization, and integration are applicable to other subject areas as well. The Bullock Report urges the involvement of teachers of all subject areas in the process of writing:

We must convince the teacher of history or of science, for example, that he has to understand the process by which his pupils take possession of the historical or scientific information that is offered them; and that such an understanding involves his paying attention to the part language plays in learning. The pupils' engagement with the subject may rely upon a linguistic process that his teaching procedures actually discourage (Bullock 1975, p. 188).

Bryant Fillion's study of Ontario schools refers to the Ontario Curriculum Guide for the Senior Division English when he discusses the importance of the entire school being involved in the language development process:

"In all subject areas, the use of language involves the student in the formation of concepts, the exploration of symbols, the solving of problems, the organization of information, and interaction with his or her environment. Teachers need to recognize and reinforce the central role of language in this learning process" (Fillion 1979, p. 1).
Fillion also describes three major tenets of the concept of a school language policy, based on the work of Nancy Martin (1976b), James Britton (1970), Douglas Barnes (1971), and the Bullock Committee (1975):

1. language is more than surface structure,
2. the entire school as an environment influences students' language development, and
3. language plays a key role in virtually all school learning (Fillion 1979, p. 2).

There is a danger inherent in depriving students of this language and learning opportunity. Limited intellectual growth may result from diminishing use of writing in schools. Donald Graves (1978, p. 30) points out:

A far greater premium is placed on students' ability to read and listen than on their ability to speak and write. In fact, writing is seldom encouraged and sometimes not permitted, from grade one through the university. Yet when students cannot write, they are robbed not only of a valuable tool for expression but of an important means of developing thinking and reading skills as well.

Courtney Cazden (1977, pp. 40-41) writes of the current situation in all too many classrooms today:

Responding to real or imagined community pressures, able and conscientious teachers all over the country are providing abundant practice in discrete basic skills; while classrooms where children are integrating those skills in the service of exciting speaking, listening, reading, and writing activities are becoming rare exceptions.

Douglas Barnes is another researcher who feels that the act of putting ideas into language is a means to understanding those ideas. Without that opportunity to use language, the students' learning suffers (Barnes 1971). Mike Torbe speaks of teachers who "look for the facts" and appear not to be concerned with linguistic structures or conventions:
For academic success in a subject, it is knowledge that is looked for; language is not thought of as important, except when errors suggest a refusal or inability by the pupil to accept the social and linguistic norms expected by the subject teacher. These attitudes bring with them inevitable attitudes to learning (Davis and Parker 1978, p. 60).

The students must be involved with language use in the schools. They must be able to express themselves in a personal way. Marland (1977, pp. 3-4) believes:

Because much of learning is possible only through the personal operation of language, unless the curriculum is planned so as to encourage a real communication and personal use of language, there will be considerably less learning.

We must consider the language very carefully if we are to lead students into an active use of it. Marland (1977, p. 13) insists that:

... a language policy will be partly concerned with what kind of language we use to explore our subjects, what kind of reading material we offer, and what kind of writing we expect from the pupils.

It is the teachers' task to make language available for use; it is the students' task to use and re-use that language until it works for them:

Therefore people who teach those subject areas concerned with the analysis and categorization of experience need to realize that they are not merely using language as an expository device: the pupil must re-use it to achieve the categorizing and ordering that is the intellectual heart of the sciences, the humanities, and even mathematics (Marland 1977, pp. 67-68).

Barnes, Britton and Rosen offer the following questions as a starting point in establishing a language policy for a school.

How much writing and of what kind do pupils ordinarily do in and out of school (continuous and non-continuous, notes, exercises, etc.)? What kinds of writing do teachers expect of pupils in different contexts, and why? How does the nature of the writing task affect what the pupils write and how they write it?
What other influences (reading, conversation, etc.) might affect the way in which pupils write? How do different kinds of writing develop in the school years? (Barnes, Britton and Rosen 1971, p. 148).

These sorts of questions are being asked more frequently as schools and teachers are observing the use (or lack) of language skill in their students and are looking for ways to treat the problems they find.

The University of Arizona is one such school that has begun to examine the use of writing in its courses. They found the current situation to be much like that described by Wayne Danielson (1979, pp. 4-5):

1. Students are spending less time writing in the primary and secondary schools;
2. Teachers are less skilled in writing than they used to be;
3. Society in general, and our schools in particular, are more tolerant of non-standard English and allow and sometimes encourage its use;
4. Students—and their parents—are reading less and watching TV more—and reading has a greater effect on the development of writing skills than watching TV has;
5. The popular models of English usage young people are exposed to today are largely non-standard models—NFL running backs, TV tough guys, and semi-literate rock stars. It is "cool" to sound illiterate;
6. The instruments of modern communication—movie cameras, tape-recordings, the familiar telephone—seem to encourage us not to express our feelings in writing.

In a 1979 survey, The University of Arizona discovered that "seventy-two percent of the faculty senators felt developmental courses in mathematics were needed" (University of Arizona, Committee of Eleven 1979, p. 4). "Ninety-two percent of the respondents to the Committee of Eleven's Spring, 1979, questionnaire indicated that the writing skills of University of Arizona students need improvement," yet "over half of the questionnaire respondents assigned 0-to-1 paper per course, the average paper being 500-to-1500 words in length" (University of
Arizona, Committee of Eleven 1979, p. 10). In 1978 the Southern Arizona Writing Project, a branch of the National Writing Project, surveyed 500 teachers at all levels and found that "the teaching of composition was cited frequently as an important need for in-service education;" further, the directors of the project have confirmed that "teachers do not feel that they know enough about teaching composition, and they would like to learn more about new methods, materials, and approaches" (Davis et al. 1978, p. 2).

Conclusion

More and more often researchers and teachers are examining all aspects of the writing process and the language policies in operation at their schools. More and more the problems focus on one aspect as an integral part of the solution to the problem of lack of language skills: the students need to write, they need to write often and in great quantity, and they need to write in all subject areas, not just English. Donald Graves (1978, p. 2) calls for more response in writing on the part of the students:

Writing is the basic stuff of education. It has been sorely neglected in our schools. We have substituted the passive reception of information for the active expression of facts, ideas, and feelings. We now need to right the balance between sending and receiving. We need to let them write.
CHAPTER 3

PROCEDURES

Subjects

The population for the questionnaire part of the study included all students enrolled in Freshman English 104 classes at The University of Arizona during the spring semester 1982, approximately 1,500 people representing diverse disciplines. From this large group population, a random section was asked to complete a self-appraisal form about their writing. A random sample of five people was selected for individual case studies. Only volunteers were used in the case studies.

Description of Sample Population

Freshman English was chosen as an appropriate place to study diverse students because the English courses are required of every university student. The researcher decided to approach students in the second half of the two-semester series because these students would have accomplished at least one full semester of college work and would, therefore, have some experience to comment upon. Since the course is required of all students, a representative sample of the university population was assured, with experience in various disciplines.
Development of Questionnaire Instruments

Student Questionnaire

The Student Questionnaire (Appendix A) was modeled on Bryant Fillion's 1979 interdisciplinary writing survey of three Toronto schools. Using Fillion's categories of writing, questions were developed to focus on the problem. The Student Questionnaire was field tested in December 1981 with mixed results. Students answering the questions evidently did not carefully read or consider what they were being asked. As a result, whole sections of questions were unanswered, responses were given which were inappropriate for the questions asked, and directions for responding were ignored. The researcher then redesigned the questionnaire for greater simplicity and clarity. Several sections of questions were omitted to shorten the exercise, directions were rewritten in simple list form, and the format for choosing answers was redesigned. Throughout the refinement process, the questionnaire was reviewed by both professional educators and students.

Self-Appraisal Form

The self-appraisal form (Writing Checklist, Appendix B) was adapted from Section I of the questionnaire. With the same categories of kinds of writing, students were asked to account for the quantity of school writing they accomplished each day over a week's period. This instrument was effectively field tested in November 1981 with no apparent confusion or questions on the part of the students. It thus required no modification.
Case Studies

The students selected for case study interviews were given the Writing Checklist to use over a one week period. The information from these self-appraisals was augmented by questioning in private interviews. No new forms were required.

Collection of Data

All English 104 students were given a survey to complete that examined their writing habits in other classes. A questionnaire with a Likert-type scale for answers was utilized to gather data for the study (Appendix A). The self-appraisal form (Appendix B) asked the students in a selected section to complete a check list of the kinds and amount of school writing they do in a week's time. The questionnaire was administered during January 1982, before students were very far into writing patterns of the new semester. The self-appraisal form was administered shortly thereafter in early February. Volunteers for the case studies were interviewed the next week to observe and review actual samples of school writing. Further, these students were questioned as to their perceptions of the amount and kinds of writing occurring in their university courses and their personal observations and experiences of the role of writing in their classes.

