

Advanced Placement English and First-Year Composition:
An Analysis Using Activity Theory with Implications for Transfer

by

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A growing trend in secondary and higher education today is students' ability to earn college credit while still in high school. Currently, there are four main ways for students to earn this early credit: the Advanced Placement (AP) Program, an International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma, dual enrollment, or early college. The AP Program, particularly the AP English program, is the focus of this research project, for successful scores, a three, four, or five on a five point scale, on either AP English exam translates to advanced credit and exemption from first-year composition course(s) in college.

The purpose of this qualitative, descriptive research project is to determine whether or not an AP English course taken in high school functions like a first-year composition course in college and to locate what, if anything, about writing transfers. In order to examine both contexts, the project utilizes activity theory as its theoretical frame to uncover the ways in which both academic systems operate and transfer theory to determine what articulates across these spaces. This project utilized survey data and observation material from both courses taken over the course of a semester, as well as textual information provided by the AP Program's website in order to triangulate the findings and make comparisons across systems. The findings suggest that while these two systems share some similar activities, very little seems to transfer.

Advanced Placement English and First-Year Composition:
An Analysis Using Activity Theory with Implications for Transfer

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Chapter 1: The Evolving Culture of AP

For several decades now, researchers and scholars have been studying the various ways high school students, before even stepping foot on a college campus, are receiving college credit. Given the rising cost of higher education and an uncertain economy, those discussions have intensified. Two of the most common ways for students to receive college credit early involve taking an Advanced Placement (AP) test or enrolling in a dual enrollment course that might be offered at the high school, a nearby college campus, or via distance education. The third way a student can gain early college credit is through earning an International Baccalaureate (IB) diploma. Finally, students can also accelerate their final years of high school and first two years of college by enrolling in an early college (EC) program (Hansen and Farris xxiii).

Of these four ways, the AP Program, especially the AP English courses and their exams are a concern for many researchers. As Hansen and Farris ask, “Is the ‘outsourcing’ of instruction in college writing to noncollege ‘providers’ of educational services something to be resisted or embraced?” (xxv). Though the AP Program itself is not a for-profit business, the College Board, an organization that sells educational products and services, sponsors it. The College Board makes billions of dollars annually through the administration of the AP Program, while promising hopeful students and their parents financial relief in the thousands of dollars for “successful” exam scores that will translate into college scholarships and opportunities for these students to receive college credit while still in high school. The AP program has steadily grown in popularity since its establishment more than fifty years ago, and since then numerous academics and researchers, including those paid by the College Board, have studied the validity of AP’s claims. One glance at AP’s 9th Annual Report to the Nation demonstrates that the two AP English courses, “Literature and Composition” and “Language and Composition,” are among

the top three most often taken exams by high school students (“9th Annual” 27), and success on one of those two exams could mean possible exemption from a first-year writing course in college. A question this possible exemption raises is whether or not the classrooms and curricula are alike enough to warrant such an exchange. In other words, in what ways, if any, does a high school AP English class function like a first-year composition class in college and what, if anything, about writing transfers?

Though AP has been in existence for decades now, many researchers still question the program’s ability to match what is learned in a high school AP English class to what is learned in a first-year writing course in college. Further, will AP English aid students in not only their future college courses, but also will it provide the tools necessary for them to enter into a new discourse community (e.g., college) the following year (or two if the student is a high school junior)? In a theoretical sense, is the activity system of a high school AP English class like that of a college’s first-year writing course? How do those activity systems affect transfer? These questions are the focus of this research study, for they offer the ability to approach both classrooms in a way not done so to date.

In AP’s publicity materials, the program characterizes itself as “a rigorous academic program built on the commitment, passion, and hard work of students and educators from both secondary schools and higher education” (1st - 6th Annual AP Report). According to Robert DiYanni, the director of international services at the College Board, the idea for the AP Program was a product of several discussions held by the faculty of Kenyon College in 1951. The faculty of Kenyon College was interested in “allowing strong secondary school students to begin working toward a liberal arts degree before formally matriculating in college” (1). After many discussions, the idea gained momentum and soon representatives from twelve U.S. colleges and

universities formed the Committee on Admission with Advanced Standing, which was funded by a small grant from the Ford Foundation (1). Three main assumptions guided the work of the committee:

- Able students in the American secondary school systems were not well enough served academically -- for the able student, the American school system 'wastes time.'
- The best place for adolescents is in the secondary school.
- The best teachers for adolescents are secondary school teachers. (Cornog qtd. in DiYanni 1)

Additionally, Joseph Jones recounts in "The Beginnings of AP and the Ends of First-Year College Writing" that there were numerous objections regarding the direction of American schools during the time period cited by DiYanni, "more specifically, the ways gifted and talented students were being underserved" (43). Many critics of public education at that time felt "the concern was not so much that no child be left behind: the concern was that the 'best' students were not being challenged and advanced as quickly as they should be" (43). According to Jones's research, the AP Program emerged out of educators' distaste for the progressivism movement and what it was *not* doing for the "best" students. Philip H. Coombs, secretary and director of research for the Fund, a foundation to "advance and improve formal or institutionalized education in North America" (47), carried strong feelings regarding the state of education at the time. For example, he said, "The most serious victims—the most handicapped under this lock step arrangement—turn out to be our ablest youngsters for whom the pace is too slow and the academic diet too thin" (qtd. in Jones 48).

With the help of ETS, the Educational Testing Service (ETS), examinations for various

courses such as English, Latin, foreign language, mathematics, and science were developed during the 1953-54 academic year and were later given to high school seniors in participating secondary schools and to freshman at twelve participating universities in May of 1954 (DiYanni 2). The exam scores of the high school students were then compared to those of the college students in order to reveal if the two were in fact learning similarly. Although DiYanni did not provide the results of the study, he did note that the kind of “comparability study, which ETS conducted for these initial precursors to the soon-to-be-administered AP Exams, would later become a hallmark of AP assessment analysis and validation” (2). In 1956 the College Board took over the initial pilot study, and the program has grown tremendously in size since then. DiYanni discusses the program’s growth in his “History of the AP Program” essay:

By 1960, AP Exam volume had grown to more than 10,000 examinations, five times the number offered the first year of the College Board’s supervision of the program. By 1970, the number had jumped to nearly 72,000, and by 1980 to more than 160,000. In 1990, students at more than 9,000 participating schools took close to half a million exams, and in 2000 more than three-quarters of a million students took more than one million and a quarter AP exams. (2)

The program is still growing at a rapid pace. Statistics for the year 2010 showed that 1,845,006 students took 3,213,225 exams. The program has gained the attention of students and administrators in high schools and universities across the nation; schools are developing their own AP courses, and students are rapidly signing up. From 2001 to 2010, the percentage of students who took AP exams in the U.S. rose from 16.8% to 28.3% (“7th Annual AP Report” 20). Most colleges and universities offer some sort of advanced credit or placement for successful exam scores. What’s even more interesting is AP’s shift in its definition of who represents the

“*traditionally underserved* students” (8, emphasis added). Unlike the “five hundred hand picked students” that Jones discusses in his essay, those who head the AP Program have dramatically shifted its focus to include all interested students, regardless of academic capability.

A major theme becomes apparent: measuring “equity and excellence” when analyzing AP’s annual *Report to the Nation* over the last eight years (*The Annual*, 2005-2012). According to the first annual report published in 2005, old ways of measuring equity and excellence were abolished due to the request of educators around the nation. The old way of measuring the percentage of AP students scoring 3, the lowest passing score on a five-point scale, or higher was revised because educators believed it was easy to inflate this number. Specifically, the Report states,

A school could only allow its two ‘best’ students to take [for example] AP Calculus, and could then attain a metric of ‘100 percent scoring 3 or higher,’ while another school, committed to equitable access, could encourage 20 of its students to take the exam; if half of those students scored 3 or higher on the exam, the school would have ‘only’ a metric of ‘50 percent scoring 3 or higher,’ when in fact they provided many more students with successful AP experiences than the school that only allowed two to participate. (1st Annual Report 2)

Here we see the first shift in how the Program defines its students. According to Jones and other scholars, the Program was clearly begun in order to cater to the “best,” most academically gifted students because those were the ones the then current educational system were allegedly failing. Now we see a clear distinction start to form as to who was and who is a part of the Program now. Each additional report from the first printed edition in 2005 until the most recent one in 2011 emphasizes targeting the “traditionally underserved students” but the focus is no

longer on the best, most academically gifted students. The program is now focused on reaching ALL students, for better or worse.

In efforts to expand and to reach more students, the AP program also promises that these high school students are doing college-level work; hence, each course is supposedly the equivalent of a first-year course in college. As a result, a student can then place out of that course upon successful completion of the AP exam, thus saving parents and students potentially thousands of dollars on introductory college level courses that are no longer necessary due to the advanced placement and college credit. In its totality, the AP Program is vast, offering more than thirty courses in multiple subject areas (“AP Courses and Exams” par. 1). Of those thirty plus courses, the two AP English courses are among the most popular for high school students to take.

Because there are two different exams that fall under AP English, the issue is further complicated. Both the AP English Literature and Composition exam and the AP English Language and Composition exam can offer a student credit for or advanced placement out of first-year writing courses in college. In an overview of the AP English program, the section on earning college credit related to the two AP English exams states three options or guidelines colleges and universities might use to place students based on their scores. First, a score of at least a three on either test could result in credit for a composition course (whether it is a year-long or just a semester course) in college. Second, a score of three or higher on the AP English Language and Composition exam could mean a student would receive credit for a “one-semester course in composition [and] another semester course that offers additional instruction in argumentation and teaches the skills of synthesizing, summarizing, paraphrasing, quoting and citing secondary source material” (5). The third placement guideline states a student with a

grade of three or higher on the AP English Language and Composition exam could potentially expect credit for a composition course, and a score of three or higher on the AP Literature and Composition exam could mean credit for an introductory literature course (5). Because essentially both exams can mean exemption from first-year writing courses in college, both are equally important objects to study.

Previous research studies seemed to consider both courses/examinations in AP English for the same reasons I am interested in them both—either course could lead to exemption from first-year composition courses. The college composition course or “freshman English” course has been required of most students who enter American higher education since the late nineteenth century (Crowley 1). The composition course came out of a perceived need to teach people how to write well and a need to address the growing student population in our nation’s colleges and universities. The student body of the freshman composition course comprises all but the very few members of each year’s entering class who manage to test out of the requirement (1). As one creation story goes, this introductory course was said to have been first invented and taught at Harvard University in the late nineteenth century for remedial purposes (4). From Harvard, it quickly spread to most other colleges and universities and has been a requirement of most incoming students ever since.

What is taught in first-year composition courses varies from university to university and class to class in some cases. “Academics in all disciplines wanted the required first-year course to teach students how to write... *Writing* seems to mean that students are supposed to master principles of arrangement and sentence construction; they are also to learn correct grammar and usage” (Crowley 7). Today much of that sentiment is still felt. Professors in all disciplines want students to be able to construct not only a well-balanced and thoughtful sentence but also to be

able to write a well-organized and researched opinion paper or lab report. Organization, clarity of point, and evidence to support an argument or claim are only a few examples of what is taught in the first-year composition course.

Also of significant importance in determining what is college-level writing and what is taught in a first-year writing course is the “WPA Outcomes Statement for First Year Composition.” These outcomes began as a conversation by several compositionists on the Writing Program Administration’s listserv in the spring of 1996 (Yancey 321). From discussions on the listserv to NCTE, CCCC, WPA, and Computers and Writing conferences, the Outcomes Statement was born (322). The Outcomes Statement seeks to make known the “common expectations, for students, of first-year composition programs in the United States” (323). The Outcomes are divided into five distinct categories (1) Rhetorical Knowledge; (2) Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing; (3) Processes; (4) Knowledge of Conventions; and (5) Composing in Electronic Environments (323-325). Each of the four sections describes what a student by the end of first-year composition should know, as well as what faculty can do to help facilitate the listed outcomes.

When reflecting on this information, I found the topic of delivery is broached when the AP English courses and first-year writing courses intersect. The delivery of composition—how, by whom, and where—is yet another important issue of first-year writing courses that Kathleen Blake Yancey, an Outcomes Statement author, researches. Yancey’s *Delivering College Composition: The Fifth Canon* poses the question “does delivery matter?” She writes,

From one perspective, for example, we might claim that this diversity in the *delivery* of composition—delivery defined as function of (1) the preparation and credentials of the faculty who teach the courses; (2) the kind of course (seminar;

workshop; and so on) and the definition it gives to *composition*; and (3) the site where the course is taught—is merely a function of institutional preference, particularly when an institution seeks to meet the perceived needs of its students.

(Fifth Canon 2)

Yancey believes that not only who teaches the course (senior faculty, adjunct instructors, ETS trained high school teachers, etc) but what is taught and *where* is a factor in this discussion.

In “Delivering College Composition: A Look into the Future,” Yancey highlights four points that motivated her to question the delivery of composition: (1) the medium in which she teaches now is quite different from the course (first-year writing course) she delivered when she first began; (2) the personal reflection over the *physical dimension of delivery* (cinderblock walls, plastic seats, etc) has changed; (3) the content in delivering college composition has changed; and finally (4) the different ways in which institutions claim to be delivering college composition has also shifted (1-3). For Yancey, delivery does matter. There is a difference between the composition curriculum in high school and that of college (4). Additionally, the agents who deliver college composition are important (8). According to Yancey then, it seems that a course designed to replace first-year writing in college taken in high school and taught by high school teachers, would prove insufficient, and ultimately this project seeks to investigate that statement further by exploring AP classrooms and FYC classrooms as activity systems rather than simply as fully independent learning spaces that create discreet student products.

Previous research studies on the two AP English courses and exams used a variety of methods to gather and analyze their data. Several studies relied heavily on historical data to uncover the negative impact these exams have on students. Researchers like Joseph Jones and David Foster both take a historical look at the beginnings of AP English and how the subsequent

exams may be harmful to how students think about writing. Gretchen Spear and Karen Flesher took a different approach in their study conducted in the 1980s and opted to use a theory of cognitive development to guide their research on students with and without AP English experience and their perceptions of college-level writing. The authors found that these AP English courses focus heavily on teaching to the test and timed-writing, and the courses focused very little on the actual processes of writing. I used this same study as a guide for my Master's thesis project. I wanted to see if the Program produced different results some twenty years later. Sadly, it didn't. The students in my study still named teaching to the test as the primary class time activity. The second most mentioned class activity was "ripping apart literature." Class sessions were full of reading and analyzing literature, writing timed essays, and going over vocabulary for the test. Some things, however, had changed. For example the number of students in an AP class in Spear and Flesher's study was only fifteen; my students recalled having an average of twenty-five to thirty students in their classes, which further increases the difficulty of teachers to give high quality feedback to their students. This rise in the number of students per class only further illustrates the growth of the AP Program.

A Review of Concerns: Curriculum, Exams, and Transfer

Previous research regarding the AP English Program has offered only a partial picture. Despite such diverse methods as surveys, grade-based studies, historical data, and interviews, previous studies have yet to focus on the changes the AP English program underwent in 2007, specifically the AP English Language and Composition exam. All of the previous research has been focused on the AP English exams prior to the 2007 changes, which will be discussed in more detail later in this project. One exception, however, is Colleen Whitley and Deirdre

Paulson's recent study "What Do the Students Think? An Assessment of AP English Preparation for College Writing." Whitley and Paulson ask a question very similar to the one I am interested in answering. Specifically, they wanted to know whether it is justified to assume equivalence or satisfactory similarity between AP courses and tests and college first-year composition courses (86). After a brief look at the history of what's been done regarding scholarly research of the AP English Program, the authors describe their study as the only one to date that has actually "investigated what students themselves think about the comparability of their AP course and their FYC course" (90). The study took place at Brigham Young University (BYU), where only students who do not want honors recognition at graduation are exempt from a first-year writing course based on exam scores.

Whitley and Paulson attempted to survey the 717 students who had taken the Honors 150 course at BYU during the Fall 2006 to Spring 2007 school year. They also surveyed Honors 150 instructors. Of the 717 students surveyed, 292 responded but only 176 of those students had actually enrolled in AP courses in high school, so those 176 students were the ones whose information was considered in the study. In sum, the authors concluded,

Nearly all agreed...the focus on timed essays in the AP test tends to foster a formulaic, five-paragraph approach...[and] students overwhelmingly responded on both the numeric scales and in the open-ended questions that their high school experience, while in many cases excellent, failed to match in depth and variety what they found in H150. (114-115)

There are several issues and constraints with Whitley and Paulson's study, however. The study sought to compare how similar the Honors 150 class is to a student's AP English experience. However, AP English wasn't meant to be equal to an honor's or advanced writing course in

college. AP English was designed to be equivalent to a “regular” first-year composition course so that students with successful AP exam scores could then be placed into an honor’s or advanced writing course in college and be further challenged by the material. So, to me, it is no surprise the students found vast differences between the two courses. Additionally, Whitley and Paulson reference the course description for the AP English Language and Composition handbook for the year 2007-2008 and use that information as a basis against which to compare their study’s claims. However, 2007-2008 represents the year of major changes to the AP English Language and Composition course and exam, and all of their study participated graduated high school before 2006. Therefore, comparing their results to textual representations of an AP English Program not available to their participants produces inaccurate generalizations.

In addition to a lack of research like what this project proposes, another problem regarding the relationship between AP English courses and college-level writing is that many may be surprised to know that there is no set national curriculum, and until recently conversations about what is or should be taught in AP English have flown under the radar. David A. Joliffe and Bernard Phelan write that

Many people assume there is some standardized, certified AP course that students must take to prepare for the examination. There is no such thing. The College Board [the parent body of the AP Program] does issue publications and sponsor workshops and institutes that promote various designs for courses that prepare students to perform well on one or both exams, but there is no official AP course or AP reading list. (91)

Unlike state mandates and required curriculum plans for public schools, like those related to No Child Left Behind or Race to the Top, AP English courses have no set guidelines, as evidenced

by their website. Also, it is important to note that a student is not required to take and pass the course in order to take the exam. Students are allowed to take the exam without ever having stepped foot into an AP classroom. Likewise, depending on the school and the AP English teacher, it's possible that a student could experience a writing classroom that closely mimics a college classroom, but more often than not, research suggests most AP English classes simply are not on par with college-level writing expectations. While current research does provide such claims, little has been done to demonstrate clearly that these two spaces are fundamentally different; however, this research projects aim to fill that gap.

In recent years members of the AP Test Development committee and others at the College Board have have made the biggest strides to try and align the AP Language and Composition exam with college-level writing expectations. In 2002 members of the AP English Test Development Committee met with writing program administrators at a conference to discuss what goes on in college composition classes and what AP English classes should in turn be doing. Discussions from that conference lead the committee to develop the AP English Language class into a “rhetoric class focused primarily on the study of nonfiction” (Puhr 74). They also created what they call the “holy trinity” for AP Language teachers, which focuses on analysis, synthesis, and argument (74). One of the downfalls Puhr discusses, however, is the fact that most AP English Language classes tend to focus only on the rhetorical canon of style and to ignore the other canons of rhetoric like delivery, memory, invention, and arrangement. Seeking to correct this error, the committee, along with members of WPA, created “AP English Language Course Outcomes” that closely mimic the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (76-77). The outcomes state that upon completion of the AP English Language and Composition course students should be able to complete the following tasks:

- Analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author’s use of rhetorical strategies and techniques
- Write for a variety of purposes
- Produce expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations, and clear transitions
- Move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review. (77)

While these represent only a sample of the twelve outcomes listed in Puhr’s article, they show great promise that the Course Development Committee is working to align the course with college-level writing expectations.

In addition to aligning the AP English Language outcomes with those of college-level writing course, researchers at College Board created the “Course Audit” in 2007. The audit requires all AP teachers to submit a syllabus for any and all AP courses they will teach. After two different college professors, who presumably work for the AP Program, review each syllabus and it is evident the syllabus meets certain criteria to be considered an AP course, the course is approved and allowed to proceed. While this is a good step in trying to align AP courses with college expectations, as Puhr points out, “Obviously mere approval of the syllabus does not guarantee that the course will actually deliver what the syllabus promises” (83). Puhr sees the course audit as sending a message that the content of the course should be just as important as the score a student earns on the exam (83). Puhr’s research suggests that the Program may be taking steps to move the classroom practice away from teaching to the test, and more towards offering a useful study on rhetoric and the writing process.

The AP exams, however, are what offer the ultimate say in where a student is placed in

college writing classes after high school. So what are the exams teaching our students about writing? According to many scholars, the exams distort our students' thought processes regarding the writing process. Critics of the AP exam have most consistently questioned it because of the multiple-choice sections. Sylvia Holladay establishes the problem with multiple-choice tests by arguing that they “cannot accommodate personal or ambivalent responses, even though there is always uncertainty about authorial purpose and tone, as well as a range of valid interpretations” (qtd. in Jones 53). A large percentage of the grade for these exams depends on those multiple-choice questions. As evidenced by research, this type of question does not offer a student a chance to interpret a passage in a uniquely personal or individual way.