Analysis of Data

The data of this descriptive study were analyzed to answer the following questions:

1. What kinds of writing tasks are students doing in other classes?

Specific areas addressed were note-taking, exams -- short answer and
essay, thought papers, research papers, book or speaker reviews, and journals. The information was divided into three general categories that Fillion (1979, pp. 5-6) suggested: "copying (where the student was simply 'taking down' information directly from some source)," directed writing (where students were writing out answers to teacher or text book questions primarily dealing with the recall of information, summarizing, or making notes in their own language), and undirected writing (involving some degree of original thought or creativity, as in stories, reports on students' own topics, etc.)."

2. How frequent are these writing tasks? Specific questions focused on four possible replies: every class meeting, monthly, once or twice a semester, and never.

3. What quantities of writing are being done? Specific questions determined amounts of writing (in terms of pages) in each of the categories in Question 1 above. Case studies allowed the researcher access to actual writings of selected representative students.

4. To what audiences are the students writing? Specific questions determined how often the audience is the writer and how often the audience is external to the writer -- a teacher, a classmate, a grader.

The Questionnaire examined how the large population responded to these questions in reviewing the accomplishments of the recently completed semester. The Writing Checklist followed the writing tasks of a smaller group of subjects throughout a representative week of the semester. The case studies also surveyed a week of writing of the subjects involved and allowed the researcher access to actual student
writings. With this personal approach to specific individuals, the writer was able to elicit varied perceptions as to the amount and kinds of writing the students were doing in their other classes and student opinions as to the value and role of writing in these classes.
CHAPTER 4

FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with reporting the actual returns on the Questionnaire and the Writing Checklist: how many persons responded and what answers they offered to the various questions or information asked of them. It does not attempt to interpret the findings, merely to report them. Interpretation follows in Chapter 5.

Sample Population for Questionnaire

Introductory items on the Questionnaire asked for ethnographic information on the students being surveyed. There were a total of 1,442 persons responding to the Questionnaire. Of these, 703 persons were male (48.8%) and 713 were female (49.4%). Twenty-six persons (1.8%) did not answer this item. Student age descriptions include: 17 to 20 years -- 1,213 (84.1%); 21 to 25 years -- 168 (11.7%); 26 to 30 years -- 30 (2.1%); 31 and up -- 12 (.8%); and Blank -- 19 (1.3%). Student class standings include: Freshman -- 1,102 (76.4%); Sophomore -- 206 (14.3%); Junior -- 64 (4.4%); Senior -- 28 (1.9%); Unclassified -- 10 (.7%); Blank -- 32 (2.2%).

These students represented all colleges of the university, as can be seen in this response to "Intended College of Major" (Table 1).
Table 1. Intended college of major.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>College</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Relative Frequency %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agriculture</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Architecture</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>3.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Business/Public Administration</td>
<td>306</td>
<td>21.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Earth Sciences</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Engineering</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>9.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fine Arts</td>
<td>110</td>
<td>7.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Law</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberal Arts</td>
<td>394</td>
<td>27.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medicine</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mines</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nursing</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pharmacy</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncertain</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>2.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blank</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (answer codes not assigned)</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>8.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>1,442</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
As students began the Questionnaire, they were asked to identify the class other than English in which they did the most writing during the previous semester. For the class they named, they were then asked to respond to a series of questions. These responses are presented by major sections or categories.

Section 1:

In this section the students were asked, "How much of the following kinds of writing did you do in that class?" (Table 2). Answers are reported in N (actual number of responses) and Relative Frequency (in percentages), in terms of all those participating. "Blank" is the number of people not answering an item, and "Other" is the number of people who responded on the answer sheet by choosing an unassigned code. (Students were asked to respond to the Questionnaire on an electronically-scored answer sheet which had more answer codes than were necessary for this study's purpose. As a result, some students marked these unassigned answer codes. These numbers are reported in this chapter and are discussed in Chapter 5.) In this way, the total survey population (1,442 people) is accounted for in each item.

Section 1 was concerned mainly with the kinds of writing done in and for the class named. Taking notes was the most frequent kind of writing; journals and creative writing, including poetry, fiction, and drama, were the least frequent. Other categories had mixed responses, with no clear modes, as can be seen in Table 2.
Table 2. Responses to Section 1: How much of the following kinds of writing did you do in the class you named?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Every Class</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Once or Twice a Semester</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Blank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Copying</td>
<td>410</td>
<td>28.4</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>17.5</td>
<td>455</td>
<td>31.6</td>
<td>86</td>
<td>6.0</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Taking notes</td>
<td>1,274</td>
<td>88.3</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>0.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Writing from dictation</td>
<td>419</td>
<td>29.1</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>17.1</td>
<td>184</td>
<td>12.8</td>
<td>480</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>2.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Answering questions</td>
<td>454</td>
<td>31.5</td>
<td>545</td>
<td>37.8</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>141</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Filling in blanks</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>498</td>
<td>34.5</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>389</td>
<td>27.0</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>2.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Making lists and outlines</td>
<td>237</td>
<td>16.4</td>
<td>488</td>
<td>33.8</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>279</td>
<td>19.3</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>6.3</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Labeling, making charts</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>324</td>
<td>22.5</td>
<td>510</td>
<td>35.4</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Translating, paraphrasing, summarizing</td>
<td>322</td>
<td>22.3</td>
<td>359</td>
<td>24.9</td>
<td>294</td>
<td>20.4</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>25.1</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>3.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Journals, personal experiences, reactions and feelings</td>
<td>94</td>
<td>6.5</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>13.7</td>
<td>242</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>759</td>
<td>52.6</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>6.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Reports, exposition, essays, persuading, informing</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>514</td>
<td>35.6</td>
<td>393</td>
<td>27.3</td>
<td>330</td>
<td>22.9</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>2.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
<td>34</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>1,006</td>
<td>69.8</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>7.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Other kinds of writing</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>5.1</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>469</td>
<td>32.5</td>
<td>699</td>
<td>48.5</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

33
Section 2:

In this section the students were asked, "How much class time did you usually spend on each of these?" (Table 3). Answers for this and all following sections will be reported in the same manner as Section 1, with the number and relative frequency of responses.

Section 2 focused on how much class time was spent on preparation and information for writing in the class named. The response of "Never" was the mode for every item except In-class writing and Other, as shown in Table 3. For In-class writing, the responses were so mixed as to not indicate a clear mode. For Other, the mode was "Blank."

Section 3:

In this section the students were asked, "When your teacher evaluated student writing in that class named, how much importance did he/she place on each of these?" Responses follow in Table 4.

Section 3 examined the kinds of requirements a teacher might ask for in a piece of writing. As demonstrated in Table 4, Content is the most often specified ingredient in writing. Organization and Development also seem to be asked for frequently, but there is no clear mode for these two items. Other items in this section received mixed responses, indicating a wide distribution of frequency and no clear favored response. Other was most frequently answered by "Blank."

Section 4:

In Section 4, a series of questions asked students to identify the principles of evaluation that were made clear to them in the class named. Table 5 shows their responses.
Table 3. Responses to Section 2: How much class time did you usually spend on each of these?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Every Class</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Once or Twice a Semester</th>
<th>Never</th>
<th>Blank</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23. In-class writing</td>
<td>357</td>
<td>321</td>
<td>260</td>
<td>18.0</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24. Discussion and analysis of models or examples of writing</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>252</td>
<td>224</td>
<td>15.5</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25. Grammar and mechanics</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>169</td>
<td>187</td>
<td>13.0</td>
<td>78</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26. Techniques of logic, organization, and persuasion in writing</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>269</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27. Pre-writing (brainstorming, getting ideas, discussion)</td>
<td>149</td>
<td>333</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28. Analysis or evaluation of other students' writing in the class</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>922</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29. Editing, revising, proofreading</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>287</td>
<td>272</td>
<td>18.9</td>
<td>670</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30. Other</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>463</td>
<td>731</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 4. Responses to Section 3: When your teacher evaluated student writing in that class named, how much importance did he/she place on each of these?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>A Lot %</th>
<th>Quite a Bit %</th>
<th>Not Very Much %</th>
<th>None %</th>
<th>Blank %</th>
<th>Other %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31. Content (logic, ideas, knowledge of material)</td>
<td>743 (51.5)</td>
<td>338 (23.4)</td>
<td>115 (8.0)</td>
<td>128 (8.9)</td>
<td>113 (7.8)</td>
<td>5 (0.3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32. Organization</td>
<td>454 (31.5)</td>
<td>510 (35.4)</td>
<td>225 (15.6)</td>
<td>146 (10.1)</td>
<td>100 (6.9)</td>
<td>7 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33. Development (fullness, thoroughness)</td>
<td>468 (32.5)</td>
<td>475 (32.9)</td>
<td>233 (16.2)</td>
<td>169 (11.7)</td>
<td>90 (6.2)</td>
<td>7 (0.5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34. Grammar and sentence structure</td>
<td>232 (16.1)</td>
<td>337 (23.4)</td>
<td>471 (32.7)</td>
<td>298 (20.7)</td>
<td>90 (6.2)</td>
<td>14 (1.0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35. Word choice and phrasing</td>
<td>216 (15.0)</td>
<td>366 (25.4)</td>
<td>476 (33.0)</td>
<td>278 (19.3)</td>
<td>90 (6.2)</td>
<td>16 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36. Mechanics (punctuation, spelling, capitalization)</td>
<td>253 (17.5)</td>
<td>308 (21.4)</td>
<td>497 (34.5)</td>
<td>288 (20.0)</td>
<td>80 (5.5)</td>
<td>16 (1.1)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37. Neatness and use of required form</td>
<td>271 (18.8)</td>
<td>391 (27.1)</td>
<td>424 (29.4)</td>
<td>248 (17.2)</td>
<td>97 (6.7)</td>
<td>11 (0.8)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38. Other</td>
<td>117 (8.1)</td>
<td>63 (4.4)</td>
<td>31 (2.1)</td>
<td>398 (27.6)</td>
<td>791 (54.9)</td>
<td>42 (2.9)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5. Responses to Section 4: Principles of evaluation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Blank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>39. Did you very often have a clear idea of what your writing would be evaluated on?</td>
<td>933</td>
<td>64.7</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>23.4</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>3.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40. Did your teacher mark errors in spelling, mechanics, and grammar?</td>
<td>705</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>570</td>
<td>39.5</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>8.6</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>2.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41. If so, did he/she supply the correct version?</td>
<td>475</td>
<td>32.9</td>
<td>632</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>3.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42. Or did he/she simply indicate that an error has been made?</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>35.3</td>
<td>659</td>
<td>45.7</td>
<td>225</td>
<td>15.6</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>3.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43. Did he/she make written comments on your paper?</td>
<td>1,073</td>
<td>74.4</td>
<td>234</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44. If so, did they deal mostly with content?</td>
<td>847</td>
<td>58.7</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>153</td>
<td>10.6</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>2.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45. Or with manner of presentation?</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>28.9</td>
<td>819</td>
<td>56.8</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>11.7</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>2.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section 4 examined the principles of evaluation that were made clear to the students in the class they named. Students replied they very often knew what their writing would be evaluated on, their teachers did mark errors in language use, the teachers did make written comments on their papers, and these comments dealt most often with content. Teachers did not make comments, in general, on manner of presentation. In a seeming contradiction, students responded that teachers did not simply indicate that an error had been made, but neither did they supply the correct versions for errors (see Table 5).

Section 5:

In this section, students were asked to respond to various categories of the following question: "When your teacher made a writing assignment, which of the following did he/she specify?" Table 6 reports the results in this area.

Section 5 asked the students to identify how much information they were given for a writing assignment. In this section, as in Section 4, there were a number of students who chose unassigned answer codes. Students were fairly evenly divided as to whether they felt the teacher specified Length. They responded generally that Format, Audience, and Style were not clearly specified. They did, however, receive more information on Principles of evaluation, Topic, Organization, and Due date. "Blank" was the modal response for Other, as seen in Table 6.
Table 6. Responses to Section 5: When your teacher made a writing assignment, which of the following did he/she specify?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Blank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>46. Length</td>
<td>673</td>
<td>46.7</td>
<td>622</td>
<td>43.1</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>8.5</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47. Format (margins, heading, type of paper, color of ink)</td>
<td>479</td>
<td>33.2</td>
<td>821</td>
<td>56.9</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48. Principles of evaluation</td>
<td>798</td>
<td>55.3</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>33.9</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49. Audience for whom the writing is intended</td>
<td>481</td>
<td>33.4</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>56.2</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50. Topic</td>
<td>986</td>
<td>68.4</td>
<td>314</td>
<td>21.8</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51. Organization</td>
<td>803</td>
<td>55.7</td>
<td>499</td>
<td>34.6</td>
<td>120</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>52. Due date</td>
<td>1,090</td>
<td>75.6</td>
<td>213</td>
<td>14.8</td>
<td>117</td>
<td>8.1</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53. Style</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>919</td>
<td>63.7</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>8.3</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>1.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54. Other</td>
<td>109</td>
<td>7.6</td>
<td>421</td>
<td>29.2</td>
<td>726</td>
<td>50.3</td>
<td>186</td>
<td>12.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Section 6:

Section 6 examined a particular assignment in the class named when it asked students, "For the writing assignment you did last semester in that class that earned the highest grade, how much time was spent in class on each of the following?" Results are reported in Table 7.

This section examined how much class time was spent in various categories in preparation for a particular assignment in the class named. "None" was the modal response for In-class writing, Student-teacher conferences, and Editing and revising. "Blank" was the modal response again for Other. For the other items in this category, responses were so mixed as to not suggest a clear mode.

Section 7:

Section 7 asked students to examine their attitudes about the place of writing in their society and their experiences with writing at home and at school. The results for these questions are reported in Table 8.

Section 7 focused on students' perceptions of the value and place of writing in their homes, their lives, and their future employment. When asked about their parents' experiences with writing as the students were growing up, the students responded with a fairly even split of "Yes" and "No." With all the other questions in this section, however, the answers were resoundingly affirmative. Students placed a high value on the role of writing in American society, thought writing a good skill to have when getting a job, and planned a career in which
Table 7. Responses to Section 6: For the writing assignment you did last semester in that class that earned the highest grade, how much time was spent in class on each of the following?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>A Lot</th>
<th>Quite a Bit</th>
<th>Not Very Much</th>
<th>None</th>
<th>Blank</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>55. Reading and discussing models or examples of writing</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>309</td>
<td>482</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56. Discussing organization and outlining</td>
<td>178</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>365</td>
<td>399</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57. Discussing errors to avoid</td>
<td>208</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>372</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>134</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58. In-class writing</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>196</td>
<td>337</td>
<td>628</td>
<td>144</td>
<td>19</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59. Student-teacher conferences</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>216</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60. Editing, revising, proofreading</td>
<td>138</td>
<td>251</td>
<td>289</td>
<td>592</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>61. Other</td>
<td>83</td>
<td>119</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>377</td>
<td>810</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 8. Responses to Section 7: Student attitudes about writing.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Blank</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Other</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62. Did your parents use writing very much in their jobs while you were growing up?</td>
<td>691</td>
<td>47.9</td>
<td>631</td>
<td>43.8</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>63. Do you see writing as having a place of value in American society?</td>
<td>1,259</td>
<td>87.3</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>6.7</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>64. Do you consider writing a good skill to have in getting a job?</td>
<td>1,211</td>
<td>84.0</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>8.4</td>
<td>102</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>65. Do you plan a career in which you will use writing to any extent?</td>
<td>927</td>
<td>64.3</td>
<td>397</td>
<td>27.5</td>
<td>105</td>
<td>7.3</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>66. Do you think our society is becoming more tolerant of nonstandard English?</td>
<td>1,077</td>
<td>74.7</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>17.2</td>
<td>103</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>67. Do you think the increased use of modern means of communication (telephone, tape recorder, computer, movie camera) encourages us not to express our feelings and thoughts in writing?</td>
<td>979</td>
<td>67.9</td>
<td>327</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>127</td>
<td>8.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>.6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
they would use writing to some extent. They also answered that society is becoming more tolerant of nonstandard use of language and that other means of communication are encouraging the disuse of writing as a means of communication.

Sample Population for Writing Checklist

The population for the Writing Checklist was drawn from the large population for the Questionnaire. One section of students was chosen at random to complete the one week survey of actual writing accomplished for schoolwork. A total of 23 persons participated. No ethnographic data were collected on these students, but they were part of the total profile of Questionnaire participants. The results of their working surveys are reported in Tables 9 and 10. Table 9 details the responses in terms of totals for each category of writing possibilities. Table 10 details the responses in terms of totals for each day of the week. Answers are reported both by N (number of pages of writing) and Relative Frequency (in percentages).

Table 9 reports the responses by number of pages in each of the writing categories. The highest response is shown in Taking notes, almost half the total of writing done during the week. Other categories show low responses ranging from 2.2% to 11.0%, with the lowest response of the week seen in Creative writing -- poetry, fiction, and drama, .1%.