Jeffery C. Markham, author of “Speaking My Mind: Hidden Dangers of the AP English Exams,” offers additional reasons to be wary of the AP English exams. The first, Markham argues, is that “these exams encourage little reflection [or] the ‘testing of truth,’ as they are focused almost entirely on assessing skills ... In other words, the tests focus on only half (at best) of what we English teachers should be teaching our students” (18). Another problem Markham sees with the exam is that it teaches students to believe that there is only one correct answer (19). Markham states,

How can we endorse the idea that texts are subject to only one correct interpretation? That the AP College Board or the teacher has a monopoly on what is “correct” I’ll leave alone as patently offensive. My conviction is simply that it’s a teaching crime to allow students even the possibility of thinking that texts are two-dimensional objects that admit only single, correct answers. While many students labor through practice multiple-choice tests and then Part I of the actual AP English Exam, they are quite aware that only one of the five ‘bubbles’ is the

‘right’ one. With this type of training and testing why wouldn’t a student begin to accept the idea that texts should have only one correct interpretive answer? (19)

Here, Markam states it is a “crime” to allow students to think that there is only one correct answer when it comes to writing and analyzing prose. Multiple-choice test questions do ask students to pick the “best” interpretation of a piece of prose, even if there are multiple and perhaps equally good ways of interpreting the same piece of prose. The lack of individual interpretation that the AP English exams consistently seem to teach is a disturbing issue.

Similarly, Gretchen Spear and Karen Flesher found in their research regarding AP students and college writing that almost all AP students needed to overcome the message of the AP English course and exam that they were finished developing as writers. Specifically, the authors state, “The students who avoided college writing requirements clearly based their decision on that message, much to their detriment as writers and learners, while the students who took college writing still had to resolve the puzzling contradictions between what they had been taught in AP and what they were experiencing in college” (47).

Spear and Flesher found that their interviewees were often perplexed as to why AP English did not prepare them for writing in college. Christiane Donahue and Elizabeth Wardle consider the reasons for this lack of transfer in their work related to this issue. First, Donahue and Wardle insist that “writing teachers tend to assume as a given the ‘transfer’ of writing ability” (par 1), and thus students are afforded very few opportunities to make connections between writing in and for various settings. Additionally, while Donahue and Wardle note that the meaning of transfer depends largely on whom one asks and what he or she believes, there are some actions (or inactions) that do hinder transfer. They state very clearly that “students’ pre-existing conceptions of writing from other contexts can prevent transfer” (par 7). Thus, if a

student is lead to believe that she has learned all there is to know about writing in AP English, then the “puzzling” feeling Spear and Flesher found in their participants isn’t surprising. In a similar study for my thesis research in 2004-2005, I found the results closely resembled those of Spear and Flesher. A common theme concluded during this research was that almost every student noted that a majority of his or her AP class time was spent preparing for the test. These students had a difficult time defining “good writing” and did very little, if any, prewriting, drafting, revising (Parham 92). These sorts of tasks are not conducive to transfer of writing knowledge or skills and they often leave students with a lack of real knowledge about the writing process.

Another concern with the AP exam is the issue of placement. Some of the “benefits” of scoring a three, four, or five on the AP exam that students and parents look to is advanced placement or, in all reality, exemption from some first-year courses in college. Kristen Hansen and fellow researchers conducted a study on these placement issues at Brigham Young University (BYU). Hansen and her team sought to change the institutional policy regarding AP scores and placement at their university. The policy in question, which has been in place for over forty years, is BYU’s act of accepting incoming students’ scores of a three, four, or five on the AP English tests as exemption from first-year composition courses. Like BYU, many colleges and universities use these scores to determine student placement when they arrive on campus. An AP exam score of a *three* signifies the student is “qualified,” a *four* states the student is “very qualified,” while a *five* indicates the student is “extremely qualified” to exempt introductory college courses (“AP Exam Scores”).

With those tests scores, students at BYU would be awarded between six and twelve credit hours to exempt them from basic and introductory college classes – three of which were first-

year writing or composition courses (Hansen et. al 30). According to their records, approximately half of incoming AP English students earned a three on their respective exam(s) (30). During their study of sophomores' writing they found that a score of 3 on the AP English exams was unsatisfactory because they were often not prepared for their future writing courses. For instance, they concluded that their "results show that students who score a three on the AP exam and do not take a first-year writing course are likely to suffer real consequences in sophomore courses that require writing assignments" (41). Thus, students who scored a three on their respective AP English exam and opted not to take a first-year writing course in college seemed to perform poorly in their subsequent writing intensive courses in college.

The issue of accepting AP scores as a way for students to opt out of first-year writing courses in college is a growing concern for students, parents, and educators. Even though, as Joliffe and Phelan point out in their work, "the name of the program is *Advanced Placement*, not *Advanced Exemption*," many parents, students, and others in education often see the program as the latter instead (89). Also interesting is the actual language used in the AP English Program's description booklet. In its overview of the AP English Program and placement, the literature states, "The committees intend them both [referring to both AP English exams] to be of equal rigor in keeping with the standards of quality of the AP Program, and they recommend that students taking either course or exam receive similar treatment by the college granting credit or exemption or both" (4). Perhaps the Program once wasn't about promoting the idea of exemption, but it seems it is now.

In one of only a few research studies to examine the issue of transfer and first-year writing courses, Elizabeth Wardle writes that most scholars examine the issue of transfer on course work and writing in professional communication classes, while positing that there is a

need for the same analysis in first-year composition courses. “While the goals of FYC [First Year Composition] are debated in our journals, the fact that nearly every student is required to take FYC suggests that administrators, policy makers, parents, and students expect the course to prepare students for the writing they will do later—in the university and even beyond it” (65). Wardle makes a valid point, and one that can be turned and applied to the AP English courses as well. Many students take these courses because they can receive placement credit for first-year writing. Thus, the material learned in this class should do two things: 1) represent what is learned in FYC and 2) prepare students for what lies ahead in their college work and beyond.

To investigate the issue of advanced placement further, the following chapter explores activity theory and the role it plays in this research project. Additionally, an analysis of the methods used will be considered, including the use of rhetorical analysis as one lens to view AP’s publicity materials. Chapter three will offer an analysis of the activity system of an AP English Literature and Composition classroom, while Chapter four will explore the activity system of a first-year writing classroom. Finally, Chapter five will close the analysis by positing the relationship between AP English, First-Year Composition in college, and the theory of transfer.

Chapter 2: Theory and Methods

In order to expand the current research base related to writing transfer and the activity system(s) of a writing classroom, this project involves two key areas of study: 1) collection and analysis of qualitative data gathered from observations of AP classes and first-year composition classes and surveys of both sets of teachers and students; and 2) a rhetorical analysis of products that the College Board creates to frame AP for teachers, students, and parents. To center this project theoretically, both activity theory and transfer theory are utilized as tools of analysis; moreover, the project's impact on transfer theory will be fully discussed in Chapter Five.

According to her work "Transfer, Portability, Generalization: (How) Does Composition Expertise 'Carry'?" Christiane Donahue writes that activity theory, which has been around for over a century in fields such as education and psychology, was first introduced to the field of composition in the 1990s to understand learning as "developing within activities and networked systems of activities" (152). In her discussion on activity theory as it relates to writing, she writes,

What counts as expert knowledge and skill is different in each activity system, and experts expect to need to negotiate, to create hybrids, and so on ... Writers, as Smit suggests [in *The End of Composition Studies*], fall back on general knowledge precisely when they find themselves out of their domain of expertise, while expert writers see analogies across genres and contexts that novices do not. (152)

In "Transfer, Transformation and Rhetorical Knowledge: Insights from Transfer Theory," Doug Brent posits that rhetorical genre theory, made famous by Carolyn Miller (1984), and activity theory are similar with the exception that activity theory includes the additional focus on motive

(400). He writes,

Activity theory takes the discourse about genres and rhetorical exigencies into the related but larger world of activity systems in general. The most salient feature of activity theory is that motives are an essential bridge between mere operations—the small, routinized actions that we perform every day—and the activity systems to which they contribute. (400)

Activity theory, then, offers a unique way for researchers to view a community, organization, or classroom in order to piece together both the implicit and explicit actions operating in each.

Additionally, the idea of motive – reasons an action is performed or not performed – is a key element of activity theory that makes it useful for this study. Kain and Wardle write that activity theory, “which is derived from the work of both Vygotsky and Leont’ev posits that activities are informed by the specific settings and motives of people involved in them, as well as by the larger socio-historical and cultural networks of which they are a part” (120). Both first-year composition and the AP Program are situated within rich cultural and historical networks. Those networks in turn inform much of what goes on in and out of the classroom.

Similarly, in her discussion of transfer from a first year composition perspective, Elizabeth Wardle emphasizes the need to choose a lens to use when studying transfer, and she discusses three conceptions of transfer. Again, the formation of transfer most applicable to this project is the “activity-based” concept (68). Wardle writes that this perspective “focuses more explicitly on interactions between individual learners and contexts but expands the basis of transfer from the actions of individuals to the systematic activity of collective organizations,” and she further quotes Tuomi-Gröhn and Engeström who state that “the individual’s learning is understandable only if we understand the learning of the activity system” (68). Essentially, as

Kain and Wardle noted, looking at the larger socio-cultural and historical contexts in addition to the activities visible in the classroom will offer a much wider view of both AP English and FYW. Both the observations of the classroom settings and the analysis of the textual documents will provide rich descriptions of the inner workings of both systems and what, if any, knowledge or activities articulate between them.

Taking these concepts a step further, King Beach, author of “Consequential Transitions: A Developmental View of Knowledge Propagation Through Social Organizations,” prefers to use the term *generalization* when referring to transfer. Beach’s concept of generalization includes traditional conceptions of transfer but it also adds in the importance of individual activity and its relation to social organization (41). Beach argues, “starting at the ‘task’ is no longer beneficial. We argue the reverse, that generalization is best understood as a set of processes that relate changing social organizations and individuals between tasks embedded in, and constituted by, this larger set of relations” (41). In “Transfer and Transition in Vocational Education: Some Theoretical Considerations,” David Guille and Michael Young use Beach’s idea of generalization in order to offer two key elements that will influence knowledge generalization (or transfer):

First, learners need to be supported to participate in an activity system that encourages collaboration, discussion and some form of ‘risk taking’. Second, learners need to have opportunities to share and be inspired by a common motive for undertaking a specific learning task. (74)

These two points are vital to consider in this research project because I seek to locate these elements during my observations of the AP classroom. In other words, I ask, are these students working together on projects, are they engaging in common motives to accomplish a written

task, are they discussing concepts such as audience, purpose, context, and so on?

The activity system or “systematic activity of collective organizations” for this project would be the AP English Literature and Composition classroom and the first-year composition classroom. Essentially, the “mere operations” of the AP English course and the first year composition classrooms are intended to be similar if we base our knowledge on AP publicity material, but are they really? The observations and survey material, discussed at length in chapters three and four, help to uncover the motives behind the kinds of writing, the teaching styles, and the reasons for taking these courses. The following offers a visual representation of activity theory by displaying what is commonly referred to as the activity triangle (see Figure 1).

Figure 1: Activity Triangle

Activity System

Tools

Physical objects and systems of symbols (like language, mathematics) that people use to accomplish the activity.

Motives

Purposes, reasons for the activity

Subject

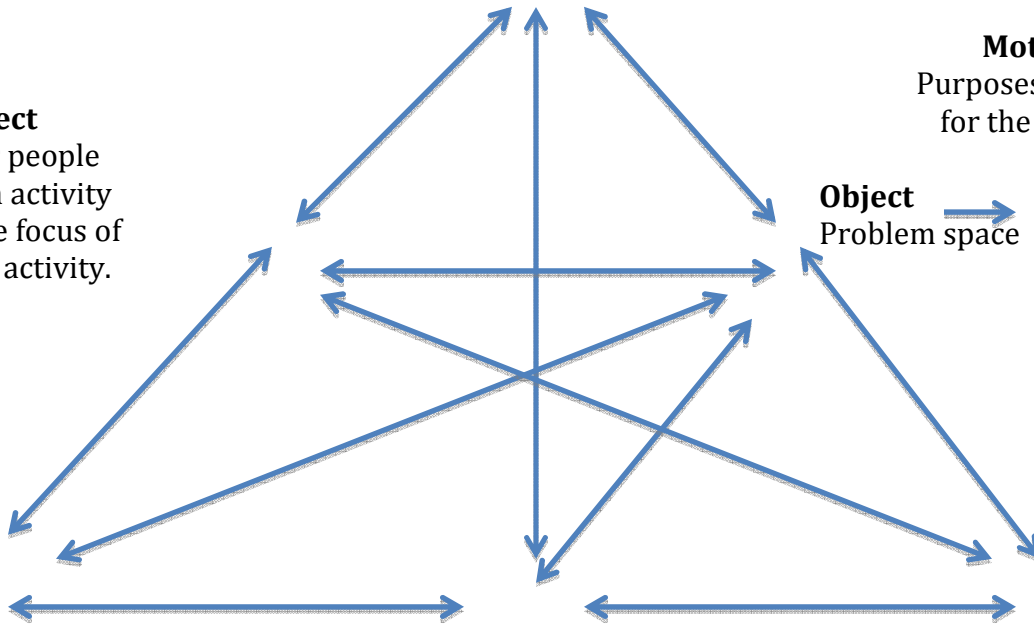
Person or people engaged in activity who are the focus of a study on activity.

Object

Problem space

Outcome

Desired goals of activity



Rules

Laws, codes, conventions, customs, and agreements that people adhere to while engaging in the activity

Community

People and groups whose knowledge, interests, stakes, and goals shape the activity

Division of Labor

How the work in the activity is divided among

Adapted from Kain and Wardle’s “Building Context: Using Activity Theory to Teach About Genre in Multi-Major Professional Communication Courses.”

For the purposes of this project, the terms will be defined and analyzed as follows:

Tools

In order to uncover the “tools” used in both systems, I gathered syllabi and assignments from both courses, one AP English Literature and Composition course and one first-year composition course. Additionally, “tools” such as in-class activities were also observed over the

course of the semester. Because “tools” includes physical objects, I have included a detailed description of both classroom spaces.

Motives

The reasons or purposes for the activities can be located in both the observations (what the instructor asks students to do) and the surveys. In the surveys, I asked questions in order to understand why students signed up for the course. Regarding both “tools” and “motives,” Kain and Wardle write,

The mediation of activity with the use of tools that Engestrom describes as one of the most significant aspects of activity systems is informed by the immediate experiences of the people involved in the activity, as well as by the history of experience associated with the tool, that is, what it was created to do, how it has evolved, and what interests and goals communities meet by adopting specific tools. The choice and use of tools can inhibit or facilitate group cohesion, empower or disempower people in activities, and limit or expand discursive activity. (121)

Analyzing the “tools” in addition to how they are used in the classroom, like timed writing assignments or practice AP test questions, and linking those “tools” to the larger context of both systems provides a richer analysis because it allows us to see not only what those at the AP Program state is done in the classroom and what is achieved via the exam, but also it affords a way to *observe* the reality of those systems.

Division of Labor

The division of labor can be analyzed using the observations and the textual representations of both activity systems, and it includes how tasks and knowledge are distributed across the system (121).

Community

There are many stakeholders within this project. The textual representations, like the Program's Annual Report to the Nation, its website, publicity materials, and outcome statements for both courses, are very useful for this analysis. For example, the College Board, the high school, the college, students, teachers, are all stakeholders in the community and each shape the activity.

Rules

Items like the AP guidelines, FYC guidelines, and syllabi for each course are used for this analysis, in addition to observations that will show the natural routines or practices of the classroom. Kain and Wardle posit that rules "include formal requirements, informal habits of work, and shared conventions that shape the activity and operate in the broader social context" (121).

Subjects

The subjects for both activity systems include the instructors and students. The subjects are essentially those who directly participate in the activity under study and will be discussed more thoroughly in the next section.

Research Methods

In order to analyze the activity systems of the AP English course and the first-year composition course, several research methods were utilized. As previously stated, many

research projects have used a variety of methods including surveys, interviews, grade-based methods, and historical research, yet none as of yet have approached the program through the use of observation. This project utilizes observations for several reasons. First, this method attempts to offer not only a holistic view of the courses being observed, but it also offers “rich detail that can lead to a better understanding of” those courses (MacNealy 1999). Second, through the use of triangulation by reviewing and merging data from three sources -- observation, surveys/interviews, and textual representations -- this research project seeks to offer a fuller presentation of its findings. There are three main research questions:

1. In what ways, if any, does a high school AP English course function similarly to a first-year college writing course, and thus are the two equivalent?
2. What attitudes/learning behaviors are promoted by these activity systems?
3. How might those systems impact transfer of writing knowledge?

At the heart of this analysis is the question of whether or not an AP English course functions in a manner that makes it equivalent to how a first-year writing course in college functions.

This project used observation as its primary method for gathering data. Initially, three classrooms were selected for study: 1. AP English Language and Composition, 2. AP English Literature and Composition, 3. College first-year writing course. Because observation allows for flexibility, I also surveyed students in order to gather even more information. In addition to the questions listed below, I was aware that this kind of analysis lends itself to the possibility that several other questions would evolve during the study itself. However, the following offers some guiding questions for my observations and for my initial survey of the teachers and students.

Sub-questions – Observation:

- How are concepts of purpose, audience, author and text constructed in the classroom?

- How is the class time being spent?
 - Practicing timed writing?
- What sort of writing assignments are students producing?
- How are they participating in collaborative writing assignments?
- How are they actively engaging in the writing process, including pre-writing, drafting, and revising?
- How are they engaging in peer review activities or one-on-one conferences with the instructor?
- How often are they practicing answering exam questions?

Additional questions related to the observation will be constructed using the “Course Outcomes” as written in each course’s printed materials.

Sub-Questions – Surveys

Instructor Questions:

- Are you familiar with the outcomes statement for the AP English Language and Composition course?
- Why are you teaching this course?
- How does one become qualified to teach this course?
- How did you decide on the kinds of assignments to create and assign?
- How do you think these assignments will help students later in college?
- How is AP English advertised in the school?
- How would you describe your AP English course?

AP English Student Questions:

- Why are you taking this course?
- How is AP advertised in the school?
- How would you describe your AP English class?

- How would you describe your AP English course?
- How do you think the assignments in AP will help you later in college?

FYC Student Questions:

- What kind of English did you take in high school? Why?
- Why did you take this course?
- How did your high school English class prepare you for writing in college?
- How will this class (FYC) prepare you for writing in your other college classes?

Copies of the full surveys are provided in Appendix A.

As previously stated, this research project incorporated a variety of methods, mostly qualitative, to fulfill its objectives, and the project received IRB approval from both institutions of higher learning that the study impacted. Initially, three courses were selected for the case study:

- 1) an AP English Language and Composition course,
- 2) an AP English Literature and Composition course, and
- 3) a first year composition course at a local college/university.

All courses were selected from the available options in eastern North Carolina, specifically the Wilson, NC, area. It must be noted here, however, that I was unable to obtain consent to survey and observe the AP English Language and Composition course. This course was being taught for the very first time at the high school, and the course was comprised of juniors who were apprehensive about signing the consent form. After repeated attempts to further explain the study and consent to the instructor and students, the AP English Language and Composition portion of the dissertation project had to be dropped due to lack of consent. Losing this portion of the project was unfortunate because there is still much to be learned from observing an AP

English Language and Composition classroom. For example and as already mentioned in Chapter 1, the AP Language and Composition program is the one described as most like a first-year composition classroom; thus, advanced placement or exemption from an introductory writing course in college is allegedly most fitting when paired with this particular AP English course. However, I was able to proceed with the AP English Literature and Composition course, taught by a veteran teacher and comprised of seniors. This course also offers exemption from introductory college writing courses, and given its popularity, it remains an important space for study. The AP English Literature and Composition class I observed included sixteen students, eleven females and five males. Of the eleven females, four were African American and the remaining seven were Caucasian. The five males enrolled were all Caucasian.

The first-year writing course observed was housed in a small, private, four-year liberal arts college in Eastern North Carolina, in the same region as the high school; it is a college that accepts a number of students from the high school I studied. Likewise, because its faculty and curricula are easily accessible to the high school, it serves as a point of cultural and curricular reference for the teachers and students at the school, which makes it a useful barometer for tracking transfer and articulation. The approximate enrollment at this institution annually is 1,200 students from over 30 states and 16 countries. The first-year writing class was observed during the spring 2013 semester. The instructor holds the rank of Professor and has been teaching at the institution for over forty years. The first-year writing class included eighteen students. Of those eighteen students, nine were female and nine were male. Of the nine females, two were African American and the other seven were Caucasian. Five of the males were African-American and four were Caucasian.