Table 10 reports the responses by the day of the week for each category. The least amount of writing occurred on Saturday and Sunday, far less than during the week. The lowest week day response can be seen on Friday and the highest on Wednesday, with Monday a close second. Tuesday and Thursday show a fairly even amount of work accomplished.
Table 9. Writing checklist: Responses by category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mon. %</th>
<th>Tue. %</th>
<th>Wed. %</th>
<th>Thu. %</th>
<th>Fri. %</th>
<th>Sat. %</th>
<th>Sun. %</th>
<th>Sub total %</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Copying</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>23.9</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>9.8</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19.7</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>19.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Taking notes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>23.8</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>20.3</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>20.1</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>18.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Writing from dictation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>32.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Answering questions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>22.6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>17.0</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Filling in blanks</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>7.14</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10.7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>17.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Making lists and outlines</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>18.6</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>23.2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>9.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Labeling, making charts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>23.1</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Translating, paraphrasing, summarizing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>34.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>20.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Journals, personal experiences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>22.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Reports, exposition, essays, persuading, informing</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>17.9</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>28.2</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>35.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Other</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>18.7</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>12.5</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 10. Writing checklist: Responses by day of the week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mon.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Tue.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Thu.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Fri.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sat.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sun.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Copying</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>11.2</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>9.0</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>9.1</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>21.6</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Taking notes</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>49.3</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>48.8</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>40.6</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44.9</td>
<td>53</td>
<td>53.5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Writing from dictation</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>14.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>16.8</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>7.9</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>19.2</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Answering questions</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.9</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>8.1</td>
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<td>8.1</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.7</td>
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<td>5. Filling in blanks</td>
<td>3</td>
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<td>1.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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<td>3.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Making lists and outlines</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6.1</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>6.4</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3.0</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>24.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Labeling, making charts</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>3.9</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>11.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Translating, paraphrasing, summarizing</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>11.4</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>5.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>7.0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>8.3</td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Journals, personal experiences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>3.8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>10.8</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>25.0</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Reports, exposition, essays, informing, persuading</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2.0</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5.3</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>7.1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>11.0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5.4</td>
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<td>5.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>1.0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>12. Other</td>
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<td>2.3</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1.3</td>
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<td>1.6</td>
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</tr>
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<td>131</td>
<td>17.8</td>
<td>155</td>
<td>21.0</td>
<td>127</td>
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<td>99</td>
<td>13.4</td>
<td>37</td>
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<td>Weekly Total</td>
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</table>
Summary of Findings

This chapter is concerned with the objective reporting of the responses on the Questionnaire and the Writing Checklist. The population for each is representative of the university as a whole. When given clearly marked answers to choose, some students marked unassigned answer codes on every item or left the items blank. These numbers vary from item to item. The category of Taking notes was the most frequent response on both the Questionnaire and the Writing Checklist by a wide margin. Journals and creative writing, such as poetry, fiction, and drama, were the least frequent on both instruments, again by a wide margin. "Never" was the modal response for almost every item under the category on preparation during class time. Content was the most often specified ingredient for writing assignments. In the area of evaluation, students often knew what their writing would be evaluated on and felt that these marks and comments were more concerned with content than presentation. Students felt they received more information on Topic, Organization, Due date, and Principles of evaluation than on Format, Audience, and Style. "None" was the modal response for class time spent in In-class writing, Student-teacher conferences, and Editing and revising. The highest and most affirmative responses were seen in students' responses to questions about their values and attitudes concerning writing. More school writing seems to take place on Monday and Wednesday, with Friday the lowest week day work response. Little, if any, work in writing occurs on the weekend.
CHAPTER 5

INTERPRETATION OF FINDINGS

Introduction

This chapter concerns itself with interpretation and analysis of the findings reported in Chapter 4, the responses of students to the Questionnaire and the Writing Checklist. Further, this chapter reports the results of the case study interviews, particularly as they relate to the results of the previous two instruments.

Questionnaire

Comments on Questionnaire responses are presented by section or category, as in Chapter 4, and are followed with general comments and observations on the instrument as a whole.

Section 1:

In this section the students were asked to identify the class other than English in which they did the most writing during the previous semester. They were then asked to determine how much writing they did in that class in each of twelve areas or categories. The most obvious response for a college student might be note taking in class as the kind of writing most often reported. Student responses confirm this (see Table 2), with note taking the most frequently occurring writing task reported. In relation to this area, other writing tasks listed did not receive anywhere near the same amount of attention and
time for school work. Categories such as journal writing and creative writing received, in fact, a high response of "Never." All other tasks identified had no clear mode, with a distribution among the answer choices that so closely approximates a natural distribution that easy interpretation is not possible. Students seem to be confining their writing tasks in school work to note taking in class, with infrequent or irregular attempts at other writing modes. They are thus very limited in the kinds of writing they experience in their college work and in the variety of audiences they address through this writing.

Section 2:

In this section students were asked how much class time was spent on each of eight areas of pre-writing or preparation tasks. Students replied (see Table 3) with high "Never" responses to each of these tasks: discussion and analysis of models or examples of writing; grammar and mechanics; techniques of organization, logic, and persuasion in writing; analysis or evaluation of other students' writing in class; editing, proofreading, and revising; and other. A more natural distribution of responses with no clear mode seems to occur for pre-writing (brainstorming, getting ideas, discussion), and for in-class writing. The indication appears to be that students feel they are not getting very much, if any, class time in preparation for any writing tasks they might be assigned or expected to complete. They see few models or examples of writing appropriate for that class and spend relatively little time in the class dealing with practice or preparation for the development of writing skills. Again, as in Section 1, their class experiences in writing are very limited.
Section 3:

In this section students were asked, "When your teacher evaluated student writing in that class named, how much importance did he/she place on each of these (eight items):" Results (see Table 4) included a high response for content as a specified area for evaluation. All other items approximated a more natural distribution of answers and gave no clear single mode. Organization and development seemed to be asked for frequently, but the distribution of responses was mixed. Overwhelmingly, the students report that content is the single most frequently asked for item in evaluation of their writing. This would include the ideas stated, the knowledge of the material, and the logic of the presentation. What is said seems to be of more concern to teachers than how it is said. This result directly correlates with the lack of classroom time spent in details of presentation and mechanics of writing. The other items in this section appear to be required or expected on an irregular or infrequent basis, thus narrowing the expectations put on student writing performance. Apparently students feel that they are being evaluated more for their grasp of the subject area than for their presentation of language and organization skills.

Section 4:

In this section a series of questions asked students to identify the principles of evaluation that were made clear to them in the class they named. The results in this section (see Table 5) directly confirm the answers in the previous section. Students reported that teachers did make written comments on their work and that these comments dealt mostly with the content of the written task, rather than with the
presentation. Students seemed to feel that generally they knew what they would be evaluated on. As far as indicating errors in written work, about half the students felt the teacher did mark errors in spelling, mechanics, and grammar but did not supply the correct version. About half of the students felt that no indication of error was even made. Again, the clear responses here confirm the emphasis on content rather than manner of presentation and reinforce the small amount of class time spent on development of writing skills.

Section 5:

In this section students were asked to respond to various categories of the following question: "When your teacher made a writing assignment, which of the following did he/she specify?" Of the nine items in this section, students reported that four were most clearly specified (see Table 6): principles of evaluation, topic, organization, and due date. The format, the audience for whom the writing was intended, and the style were clearly not specified as often. Students seemed fairly evenly split as to how often length was a requirement. Here, as in the previous section, the information the students received seemed to be more concerned with the content or the topic of the written material, rather than the format, the style, or the manner of presentation. Students appear to be receiving a clear message from instructors that as long as the content area is dealt with in a reasonable manner, the written work will not be assessed for its use of language skills.

Section 6:

This section examined a particular assignment in the class named when it asked students, "For the writing assignment you did last
semester in that class that earned the highest grade, how much time was spent in class on each of the following?" Responses to this section (see Table 7) indicate that students felt little or no time was spent on in-class writing, student-teacher conferences, and editing, revising, and proofreading. This result directly correlates with the results of Section 2 (see Table 3), where students reported little class time was spent in preparation for writing assignments. Other items in Section 6 reflect a natural distribution of answers, with no clear single modes. The amount of class time spent on preparation for major projects seems very limited.

Section 7:

This section of the questionnaire asked students to examine their attitudes about the place of writing in their society and their experiences with writing at home and at school. This section proved the most curious as far as clear modes of response (see Table 8). The only item with any split response was the first one: "Did your parents use writing very much in their jobs while you were growing up?" The students replied fairly evenly "Yes" and "No" here. All other items in this section, however, received clear and unquestioned "Yes" answers. Students felt that writing has a place of value in American society, that it is a good skill to have in getting a job, that they plan a career in which they will use writing to some extent, that society is becoming more tolerant of nonstandard English, and that increased use of modern means of communication encourages us not to express our feelings and thoughts in writing. This is an overwhelmingly positive vote for the value of writing in our society and our jobs. Yet these are
the same students who reported that they are getting little preparation and support for writing as a valid skill in subject areas other than English. Student comments on the Questionnaire, discussed in a later section of this chapter, provide more insight into this contradiction.

General Comments

One of the most immediate cognitive examples of the students' responses to written language was observed in the administration of the Questionnaire itself. Students had many difficulties with the instrument, although they were given clear oral and written directions. Problems included the following:

1. Students wrote their names on the answer sheets, though they were directed not to.

2. Students wrote their matriculation number on the answer sheet, though they were instructed to copy an identification number from the questionnaire form.