Once the courses were selected, I began my initial observations. Observations of the

three courses were taken using a pen and paper method and were conducted over several months during the Spring 2013 semester. While I had a list of activities to look for (based on the outcomes for each course), I worked to remain open to new questions and possibilities in order to remain flexible with what information naturally presented itself. I kept a journal for the observations and took field notes regarding the activities and discussions happening during the entire observation period.

After the observations were conducted, I typed up the information and coded it for places where the two courses may have overlapped in their discussions or work, or for places where there were stark differences. Additionally, the information received from the classes and the surveys were then further analyzed and compared to the current textual material provided by the College Board regarding the AP Program. The technique of rhetorical analysis was used to investigate the persuasive techniques the College Board uses to entice both potential students and parents to partake in AP's offerings, particularly those related to the AP English courses. In her discussion of analyzing discourse, MacNealy writes that "studying discourse enables scholars to add to a body of knowledge in a particular discipline by making data-based inferences about the person(s) who created the discourse, the audience(s) for the discourse, and the social and political context for the discourse" (124). In essence, rhetorical analysis allows a nuanced look at the Program's materials and their potential impact on interested educators, students, and parents. The particular textual documents chosen for this analysis were located on the College Board's website and various sections of AP Central's website, especially those related to both AP English programs. Additionally, I looked at AP's *Annual Report to the Nation*. A close analysis of this information will open in the next chapter, beginning with the activity system of AP English Literature and Composition.

Chapter 3: Activity System of AP English Literature and Composition

While there is a plethora of material one could traverse through regarding the AP Program, this chapter will explore two key elements of the College Board's AP Program. First, I investigated its textual production using materials taken from AP Central's main website, the AP English website and downloadable manual, as well as some of AP's *Annual Report to the Nation*. These documents provide a rich look at those whom the College Board targets and what the publicity material aims to accomplish. In addition to the textual artifacts, information gleaned from the survey responses of students and observations of class time provide the second lens of analysis that uncovered how these textual artifacts are embodied in an AP English Literature and Composition classroom in Eastern North Carolina. The intent is to provide a rich look at what the activity system of this particular AP English class looks like to later compare it with the activity system of the first-year composition classroom (discussed in Ch. 4) and to discuss how both spaces help inform, if at all, writing transfer (discussed in Ch. 5).

AP English Literature and Composition: Historical and Socio-cultural Background

To begin with, the two AP English courses and subsequent exams are very popular avenues for students to begin their journey of obtaining college credit while still in high school, as evidenced in AP's 9th *Annual Report to the Nation*. In 2012 alone 780,024 graduates left high school having taken an AP Exams in English, History, or Social Science. Of those graduates 441, 671 received a score of 3 or higher in those disciplines while in high school (26). The information is then further broken down to indicate that 358,136 students in the class of 2012 took an AP English Language and Composition exam, while 316, 840 students took the AP

English Literature and Composition exam (27). The only other exam that comes close to matching the number of students who take these AP English exams is the AP United States History exam (344,938 exams) (27). The popularity of these courses is intriguing and ripe for further analysis.

In order to provide an overview of AP English in general, the College Board AP provides a manual available for download on its website. For each AP subject a Development Committee works to provide descriptions of typical college courses and to assess what would be “equivalent achievement” in them (“AP English Course” 4). Schools in turn use that information to develop courses and assignments that students enrolled in such AP courses could complete and proceed, if successful on the College Board’s exam, to advanced courses at participating colleges. AP English courses, however, offer a bit of a challenge to these Development Committees. As previously noted, first-year composition in college often varies from college to college, so the committee is tasked with developing a course, two in the case of AP English, that reigns in some of the diversity that is first-year writing.

The committee came to the conclusion that since most students begin their college writing career with a course in expository writing and then matriculate to courses that later focus on literature, students would benefit from two separate exams: AP English Language and Composition and AP English Literature and Composition (“AP English Course” 4). The AP English Language and Composition course and exam is described as being most equivalent to first-year writing in college. The course is designed to engage “students in becoming skilled readers of prose written in a variety of rhetorical contexts, and in becoming skilled writers who compose for a variety of purposes” (7). The literature goes on to state that the goals of this

course are diverse since college composition offers a varied curriculum in each setting.

However, the course description manual states,

The overarching objective in most first-year writing courses is to enable students to write effectively and confidently in their college courses across the curriculum and in their professional and personal lives ... As in the college course, the purpose of the AP English Language and Composition course is to enable students to read complex texts with understanding and to write prose of sufficient richness and complexity to communicate effectively with mature readers. An AP English Language and Composition course should help students move beyond such programmatic responses as the five-paragraph essay... (7)

This particular program was recently re-designed to have a stronger focus on rhetoric and composition. As mentioned in Ch. 1, the AP English Test Development Committee and members of the WPA met together in 2002 to begin discussions of how this course should be re-designed to distinguish it from its parent course, AP English Literature and Composition, and align it more with first-year composition (Puhr 74).

According to Puhr, as a way to align the two courses the AP English Language course now includes a broader focus on rhetorical analysis, defined as “the meaning, purpose, and effect of various types of rhetoric, including print and visual texts from many disciplines, as well as the nature and operations of the appeals used in them” (74). Also, as first-year writing courses often have a set of outcomes that defines them, such as those authored by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, the AP English Language and Composition course recently prescribed a set of outcomes intended to match those of first-year composition (See Table 2).

Table 1: Outcomes – WPA and AP English Language and Composition

WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition	AP English Language Course Outcomes
<p>Rhetorical Knowledge By the end of first year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Focus on a purpose• Respond to the needs of different audiences• Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations• Use conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation• Adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality• Understand how genres shape reading and writing• Write in several genres	<p>Upon completing the AP English Language and Composition course students should be able to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analyze and interpret samples of good writing, identifying and explaining an author’s use of rhetorical strategies and techniques• Apply effective strategies and techniques in their own writing• Create and sustain arguments based on readings, research, and/or personal experience• Write for a variety of purposes• Produce expository, analytical, and argumentative compositions that introduce a complex central idea and develop it with appropriate evidence drawn from primary and/or secondary sources, cogent explanations, and clear transitions• Demonstrate understanding and mastery of standard written English as well as stylistic maturity in their own writings• Demonstrate understanding of the conventions of citing primary and secondary sources• Move effectively through the stages of the writing process, with careful attention to inquiry and research, drafting, revising, editing, and review• Write thoughtfully about their own process of composition• Revise a work to make it suitable for a different audience• Analyze an image as text• Evaluate and incorporate reference documents into researched papers
<p>Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing By the end of first year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating• Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources• Integrate their own ideas with those of others• Understand the relationship among language, knowledge, and power	
<p>Processes By the end of first year composition, students should</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text• Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading• Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and rethinking to revise their work• Understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes• Learn to critique their own and others’ works	

- Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with responsibility of doing their part
- Use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences

Knowledge Conventions

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Learn common formats for different kinds of texts
- Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling

Composing in Electronic Environments

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases; other official databases (e.g., federal government databases); and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Understand and exploit the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts

Although the AP English Language outcomes are not broken up into categories like those on the CWPA's, one can still see the a parallel between the two. While both sets of outcomes focus on writing for different audiences and purposes, paying attention to the entire writing process, and learning to control grammar and syntax, a missing link in the AP English Language outcomes is the mention of the collaborative and social aspects of writing. Working collaboratively on a piece of writing and peer reviewing others' work is an outcome of most first-year writing courses as well as a skill that will be utilized time and time again in the workforce. While the lack of collaboration is not a shocking a discovery, it is still a concern. Writing, specifically as it relates to the reading of and writing about literature, for a long time has been viewed as a highly individual, expressive process. Espousing Romantics' assertions towards teaching writing, Russell states, "A proper education produces deep thoughts, which cannot help but find their proper expression. And the thoughts that most improve one's writing naturally come from studying the great writers, the masters of the art which cannot be taught" (136). He goes on to state that Romantics believe that literature, not rhetoric, is really what improves students' being and that "the role of English departments in writing instruction is thus to teach liberal culture through imaginative literature" (136). "Collaborative" work can be seen as infringing on the individual "genius" that has been so prized by Romantic thinkers and writers. The AP Outcomes seem to do little to disrupt the dominance in high schools of certain Romantic notions of literature and writing.

Unfortunately due to circumstances beyond my control, I was unable to observe the AP English Language and Composition course at the high school where I conducted my research. Several factors, I believe, contributed to this fact. First, the students would not consent to the observations. I spoke to the class on at least three occasions and explained the study each time,

but I later found out that many feared I would take up too much of their personal, out-of-class time. Second, the teacher was new to teaching the course. Unlike the AP English Literature and Composition instructor, who had seventeen years of AP English under her belt, the AP English Language and Composition instructor had never taught the course before. In fact, this was the first time the course was being taught at that school. Chapter 5 explores other possible reasons for the lack of consent, implications, and ideas for future research related to the AP English Language and Composition course because its presence in the larger activity system of the AP Program is significant for educators, students and parents alike.

While I was unable to study the AP Language and Composition course in depth, the fact that it now exists as a highly desirable option suggests that many, including those involved with ETS, the College Board, AP, principals, teachers, students, and parents, feel it is a necessary tool for advanced preparation for college and exemption from certain “introductory” courses. Likewise it is useful to return to it periodically as I discuss the AP Literature and Composition course because its existence suggests the long-running Literature and Composition course has been “freed,” in some ways, to do even less of the things important to writing transfer in the context of a college-level first-year writing course.

The AP English Literature and Composition course has a much different focus from the AP English Language and Composition course: it is designed to engage “students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature” (*English Course Description* 49). The course students may take to prepare for the exam is an extensive study of representative works from various genres and periods. The College Board’s own publications describes an overview of the course and offers a list of recommended authors and works for AP teachers to use, but none are mandatory. Some of the recommended authors include Elizabeth Bishop, William

Blake, T.S. Elliot, and Chaucer for the poetry section; Tennessee Williams, Shakespeare, George Bernard Shaw, and Oscar Wilde for the drama section; Flannery O’Connor, Virginia Woolf, Alice Walker, Bharati Mukherjee, and Jane Austen for the Fiction section; and Joseph Addison, Gloria Anzadula, John Stuart Mill, and E.B. White for the Expository Prose section (53). The course packet emphasizes that students are taught close reading skills that include the “experience of literature, the interpretation of literature, and the evaluation of literature” (49). These guidelines serve as “rules” within this AP English system, yet they are informal as none are actually required but only suggested.

In addition to reading literature, students will, of course, write in response to the literature they read. Those responses may be in the form of critical analysis or creative works as both have the goal to “increase students’ ability to explain clearly, cogently, even elegantly, what they understand about literary works and why they interpret them as they do” (51). The overview further states that the writing instruction in the AP English Literature and Composition course should emphasize understanding the elements of style, attending to grammar and correctness, as well as organizing ideas using coherent and persuasive language (51). Furthermore, the following is a list of what AP English posits as “stylistic maturity”:

- A wide-ranging vocabulary used with denotative accuracy and connotative resourcefulness;
- A variety of sentence structures, including appropriate use of subordinate and coordinate constructions;
- A logical organization, enhanced by specific techniques of coherence such as repetition, transitions and emphasis;
- A balance of generalization with specific illustrative detail; and

- An effective use of rhetoric, including controlling tone, maintaining a consistent voice, and achieving emphasis through parallelism and antithesis. (51)

These points do include several aspects of both the CWPA Outcomes and the outcomes for the AP English Language and Composition course; however, the real difference is the level of focus placed on literature as opposed to writing and rhetoric. Also, the group's definition of rhetoric is anemic. Rhetoric encompasses so much more than the surface level definition provided by the Program's guide. A more current and useful definition of rhetoric is one that encompasses exigency, logos, ethos, pathos, context, as well as writing as a civic act. This lack of agreement on what constitutes rhetoric fully emphasizes a gap in the two system's views. Finally, a portion of the overview also discusses in more detail the kinds of writing one may experience in the AP English Literature classroom. In addition to writing about literature that will likely involve composing texts ranging from informal, exploratory writing to critical analysis and revision, the booklet also states that "some writing assignments should encourage students to write effectively under the time constraints they encounter on essay exams in college courses in many disciplines, including English," and, not ironically, the AP English examination itself (52).

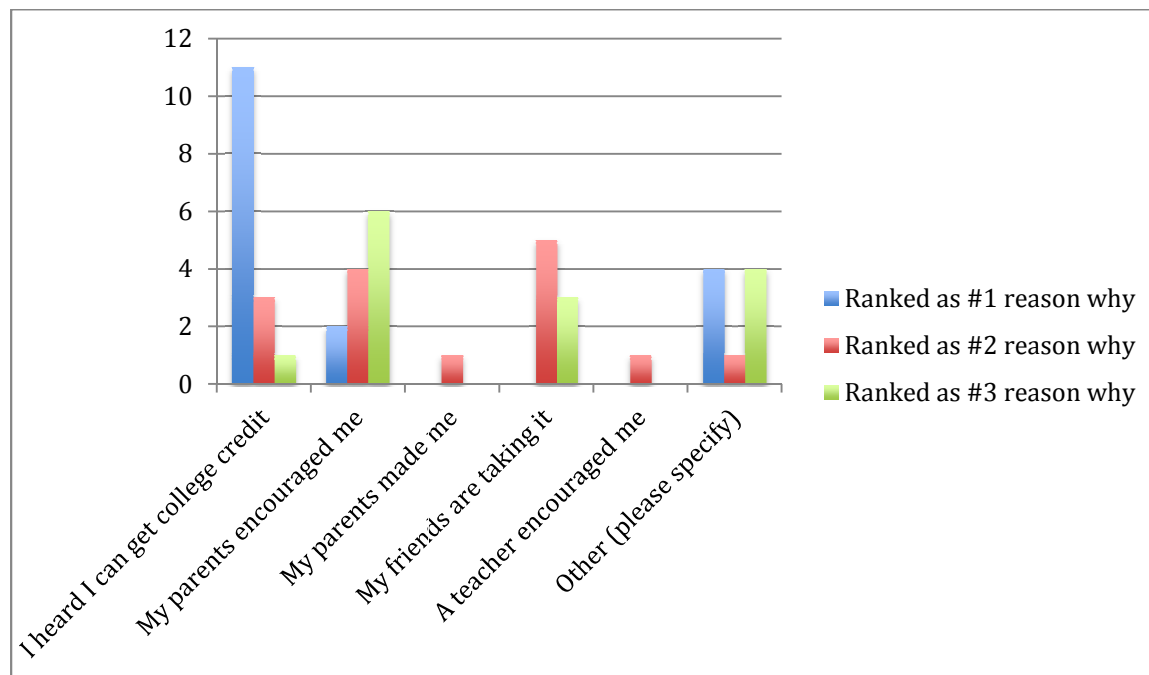
While the document used to compile this brief overview of the two AP English courses is a "tool" and part of what one could also consider the "rules" of the activity system of AP English in general, the first point of analysis to explore more in depth is motive. Why are students signing up for these two courses in such high volume?

AP English Literature and Composition: Motives

Neither AP English course is a mandatory first step to taking either AP English exam, but many students sign up to take the courses anyway. According to the results obtained during my initial survey of students enrolled in the AP English Literature and Composition course I

observed, the main reason students signed up for the course was because they heard they could receive college credit for taking the course and passing the exam. Table 3: Motives offers a visual overview of top three reasons students enrolled.

Table 2: Motives: Why did you enroll in this course?



OTHER – (reasons provided by the students):

#1 Reason why OTHER: “Pushed myself to go above and beyond average”
 “mental challenge”
 “I didn’t know I could take IB”
 “to get into college without taking IB English”

#2 Reason why OTHER: “I wanted to”

#3 Reason why OTHER: “wanted the 2 extra GPA points”
 “My girlfriend told me I was too smart to take Honors English IV”
 “students said it was a great class to take”
 “I wanted to take it”

It should be no surprise that students’ number one reason for taking the course is because they heard they could receive college credit for successfully passing the exam. With one visit to any AP website, whether AP Central, AP Students, or an AP course overview page, information

about “getting ahead in college” is aptly placed on the site to attract students and parents to this information (“AP Students – AP Courses and Exams”). This notion of “getting ahead” feeds the idea that education, particularly at the college level, is a commodity for which one can purchase an advanced pass in order to move up to the next level. The AP Program’s website offers more examples of this line of thinking.

On the AP Students website under “Explore AP – The Rewards”, the first image that greets visitors is a bright purple banner with the image of a hand holding a thermometer that is colored in at 82%. The caption reads: “AP is your time – well spent. 82% of students say AP courses are more worthwhile than regular courses” (“The Rewards”). The next bold heading just below the image states, “Put AP to Work for You.” The remaining information in the middle of the page is broken down into three sections, with each section set off by a different point written in bold, bright blue ink. The first section reads “Stand Out in College Admissions”. The idea presented in the two paragraphs that follow is that by taking AP courses, the student is “telling” college administrators that he/she has what it takes to be successful in college because AP classes “have to provide a curriculum that meets college standards.” The second point situated in the middle of the page states “Earn College Credits.” The two paragraphs that follow the heading describe the rising cost of college education and the fact that taking AP courses can help students save on college expenses. This section clearly emphasizes higher education isn’t cheap and uses pathos to appeal to both parents and students. It states,

As college costs grow each year, the prospect of continuing education becomes less and less of a reality for many high school students. By making it through an AP course and scoring successfully on the related AP Exam, you can save on college expenses. Currently more than 90 percent of colleges and universities

across the country offer college credit, advanced placement, or both, for qualifying AP Exam scores. *These credits can potentially save students and their families thousands of dollars in college tuition, fees and textbook costs, which can transform what once seemed unaffordable into something within reach.* (emphasis added)

In *Metaphors We Live By*, Lakoff and Johnson discuss metaphors as part of our everyday life, language, and reality (3). Here the website emphasizes two main points: our time is important and our money is valuable, so we should be sure we spend each wisely. When explaining metaphorical concepts, Lakoff and Johnson give the example of “time is money” to show how our culture typically represents time as a valuable commodity (8). They write, “Corresponding to the fact that we *act* as if time is a valuable commodity—a limited resource, even money—we *conceive of* time that way. Thus we understand and experience time as the kind of thing that can be spent, wasted, budgeted, invested wisely or poorly, saved or squandered” (8). The AP website makes use of this American commonplace. The large image of the thermometer emphasizes that AP is not just time, but it is time *well spent*, further suggesting time is a commodity. It is something that can be “well spent,” perhaps in an AP class, or wasted. This line of reasoning all suggests that other high school classes are a “waste of time,” perhaps, or that maybe general education college courses, like composition, are a “waste of time.” The website also personifies the rising cost of college as an adversary and the College Board’s program as a savior. The repeated use of the term “save” also appeals to parents and students in these uncertain economic times. This sentiment is one that is prominently placed throughout AP’s participating websites.

To continue that theme, the third and final section of the page discusses how one can “Skip Introductory Classes”. This theme directly relates to the previous one on saving money because by skipping introductory classes and bypassing some of the college’s or university’s general education requirements by receiving AP credit, one can move directly into upper level courses and therefore potentially cut off a semester or entire year’s worth of classes. Again, the idea of trading an AP class for an introductory college class reflects the theme that these courses are commodities, like cards in a deck that can be traded, rather than important spaces where valuable learning happens, devaluing what happens in these courses. A final interesting connection to make here is the use of the term “introductory” to label the courses one would potentially be exempt from in college. The idea is that if a course is “introductory” and a student has had similar kinds of courses in high school already, then he should have built up a base of knowledge and is ready for the next level of learning. However, these first-year courses in college are actually “foundational,” not just introductory. If these courses were labeled as “foundational” instead of “introductory,” a different connotation could be derived because a “foundational” course is one someone wouldn’t dare miss because it sets the *foundation* for his new career as a college student. These college courses referenced on the website are in many ways *foundational* and should not but merely overlooked as only “introductory.”

The second reason stated for why students enrolled in the AP English Literature and Composition course was because their friends were taking the course. Peer influence is a huge motivating factor for students at this age. When asked how they heard about the course on the initial survey, only two answers were marked. The number one way students heard about the course was because “a friend told me about it”. Nine students checked that box, while the remaining five stated “a teacher told me about it.” The third ranked reasons as to why students

took the course is because their “parents encouraged them to take it”. Other reasons for taking the course varied. Several students mentioned a desire to be “mentally challenged” while another student stated he did it for the “2 extra G.P.A. points.”