3. Students wrote in ink, though they were directed to use pencil.

Two hundred and forty-four questionnaire returns were useless because of this.

4. Students did not copy their identification number, though they were directed to do so.

5. Students chose more than one answer for a question.

6. Students wrote the codes for their identification number and the intended college of major in any space available, though they were directed to use only one.

7. Students wrote in the right hand corner when directed to use the left hand corner, and vice versa.
8. Students answered all items on the questionnaire but did not name the class for which they were replying.

9. Students wrote comments on the back of the answer sheet, though they were directed to use the back of the questionnaire sheet.

10. Students answered some items and left some items blank, in no distinguishable pattern.

11. Students answered some items with answer codes not assigned to the Questionnaire. This happened so regularly that it appears the students had difficulty processing the information in these items.

Such an accumulation of evidence indicates that students have trouble with the cognitive processing of written language, both their own language and that of others. This kind of frustration showed up in student comments such as these:

"I found it hard to apply these questions to my Spanish class. They didn't seem relative [sic]."

"I had a lot of problems answering these questions. The class I chose really doesn't fit in with this questionnaire, so you may not want to use my form."

"This questionnaire doesn't make sense if you can't write about an English class because that is what the questions applied to. Few other classes assign [sic] writing papers."

Student comments were frank and honest about the students' perceptions of the writing situation in their classes and in their society and about the questionnaire itself. Three general categories occurred most frequently. One of these dealt with responses to the instrument (see Appendix C for a more complete listing of comments), such as these:
"I was quite confused at what answers you actually wanted."
"The questions are obviously aimed with english [sic] classes in mind."
"Not enough consideration has been given to scientific courses."

Another major category of student comments was concerned with preparation and practice of English (see Appendix D):

"Writing should be stressed in all classes."
"At the U of A - no body [sic] cares about your writing skills except the English dept. and they don't do such a great job either."
"In this school they are so tied up in proper English that they don't give a damn what the student writes."
"4 years of English was required [sic] at the time I attended my high school I believe they now requier [sic] less years [sic]."

A third major category of student comments reflected the amount of writing students felt they were doing (see Appendix E):

"I have never written in any other class besides Eng."
"No other class required writing"
"Rarely had written assignments"
"I took no course last semester which required writing [sic]."
Students also had trouble indicating the class in which they had done the most writing during the previous semester. Student offerings included these (see Appendix F for a more complete listing):

"No writing classes"
"P.E. Principals" [sic]
"Spanish" [sic]
"Essay exams"
"Biology" [sic]

These comments reflect the situation as described in the Questionnaire responses above: little class time is given to the practice of writing, and little or no consideration is given to writing as a valid learning method. Yet these students feel that writing is an important skill to them in their jobs and their society.

Writing Checklist

Tables 9 and 10 report the results of the week-long self-appraisal by 23 students of the kinds and amounts of writing done for school work. The category Taking notes received the most frequent response, and Journals and Creative writing were the least frequent. This confirms student reports on the Questionnaire, that school work is limited to certain writing tasks and that other tasks are infrequently or irregularly expected. The variety of writing experiences is thus limited, and the kinds of audience to whom the writing is directed are also restricted.

Students in this group reported very little or no writing for school was being accomplished on the weekend and relatively little on
Friday. Most of the writing done during the week studied occurred on Wednesday, with Monday a close second and Tuesday and Thursday following. Thus, writing is not a regularly occurring part of class work and does not occur when class is not in session. Attention to writing is uneven and limited as to time, as well as to category.

Case Studies

The case studies in the research project were intended to provide a closer look at the kinds of information asked for in the two major instruments (the Questionnaire and the Writing Checklist), to afford opportunities to examine student writing samples, and to furnish more individualized responses and explanations to the issues than can be obtained through an impersonal research instrument. The five persons who volunteered for case studies were asked to complete the Writing Checklist over a one week period and to meet with the researcher at least twice during that week for personal interviews and reviews of school writing.

Description of Case Study Population

The five case study volunteers included three males and two females. All levels of class standing were represented and various disciplines of the university. Individual characteristics included the following:

1. Alan is a junior majoring in electrical engineering. He is twenty years old, took a foreign language in high school, and took more than the required number of high school English courses. His parents used writing skills in various ways as he was growing up; his father
is the author of several textbooks. He indicated that the course in which he did the most writing last semester was French Literature in Translation. Alan's grades in English are regularly A's.

2. Mark is an eighteen-year-old freshman planning to major in architecture. He did not take a foreign language in high school and did not consider his parents active writers when he was growing up. He named a beginning architecture course as the one in which he had done the most writing the previous semester. Mark's performance in English is at a high C level, but he does not feel comfortable writing and works hard over everything he composes.

3. Anne is a twenty-one-year-old senior majoring in finance. She feels that increased use of modern means of communication does not discourage the use of written language, but she admits to a bias as computer programming is a large part of her studies and will be an important part of her future job. She identified a course in Management Information Systems as the course for which she did the most writing last semester. She did take a foreign language in high school and several courses in elective English. She feels her parents were active writers and remembers her father frequently writing letters of complaint or protest to the newspaper. Her performance in English is at a B level.

4. Rob is a twenty-two-year-old junior who is majoring in real estate. Although he easily receives A's in his English work, he does not feel that writing is that important to his career plans. He indicated Marketing as the course where he did the most writing the previous semester. He took a foreign language in high school but only
the required number of English courses. He considers his parents active writers but intends to have "a secretary take care of all that stuff" in his own job.

5. Chris is a twenty-year-old sophomore planning to go to medical school. She took a foreign language in high school and several elective English courses beyond the required minimum. She most enjoys her Spanish class now and did the most writing in that class last semester. She performs at a B level of proficiency in English, but she readily admits she would rather be doing other things than writing. She feels her parents were active writers as she was growing up.

Volunteers' Responses to Writing Checklist

The responses of these five people for the Writing Checklist are totaled in Table 11 (Responses by Category) and Table 12 (Responses by Day of Week). Their replies very closely approximate the responses of the larger group in Tables 9 and 10. Taking notes was again the most frequent writing task by far, and Journals and Creative writing were again among the least frequent. The volunteers indicated no response in writing from dictation, which is a decrease from the larger group's results, and the five people also spent more time in answering questions. One category where the response seemed quite a bit higher was other writing, increasing from 2.2% to 23.0%. This was explained by Anne's preparation of computer programming projects and Alan's technical problems in engineering. Where the larger group indicated that most school writing was accomplished on Monday and Wednesday, the
Table 11. Writing checklist: case studies responses by category.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mon.</th>
<th>Tue.</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>Thu.</th>
<th>Fri.</th>
<th>Sat.</th>
<th>Sun.</th>
<th>Sub Total</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Taking notes</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>28.2</td>
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<td>19.6</td>
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<td>15.2</td>
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<td>4. Answering questions</td>
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<td>5</td>
<td>35.7</td>
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<tr>
<td>5. Filling in blanks</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Making lists and outlines</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>33.3</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Labeling, making charts</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Translating, paraphrasing, summarizing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50.0</td>
<td>2</td>
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<td>9. Journals, personal experiences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Reports, exposition, essays, persuading, informing</td>
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<td>11. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>100.0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>21.7</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>13.0</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Grand Total 100 100.0
Table 12. Writing checklist: case studies responses by day of week.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Mon.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Tue.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Wed.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Thu.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Fri.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sat.</th>
<th>%</th>
<th>Sun.</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Copying</td>
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<td>2</td>
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<td>1.1</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>2. Taking notes</td>
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<td>3. Writing from dictation</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Answering questions</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>5</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
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<td>5. Filling in blanks</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Making lists and outlines</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>7. Labeling, making charts</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8. Translating, paraphrasing, summarizing</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>9. Journals, personal experiences</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10. Reports, exposition, essays, informing, persuading</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>11.1</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>5.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Other</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>29.4</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>30.4</td>
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<td>5.5</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>16.7</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23.5</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Daily Totals 17 17.0 23 23.0 18 18.0 18 18.0 17 17.0 2 2.0 4 4.0
Weekly Total 100 100.0
volunteers' replies demonstrated very similar amounts of work but with a slightly higher frequency on Tuesday. Wednesday and Thursday were fairly equal in amounts of work accomplished, but Friday and Monday were much more nearly equal with the volunteers than in the larger group's response. Weekends followed the same pattern of decreased work in writing.

Volunteers' Comments in Interviews

The five volunteers were interviewed both individually and in groups. Because most of their comments and attitudes were so similar, their perceptions are offered here as a group. The most frequently recurring topic on the part of these students was the fixed attitudes of university instructors about the place of writing in the classroom. All five seemed to feel that most teachers expected students to have writing skills well founded before they reach the university level. As a result, these five people all felt very frustrated that, while a certain level of proficiency was expected of them in written work, no one was willing to give them preparation or practice in those skills, assuming that was the responsibility of high school teachers. The volunteers wished for more instruction from English instructors in the Freshman English classes and for more practice in their other classes. Too often, they felt, instructors in subject areas other than English look for content only and do not care as much about the manner of presentation of the material. These instructors do not count off for language errors, style, or development and logic, but look more for demonstration of information appropriate to the subject area. If that
information can be recognized in the presentation, the work is satisfactory. Students reported being told directly that they did not have to worry about grammar and spelling.