Another aspect of motive to explore is the desired outcome of the activity. What do students hope to achieve by taking this course? But first, what are the stated outcomes of the course according AP’s material? As part of the course materials that parents and students can browse for more information on the course, a section after the introduction states the goals as follows:

The course includes intensive study of representative works from various genres and periods, concentrating on works of recognized literary merit such as those by the authors listed on pages 52-53. The pieces chosen invite and reward rereading and do not, like ephemeral works in such popular genres as detective or romance fiction, yield all (or nearly all) of their pleasures of thought and feeling the first time through. The AP English Literature and Composition Development Committee agrees with Henry David Thoreau that it is wisest to read the best books first; the committee also believes that such reading should be accompanied by thoughtful discussion and writing about those books in the company of one’s fellow students. (49)

The emphasis placed on reading (a certain type of) literature is clear. Additionally, Ms. Roper¹, the AP English Literature and Composition instructor I observed, created two separate syllabi for the course: a CollegeBoard version, which was submitted for approval via the course audit, and a class version (See Appendix B for AP Materials). While both versions include a brief

¹ Ms. Roper is a pseudonym. All names related to the observations and surveys of teachers and students have been changed to protect their privacy.

description of the course cribbed from the College Board's website, she further emphasizes the literature heavy course by stating the following:

The reading requirements in the course are rigorous, as AP English is meant to emulate college-level courses. Thus, students must be prepared to have a reading assignment every night. My expectation is that every student can devote one hour per night to read the assignments; however, there will be some nights that more time is required for longer novels. AP English also requires students to write reflectively, analytically, and persuasively. Writing instruction will include attention to developing and organizing ideas in clear, coherent, and persuasive language. Students will learn how to develop a "voice" in writing and how to develop stylistic maturity by using sophisticated vocabulary, a variety of sentence structures, specific illustrative details, and effective tone. We will also practice how to write timed essays both for the SAT and for the AP exam. Students are required to keep a reader-response journal to accompany the assigned readings. These journals will include reflections about the reading assignments. Usually, I will assign a topic or two per literary work. Often, students will be expected to respond to a quotation from a work and argue its relevance and validity. I will take up the journals each grading period. Generally speaking, students must have ten journal entries per grading period. (Roper, "College Board version", 1)

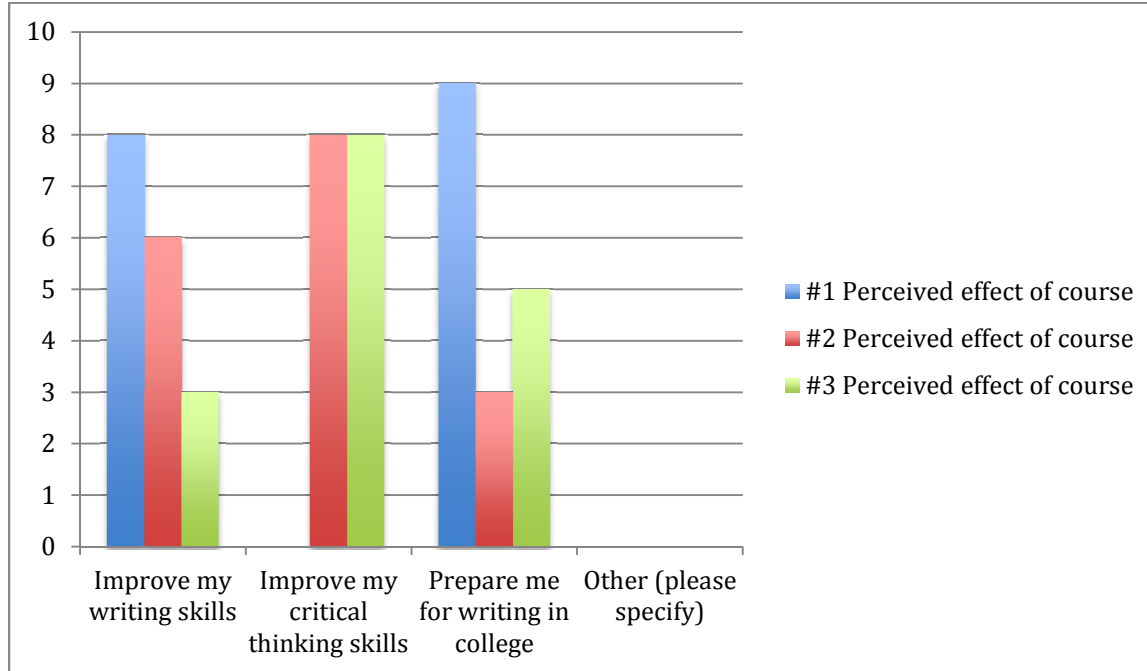
In her description of the course, Ms. Roper also incorporates objectives related to the writing portion of the course and the fact that the course is supposed to be like that of a college-level course. On the first day I observed her class, Ms. Roper talked to me about the letter she sends students at the beginning of the school year, outlining the heavy reading load and mentioning the

summer reading test at the beginning of the year. She stated, “I send a letter with a picture of a stack of books to remind them about the seriousness of the class and the amount of reading they have to do” (Roper, observation, 11/11/12). The letter and syllabi were accurate; the reading load was heavy. Students read a lot over the course of my observations, approximately six novels and several poems and short stories.

In the class version of her syllabus, Ms. Roper adds that students will have three major academic goals in AP English over the course of the school year: “1) Read. 2) Write. 3) Discuss” (Roper, “Class Version”, 1). Here she also further emphasizes the course as being equivalent to college-level work so expectations are high. In sum, based on both the material provided by the College Board and that provided by Ms. Roper, the outcomes of the course are focused on conducting close readings of literature, writing and reflecting about the works read, and discussing those works openly in the classroom, but what are the students’ goals for the course?

According to the initial survey, students’ number one perceived goal or consequence of taking the course was because they believed it would prepare them for writing in college (See Table 4). It can be assumed that since the information they can gather via AP’s course website about the possibility being able to exempt first-year composition in college for successful AP scores that students would then correctly ascertain that this course will in fact prepare them for writing in college.

Table 3: What do you think this class will do for you?



“Improve my writing skills” was also ranked high as the first choice students’ marked. The second and third perceived outcomes of the course are tied. While improving writing skills and preparing them to write well in college ranked high, they also believed the course would help improve their critical thinking skills. In this section of the survey, no one chose “Other” and elaborated on other perceived outcomes or goals of the course. Interesting, though, is the fact that their expectations do not really line up with what actually happens in a typical college first-year composition course. Most first-year writing courses do very little, if any, writing about literature, so here again is another instance where the two systems clash with regard to expectations.

AP English Literature and Composition: Tools

The tools of the classroom include a number of objects, including physical ones, and language that helps the people accomplish the activities within the system. As part of discussion

the tools, I felt it was important to include a physical description of the classroom space, especially since it differed so much from the first-year writing classroom described in Chapter Four.

AP English Literature and Composition Classroom Description

The classroom's desks are divided into three sections. When one enters, to the left is a set of six desks (three front in the and in the three back). In front of one of the first row of desks is a bright blue butterfly chair (a comfy chair). The student whose desk is behind that chair just uses it for her book bag. Behind that set of six desks is a whiteboard; its braces have been painted bright orange and several book covers (*Wuthering Heights*, *Jane Eyre*) and other hand-painted crafts line the wall.

Toward the "back" part of the class is set of eight desks (in two rows) and a bright pink butterfly chair sits in front of one student's desk. A girl has chosen that pink chair as her "desk". Behind this set of desks is the back wall of the classroom, which is covered in bookshelves, loaded with classroom copies of books and two computer workstations. There is also a table with two crates on it; one is labeled AP English and the other is labeled IB English. The crates contain student folders.

Between the second and third set of desks is Ms. Proctor's personal area. There are two file cabinets, at least four more bookcases full of folders, books, etc., and her hand-painted desk. The desk is purple, yellow, green, blue, white, and pink, and it has stars and stripes painted on it, as well as her initials. The desk and bright colors represent Ms. Roper's ethos well. She is someone who clearly loves to read and to teach her students the joys and complexities of reading both critically and for fun.

The last set of desks contains two rows each with four desks. Again, in front of one of the desks is a dark blue camping chair, like the kind you take to a soccer game or outdoor concert, and a male student has chosen that seat as his “desk”. The wall behind this set of desks has been painted a bright yellow. There are more examples of artwork and quotations on this side of the room. Other words have been cut out and pasted to the air conditioning vent that spans this side of the room: Style, Diction, Sentence Structure, Imagery, Figurative Language, Tone, Detail, and Syntax. Across the yellow wall, there is another bookshelf at the front of the room, and there are more pictures, but these are of bands like Rascal Flats, and Bruce Springsteen and the E Street band.

In the front of the room there is a long whiteboard. The teacher’s lectern is painted a lavender color with yellow trim. The words “Wuthering Heights” are painted in blue letters on the front and there is a drawing of a girl with a bow in her hair holding a white flower. There is also a green vine winding up the podium. In front of the podium are two tables pushed together to make a large “desk”. On it are speakers, an iPod docking station, a laptop, DVD player, and a projector. On the left side of white board are vocabulary words and on the right side are reminders for both the AP English and the IB English classes. To the right of her teaching space is another shelving unit that has been painted a tangerine color. It holds school supplies like tissue, sanitizer, and pencils. A door, which I assume leads to a closet, is on the same wall by the door students use to enter the classroom. The “closet” door is painted purple but it has a flower vase full of flowers painted over it, as well as quotations all over the door.

The room can be summed up as extremely bright and a bit “teen-ish”. The décor is ever changing as students finish creative assignments and tape them to the brightly colored walls or hang them from strings attached to the ceiling. In many ways, the decorative classroom, with its

bright colored walls, personalized trinkets, and construction paper assignments, constructs this space as one that is very different from the typical first-year composition classroom it is meant to replicate. Though a room is but only one piece of the AP system, it seems clear that this particular classroom sets up a completely different atmosphere than the first-year composition course I report on in Chapter Four. However, not only does the physical space create that difference, but the “tools” located within it do as well. The books that line the shelves all belong to the school system and/or the teacher, not the student. The students do not purchase and keep those texts, but instead they are required to use them during class time while working on an assignment. Thus, learning seems mainly to take place only within those four walls with the instructor present, providing another major difference of these two spaces.

AP English Literature and Composition: Rules, Community and Division of Labor

According to Engeström, the rules, community, and division of labor in an activity system are what constitute its “social basis,” situating it in a broader context and allowing researchers to explore its historical roots and cultural diversity (Kain and Wardle 121).

Specifically, Kain and Wardle write,

The *rules* include formal requirements, informal habits of work, and shared conventions that shape the activity and operate in the broader social context. *Rules* also include language conventions, such as grammar, syntax, structure, style, and format that the subject and community consider when working with genres. The *community* is the group from which subjects take their cues and to which they contribute. The community’s history, activities, and general goals are relevant to the activity, and the community’s interests shape the subject’s interests

and actions. The *division of labor* refers to the distribution of knowledge across the system. (121)

As noted by Kain and Wardle, each of these aspects of the system allows for a unique look at the larger cultural and historical background of the AP system and, later, the FYC system. To further this point, Yrjö Engeström and Reijo Miettinen write in the introduction to *Perspectives on Activity Theory* that this theory recognizes “two basic processes operating at every level of human activity: internalization and externalization. Internalization is related to reproduction of culture; externalization as creation of new artifacts make possible its transformation. These two processes are inseparably intertwined” (10). Engeström and Miettinen then discuss Bhaskar’s take on this way to view social activity:

It is no longer true to say that human agents create it [the society]. Rather they *reproduce* or *transform* it. That is to say, if society is already made, then any concrete human praxis, if you like, act of objectivation, can only modify it; and the totality of such acts sustain or change it. It is not the product of their activity (any more than their actions are completely determined by it). Society stands to individuals, then, as something that they never make, but that exists only by virtue of their activity (...) People do not create society, for it always preexists them. Rather it is an ensemble of structures, practices and conventions that individuals reproduce or transform. But which would not exist unless they did so. Society does not exist independently of conscious human activity (the error of reification)... (10-11)

Bhaskar, Engeström and Miettinen make it clear that it is impossible to look only at subjects, objects, and outcomes of an activity system. While those three aspects are extremely important,

the larger socio-, cultural, historical contexts are a vital piece of what also shapes each system. The first aspect of this “social basis” we’ll explore is *rules*.

Rules

Because *rules* includes the formal requirements of the system, let’s first look at what is necessary in creating and teaching an AP English course. According to its media guide, all AP courses are “modeled upon a comparable college course, and college and university faculty play a vital role in ensuring that AP courses align with college-level standards” (1). What many people may not know about the AP program is that there is no set national curriculum. In Yancey’s *Delivering College Composition: The Fifth Canon*, David A. Joliffe and Bernard Phelan write that

Many people assume there is some standardized, certified AP course that students must take to prepare for the examination. There is no such thing. The College Board does issue publications and sponsor workshops and institutes that promote various designs for courses that prepare students to perform well on one or both exams, but there is no official AP course or AP reading list. (91)

Ms. Roper, the AP English Literature and Composition teacher I observed, has taught AP English Literature and Composition for course for seventeen years. As part of this research project, I asked her about how she first came to teach AP English and how she decides on the assignments to create. She stated: “I haven’t officially been ‘trained.’ I have gone to a couple of workshops, but most of what I have learned I have done on my own through the College Board AP website and blogs and my own research. I have also bought several books about the exam and how to prepare students for that” (Roper interview). Over the course of the observation, I

saw Ms. Roper use AP prep books as she geared her students up for the AP English exam in May.

The other “rule” required by the system is the submission of one’s syllabus to the AP Course Audit. Per the program’s media guide, the course audit is described as having the intent “to provide secondary and higher education constituents with the assurance that an ‘AP’ designation on a student’s transcript is credible, meaning the AP Program has authorized a course that has met or exceeded the curricular requirements and classroom resources that demonstrate the academic rigor of a comparable course” (1). Essentially, teachers must prepare a syllabus for the proposed course, paying attention to the suggestions of the College Board and the requirements of the course it is to replicate, and complete the “subject-specific electronic AP Course Audit form” (“AP Course Audit” par 1). Once the syllabus and form are submitted, it will be reviewed, and if approved, it will be forwarded to an “external college faculty reviewer who will validate that it does indeed demonstrate how the course meets the curricular requirements for that subject” (“AP Course Audit par 1). Ms. Roper stated, “I have to submit my syllabus to the AP course audit site for it to be approved. I had to read the objectives of the course and make sure my reading selections ‘fit.’ That is a grueling process...” (Roper, interview). As mentioned already, Ms. Roper does keep two syllabi. She has the formal one that she submits to the AP Course Audit site for approval, but she also has a condensed version she opts to give the students. Her decision to give her students a separate syllabus is strictly personal. She seems to believe her students do not need all the extra information necessary for the Course Audit version. In a sense, this decision on Ms. Roper’s part gives her some agency that some may say circumvents the entire audit process. However, her move mimics that of a first-year composition instructor who is able, typically, to choose her syllabus content.

Because “rules” also refers to the “informal habits of work and shared conventions,” including language conventions, it is also important to look at the genres Ms. Roper presents to the classroom. In their research on using activity theory to teach genre in professional communication courses, Kain and Wardle rely on Carolyn Miller’s definition of genre as “‘typified rhetorical actions’ that respond to reoccurring situations and become instantiated in groups’ behaviors” (115). They later posit that the “rhetorical moves people must make within accepted genres to communicate successfully in particular contexts operate to reinforce communities’ identities and to legitimate particular communication practices” (115). Essentially, the genres represented in Ms. Roper’s classroom should be, according to AP’s Course Audit approval, like those represented in a first-year composition course and/or, one would have to assume, a sophomore literature course since this course can also offer advanced credit for that course as well. Some of those genres include poetry, research paper, speech, journaling, tests (both reading and AP practice), and literary analysis. Other assignments were designed to fulfill Ms. Roper’s objectives concerning grammar, vocabulary acquisition, and sentence construction.

The poetry genre was not only introduced via reading and analysis, but students also completed a “found poems” project. For this project students selected a passage from a book they were reading to rewrite as a poem on a piece of construction paper and to paint a picture that corresponded to the quotation (Observation, 11/11/12). These works were later taped around the room for all to see. In addition to the large post-it notes with vocabulary words on them, Ms. Roper also had students write practice sentences using vocabulary words from the text they were currently reading. She instructed that the students “not use simple sentences and that they should include context clues” (Observation, 12/04/12). On several occasions I also saw

students write in their journals, answering prompts that were either written on the board or verbalized by Ms. Roper.

On the second day of my observations, I watched as Ms. Roper began discussing their research paper project. The project was introduced some time before I began my observations because students were clearly in the research phase. According to Yancey and colleagues in the “Portraits of Composition” study, two of the most important approaches to teaching composition in college, according to the 1,861 postsecondary writing faculty, were academic writing and argument (Yancey and Morrison 268). The research paper is a staple in most first year writing classrooms, so Ms. Roper’s use of this genre fits within the expectations of college-level writing. These projects, however, are tied to the students’ senior projects and part of their graduation requirements. The high school’s senior project is a required three to five page research paper, a visual aid that represents the student’s work, a portfolio that contains all the “paperwork” and forms, pictures, etc., and a three to five minute presentation of the work. Each student is required to spend a minimum of ten hours (or fifteen if an AP or IB student) on the project and is required to have a mentor. This project is not something that is typically part of an AP English classroom, but instead it is a graduation requirement of this particular high school.

On this particular day, Ms. Roper asked the students to get out their research notecards. Their research notecards were part of the larger research project. On the handout she provides students that details the larger assignment and these notecards, she refers to them as “bibliography cards,” as they hold quotes and notes from students’ research on them. She then pulled up the UNC Chapel Hill Writing Center’s website on writing thesis statements. She instructed the students to begin sorting their notecards into three stacks so they could craft a three-point thesis statement. Some thesis statements, she stated, however, may only have two

points. She also suggested they think about the question they want to answer. In other words, they may not have a thesis statement in mind right now, but it should come out of the research. She then asked them to think about what they want to do with their paper and instructed the students to look at their stacks and think about what they want to say. After glancing at several students' stacks, I realized they had already conducted some research and had written down quotations and facts on their notecards. After several minutes of sorting and thinking, Ms. Roper asked students to share their stacks. After the first student discussed her stacks, Ms. Roper prompted her to think about one word she could use to label each stack. She then suggested they use sticky notes to help label note cards separately.

Several students began offering up their stacks for discussion and asking Ms. Roper what she thought. She noted their good use of organization, but questioned how they would put their points into a thesis. She brought up the importance of parallelism and continued to help students but acknowledged she couldn't write everyone's thesis statement because that should be each student's individual job. After they finished the discussion and before the bell rang, Ms. Roper told the students she put the UNC Chapel Hill site on Edmodo, their course website, for all to see and use (Observation, 12/04/12). A few days later, while students watched *Macbeth*, I reviewed graded copies of students' research papers. Of the papers I looked at, all received passing grades, including several A's and B's. One paper even earned a perfect score of 100. However, when comparing that paper to Ms. Roper's "How To Make An 'A' on a Research Paper" (see below), the perfect score seemed a bit high.

How To Make An "A" on a Research Paper

Just make sure you have the following items:

Format/Style:

- Correct heading (your name, teacher's name, course, date, all double-spaced)
- Engaging title (not a complete sentence, not in " " or underlined!)
- Typed double-spaced
- Correct number of pages
- Last name and page number at top of each page
- Parenthetical citations according to MLA format (A paper without parenthetical citations will not receive a passing grade, as this would be plagiarism)
- Works Cited page at end of paper arranged according to MLA guidelines - sources in alphabetical order, double-spaced, hanging indentions
- At least five sources used throughout paper
- Interview with mentor included as source and in text of essay

Content:

- Attention-getter in introduction
- Smooth sentences that "bridge" the attention-getter to thesis
- Clearly stated thesis at the end of introduction
- A thesis that presents an "argument," not a mere statement of facts
- Points of thesis in parallel form (same grammatical pattern)
- Body paragraphs that prove each point of thesis
- Topic sentences stated at beginning of each body paragraph
- Topic sentences following the order of points presented in thesis
- Transitional expressions making paper coherent (sentences "flow")
- Effective use of research to prove each point
- Sufficient amount of research to prove thesis
- Clarity and organization (message is clear, not vague or hard to follow)
- More than listing of facts, writer's own commentary as well
- Sources used fairly evenly
- Smooth use of quotations, often incorporated into grammar of your own sentence
- Sophisticated vocabulary
- Sentence variety (not every sentence beginning with subject, etc.)
- Conclusion that restates thesis, sums up argument without being repetitive, and has an ending with "umph."
- An interesting "angle" so that paper is not BORING!!!
- Absolutely no grammatical errors

As evidenced here, the grading is based on format/style and content. Things such as having the correct heading and an engaging title, along with a minimum of five sources used throughout the paper are listed in the first section. The essay that received a perfect score had fulfilled most of these characteristics, but the content was made up entirely of paraphrased or directly quoted information. Behind each sentence there was a citation and each citation came from a website, like Ask.com or Guy Harvey's website. There was virtually no "writer's own commentary" but a lot of "list of facts". The "A" paper for this project, then, seems to be more like a caricature of research. In other words, students are imitating the more superficial elements of the genre rather than actually working to research the material thoroughly using a wide variety of sources, to critically analyze the material gathered, and to synthesize it into a meaningful assignment, taking into consideration both audience and purpose. As evidenced in the next chapter, what is considered an "A" content in a high school research paper isn't exactly the same as what is considered an "A" paper in college.

Another major genre and activity that took up the bulk of my final observations involved preparing students for the AP examination. On numerous occasions students either began or ended class with an AP practice test, and Ms. Roper would use her *AP Express* book or her *5 Steps to a 5* book to help students better understand the test and which answers were considered correct and why. An example of this kind of work can be taken from a portion of the observation conducted on March 19, 2013. On that day I arrived at 9:20 and the class had already begun. The students were taking an AP practice test. According to the white board, they were also working on a project that was due the following Monday. "No Exceptions" the board read. A large post-it note had been placed on the sideboard beside the one already there that read "Words to include in Analytical Essays". The new post-it read:

Tone – writer’s (or speaker’s) ATTITUDE toward the subject.

TONE Words:

Angry, sarcastic, scathing, sharp, vexed, contemptuous, apologetic, didactic, joyful, sentimental, mocking, condescending, nostalgic, somber, sad, candid, irreverent, cold, humorous, urgent, bitter, disdainful, poignant, detached

At 9:40 Ms. Roper began going over the practice test. She was using a text called *AP Express*. She began by first reading from the book about how to approach the multiple-choice section of the test. She told them to “skip the labor intensive questions” because the “goal is to get as many points as possible in the allotted time.” She reminded them that no points are deducted for incorrect answers. Ms. Roper then returned to the *AP Express* book and explained the timing rules, how much time to spend on each set, and how to use “process of elimination”. The students then proceeded to go over the test. Out of the ten questions, no one got more than 5 correct. They all immediately began emphasizing their stress and they wanted to do another practice test. Ms. Roper said they would have to wait until tomorrow. The next day I observed, (March 21, 2013) and every day after that (03/29/13; 03/26/13; 04/11/2013; 04/16/13; 04/23/13) the students worked through practice tests, including both multiple choice and timed essays tests.

By the last day of my observation and only weeks before the AP exam, students were still hard at work trying to figure how to pass the exam; however, Ms. Roper and the class had an interesting discussion about the exam and what she hopes they are learning. After students finished taking another practice test, Ms. Roper went over the answers and instructed the class to mark the ones they got correct. She said to the class, “You’re just trying to get points, get points, get points!” The book she is reading from is titled *5 Steps to a 5* published by McGraw/Hill. Once they finished tallying scores, she said if they had at least twelve right then they were set to do well and get a decent score on the exam. Ms. Roper’s exclamation that they were just trying

to “get points” illustrates a major distinction between the AP English classroom and the first-year writing classroom. “Getting points” is not typically part of a college composition course’s repertoire because “success” usually involves more than scoring well on one particular occasion/assignment.

One student then mentioned that she didn’t like how the exam asked about theme because each individual will look at the passage and analyze and interpret it differently. She was upset, in other words, that she was being asked/forced to conform to someone else’s interpretation. Ms. Roper then emphasized that this is not how she really wants them to read. She emphasized that this was only a test and she hoped they put more time into their reading. She said, “When you read for me, use a pen, highlighter, sticky notes, etc. to read and take notes. This test goes against everything we preach in writing classes because you can’t really brainstorm, prewrite, draft, etc. It just tests your knowledge. The test is hard because if you aren’t a lifelong reader and you get to us [AP teachers] as seniors, it’s hard to change you. I hope that just being in this class will help you in college.” Though the class was clearly focused on literature, reading it, analyzing it, and writing about it, and passing the AP exam, Ms. Roper truly hoped her students would take away something more. Her concern is genuine and it is easy to see how much she hopes to inspire her students to achieve more in life; however, at the same time she appears conflicted. On the one hand, she is bound by the “rules” and practices of the AP system in that a major driving force of it is the test and its outcomes. Accolades, promotions, and money, lots of money, are all tied up in this singular outcome: AP test scores. On the other hand, she knows as a teacher and reader that having to spend a large majority of her time teaching to the test is not really how she wants her students to learn. She seems to long for a fuller learning environment,

one perhaps that could mimic that of a introductory college classroom, but she is constrained by the AP system.

Community and Division of Labor

The concepts of community and division of labor within the activity system of AP English I observed are really quite similar. The community represents those people or groups whose “knowledge, interests, stakes, and goals shape the activity,” while division of labor refers to the hierarchy of the system or how the work is divided among the participants in the activity (Kain and Wardle 120). Both parts include the students, whom I will discuss further in the next section, and their parents, the teachers, administrators, and those within the College Board and AP Program’s system. Traditionally, students are “batched” or “tracked” in high school. Thus, students are placed into various learning tracks based on their academic ability, placement on certain standardized tests, teacher evaluations, and/or a combination of those factors. At my research site, the county, another community member and stakeholder, does not “enthusiastically support the AP curriculum because we [the school and county] have the IB program,” stated Ms. Roper. She went on to say that “we spend over \$50,000 every year on IB tests and costs of having the program ... We have only four AP courses at [our school] while some schools have thirty” (Roper, interview).

While the College Board’s administrators within the AP Program are one set of gatekeepers that schools and teachers must pass through, there are others within this hierarchy. As evidenced by Ms. Roper’s statement on the importance the county places on IB, the county offices are also a sort of gatekeeper. On several occasions, I observed censorship in action. While reading the *Poisonwood Bible*, for example, students became interested in the African army ants mentioned in the novel. When Ms. Roper tried to locate an image of them online, all

access was denied due to the school's Internet censorship settings (Observation, February 7, 2013). On another occasion, Ms. Roper wasn't able to access her own course website, a site that had already been pre-approved by "central office" (Observation, February 21, 2013). What Ms. Roper could and could not do in the classroom regarding using the Internet for supplemental instruction was greatly hindered on several occasions due to censorship.

Lastly, the community of learners and the atmosphere created in the classroom was vastly different from that in the college first year writing classroom. Just as the room as bright and cheery, the overall vibe in the class was, too. When students began to fall asleep, Ms. Roper would have them stand up and hula hoop. The very act of someone hula hooping in the corner often got the entire class off subject for several minutes, but nonetheless it created what Ms. Roper called "commercial breaks" in the learning process. On one particular day in January, as I observed the class, the room smelled delicious because they were celebrating a student's birthday with cookies, cake, fruit, etc. The class was in the midst of studying Shakespeare's *Macbeth*, and the following notes were written on the front board:

Paradox		
Theme of deceitful appearances		
Inversion... "look like the innocent flower But be the serpent under it"		
Blank verse → unrhymed iambic pentameter		
Soliquy		
"solo"	assonance	"see <u>e</u> ach <u>f</u> reaking
aside	aubade	<u>c</u> reep <u>e</u> at <u>t</u> hree
dramatic dialogue		<u>g</u> reasy <u>p</u> eaches"
clothing, blood imagery, water		metaphysical
internal conflict		conceit
	comic relief	unusual comp.
sleep → innocence, peace		
apostrophe – lit. technique in which someone addresses something nonhuman, dead, or absent		

blood – guilt
water – purifying agent

	(Act 3) climax	
	(Act 2) rising action	falling action (Act 4)
(Act 1) exposition		resolution (Act 5)

Students were assigned various parts in the section of the play they were reading and they began reading the play out loud. Every now and then Ms. Roper broke in and added analysis. She also asked questions to probe more information from the students. When they would get off track, she remarked they were having a “commercial break”. In this particular case, the class got off track discussing the food smell that was coming from downstairs where the home economics class is located. Ms. Roper then went on to introduce the term “night terror” and her past experience with having a child with them. Overall, there appears to be good interaction within the group. Students took turns reading and all seemed actively engaged in the activity (Observation, January 10, 2013).

Additionally, another aspect of the community I observed was the number of interruptions Ms. Roper received on an almost daily basis. The class always began with announcements over the PA system, the saying of the Pledge of Allegiance, and a moment of silence. On a weekly basis, the classroom phone would ring and students would be asked to go to the front office, counselor’s office, etc., for various reasons. Additionally, other teachers or administrators would also knock on the door and come in to talk to Ms. Roper in the middle of a lecture. At least once or more a week, I would witness a variety of these interruptions.

AP English Literature and Composition: Subjects:

Though it is more than likely clear who the “subjects” in this particular study are, let’s take a closer look at whom the CollegeBoard and AP strive to indoctrinate and who actually

signs up. At the onset of this study, on the first day I observed in mid November of 2012, there were sixteen students in the class. Thirteen were females and three were males. Additionally, there were a total of six African American students (five females and one male) and ten Caucasian students (See Table 4). As the course progressed into the spring semester, the class demographics shifted a bit due to scheduling conflicts. In the spring semester there were a total of sixteen students, consisting of eleven females and five males. There were four African American females, nine Caucasian females, and five Caucasian males.

Table 4: Fall Demographics

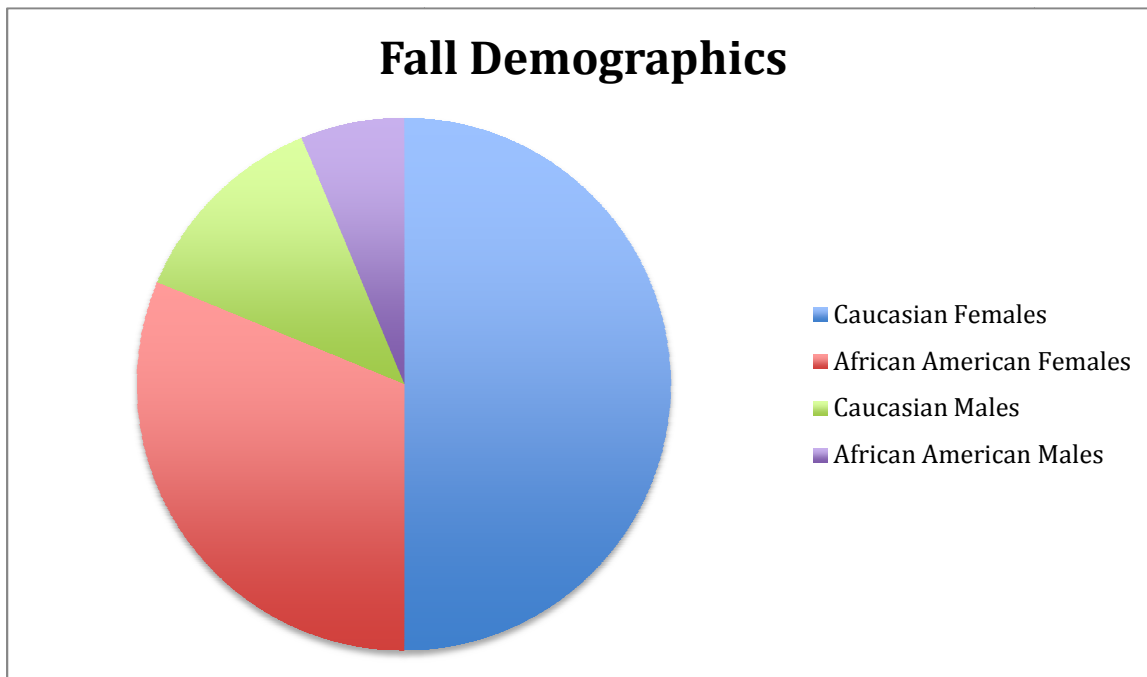
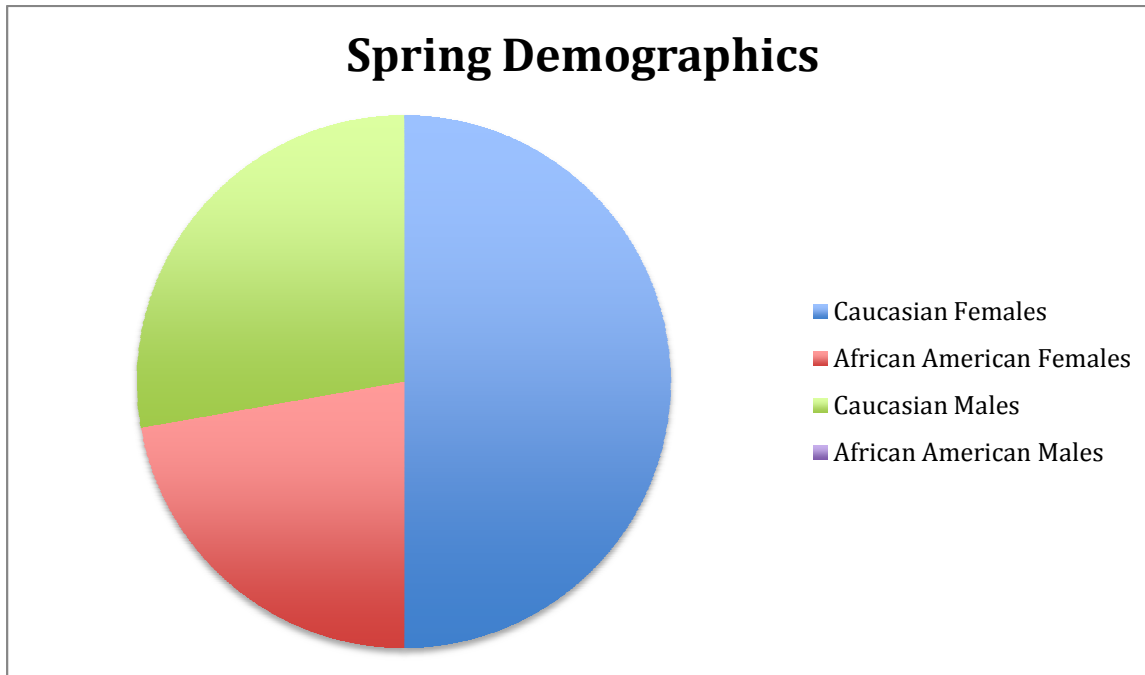


Table 5: Spring Demographics



A quick look at the chart shows that students enrolled in this particular course were, on both occasions, half female and approximately three-quarter Caucasian. This statistic is really no surprise since traditionally the program has had high enrollments for both Caucasian and female students. This trend, however, is something the College Board and AP program claim to be working to change, as signified by their annual *Report to the Nation*, which began in 2005.

As part of signifying the approaching fiftieth anniversary of the AP Program, the College Board began publishing the *AP Report to the Nation*. Although the Program regularly collects data and has online, searchable archived data starting from the year 1997, this report “provides another means of evaluating student performance [because it] uses a combination of state, national and AP Program data to provide each U.S. state with the context it can use to celebrate its successes, understand its unique challenges, and set meaningful, data-driven goals to prepare

more students for success in college” (“AP Data & Reports” 1). As I analyzed these reports, it became clear how much the program has changed. The 2005 annual Report highlights the first major change.

In the 2005 annual Report, the document opens with an Introduction to the report—detailing its specifics—and information regarding what AP is, how exams are scored, and what the grading scale means (1). The report then presents new information regarding a reoccurring theme seen throughout all six reports—measuring “equity and excellence” (2). Due to the request of educators around the nation, old ways of measuring equity and excellence were done away with. First, the old way of measuring the percentage of AP students scoring 3 or higher was revised because educators believed it was easy to inflate this number. Specifically, the Report states:

A school could only allow its two ‘best’ students to take [for example] AP Calculus, and could then attain a metric of ‘100 percent scoring 3 or higher,’ while another school, committed to equitable access, could encourage 20 of its students to take the exam; if half of those students scored 3 or higher on the exam, the school would have ‘only’ a metric of ‘50 percent scoring 3 or higher,’ when in fact they provided many more students with successful AP experiences than the school that only allowed two to participate. (1st Annual Report 2)

Here we see the first shift in how the Program defines its students. According to Jones and other scholars, the Program was clearly begun in order to cater to the “best,” most academically gifted students because those were who the then-current educational system were supposedly failing. Now we see a clear distinction start to form as to who was and who is a part of the Program now.

Additionally, the Report’s use of “successful” to describe the fictional “half of students” who didn’t make a 3 or higher is contradictory to its long standing assertion on what it means to be successful in AP. As the text in the most recent Report states, “Throughout the *AP Report to the Nation*, ‘success’ on an AP exam is defined as an exam score of 3 or higher, which represents the score point that research

finds predictive of college success and college graduation” (6th Annual Report 3). According to this definition, those students in the fictional example were *not* successful.

The second major change in measuring the Program’s equity and excellence concerns how the Program represents the percentage participating in AP. This percentage did not originally take into account the scores; the program felt that was a useless piece of data because it was unable to show true equitable access to courses that “truly [were] offered at the level of quality demonstrated by exam grades of 3 or higher (2). Thus, the scores are important and should be represented.

Finally, the new measure takes into account “the percentage of students in a total population (a school, a district, a state, or the nation) who had at least one AP experience resulting in an exam score of 3 or higher” (2). The 6th annual Report to the Nation states this new metric does not allow for inflation of the percentage “by restricting access to AP; students who earn 1s and 2s on AP Exams neither increase or reduce the percentage” (4). This new metric, then, allows for a somewhat fuller numeric representation of how the Program is doing, but, as this analysis will show, this metric ultimately fails to tell the whole story related to AP students’ failures.

The next “Theme” evident in this Report is labeled “AP and College Readiness.” This section opens with a statistic about the percentage of students (40%) entering four-year colleges and universities who need some sort of remedial education. The percentage rises to 63% for those entering two-year institutions. The Report notes that this need for remediation is a “significant concern” because it “negatively influences the likelihood that a student will obtain a bachelor’s degree” (6). This notification of a need for remediation seems odd to mention this in this way. Originally, the concern was that students were made to “repeat” courses because the high schools and colleges were not on the same page; hence, the last two years of high school and the first two years of college were too similar with college being too easy. Now it seems as though students are not leaving high school fully prepared to handle the rigor of college courses.

Based on its historical foundation, however, one could argue that it was not and is not the AP Program’s job to strengthen the entire educational program. The Program originally was only concerned

with the most academically gifted students. As Jones points out, the original founders of the Fund made clear the program was “not intended for most students” and there was no intent to “reform...the whole American educational system...” (qtd. in Jones 49). Yes, that can be construed as elitist in nature. According to Jones, in the 1950s progressivism was attacked because of its “tendency to privilege pedagogy over subject-matter content. Moreover, they [critics] faulted the reluctance in most public high schools to differentiate among student abilities” (47). It seems as if the AP Program could be faulted for similar reasons. A rapid move by the College Board to “democratize the program, announcing ambitious goals such as ‘offering AP in every school in the nation, with 10 courses in each school by 2010’” (Hansen 17) means they will no longer acknowledge each student’s individual abilities and will instead commence in a call to encourage one and all to partake. What becomes even clearer throughout the analysis of the Reports is that as the program grows, it is also flat lining, losing its prestige and quality.

The third section in the *1st Annual Report to the Nation* is one labeled “Closing the Equity Gaps.” Though the full policy is not stated in the actual guide, the focus on diversity in the classroom is made clear in the Report. The Program’s official “Equity Policy Statement,” found in an outside document, states:

The College Board and the Advanced Placement Program encourages teachers, AP Coordinators, and school administrators to make equitable access a guiding principle for their AP programs. The College Board is committed to the principle that all students deserve and opportunity to participate in rigorous, academically challenging course and programs. All students who are willing to accept the challenge of a rigorous academic curriculum should be considered for admission to AP courses. The Board encourages the elimination of barriers that restrict access for AP courses to students from ethnic, racial, and socioeconomic groups that have been traditionally underrepresented in the AP Program. Schools should make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population. (qtd. in Moore and Slate 57)

The last line that calls for “schools to make every effort to ensure that their AP classes reflect the diversity of their student population” (also found on page 8 of the Report) reproduces issues similar to those made apparent in the discussion of the second theme earlier in this text. This third theme is also reminiscent of issues related to Title IX, which requires high schools to provide equal opportunities in men’s and women’s sports based on proportionate student enrollment (“Title IX”). The issue with both Title IX and the AP Program is that schools cannot make girls participate in sports in order to meet Title IX requirements any more than schools can make minorities students participate in AP Programs. However, AP programs and schools are finding ways to get more and more students to participate with incentives. For example, in the 6th *Annual Report to the Nation*, schools are “guaranteeing” students an extra “grade point for their effort” and some states are offering supplemental college scholarships for low-income students based on their performance (10). As further analysis will reveal, these incentives play a major role in the shift the AP Program as taken.