While most of these students plan a career in which they will use writing to some extent, they do not feel they are getting enough practice or information now for the kind of written work they will be required to do later. They would like to see teachers in their major areas spend more time on preparation for written work in their career fields. For instance, Anne (in finance) and Mark (in architecture) both feel that, although they may know the technical aspects of their work, they must be able to prepare written reports to clients that present the technical information in a manner which the client can understand. If the reports are poorly written, it will not matter how well the writer knows the technical information. Alan suggested that each department in the university offer a writing course geared to the specific aspects of that subject area.

One result of this lack of preparation and practice in written language is that often these students do not trust their own abilities to write and will evade or put off written work. They are not eager to write in English class and often feel that their efforts are never good enough (which their instructors have been glad to confirm). The students who feel the most comfortable in this group about writing are two whose parents did much writing as the two were growing up: Alan, whose father wrote books, and Anne, who saw her father writing to the newspaper. These two were more willing to attempt writing tasks and more aware of the effects of written communication.
Although Rob does not plan to use writing to a great extent in his job ("a secretary can do all that stuff") and Anne will work primarily with computers, all five volunteers felt that writing is an important skill and has a place of value in our society, though perhaps it does not have as much value at the university as it should.

**Summary of Interpretation of Findings**

The Questionnaire, the Writing Checklist, and the case study interviews all point to similar conclusions: students are not writing very much, they are not writing in very many different modes, they are not getting very much guidance in their writing, and they are not getting very much affirmation for writing as a valid cognitive skill in the classroom. To a certain extent, some students are receiving some of these benefits, but the majority of university students are not, and this majority cannot be ignored. Their responses are clear.
CHAPTER 6

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to provide a description of the amount and kinds of writing done by Freshman English students in classes other than English at The University of Arizona in Tucson. In this chapter, the findings of the study are presented in terms of the major research questions identified in Chapter 3.

Summary

The study involved three aspects of observation and documentation of writing habits in the university: a Questionnaire administered to 1,442 Freshman English students, a Writing Checklist completed by 23 students over a one week period, and case study interviews of five students. All three of these aspects will be considered in the findings for the individual research questions.

Research Question 1

What kinds of writing tasks are students doing in classes other than English?

Analysis of the data indicates the following significant research findings.

1. Note taking occurs as the most frequent form of writing task asked of students at the university.
2. Creative writing, such as poetry, fiction, and drama, occurs as the least frequent writing task for university students.

3. Other kinds of writing tasks, such as report and essay writing, answering questions, and summarizing, are occurring, but at a much less frequent and much less consistent rate than note taking.

4. Fillion's (1979, p. 5) category of "copying (where the student was simply 'taking down' information directly from some source)" would include copying and writing from dictation, both of which occur on an irregular or sporadic basis.

5. Fillion's (1979, p. 6) second general category of school writing is called "directed writing (where students were writing out answers to teacher or textbook questions primarily dealing with the recall of information, summarizing, or making notes in their own language)." In this category, results show that note taking is the most often used writing task. Other tasks of this sort occur intermittently and irregularly: answering questions; filling in blanks; making lists and outlines; labeling and making charts; and translating, paraphrasing, and summarizing.

6. Fillion's (1979, p. 6) third category of student writing, called "undirected writing (involving some degree of original thought or creativity, as in stories, reports on students' own topics, etc.)," is less consistently emphasized. These writing tasks are the least frequently occurring: journals, personal experiences, reactions and feelings; reports, exposition, essays, persuading, informing; and poetry, fiction, and drama.
Research Question 2

How frequent are these writing tasks?

Analysis of the data indicates the following significant results.

1. Very little class time is spent on preparation for writing.
   Such vital areas for writing as the following are not given attention: discussion and analysis of models or examples of writing; grammar and mechanics; techniques of logic, organization, and persuasion in writing; analysis or evaluation of other students' writing in the class; and editing, revising, and proofreading.

2. Time spent on in-class writing is sporadic and infrequent.

3. The concept of pre-writing (brainstorming, discussion, getting ideas) is given little or no time in university classes.

4. Class time is infrequently or irregularly spent on discussion of organization and outlining, discussion of errors to avoid in writing, and student-teacher conferences.

5. Students are doing the bulk of their school writing on school days, particularly Monday and Wednesday, and are doing little, if any, school writing on weekends and Friday.

6. Most of the time spent on school writing tasks is confined to note taking.

Research Question 3

What quantities of writing are being done?

Analysis of the data indicates the following significant results.
1. Students are writing an average of 20 to 30 pages a week for school work.

2. Half the amount of writing accomplished in a week is note taking.

3. The remaining half of the weekly work is divided irregularly among other writing tasks, with less than 11% in any given area.

4. For most students, no writing is done in journals or creative writing, such as poetry, fiction, and drama.

Research Question 4

To what audiences are the students writing?

Analysis of the data indicates the following significant results.

1. Emig (1971) describes two modes of writing as reflexive and extensive. The reflexive mode is self-sponsored; the audience is the writer; the style is personal; and the message is about personal experience. The extensive is school-sponsored; the audience is others; the style is impersonal; and the purpose is to convey a message to others. University students' writing is confined almost entirely to the extensive mode. Students write to a teacher or grader. They are limited in the variety of writing experiences they have and, thus, are limited in the kinds of audiences they write for.

2. Personal or reflexive writing appears so infrequently as to have no impact on the writing experiences of university students.

3. Students are writing primarily to be graded and to respond to the expectations of the instructor, rather than to gain a personal integration of the material.
4. Students recognize the need for a variety of audiences in future career plans and feel they are not getting adequate preparation at the college level for this future experience.

5. Martin (1976b) calls for a variety of audiences and purposes, feeling that teachers typically deal only with the surface features of writing and are seen more as assessors than as communicators. Students are reflecting this limited role of writing when they are confined to writing for assessment only.

6. Limits on the variety of audiences used may thus contribute to limits on the kind and amount of cognitive growth in the subject area.

General Comments

Two of the most evident characteristics of the current situation are the limitations and the frustration: limitations on the kind and amount of time spent on writing, limitations on the variety of writing accomplished, frustrations of the teachers over students who are not adequately prepared in writing skill, and frustrations of the students who very often do not have a choice in their writing habits. Students' responses demonstrate their confusion and uncertainties.

Implications and Recommendations

Classroom Teaching

1. Grading procedures which only identify errors and which provide no guidance should be evaluated and redesigned.

2. Students need to do more writing in all classes, both in terms of quantity of writing and in terms of varieties of writing. They need more experience in varying modes and audiences.
3. Students should participate more in the writing process itself, identifying their topics, making conclusions from personal study and experience, and applying higher cognitive processes to subject area information.

4. More emphasis should be given to the process of writing and assimilation, not just the product.

5. In all subject areas, more class time should be spent on writing, particularly on pre-writing and re-writing.

6. Consideration should be given to the establishment of writing courses in departments that teach students what to expect in their career fields and how to present their subject area information in written form.

Teacher Education

1. Teachers of all subject areas need to be writers and readers in at least their subject area. They are models and authorities in their classes and need to understand the cognitive experience involved in writing.

2. These teachers are very often specialists in a defined area of study and may not be trained in pedagogical approaches to their area. These teachers need to be made aware of their use of language as an instrument of teaching. Their frame of reference should rely less on technical language and should be more concerned with the student's reasoning or thought.

3. Competency testing may need to be a required part of undergraduate preparation for teaching or for any subject area, to insure
that college graduates, particularly those who will become teachers, have basic writing skills.

4. College instructors need to be made aware of writing not simply as an entity, but also as a process, one that has an appropriate place and role in all disciplines.

5. These instructors need to learn to make language available for use in learning, not simply to use it as a tool for assessment.

6. These instructors need experience writing in various modes and to various audiences.

Role of the English Department

1. The English department should be a central source of reference and articulation for all other subject areas. It can sponsor in-service training and workshops for instructors in other departments and be available for consultation.

2. The English department should also be a source for articulation with high schools and with other universities.

3. Instructors in English should give attention to the process of writing and not just the product. This emphasis and practice will translate to the demands of other subject areas.

4. The English department and its instructors should keep in mind the future writing skills that will be asked of the student and should allow for some attention to writing in various job areas.

Future Research

1. A need exists for more longitudinal studies of students' writing habits. A group of university students could be followed through their
college experiences and followed up in career fields after graduation. Case studies of individual students over a longer period of time would allow access to more detailed and specific information on writing practices.