The next theme discussed in the 1st *Annual Report to the Nation* concerns “Closing the Equity Gap.” Here again we see the shift in language regarding who is now taking (or who the Program would like to be taking) the AP courses and subsequent exams. The Report states the information presented in this section should “...guide educators and policymakers in continued efforts to ensure that traditionally *underserved* students not yet fully represented in AP classrooms to receive preparation for, and access to, AP courses” (1st Annual AP Report 8, emphasis added). As stated previously, Jones remarks that AP was started because of concerns that gifted and talented students were being “underserved.” Clearly a shift in who is being “underserved” has taken place. The term “underserved” is also used in the Reports for the years 2007 and 2008 and will be highlighted later.

The 2nd *Annual Report to the Nation* in the year 2006 big changes are reported in terms of number of students who took AP Exams. Under the first theme “Excellence and Equity in College-Level Achievement” the following points were made:

- “Over the past five years, the size of the U.S. public school population has increased by more than 100,000 students”

- Overall high school population increased by 104,149 students
- Number of students succeeding on an AP Exam in high school increased by 118,036 students. (2nd Annual Report 4)

Specifically, the total number of exams taken by those identifying as Black/African Americans jumped from 80,444 in 2005 to 94,556 in 2006. The number of exams taken by Asians, Asian-Americans or Pacific Islanders increased from 213,828 in 2005 to 241,692 in 2006. Additionally, the number of exams taken by Whites rose from 984,405 in 2005 to 1,046,590 in 2006 (Cech and Holovach 7). The interesting fact to note about these increases is that as each group increased its numbers, the average test score for each ethnicity, except the American Indian or Alaskan Native, decreased. Cech and Holovach report that the average number of test takers for each recorded ethnicity rose again in 2007, but the average scores reached an all-time low for Report years 2004-2007 (5-6).

Because of the shift in academic eligibility in terms of who can now take AP, the third theme in 2006's Report focuses on "Closing Equity Gaps." The section states that "despite the strides that have been made by educators to provide traditionally underrepresented students with AP courses, poor AP Exam results indicate that often these teachers and students are not receiving adequate preparation for the rigors of an AP course" (10). The guide goes on to encourage "major initiatives" to ensure adequate preparation of students in middle school and 9th and 10th grades. Those initiatives become major focal points for the remaining Reports.

In the 2007 Report, under the first theme of "State Initiatives that Foster Student Success," the focus is on funding and incentives, but the analysis shows once again the Program's shift in defining who is "underserved." The report highlights Arkansas's "landmark legislation [that] requires all public schools in the state to make AP courses available for their students, and to support this requirement, the state has allocated funding..." (6). Other schools are providing incentives for teachers and administrators "willing to put in the extra work needed to help traditionally *underserved* students succeed on AP Exams" (6, emphasis added). Additionally in the 2007 Report under the theme labeled "Closing Equity Gaps" a section titled "WORDS of CAUTION and CONCERN" states that more *underserved* students are taking

the test, but those students are only achieving 1s and 2s, so those students and teachers are not prepared for the academic rigor necessary for these AP Exams.

In the final Reports a shift in focus can clearly be seen both visually and textually. In the 2008 4th *Annual Report to the Nation*, Part I is labeled “Themes of Equity and Excellence” and the entire section is devoted to two different facets of that theme. The first highlights several states that lead the nation in their AP students’ performance and participation percentages, while the other theme focuses on “The Work Ahead—Closing Equity and Excellence Gaps” (7-8). The original heading of “Some Words of Caution and Concern” has been deleted and the information originally contained within that section has simply been blocked into paragraphs. Clearly there is still concern over the gaps in what the Program calls “equity and excellence”, but perhaps the lack of measureable increase over the last three years made the writers decide not to include the heading, which draws more attention to the matter.

Additionally, money and incentives are discussed, even set off in bold typeface. The Report states that the newly created Advanced Placement Incentive Program “provides grants to state and local educational agencies working toward increasing participation of low-income students in both Pre-AP and AP course work and exams” (4th Annual Report 8). The Report then highlights several incentives “designed to support traditionally *underserved* students” (8, emphasis added). Here again we see the term “underserved” being used to describe an entirely different kind of student compared to the term’s original use in the Program’s founding documents.

The 2009 and the 2010 Reports both emphasize more design changes. These Reports include a “Highlights” section that previews some of the important information in the Report like the percentage of students in the graduating class with a score of 3 or higher, the numbers of minority students participating but also the disparity in their numbers overall, and the statistics for low-income students participating in AP and experiencing success (2).

These two reports are also not broken down into “Parts.” Instead, the entire report is devoted to “Themes of Equity and Excellence.” Like in the 2008 Report, the information is all in a paragraph, two-column format. Attention is no longer drawn to the negative information, but a list of bullets sets off the

positive information (*5th Annual Report* 4-5). The decision to focus the entire Report on “equity and excellence” really marks a decided shift in the Program’s history. While the reports try to place the focus on increases and closings of “equity and excellence gaps,” readers can clearly see not much progress is being made. Likewise, as the gaps do begin to shorten for some ethnic groups’ representation in AP, the numbers for students receiving scores of three or higher, the mark of “success” on an AP Exam, diminishes as the numbers receiving scores of 1s and 2s widen.

To put these reports in perspective and compare them to the observations, according to Ms. Roper, the enrollment for AP courses at her high school is “open to any students because our county wants a more diverse population in our upper-level classes” (Roper, interview). Additionally, the open enrollment policy has led to larger class sizes and more diversity. Ms. Roper stated, “One year at [another school] I had a class of all white students...and only one boy. [...] It was not very diverse. Now I usually have two sections of the class, which is awesome when you consider the fact the first year I taught the course there were only three students enrolled!” (Roper, interview). Also, according to self-reported scores, no one who responded to the email query regarding their AP exam scores was able to or planned to exempt first year writing in college. Of those who responded, two received a two on the exam, and three earned a three but all three still planned to take first year writing in college. Through further correspondence with Ms. Roper, I learned that no one received a 5 and only one student received a 4. She ended her email with the following: “I hope that even though my AP students did not get college credit, they will still feel well prepared for their college English courses” (Roper, email, 08/06/13). Ms. Roper’s comment is interesting, as it shows she is concerned not that any of her students “earned” college credit via a standardized AP test, but that she prepared them for their college English courses, an expectation the AP Program is not and was not originally designed for.

The analysis of AP's program materials and observations of the AP English class result in several key findings that will be fully developed in the final chapter; however, those findings correspond to the motives of the program and the course, the views on writing and writing assignments, and the expectations of students and the course. First, the motives or goals of the AP system are fairly clear. The creators of the AP Program have designed it to appeal to students and parents as a way to save money on their college expenses. This point is made clear by the analysis of not only the program's website and *Annual Report to the Nation*, but also in the students' responses as to *why* they enrolled in the course in the first place: to earn college credit. The course, then, is designed to teach students how to analyze literature, write about literature, and pass the corresponding AP English exam about literature. The focus on literature and preparing to pass a test also shapes students' view of writing. Often times research has indicated that students who matriculate from these AP courses often have this sense of "I've learned everything there is to know about writing," when in fact they've learned a smidge. Finally, the idea of AP English as being a commodity is heightened when we look at the increasing numbers of students enrolling in the course and their expectations of the course as preparation for writing in college. To provide a fuller picture of the course AP English seeks to emulate, Chapter 4 will take a closer look the activity system of a college first year writing course.

Chapter 4: Activity System of First Year Composition

As noted in Chapter 1, the introductory college composition course is a course of many names (“freshman English,” “first-year writing,” “first-year composition”), and it has been required of most students who entered American higher education since the late nineteenth century (Crowley 1). Because of the growing student population in our nation’s colleges and universities and a *perceived* need to teach people how to write well, the freshman composition course was designed, and each year these courses are full of incoming students, who are by no surprise mostly freshmen (1). According to Crowley,

In the academic year 1994-95, there were 12,262,608 undergraduates enrolled in American colleges and universities. If a quarter of those students were freshman—which is likely, since freshman classes tend to be larger than more advanced classes—nationally there were at least four million students enrolled in the freshman composition course during that year. (1)

Additionally, the National Center for Education Statistics reported that approximately, 21.6 million students were expected to attend colleges and universities in 2012 (1), but at the growing rate that students are beginning to take college courses while still in high school, it’s uncertain exactly how many of those 21.6 million students would be considered freshman and enrolled in a first year writing course. Because both AP English exams seek to offer students exemption and advanced standing for credit-bearing first-year composition courses in college, this chapter analyzes the activity system of a first-year writing course in a small, private four-year institution in eastern, NC, in part to ascertain how this system may differ from that of a high school AP system and how that difference may impact learning transfer. Unlike AP’s beginnings, first-year composition courses have had a tumultuous history. The course has been faced with several

attempts to abolish it completely. In their piece titled “Activity Theory: An Introduction to the Writing Classroom” Kain and Wardle break down David Russell’s definition of an activity system into discrete parts and posit that “activity systems come into being because of practices that have a history. At any point that we can begin to study how a system works, we need to consider how it came to function in a particular way” (2). This chapter begins with an analysis of first-year composition’s sociocultural and historical background, followed by a discussion of the nationally recognized CWPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, and then a discussion of the observation and survey material from the first-year composition class I observed at a small private liberal arts college in Eastern North Carolina. This material is important to this dissertation project because it provides a look into what a first-year composition course “looks” like and addresses how it functions in today’s time.

First-Year Composition: A Historical Look at its Tools, Rules, Community, and Division of Labor

At the beginning of his article “Romantics on Writing: Liberal Culture and the Abolition of Composition Courses” published in 1988 in *Rhetoric Review*, David Russell began with the following quotations:

“On no one subject of education has so great an amount of effort been put forth as on the teaching of English Composition, with so little satisfactory to show for it.”

-- Thomas R. Lounsbury, 1911

“I believe that the standard college course in Freshman composition has done much more harm than good, and the greatest service that college teachers of

English could render to their profession and to collegiate education in general would be to urge the immediate abolition of the course everywhere.” -- Oscar James Campbell, 1937

These are harsh words spoken by two well-known literature professors, yet they offer a first glimpse at the turbulent history of the first-year composition course. Russell writes that “though English departments were founded at the close of the nineteenth century largely to teach writing, and freshman composition has been the most constant part of a shifting elective curriculum ever since, composition courses have rarely been a full part of the university” (132). This statement is largely made because the course was so often seen as remedial, was more than likely taught by adjunct or graduate students, yet was a “necessary evil” because English departments came to rely on it for numbers (133).

Over the years the content of this course has changed as well, and it often varies from university to university and class to class in some cases. Traditionally, these first year writing courses have been housed in English departments with a wide range of tenure-stream faculty, adjuncts, and graduate students teaching the course. Also, there is much talk about the disciplinarity of writing studies and where college composition falls within that landscape. In the Retrospective piece of *Composition Forum*'s Spring 2013 journal, Elizabeth Wardle and Doug Downs wrote, “We do continue to maintain that writing studies has a problem that most other fields don't: lack of recognition that we *are* a field and that people who teach writing courses can't necessarily do so well with only the knowledge about writing they've developed in earning other college degrees” (par 14). Downs and Wardle point out two keys issues within the field: who teaches within it, which we will be discussed later in the chapter, and what *is* taught in

the field. Additionally, many scholars and educators have begun to ask, given the complexity of the different types of first-year composition offered and no set national standard, how could either AP English course/exam possibly “stand in” or “replace” first-year composition.

Likewise, in “Reimagining the Nature of FYC: Trends in Writing-about-Writing Pedagogies,” Downs and Wardle write that the composition field is clearly one tied to both the study of writing and the teaching of writing, and as a field, Composition Studies is approximately fifty years old (124). As part of their introduction to the field, they cite the questions it typically seeks to answer:

Like other academic fields, it [composition studies] has a loosely defined (and continually redefined) set of central questions that create an area of research-and-theory-based study. These questions include: How does writing work? How did a text get to be the way it is? How do writers get writing done? How is writing a rhetorical activity, and how are texts rhetorical discourse? How is writing technological? How is writing learned, and what are better and worse ways of teaching it? (124).

For Downs and Wardle, these questions are part of what keeps the field of composition studies in such flux. In other words, those in the field continually re-evaluate what works and what doesn't in order to construct the best approach(es) to the teaching of writing. Questions like these also prompted the Council of Writing Program Administrators to craft the “Outcomes Statement for First Year Composition,” which was adopted in April 2000 and amended in July 2008. The purpose of this document is not necessarily to standardized what each institution and instructor does regarding teaching composition, but it is to offer a set of nationally recognized outcomes that students can expect to achieve after one or two sequences of first-year composition. How

each institution approaches the document, however, remains a very individualized action. Table 6 lists the “Outcomes”.

Table 6: CWPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition

CWPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition

Rhetorical Knowledge

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Focus on a purpose
- Respond to the needs of different audiences
- Respond appropriately to different kinds of rhetorical situations
- Use conventions of format and structure appropriate to the rhetorical situation
- Adopt appropriate voice, tone, and level of formality
- Understand how genres shape reading and writing
- Write in several genres

Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Use writing and reading for inquiry, learning, thinking, and communicating
- Understand a writing assignment as a series of tasks, including finding, evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing appropriate primary and secondary sources
- Integrate their own ideas with those of others
- Understand the relationship among language, knowledge, and power

Processes

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Be aware that it usually takes multiple drafts to create and complete a successful text
- Develop flexible strategies for generating, revising, editing, and proof-reading
- Understand writing as an open process that permits writers to use later invention and rethinking to revise their work
- Understand the collaborative and social aspects of writing processes
- Learn to critique their own and others' works
- Learn to balance the advantages of relying on others with responsibility of doing their part
- Use a variety of technologies to address a range of audiences

Knowledge Conventions

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Learn common formats for different kinds of texts
- Develop knowledge of genre conventions ranging from structure and paragraphing to tone and mechanics
- Practice appropriate means of documenting their work
- Control such surface features as syntax, grammar, punctuation, and spelling

Composing in Electronic Environments

By the end of first year composition, students should

- Use electronic environments for drafting, reviewing, editing, and sharing texts
- Locate, evaluate, organize, and use research material collected from electronic sources, including scholarly library databases; other official databases (e.g., federal government

- databases); and informal electronic networks and internet sources
- Understand and exploit the differences in the rhetorical strategies and in the affordances available for both print and electronic composing processes and texts

Again, because either AP English course can replace first-year composition by virtue of a score on a standardized test, it is important to note that these outcomes are not, in many ways, similar to the outcomes stated or produced by either AP English course. Granted, the AP English Language and Literature course has its own set of outcomes that somewhat mirrors those provided by the CWPA for first-year composition, as evidenced in the previous chapter, some essential elements were not addressed. Additionally through observations of the AP English Literature and Composition class, it was clear the crux of writing done in that course had only two purposes: 1) writing to analyze literature for no clear audience or purpose and 2) practice writing to pass a standardized test. Very little emphasis was placed on rhetorical knowledge, including the conventions of rhetoric and the rhetorical situation, or the processes of writing, like pre-writing, drafting, and proofreading.

The questions outlined by Downs and Wardle and the Outcomes crafted by the CWPA have both done a lot to characterize where the field has been and is going. Downs and Wardle took time to revisit the field's previous focal points by noting,

Like other academic fields, composition studies...is characterized by paradigmatic waves of thought shifting one to the next, each a strong reaction to (and usually against) the preceding paradigm. Always, these paradigms of thought about writing are expressed foremost in the pedagogies that accompany them. *Current-traditional* rhetoric, with its modernist emphasis on forms of, and in, writing, was accompanied by writing instruction that focused on formal correctness and theme-based writing. The *process* paradigm, beginning in the

early 1970s, focused on writing as an activity of recursive invention of ideas through prewriting, drafting, and revising, and saw writing instruction turn to emphasize ‘process over product’ and strong expression of writers’ own points of view. With the advent of *the social turn* in the late 1980s and early 1990s, researchers and theorists brought greater emphasis to the contexts in which writing takes place, reunderstanding writing not as simply emerging from a writer’s thoughts, but as a response to particular writing situations and audience needs and expectations. Writing instruction in the social turn has been characterized by a focus on textuality, the social nature of language, and the analysis of how texts are culturally constructed and thus constrain writers and readers. (124)

Clearly, over the years there has been much discussion about what this course is supposed to teach about writing or if there should even be a course at all. This “questioning of the field”, however, has not typically been part of the AP program. Alas, the strongest change that has taken place within the field of AP is one works to sale education as commodity, as referenced in Chapter 3. However as some educators and scholars in the field of composition have studied and as the opening quotations to this section state, both Lounsbury and Campbell firmly believed such a course should not exist because “it [composition] not only wastes time, [but also] it corrupts the English department by introducing an alien philosophy which is antithetical to the department’s true mission” (Russell 136). Essentially, the two, among a smattering of others over the years, believed “good” writing simply couldn’t be taught. The dilemma has also existed in regards to what is classified as “college-level” writing?

Defining what is “college-level” writing is a more recent task that Patrick Sullivan and Howard Tinberg, as well as many others, embarked on in the mid 2000s. Patrick Sullivan’s “An Essential Question: What is ‘College-Level’ Writing?” reflected on the importance of defining college-level writing. Sullivan participated in a statewide meeting sponsored by the Connecticut Coalition of English Teachers “to continue work on a pilot study begun a few years ago to examine what various English teachers at community colleges around the state do when they teach composition” (347). Their goal was to define what “college-level” writing was, and it proved to be a daunting task. Sullivan states, “I would like to argue in this essay that as teaching professionals we must, at the very least, clearly understand the full variety of factors that help shape this debate, and respect the imposing complexities that make determining a shared definition of something like ‘college-level’ writing problematic” (375). He believes we must first acknowledge all the intricacies related to the issue in order to engage in a productive dialogue. One of those complexities is the idea that what one institution may consider college level work, in fact, may not be college level work to another. For instance, some universities cite college-level work as the next step in writing education, while others see writing in high school as completely different from writing in college. Sullivan ends his quest with a proposed solution to what he believes “college-level” writing is or *should* be:

To begin this dialogue, I would like to suggest that we change the term “college-level writer” to “college level reader, writer, and thinker.” I believe these three skills must be linked when we evaluate students’ written work, especially as it relates to their relative level of preparedness to be successful college-level students in mainstream courses. Good writing can only be the direct result of good reading and thinking, and thus, it seems to me, is one of the foundational

principles of college-level work. Furthermore, the ability to discuss and evaluate abstract ideas is, for me, the single most important variable in considering whether a student is capable of doing college-level work. (384)

Patrick Sullivan engaged in this conversation about what college-level writing is and to further his point he came to the following criteria or standards for defining college-level work:

1. A student should write in response to an article, essay, or reading selection that contains at least some abstract content and might be chosen based on its appropriateness for a college-level course. The selection should *not* be a narrative and should not simply recount personal experience. Reading level or “readability for this material might be determined by the approximate grade level it tests at on, say, the Fry Readability Graph, MacLaughlin’s SMOB Readability Formula, or the Raygor Readability Estimate. Some critics argue that the various readability tests can’t accurately measure complexity of content (or “concept load”) very well (see Nelson; Hittleman). My experience using these tests for work I assign in my own classes seems to indicate that sentence length, sophistication of vocabulary, and length of sentences is a good general indicator for determining what is appropriate for a college-level reader.
2. The writer’s essay in response to this reading should demonstrate the following:
 - A willingness to evaluate ideas and issues carefully
 - Some skill at analysis and higher-level thinking
 - Some ability to shape and organize material effectively

- The ability to integrate some of the material from the reading skillfully
- The ability to follow the standard rules of grammar, punctuation, and spelling. (385)

Because the question of what college-level writing is continues to be such a pressing issue, this article was the first chapter in Patrick Sullivan and Howard Tinberg's book *What is "College Level" Writing*. The book is comprised of selected essays dealing with the topic of college-level writing. Published in 2006, after the CWPA's Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, Sullivan lists several attributes of the WPA's statement, though not all of them. Most notably, to me, would be Sullivan's omission of criteria related to rhetorical knowledge, for example writing for a purpose and an audience.

But what else is or is supposed to be included in first-year composition? Some see the college composition course as a course that practices "empty forms," including patterns such as compare/contrast essays, personal narratives, and other rhetorical modes. A hot topic at recent College Composition and Communication Conferences, held most recently in Las Vegas, is the value of teaching a "writing-about-writing" curriculum in first-year composition classrooms because many believe this method best influences transfer, a topic covered in Chapter 5. However in his excerpt above, Sullivan provides only one example of what "college-level" writing is.

First-Year Composition: A Four-Year Liberal Arts College's Perspective

At an institutional level, what is taught in the college composition classroom is often decided within the department that houses the course. At the institution where this research was

conducted, the first-year writing course is delivered in two semesters, unless one places into ENG 100: Fundamentals of Writing, the developmental course, or directly into ENG 102. At the ENG 100 level, a student will take three semesters of composition instruction, or, if a student places into ENG 102 or ENG 103: Honors, he or she will only be required to take and pass either of those courses with a C- and then he or she will receive placement credit for ENG 101. For ENG 101: Composition I, the first course in the two-course sequence, classwork counts for 80% of the grade and the final exam makes up the remaining 20% of the final grade. Additionally, the document the department uses as the basis for its guidelines states,

- Students should write at least six papers, with one of the six being a major revision of one of the other five papers.
- At least two of the six papers should be written in class (hand-written).
- Minimum length of papers: 550 words.
- Rhetorical modes may include observation, illustration, definition, investigation, narrative (remembering), causal analysis, comparison/contrast, evaluation, but not argumentation. The six papers should cover at least five different modes.
- One of the six papers, preferably near the end of the course, should require MLA documentation of a source, perhaps an essay from the course textbook.
- A maximum of 20% of the entire course grade can come from non-writing activities.

Even with just a quick glance at these action items, one can tell the course as a whole has a heavy focus on learning certain “patterns” of writing, and it has a strong focus on function and form. There is little required in regards to use of technology, as three essays (two in class and then the final) are written by hand in the classroom setting.

The second course in the two-course sequence is ENG 102: Composition II. This course is focused more on argumentation, whereas argument was not an approach typically taught in the ENG 101 course. The guidelines for this course state:

- Students should write at least three papers plus the research paper.
- At least one of the three papers should be written in class.
- Minimum length of the three papers: 550 words.
- Minimum length of the research paper: 6 pages, not counting Works Cited.
- Number of sources used in research paper: minimum of 5 (varied, scholarly sources).
- The main rhetorical mode for papers is argumentation, but early papers may engage students in exploration of topic, sharpen their summarizing skills, or otherwise prepare them to think argumentatively.
- The instructor must have a conference with each student to discuss the rough draft of the research paper.
- A maximum of 20% of the entire course grade can come from non-writing activities.

ENG 102 shares some similarities with ENG 101, like the required in-class written essay, but the real focus of ENG 102 is on argumentative writing. Depending on the professor, a class may learn straight position argument or a variety of approaches to argumentation, like rhetorical analysis, causal analysis, argument by definition, or proposal arguments to name a few. Through analysis of just the learning outcomes, the two first-year composition classes do not share many similarities with those of the AP English class observed, nor is either composition course up to par exactly with the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition. Again, it seems one of the number one outcomes missing is related the CWPA's section regarding Rhetorical Knowledge. While the first-year composition courses do take into consideration the entire writing process from initial idea and draft to revision and editing, a sense of writing for a *real*

purpose and a *real* audience is missing. Additionally, while students are learning several patterns of writing, like comparison-contrast, description, or argumentation, there is not any indication of the learning genres beyond those already specified knowledge conventions.

In addition to these requirements, there are also specific “Examination Guidelines” that must be followed as well. Not only do students have to write one or two hand-written essays in class, but each class also requires a hand-written, in-class final essay exam. At the beginning of the semester, all students turn in a specific number of “blue books,” which are simply pieces of notebook paper that have been wrapped in a blue cover and stapled together. On the last day of class, students receive the final exam handout that lists the five possible essay exam topics. Students prepare thesis statements and outlines for three of the five topics on the back of the exam sheet and bring the sheet with them to class on the day of the exam. Then, on exam day the instructor will randomly select three of the five topics, and the student selects one to write on. Interestingly, this practice somewhat mirrors that of the both the SAT’s and AP’s exam writing sections since all three instances include writing one draft in a timed setting. For ENG 100, the Fundamentals of Writing course, and ENG 101, students typically only need thesis statements and outlines; however, for ENG 102, students will also need to include any quotations and works cited information on the outline(s) too. Finally, the exams are then exchanged with two other professors in the department who grade them holistically. The instructor then takes the average of the two grades as the final essay exam grade, which counts for twenty percent of the overall course grade.

The composition program’s faculty, in essence the English Department, decides on the majority of these requirements. They are revisited annually and revised as needed. In addition to these requirements the two sequenced composition courses also fall under the purview of the

college's General Education requirements and the QEP (Quality Enhancement Plan). These two groups require all Writing Intensive (WI) courses to use a specific college-wide rubric to grade at least one paper (two in ENG 101), to write a minimum of fifteen to twenty pages, and to assign at least fifty percent or more of the course grade based on writing assignments.

The course observed during the Spring 2013 semester was Dr. F's ENG 102E: Composition II course. The syllabus for this course is a very thorough and detailed thirteen-page document (See Appendix C). In addition to the syllabus, Dr. F also gives students a two-page, two-column, single-spaced document titled "Course Information for ENG 102" (See Appendix C). This sheet lists various college wide policies, including ones on attendance, electronic devices, academic dishonesty, and disruptive behavior in the classroom. In the left-hand column under the "Continuous Enrollment and Course Grade Policy," the course's objectives include the following:

1. To learn to write effective argumentative essays.
 2. **To learn to think and write logically.**
 3. **To learn to analyze and evaluate complex reading assignments** and improve test-taking skills.
 4. **To learn effective research techniques and apply them in the writing of an argumentative research paper.**
 5. To learn to use Microsoft Word for all English 102 papers, including the research paper.
- (1, emphasis added)

Some of these course objectives are an addition to the one's already established by the department (see those in bold). Dr. F has chosen to highlight other areas he believes ENG 102 students need more proficiency with, and he works on those areas throughout the course of the semester. Directly below the course objectives, Dr. F also includes a note that states, "Please do

not think that you can improve your writing skills by only turning in your papers and not attending class. This is not a correspondence course. There is a lot that is learned in class that cannot be learned simply by writing your papers outside of class” (1). Class attendance is crucial, not only in this ENG 102 course, but also across campus as a whole. Because this is a small, private, liberal arts institution, a great deal of value is placed on being present and participating in classes. A quick comparison of Ms. Roper’s course objectives to Dr. F’s will show the first major difference between the courses. While Ms. Roper’s course has a heavy emphasis on reading literature, Dr. F’s course only mentions reading as it relates to analyzing and reading research related to their essays. Ms. Roper’s syllabus goes on to discuss timed essays and reader-response journals; Dr. F’s course includes none of the sort.

Over the course of the observation period during the spring 2013 semester, I observed Dr. F work with students on a series of small assignments that lead to their big research paper; I also observed students develop Paper 3, which was a smaller version of the larger research paper. A typical observation of this course would involve Dr. F’s speaking to the class about the assignment they are presently working on and offering advice or pointing out format requirements, and then the class would have the remaining class time (anywhere from forty to twenty-five minutes) to work on that assignment on their on at their computer.

To illustrate a typical day in Dr. F’s class, on February 20, 2013, I observed as Dr. F met his students in the computer lab in order to discuss the format for their research paper. At the beginning of class, he handed back graded paragraphs that they had completed the previous class period. Dr. F then went over the correct format again for the first argument paragraph. He discussed the simplicity of having a “master copy” and emphasized the form, as in MLA style header, contact information, and title and paragraph alignment. He announced the worksheet for

Paper 3 and the next argument paragraph were due by the end of the class period. Dr. F then provided a mini lesson on how to set up a one-paragraph argument and to include quotations. He broke down the example sentence by sentence. He said the first sentence is the argument or claim that is being made, and the next sentence works to prove the first sentence is true or correct. He then stated that the rest of the paragraph is also developed to prove the first sentence (claim) is true, and he cited the use of an indirect quote (“qtd. in” format) in the example paragraph. Thus, he discussed the content (research) in the paragraph to show how the writer processes it. He then proceeded to tell a story about how one can tell someone is gay by looking at the eyes. His example made some students giggle and others squirm in their seat. He proceeded to offer information from a scientific study and then pulled it all together by saying his claim about “gay” eyes was verbalized in the same format as the paragraph they are writing.

After he finished explaining his verbal example that imitated the format of the paragraph they were writing, he reminded them they would be discussing how to revise next class period and to bring back marked paragraphs he’d graded. Dr. F reiterated that they should be able to complete most of their work in class if they stayed on task. He also stated that Paper 3 is a short version of the larger research paper, so each paragraph will eventually be expanded into a page (one page introduction, one page body paragraph, so on). In total, he spent about twenty-five minutes discussing the format of the paragraph, and the students, then, had the remaining class time (another twenty-five minutes) to work on their individual paragraphs at their computers.

Only on four occasions did the class meet upstairs in their normal classroom, not in the computer lab, to discuss other items related to the larger research paper. The first non-lab class session included a discussion of grammar and revision. Dr. F discussed his revision symbols and what they mean during this class session. For instance, on February 22, 2013, the class met in

their normal classroom on the second floor of Pines Hall. He instructed students to take out their first argument paragraph (short assignment #3). He also told the class that he has six more papers to grade. He then began to break down the paragraphs of Paper 3, which were really a mini version of the argument research paper (ARP). He instructed students that he wants them to revise argument paragraph #3 but to do so on the actual paragraph, not on another sheet of paper. He then mentioned some writing problems that he considers to be “major”: comma splice, fused sentence, subject-verb agreement, major awkward constructions, and fragments. Thus far, on every occasion Dr. F took great detail to explain the writing assignment students were working on as well as his expectations of that assignment. It was also clear that the main audience for the student’s work was Dr. F and not a made up source. The assignments did not have a purpose guided by a specific situation or exigency. In other words, students were writing to write.

During the remainder of the observation on February 22, 2013, I listened as Dr. F discussed the students’ assignment in more detail. He discussed first sentence of the paragraph, focusing on if the topic sentence makes sense. It should be the claim, and he suggested they follow a format of *claim—because—argument*. Thus, he wants students to include *because* clauses to connect their claim with their first argumentative point. Dr. F then stated that some students were already putting refutation in the essay but that it was NOT allowed yet. He made up an example while holding a remote. He said, “Telling me what it’s not is not the same as arguing for what it is. You still must argue your point.” Dr. F then continued to go over the revision guide stating, “Stars are bad.” He used the example of someone having holes in his jacket. He stated that one hole is fine; someone might not catch it, but half a dozen holes are distracting. To him, poor grammar and syntax is like having too many holes in one’s clothing. After going over the grammar revision guide, he showed his students how to use the “Revision

Tabulation Grid,” which is the grammar revision guide without all the definitions. This guide allows students to make “tick” marks of their errors so they can see what kind of errors they continually make. Finally, he went over the “Grammar Problems To Watch Out For” guide.

Essentially, Dr. F meticulously breaks down assignments for students. They work on writing pieces of the essay, paragraph by paragraph; then, he gives them feedback, an option to revise, and grades the whole essay again. The first few grades are “homework” grades but the final grade is the “paper” grade. He tells the class he is not making revisions for them but teaching them how to do it themselves, yet the students are not always paying attention. A large majority of students played on their phones, and many didn’t even take notes. This lack of engagement is very different from the level of engagement in Ms. Roper’s class. Students often hung on every word Ms. Roper spoke and rarely were distracted by their phones. Part of this difference seems to be due to the two instructor’s very different personalities and possibly the design of the classroom.

Unlike the bubbly and inviting atmosphere of Ms. Roper’s classroom space, ²Pines Hall 204 is a blank slate. Pines Hall is the academic hub of the campus. First-year students spend a majority of their time in Pines Hall as it houses many departments and majors on campus, especially those also connected to the general education curriculum. The Pines Hall classroom 204 is just off the back stair well centered between a “history” classroom and a “business” classroom.

The classroom has a blue-ish speckled carpet and approximately twenty-five desks with twenty-five chairs pulled up, one to each desk. In the front of the room is a long table and a chair for the professor. To the right of the table, if facing outwards to the classroom, is a wooden

² Pines Hall is also a pseudonym used to protect the identity of the institution observed.

lectern and a long coiled up set of cords for the projection unit, making it possible to connect a professor's laptop for various lessons. The far wall of the classroom is lined with large windows facing a street, and the remaining walls are a mixture of brick, white boards, and bulletin boards. In total, the room has three large whiteboards and three large bulletin boards. Other than various advertisements for student jobs, the room is virtually a clean slate. Unlike Ms. Roper's bright, student-inspired classroom, Dr. F's classroom is just a room. It does nothing to facilitate learning other than to provide a place for students to meet, discuss, and work. Unlike the AP setting, however, Dr. F's students split their time between a computer lab and the actual classroom. The two settings are in stark contrast to each other and the kinds of learning that take place within them.

On the second in-class session, Dr. F discussed putting together the research paper, including exactly what to turn in, how to place items in the folder, and when the final project was due. The final two in class sessions included speeches given by the students on their research project to gain extra credit points and a discussion of topics related to the final in class written essay exam. Dr. F seems to take a great deal of time to plan his course and assignments so that students can do the work on their own. He expects them to read the syllabus and the directions for each assignment and to complete the task in a timely manner. The responsibility resides within the student to stay on task. This point is further illustrated when on one particular occasion, Dr. F refused to grade several students' work because they did not follow directions. He announced that he had handed back several packets for Paper 3 the previous class period because they were incomplete and only four people had turned them back in. He emphasized that students must follow directions and turn their packets back in if they expect a grade (Observation, March 20, 2013). On another occasion he provided a word of caution regarding

students who were not working through their revision paragraphs. He noted he had been marking the same errors repeatedly, so he instructed students to look back over their previous work and learn from their mistakes so he doesn't have to mark the same errors again (Observation, March 22, 2013). Dr. F made similar remarks regarding student's responsibility on several other occasions, including ones about how to turn in the ARP assignment and how to proceed with their in class speeches (Observations, April 17, 2013).

Overall, this first-year composition course is very different from the structure and demands of the AP English course. The first-year composition course is also somewhat at odds with the WPA Outcomes statement as well. It appears neither course, as each stands, does much to aid writing transfer. However, in regards to the hierarchical structure of the AP program, the first-year composition course holds less rigidity in regards to college demands and instructor's preferences. The system as a whole is much "looser" and more flexible than that of the high school AP English classroom. However, the subjects, the students and instructors, share some similarities.

First-Year Composition: Subjects and Motives

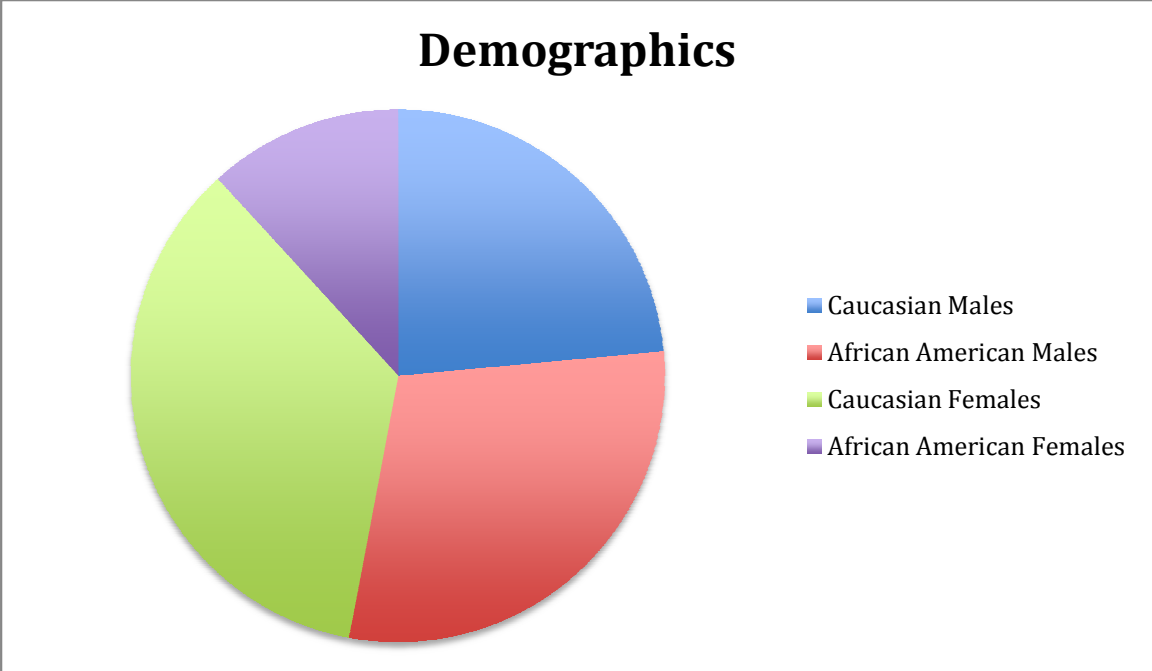
In the early part of the twentieth century, teaching the first-year composition course fell mainly on probationary faculty, primarily "because full-time faculty realized that there was no professional future in teaching a course that produced no research" (Crowley 4). By the 1940s, graduate students had taken over the bulk of teaching the course. During the 1950s and 60s, part-time teachers began teaching the course alongside the graduate students because of the large influx of post-war students entering college (4). And today, for the most part, and depending on whether the institution is public or private, graduate students, adjunct faculty, and lecturers make

up the majority of composition instructors in our institutions of higher learning, which is as much a part of the grand issues surrounding first-year composition as is what is taught.

At the college where I observed English 102E, however, six of the seven instructors are full-time and hold a Professor, Assistant Professor, or Visiting Assistant Professor rank. Four of those six are tenured, and one is tenure-track. All regularly teach in the program, usually covering one to three composition classes a semester. Additionally, the department also keeps at least one adjunct, typically the same person each semester, on hand to cover any additional traditional composition courses or APP, Accelerated Professional Programs, courses that may need to be staffed. As a whole, this department's make-up and teaching practices are not the norm for most college and university's freshman composition programs.

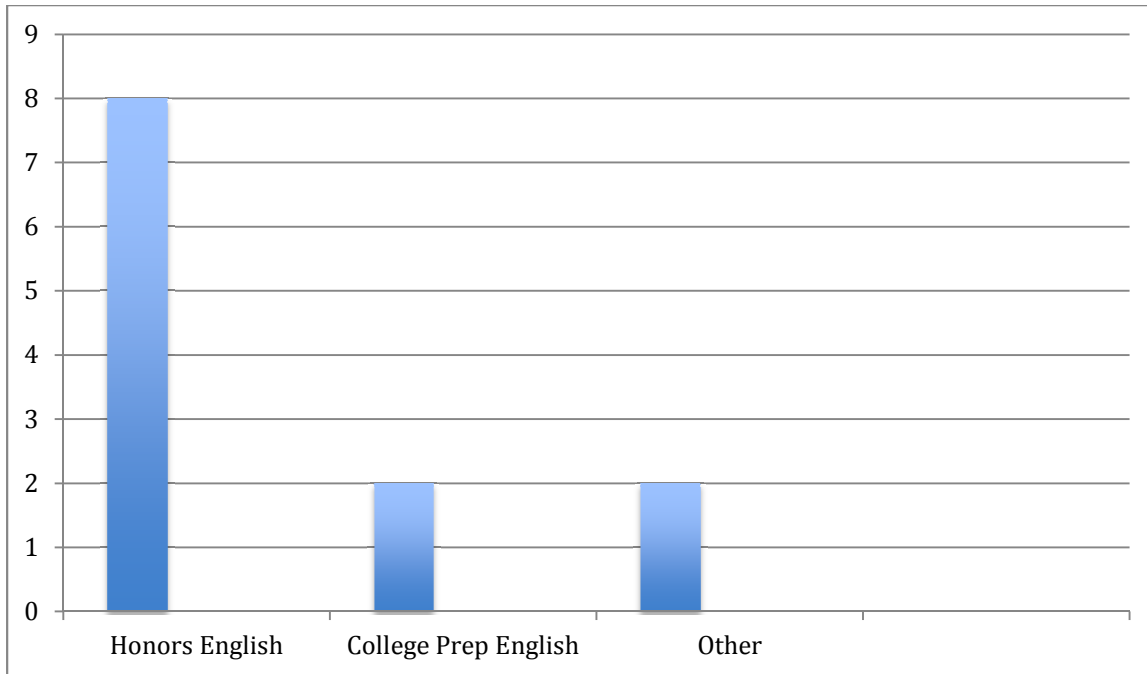
For the particular ENG 102 course under observation, the instructor holds the rank of Professor, has tenure, and has been at the college for approximately forty years. There were seventeen students enrolled in the course, eight females and nine males. Of the eight females, six were Caucasian and two were African American. The nine males included four Caucasians and five African Americans (see Table 7).

Table 7: ENG 102 Demographics



Of the seventeen students in the course, thirteen participated in a survey that asked questions about their previous high school experiences and what they hoped to gain from taking the freshman composition course. Only one out of the thirteen students surveyed took an AP English course in high school. This student took the AP English Language and Composition course and exam, but she received a two on the exam and could not use the score to place out of ENG 101 or ENG 102. The chart below shows what English courses the remaining twelve students took in high school.