2. More study is needed on the connections between high school experiences in English and foreign language and university success in writing.

3. More information is needed about the process of writing itself, what goes on in the student's mind as he/she writes and how the thoughts are assimilated and transmitted to paper.

4. More measures are needed of how much cognitive growth is made through writing, as compared to other learning methods.

5. More information and data are needed from the students themselves as to their perceptions and attitudes about the role of writing.

General Comments

Little research has been done on university students to determine how much and what kinds of writing they are doing in classes other than English. This study is an attempt to describe writing patterns and habits for these students in their college work. Much remains to be done in this field, and more work is needed, but if our society continues to value writing as an important skill, then our universities must re-examine the role of writing in college classes. Without the process of discovery that occurs when writing, the student's education and cognitive growth are greatly limited. Writing is a valuable cognitive aid that must be used in all departments.
APPENDIX A

STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identification Number</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Special Code: 01 Agriculture</td>
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<tr>
<td>02 Architecture</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>04 Earth Sciences</td>
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<tr>
<td>05 Education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>06 Engineering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>07 Fine Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>08 Law</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>09 Liberal Arts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 Medicine</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### STUDENT BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. **Sex:**
   - A - Male
   - B - Female

2. **Age:**
   - A - 17 to 20
   - B - 21 to 25
   - C - 26 to 30
   - D - 31 and up

3. **Class standing:**
   - A - Freshman
   - B - Sophomore
   - C - Junior
   - D - Senior
   - E - Unclassified

4. **How many colleges besides University of Arizona have you attended?**
   - A - 1
   - B - 2
   - C - 3
   - D - 4
   - E - more than 4

5. **How many college English courses have you had at schools other than U of Arizona?**
   - A - 1
   - B - 2
   - C - 3
   - D - 4
   - E - more than 4

6. **Did you take a foreign language in high school?**
   - A - yes
   - B - no

7. **How many semesters of required English did you take in high school?**
   - A - 1
   - B - 2
   - C - 3
   - D - 4
   - E - more than 4

8. **How many semesters of elective English did you take in high school?**
   - A - 1
   - B - 2
   - C - 3
   - D - 4
   - E - more than 4

9. **During the first semester of your senior year in high school, how many papers did you write in classes other than English? (________ total pages)**
   - A - 2
   - B - 4
   - C - 6
   - D - 8
   - E - more than 8

10. **Were you in college last semester?**
    - A - Yes, but not here
    - B - Yes, here
    - C - No

**Please turn to the next page**
STUDENT QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions:
• Consider all of the classes you took last semester, except English.
• Identify the class in which you did the most writing.
• DO NOT CHOOSE ENGLISH!!
• Write the name of the class here: ________________________________
• Answer all the questions below for this class only.

I. How much of the following kinds of writing did you do in each class?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Kind</th>
<th>Every Class</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Once or twice a semester</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11. Copying</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12. Taking notes</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Writing from dictation</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Answering questions</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15. Filling in blanks</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Making lists and outlines</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Labeling, making charts</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18. Translating, summarizing, paraphrasing</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19. Journals, personal experiences, reactions and feelings</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20. Reports, exposition, essays, informing, persuading</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22. Other (please specify here)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please turn to the next page
II. How much class time did you usually spend on each of these?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Every Class</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Once or twice a semester</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>In-class writing</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Discussion and analysis of models or examples of writing</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Grammar and mechanics</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Techniques of organization, logic, and persuasion in writing</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>Prewriting (brainstorming, getting ideas, discussion)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Analysis or evaluation of other students' writing in the class</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>Editing, revising, proofreading</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Other (please specify here)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

III. When your teacher evaluated student writing in that class, how much importance did he/she place on each of these?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>Content (ideas, knowledge of material, logic)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Organization</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>Development (fullness, thoroughness)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Grammar and sentence structure</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>Word choice and phrasing</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Mechanics (spelling, punctuation, capitalization)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Neatness and use of required form</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>Other (please specify here)</td>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Please turn to the next page
IV. 39. Did you very often have a clear idea of what your writing would be evaluated on?

40. Did your teacher mark errors in spelling, mechanics, and grammar?

41. If so, did he/she supply the correct version?

42. Or did he/she simply indicate that an error has been made?

43. Did he/she make written comments on your papers?

44. If so, did they deal mostly with content?

45. Or with manner of presentation?

V. When your teacher made a writing assignment, which of the following did he/she specify?

46. Length

47. Format (margins, heading, type of paper, color of ink)

48. Principles of evaluation

49. Audience for whom the writing is intended

50. Topic

51. Organization

52. Due date

53. Style

54. Other (please specify here)
VI. For the writing assignment you did last semester in that class that earned the highest grade, how much time was spent in class on each of the following?  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A lot</th>
<th>Quite a bit</th>
<th>Not very much</th>
<th>None</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>D</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

55. Reading and discussing models or examples of writing

56. Discussing organization and outlining

57. Discussing errors to avoid

58. In-class writing

59. Student-teacher conferences

60. Editing, revising, proofreading

61. Other (please specify here)

---

VII. 62. Did your parents use writing very much in their jobs while you were growing up?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

63. Do you see writing as having a place of value in American society?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

64. Do you consider writing a good skill to have in getting a job?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

65. Do you plan a career in which you will use writing to any extent?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

66. Do you think our society is becoming more tolerant of nonstandard English?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

67. Do you think the increased use of modern means of communication (telephone, tape recorder, computer, movie camera) encourages us not to express our feelings and thoughts in writing?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>B</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

VIII. Please check to see that you answered all items on all three pages. Your responses are very much appreciated and will help to improve the writing situation for yourself and others. Please add any comments of your own about the place and value of writing in the university or our society. Feel free to use the back.
APPENDIX B

STUDENT WRITING CHECKLIST

Directions: Once a day for the next week, please examine all the schoolwork you have written during that day (except for English class work) and indicate the total number of pages completed each day. Please be honest!

(A page is two-thirds or more of a sheet of paper that measures about 8½" by 11". A half-page is half of that sheet or smaller sheets of writing, including note cards, note paper, etc.)

How much of the following kinds of writing did you do in your schoolwork today?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Tu</th>
<th>We</th>
<th>Th</th>
<th>Fr</th>
<th>Sa</th>
<th>Su</th>
<th>Mo</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Copying</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>2. Taking notes</td>
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<tr>
<td>3. Writing from dictation</td>
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<td>4. Answering questions</td>
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<td>5. Filling in blanks</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>6. Making lists and outlines</td>
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<tr>
<td>7. Labeling, making charts</td>
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<td>8. Translating, summarizing, paraphrasing</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>9. Journals, personal experiences</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Reports, exposition, informing, persuading, essays</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>11. Poetry, fiction, drama</td>
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<tr>
<td>12. Other (please specify ____________)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Thank you for your help!
APPENDIX C

STUDENT COMMENTS RELATED TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

These comments were taken from student responses to the questionnaire. All errors appeared in the original offerings.

1. "I wish to protest the use of this form to determine writing skills in present English classes. The survey was not well thought out. The questions are obviously aimed with English classes in mind. The choice list is also extremely ambiguous and superfluous."

2. "Some questions . . . leave no room for an alternative answer."

3. "This questionnaire is very poorly organized. For the sake of the people who have yet to encounter it, trash it before it gets out of hand."

4. "The terminology of 'a lot' and 'quite a bit' is vague and/or redundant. If you truly wish to improve writing skills you should encourage more specific usage of phrases."

5. "This was a truly crappy questionnaire."

6. "Since this is my 2nd semester here, I had a lot of problems answering these questions. The class I chose really doesn't fit in with this questionnaire, so you may not want to use my form."

7. "This survey in my eyes serves absolutely no purpose as far as I'm concerned. The questions serve no purpose in my case because they do not pertain to me. I really do not think that this survey will do you or I any good at all. All this survey did was waste paper and use our tax dollars."
8. "this survey was **very** vague and the questions were not thought out too well. You don't get satisfactory results try rewriting this thing a little more clearly. I was quite confused at what answers you actually wanted."

9. "This is a joke."

10. "I think this survey is too vague to answer completely. Not enough consideration has been given to scientific courses."

11. "I think this questionnaire needs to be more carefully thought out. In **many** cases to give one of the answers demanded you would have to lie."

12. "I found it hard to apply these questions to my Spanish class. They didn't seem relative."

13. "I resent being required to complete this questionnaire when I have so many other school-related projects to contend with. Though, I realize this may be helpful and put to good use, I think it could be carried out in a more personal and less time consuming manner."
APPENDIX D

STUDENT COMMENTS RELATED TO ENGLISH PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

These comments were taken from student responses to the questionnaire. All errors appeared in the original offerings.

1. "Society is rapidly changing and therefore so is the English language. There are many forms of communication, as you mentioned, besides writing. I don't think the tolerance of nonstandard English is a bad thing. Any change, as long as it does not breakdown communication in any way will have to be accepted. I feel that holding on to an obsolete language is a danger. I'm not in any way comparing the English language to latin, but I am condoning any language that can express thoughts & ideas clearly."

2. "I'm not impressed w/U. of A English Dept."

3. "Writing should be stressed in all classes. Pre-law students should be able to take a special class in preparation for the LSAT exams as these exams now stress writing skills."

4. "Writing is important as an alternative means of communication. It is a personal, lasting, and formal style of communication that is relevant to employment. A persons writing should be taken only in context, and only applied to who it was meant for."

5. "The common error in university writing is that too much emphasis is placed on mechanics & semantics. Often I find that my idea is
not as important to the instructor as is the mechanical aspect. This is not only frustrating but discouraging as well."

6. "The emphasis on writing in my Psych class was very little. We had an essay every week - yet it was only to see if we understood the readings. At the U of A - no body cares about your writing skills except the English dept. and they don't do such a great job either. I feel their intent is to see how many freshman they can drop - not to better their English backgrounds."

7. "The department of English should use more feeling when discussing the requirements needed for english credits."

8. "Writing is very important in communication."

9. "The speech class I had was like almost having another English class. I think for almost every type (cause/effect, argumentative, etc) of paper in English 102 that I wrote, it would coincide with the type of speech I would have to give. I used the same topics and their formats of the essays (that I wrote for English) and prepared them for the speech of the similar type of format. It worked out easily. My speech class also helped me to understand how to write some of the types of essays. For example, the cause/effect essay was similar to the way we were to give a speech, although it was called something else."

10. "In this school they are so tied up in proper English that they don't give a damn what the student writes. I know grammar is important, but content should be the most important. I didn't answer questions 4, 5, and 8 because there was no O's."
11. "Writing is very important here at the University and in American society, but it is very difficult when one comes from a Hispanic background where Spanish may be the dominant language."

12. "I feel that writing has a strong place in our society and our university. Unfortunately I feel that people aren't taking advantage of it."

13. "Wish you would please have free advisers/counseling so that we students have a place to take our essays for proof-reading and/or comments. Teachers usually don't want to proof read an essay that they in turn are going to be grading. We need the help of others very many times when the teacher is unavailable or unwilling to help. Thank you."

14. "Yes, I do feel society has become more tolerant of use of substandard English, however, I feel such tolerance is very damaging in regard to the quality of education today. The increased use of modern conveniences (telephone, computers, etc.) has increased the process of expressing one's thoughts and ideas but has wreaked havoc upon the quality of writing skills."

15. "I feel that most high school English programs are so poor that two English classes in college can hardly remedy the situation. Writing should be used in all classes if there is too be any improvement. Yet, teachers in all classes would have to take time in trying to remedy the students' writing. Unfortunately, not all teachers are capable of doing this well and many simply wouldn't be willing."

16. "I feel the English dept. at the university needs to improve in order to adequately fulfill the teaching of valuable writing skills"
84

to students attending such institution so they may be prepared to face a world or variety of constant technological achievement. I suggest that the UA improve the quality of English TA's (in some instances of course) so they may better teach their students on the subject of writing. In addition, I feel that more emphasis than is currently placed, should be put upon basic grammar, punctuation, sentence structure, and maybe also paragraph development."

17. "Writing should be taken seriously but at the U of A some teachers push students to much causing many students, mentally to despise English. My opinion is to have a good English program but taking away the thought that students are excellent writers."

18. "I feel writing at the University is extremely important to the extent of knowing what to do. In order to get along good in any class at the University or at any college whatsoever, good writing habits are important. Writing is expected from everyone in college."

19. "The Univ. forms of writing are far too structured & do not leave room for creativity."

20. "I don't think writing should have the value that it has now. I feel communication is more important in society. Writing should be used for pleasure not to judge what a person knows."

21. "I really felt intimidated by the U of A's English Dept, and I really don't think it is, or was, necessary. Overall, I like the U of A, but intimidation is no way in which to make friends."

22. "4 years of English was requiered at the time I attended my high school I believe they now requier less years."
23. "about that 1 paper that was required for Soc 100 - the T.A. never discussed it in class, seemed very apathetic, did not encourage any sort of discussion, etc. I think it was just an assignment to give us a grade (attendance wasn't required in her class)"

24. "We speak english in this country. Or so we claim. The truth is that more often than not, we 'speak' some manner of slang contrived in (illegible word)."

25. "Writing has always been stressed in schools I have attended prior to this university. I believe writing is perhaps the greatest skill used in higher education, and that the stress placed on writing skills should be continued and increased. Even as a freshman I have had friends come (some of them upper classmen) and ask for help in writing. Either they had not learned the proper writing skills in high school or they had taken English Comp courses at community colleges and were not sufficiently prepared for college composition in a strong English department at a university such as this. I think the English Dep't does a great job preparing challenging frosh writing courses however hope that some other dep'ts will stress good writing skills a little more in the future after all I'd rather have the chance to write out the way I really feel about an answer than to 'fill in the blank' or 'color dots' as so many classes prefer to have me do!"

26. "There seems to be little standardization between the difficulty levels of the same material covered and grading procedures between what are said to be the same English courses. The teachings assistants giving a Freshman English course 103 do not produce
equally prepared students, simply because some are more lax than others, and some do not feel that a lot of feedback is necessary. I am of the opinion that those hired to teach Freshman English classes should be screened more carefully for their teaching abilities and quality communication skills. Further, the material covered from one teacher to the other should be more closely related and grading procedures should be similar. My friend & I, having always excelled in our many writing adventures for our high school paper (et. al) too English 103. I had (teacher's name), whom I feel is a quite competent & brilliant man. I learned a great deal & I am still trying to master his concepts, while only earning a 'B'. My friend still feels she is in high school, grazing by with easy 'A's and learning nothing. We discuss what I learned in my class & she is intrigued, thinking of taking Mr. ----'s course for no credit."

27. "although writing is very important to our society, many people cannot grasp a written concept. These people must be shown, either by models or video. Television, movies, video games (ie, computer games) can teach people if the production of the shows or the design of a game is designed towards teaching people."

28. "While writing is indeed important, I still feel that too much emphasis is placed upon it."

29. "It really bothers me to see people use poor grammar."

30. "I think writing should be used more for exams, because, it gives you a better chance to show what you know"
APPENDIX E

STUDENT COMMENTS RELATED TO AMOUNT OF WRITING

These comments were taken from student responses to the questionnaire. All errors appeared in the original offerings.

1. "I took no course last semester which required writing. English was my primary source of required writing. I disliked my teacher and the format. I answered the questions based on a chemistry course, and some answers do not express my feelings toward the amount of writing and type of writing I have been exposed to. I would like to see more in class creative writing in the classroom."

2. "Unfortunately the bulk of my answers will be useless because I haven't had a writing oriented class in at least 2 semesters. I've had all engineering classes in which most of the writing is in the form of taking notes."

3. "Did no writing"

4. "No writing, Math & Engineering courses"

5. "Acting I I didn't write at all in any other class, I wrote 2 critiques for Acting."

6. "None of these questions really applied to any of my classes. Chemistry Labs were the closest thing to writing I did."

7. "Couldn't answer all questions as some of them did not apply to my situation last semester."

8. "I have never written in any other class besides Eng."
9. "Did not write any papers"
10. "Many questions were not relevant"
11. "Rarely had written assignments"
12. "I Did No Writing Exercises In Any Class Outside Of English."
13. "No classes with writing"
14. "Did not write essays in other classes"
15. "I did not write last semester."
16. "No other class required writing"
17. "I didn't have to (write) at all."
18. "Did not write any papers except in English"
19. "My courses were all accounting and mathematics which required a minimal amount of writing. Thus most of the questions are not applicable."
20. "I didn't do the assignment - it was optional."
21. "All I wrote were test essays."
22. "When the answer 'Never' appears on my answer sheet, it is not because, The teacher did not teach us, but because I did not do any writing last semester."
23. "This questionnaire doesn't make sense if you can't write about an English class because that is what the questions applied to. Few other classes assign writing papers."
24. "We didn't really write papers"
25. "This evaluation wasn't useful because last semester I took no class that required writing of any kind except for English. (Most class only required a student to take notes; nothing was turned in.)"
26. "Gave no writing assignments"
These comments were taken from student responses to the questionnaire. All errors appeared in the original offerings.

1. "Don't know"
2. "No writing classes"
3. "Not applicable"
4. "Sociology"
5. "Psychology"
6. "Only had Geol. and P.E. no writing"
7. "No other courses"
8. "P.E. Principals"
9. "Phych"
10. "None All Engineering Curriculum"
11. "Psyc"
12. "Biology"
13. "Spanish"
14. "Psychology"
15. "Child Development"
16. "Chemistry"
17. "Comparitive Politics"
18. "P.E (Avocado Seed Spitting)"
19. "Essay exams"
20. "None"


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