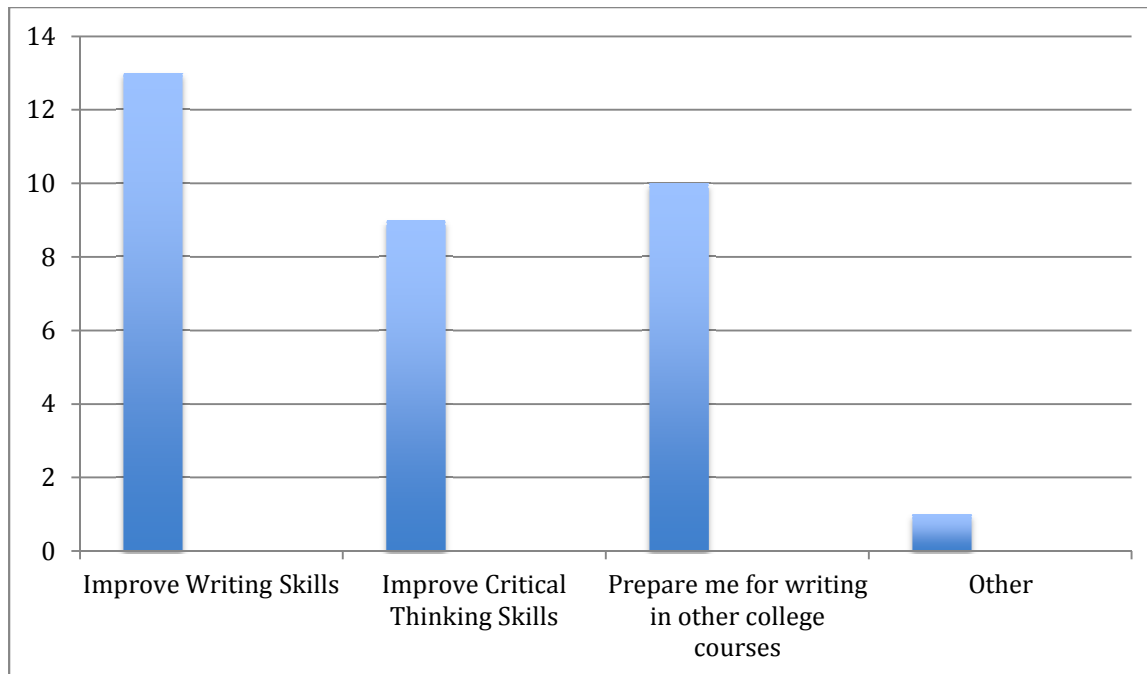
Table 8: High School English Courses



The two who marked “other” further explained they had taken “Regular English” and “Standard English.”

Additionally, students were taking the course because it is the required second course of the two-course sequence at this particular college. The students entered the course through a variety of means, including transferring to the institution and being placed into the course, matriculating from ENG 101, or repeating the course because of a failed prior attempt. When asked what students hoped to gain upon finishing their ENG 102 course, the answers were fairly close and they seemed to match the learning outcomes for the course.

Table 9: What Students Hope to Gain from ENG 102



Because the respondents could mark all that apply, the results are fairly even. The one who marked other added he hoped the course would “prepare me for the English major and all the writing that’s required.” Though the relationship between those who stated the course will improve their writing skills is only slightly higher than the number who also stated they hoped the course would prepare them for writing in other college courses is minimum, it is somewhat concerning to see students *not* think the course will prepare them for their other writing endeavors, and it is equally interesting to compare this statistic with the overwhelming number of students who believed the AP English course *would* prepare them for writing in college. Somewhere there is a disconnect *between* and *within* both systems. This topic directly relates to the issue of transfer, which will be taken up in the next chapter, but first let’s summarize what we’ve learned from this chapter.

First, while the activity system of this first-year composition classroom varies greatly from the activity system of the AP English Literature and Composition classroom, it also does not directly meet many of the outcomes listed in the CWPA Outcomes Statement. Although

neither course directly relates to the CWPA Outcomes statement and is a concerning similarity, it further proves the difficulty of gauging and promoting the effectiveness of passing off one course for another. It has been made clear that not all first-year composition courses are designed or administered with the CWPA statement in mind, so the assumption that an AP course taught in high school would transfer across a space with such vast differences is shaky.

Ch. 5: Conclusions and Implications

When writing about her deep interest in the connections between writing in high school and writing in college, Yancey offers three reasons: her previous teaching experience both in college and in middle and high school, her work with Virginia Beach City Schools' teachers, and her recent research on transfer theory. She then asks, "Put simply, what is it that students learn in our classes about how to write that they carry forward with them in other sites of writing?" (Yancey, "Responding" 300). Yancey's question is useful when applied to the overall analysis of this study. What is it that was learned about the activity systems of both high school AP English classes and first-year writing in college, and what, if anything, transfers? Some of the differences between the two systems relate to the motives or underlying goals of the two systems, the views on writing and writing assignments, and the expectations of students and courses themselves.

As referenced earlier, the most popular courses in AP's repertoire are those in the AP English program. Both courses allow for the possibility of advanced placement or exemption from first-year composition in college. The AP English Language and Composition course and corresponding exam has become more popular recently because more and more colleges and universities are offering credit for first-year composition to students with successful AP exam scores. The newly adopted "Statement on Pre-College Credit for Writing," authored by select members of the Council of Writing Program Administrators, found that "since 2010 more students have taken the language exam than the literature exam, probably because more institutions are now permitting exemptions from FYW [First Year Writing] for the language exam" (5). Though AP revised the Language and Composition course to align it more closely to the goals and objectives of first-year composition in college (see Ch. 3 for more details), some

major differences remain. First, American Literature is often the required subject of junior year high school English because of state mandates; this mandate means the typical AP Language and Composition course is most often not comparable to a first-year composition course in college (“CWPA Statement” 5-6). The same can be said for the AP English Literature and Composition course. State mandates often require that this course cover British Literature, so much of the course revolves around the reading and analysis of literature. This study of literature may increase the critical thinking capacity of students and help begin to mold their views of the world, yet in most instances, literature like that which is studied heavily in this AP course is not the kind of reading done in a first-year composition course.

Largely, the way literature was analyzed in the AP course I observed often resulted in claims or conclusions regarding the author’s tone or stylistic choices. Granted, there are other ways of analyzing literature that really get to the heart of rhetorical analysis and claims that a first-year writer may make, like asking students to take into the socio-culture climate or political leanings of the time period the writing was created, but this particular course was not designed to achieve those sorts of claims or discussions. This curricular choice, I believe, is largely due to the nature of the AP exam the course was designed to prepare students for. For this exam, there is but one answer and one interpretation to each piece of literature and any “outside” or contextual information is not necessary to determining the correct answer.

Likewise, the writing is very different, too. In most instances, AP English courses include a variety of writing assignments related to analyzing and responding to the literature read. On numerous occasions in Ms. Roper’s class, students were instructed to pull out sections of a particular novel, re-write the section on a sheet of construction paper, and illustrate it in order to create something called “found poems.” Another assignment may include cutting up a

poem and gluing it into their journals to critique using the literary analysis techniques they've learned thus far. Still other assignments, mainly closer to the time the exam loomed, were directly related to the AP exam and emphasized writing timed essays in accordance with an official, yet out-of-date, AP essay prompt. Students often practiced the five-paragraph theme and were encouraged to utilize the words from the "Words to Use in Analytical Essays" poster on the wall of the classroom. None of these assignments were part of the first-year composition class I observed, nor are they like any of the assignments described in the outcomes of either the ENG 101 course or ENG 102 courses at that college. However, a close examination of the two courses will show that even though the physical assignments were not the same, there were similarities in the mechanics and the framework behind those assignments. For example, although Dr. F never required students to write a five-paragraph essay or select certain analytical buzz words, his discussion of how to write argument paragraphs and because-clauses are regimented, formulaic ways of understanding writing and/or communication.

In some ways, the activities engaged in the AP English course work against some of the outcomes of the first-year composition course. The timed-essays and practice multiple-choice exams are two such examples of activities that do not produce the same outcomes as those in the first-year composition course. Focusing on how to write a five-paragraph timed essay full of "tone" or "analytical" buzzwords does not teach students the recursivity of the writing process. Learning that there is only one correct answer to an interpretation of a piece of writing also does little to foster students' critical thinking skills, especially those related to rhetorical analysis.

The only assignment the two systems shared was a research paper. However, there were vast differences between those two assignments, too. A similarity between both instructors, though, is that both worked to take their students through the entire writing process, from initial

idea to final draft. I observed the middle portion of Ms. Roper's process, which included the use of notecards to organize ideas, an instructor reviewed draft, and a final paper. Dr. F's process was similar but students wrote their final research paper in sections, which were then first reviewed and graded as Paper 3, and then portions of that paper were pulled out, further developed, and reviewed again by Dr. F before finally becoming part of the final ARP (Argument Research Paper). Some of the differences between the two projects included items such as page requirement and the number of required sources. The sources themselves were very different, too. Ms. Roper allowed a wide variety of online sources. There were, essentially, no restrictions. The paper that received a perfect score used Internet sites such as Guy Harvey's website and About.com. Additionally, there was not a requirement to use scholarly journal articles or any particular type of traditional "paper" texts. On the other hand, Dr. F had strict requirements regarding the kinds of sources allowed in the paper, including a certain number of book sources, scholarly journal sources, and magazine/newspaper sources. In the singular use of the required research paper, the AP English students were getting their first taste of writing in college, but it could be viewed as a very weak or insufficient preview of such writing tasks because the standards were not set as high as those in a typical college course nor were there discussions related purpose, audience, context, or other rhetorical conventions when writing was produced.

Another major difference between these two activity systems is the expectations within them, concerning those related to both pedagogy and responsibility. As it stands, AP English Language and Composition is typically taught in the junior year of high school. This placement means the typical age of the student enrolled in the course is anywhere from fifteen to sixteen years old. As the CWPA's statement posits, the timing of the course creates issues:

They [these juniors] are, in fact, younger at the time they take the language test, the exam which more colleges now allow as a substitute for FYW. This fact raises these significant questions: Should FYW credit be given for short, formulaic timed writing the student did two years prior to matriculating at college? If a student bypasses FYW on the strength of such a small amount of writing—even if it was rated highly by test scorers—might they be missing out on the developmental and socializing effects of more writing and of writing assignments that are designed for the curricular moment when they matriculate at college. (6)

Simply put, the answers are No and Yes. Beyond the fact that it doesn't make logical sense to give credit for a course that requires very little writing that matches the course it is supposed to be a substitute for, but there also seems to be a disconnect regarding a major goal of what FYC does implicitly for the freshman student.

Many colleges and universities use FYC as a major part of their general education requirements. It indoctrinates students into the discourse community and introduces students into the ways in which we want them to write at the particular college or university they matriculate at. In his foundational essay "Inventing the University," David Bartholomae articulates the first-year writer as someone who must learn our language, meaning the language of the university. He states,

Every time a student sits down to write for us [college/university professors], he has to invent the university for the occasion—invent the university, that is, or a branch of it, like History or Anthropology or Economics or English. He has to learn to speak our language, to speak as we do, to try on particular ways of

knowing, selecting, evaluating, reporting, concluding, and arguing that define the discourse of our community. (4)

To be quite frank, the discourse of *our* community is quite different from the discourse of *their* community, the high school AP English classroom. Not only are college systems and the hierarchies within their governing structure different, but the approaches to writing are vastly different, too.

The continual argument that students can bypass first-year composition with a “successful” score on a standardized AP Exam further feeds the idea that the student has learned everything he or she needs to know about writing in AP English. This false sense of knowledge can lead to what Jeanne Gunner calls “writing as a disembodied skill” (qtd in Thalheimer 121). Gunner says this kind of writing “serves merely to function as a credential that can be impersonally produced. Students in turn can be labeled as *haves* and *have nots* according to this commodified notion of writing, their worth determined by their use value: do they have good writing skills” (121). Thalheimer, author of “From Advanced Placement Student to Concurrent Enrollment Teacher,” experienced this phenomenon first hand as he was someone who did well in high school, including AP English, but was crushed emotionally by his first college writing course. He states, “I thought I had what it took to be a successful writer in college, partially because of the grades I had received in high school, but more so because AP had deemed me worthy” (121).

As evidenced in Chapter 3, AP eagerly plants the seed in prospective parents’ and students’ minds that many introductory college courses are a commodity. As Thalheimer states, “when I determined college writing was a ‘thing’ I had obtained, even had mastered, in a high school setting, I personified Gunner’s fear that students see college writing as merely a

commodity” (121-122). In his tell-all book *Making the Grades: My Misadventures in the Standardized Testing Industry*, Todd Farley discusses his years spent working for the standardized testing industry. Farley writes,

We are fast approaching a point where the graduation of high school seniors or the promotion of any students will result not only from their classroom work or the opinion of the teachers who spend every day with them but will also hinge on their performance of a single *standardized* test ... We are nearing a point where teacher pay and teacher hiring/firing will not be linked to an educator’s skill or experience as much as it will be tied to his or her students’ *standardized test scores* ... We are facing a world of education where districts and states are awarded federal funds based not on population or need but instead on regional *standardized test scores*. (ix)

The AP Program is in the *business* of education through the use of its standardized test. Education, then, is a commodity. When something is viewed as a commodity, it can be bought and sold, and we can earn equity. If we bought it, we have full ownership, rights, and privileges, but we don’t always get exactly what we pay for. As AP has quickly grown in size over the years, the value of its commodity has shrunk, even if the publicity around it and the credit it earns for students hasn’t necessarily decreased.

With the rapid expansion of AP, there has been a marked shift in not only the value/quality of the education provided, but also there has been a shift in whom the program markets. The reason for this shift is capital. The more students become involved in the program, the more “equity” it has. In this sense, the preferred definition of “equity” as it relates to the Program’s popular theme of “Equity and Excellence” refers to money. As most are aware, one

of the definitions of the term “equity” means “the monetary value of a property or business ...” (“equity”). As Jones notes, “The size of AP...has changed. Five hundred *hand-picked* students took a first version of the exams; [now] more than a half-million take one of the two AP English exams each May” (Jones 43, emphasis added). That rapid growth and inclusion has left the AP Program with a lot of “equity”. Hansen took the liberty of calculating just how much money the nonprofit organization grossed in 2008:

In 2008, the College Board sold a total of 2,736,445 AP exams worldwide to 1,580,821 students for \$84 each, thus taking in nearly \$230 million in 2008 just from AP tests.

From a financial standpoint, AP tests are clearly a successful product in the education market, since the cost of the tests is within the reach of many students. (18)

The same calculation for the year 2010 shows that 1,845,006 students took 3,213,225 exams at an increased price of \$87 per exam, which means the Program grossed close to \$280 million just from AP exam fees that year. Exam fees, however, are different depending on who the student is and where he or she is from. The fee for those at schools outside of the United States, U.S. territories and commonwealths, and Canada is \$117 per exam. Additionally, the fee for taking the exam at a College Board-authorized testing center outside of the United States is \$143 (“Fees”). To be fair, there is a reduction of \$22 that can be taken by students with “financial need” (“Fees”). Another little known moneymaker for the group is also the test given to students before they even enroll in AP courses. In the 9th Annual AP Report to the Nation, under the section titled “A Right to Rigor: Fulfilling Student Potential,” it is noted that the Preliminary SAT/National Merit Scholarship Qualifying Test (PSAT/NMSQT) can be given to students to gauge their readiness for AP courses (2). This product too is sold by ETS, the parent company of the College Board.

However, these exam fees are not the only expense related to the AP Program. It also costs money to obtain score reports beyond the initial one. The fees vary according to how one would like the information, for example by phone, rushed, etc. (“Fees”). It seems evident that the amount of money this

program produces each year is astounding, but at what cost to the students' education does it come?

Jones writes that "the rapid growth of AP, far from being cause for celebration, has caused its degradation as a valid measure for college credit. That is, as the College Board has concentrated on increasing the number of participants, the quality of student performance has actually declined, despite College Board claims to the contrary" (Lichten qtd. in Jones 62).

In 2008, Cech and Holovach made Lichten's assertion clear at the conclusion of their article outlining "AP Trends" a chart included the following revelation: "Mean AP scores on AP exams taken at U.S. public schools has declined in the past four years for students in all racial and ethnic categories, except those in the Asian categories" (6). The following chart depicts the issue graphically.

Table 10: Mean AP Scores with Demographics

	Black or African American	Asian/As. Amer.	Mexi/Mex i-Amer.	Puerto Rican	Other Hispanic	American Indian	White
2004	2.03	3.04	2.51	2.54	2.8	2.45	2.99
2005	1.99	3.04	2.44	2.52	2.72	2.41	2.98
2006	1.96	3.04	2.42	2.5	2.57	2.42	2.96
2007	1.91	3.05	2.39	2.47	2.48	2.39	2.95

(data compiled from Cech and Holovach 7-8)

According to this data and AP’s definition of success, each ethnic category with the exception of the Asian/Asian-American ethnicity has a failing average. In fact none of the other six ethnic groups has ever had a passing average according to Cech and Holovach’s numbers from the years 2004-2007. The *AP Reports to the Nation* mentioned already in Chapter 3 do not include this data. Instead these reports include only the percentage of a graduating class scoring a three or higher on an AP Exam at some point during high school. The College Board appears not to want to emphasize the specific data mentioned here and emphasized by Cech and Holovach. Why would they? The numbers show a decline in quality as Lichten asserts.

Hansen, again, sums up the issue well and offers a final compelling thought:

As AP has expanded its market share by recruiting teachers and students in inner-city and rural schools that formerly did not participate, the number of students receiving the low scores of 1 and 2 on the tests has also increased, raising the question of whether it makes sense to invite students to participate in a program for which they are ill-prepared and to spend personal or public funds for tests they will likely fail. (18)

Her point is valid. Over the last several years, as an educator in higher education teaching first-year composition, I’ve encountered numerous former AP English students in my “regular” and developmental

(not Honors or Advanced) composition classes. The college where I currently teach accepts AP English scores of 3 for both exams as course credit for English 101, the first course in a series of two. A score of 4 or 5 on the AP Literature and Composition Exam will give a student credit for English 101 and English 201, the introduction to Literature course (“Credit by Examination” 83). Notably, though, a student cannot completely place out of composition courses. Like Kathleen M. Puhr, the college believes learning to write does not stop with “successful” AP Exam scores (84), so all students must take the English 102 Composition II course or the honors/advanced English 103 section. From an educator’s standpoint, the quality of the AP Program has diminished. A program that once stood to motivate and to help the *underserved* academic elite has shifted objectives and expanded too quickly, creating a monetarily equitable yet academically weakened program, largely in part because very little, if anything, can be justifiably assumed to transfer from one system to the next.

Transfer between AP English, FYC, and Beyond

The field of transfer as it relates to writing is ripe for analysis. Several studies regarding what actually transfers from first-year composition into other writing situations are currently underway, and researchers are working to uncover meaningful ways to foster transfer in the writing classroom. So what do we know about writing transfer? In her chapter that concludes Sullivan, Tinberg, and Blau’s second volume of *What is “College-Level” Writing*,” Yancey states,

We want our students’ learning to have both immediate effect and enduring value. At the same time, we know...we have very different cultures of writing in high school and in college. I hasten to point out, however, that even a *single* high school or college has within it *multiple* cultures of writing, and, given that writing is rhetorical—designed for a given purpose and audience—that’s a good think in my view. The ‘problem,’ if there is one, isn’t the diversity of cultures, but rather

how those cultures connect, or put somewhat differently, how we might better connect them. (300)

She goes on to mention a longitudinal study conducted by educational assessment researchers and reported in the University of Washington's Study of Undergraduate Learning (UW SOUL) where the study was "designed to discover what undergraduates learned, how they learned it, what obstacles or challenges they faced along the way, and how they assessed their own learning in six areas," including writing (304). The two most difficult areas for them were in regards to math and writing: "The problems in writing were two fold: (1) students bring with them to college a conception of writing misshaped by testing; and (2) students don't understand writing as disciplinary" (304). As Thalheimer posited, many students are often perplexed as to why their high school AP English course didn't prepare them exactly for the rigors of college writing. Likewise, many college professors outside of the English department often wonder what those compositionists over in the English department taught their majors about writing in college and beyond. In many ways the set up of both activity systems explored here do much to hinder the transfer of writing "skills" from one to the other and beyond.

In another study conducted jointly between the University of Washington and the University of Tennessee (Bawarshi and Reiff), the authors found that "students brought limited genre knowledge into college with them and didn't use that knowledge when writing...In other words, in spite of all the time these students had spent learning a set of genres in literature, they didn't have the category of genre as one that informed their writing" (qtd. in Yancey "Responding" 304-305). Yancey's final point is one from a third study conducted by Nancy Sommers and Laura Saltz in a report on the Harvard Study of Writing. Sommers and Saltz found that students who approached writing in college with the idea of being a novice, a new writer,

were more successful (305). The finding here is very clear. If we can teach our students to approach writing as a lifelong skill, one that requires an open mind and the idea that there is always something to learn, then our students will be more successful.

In “Transfer, Portability, and Generalization,” Christiane Donoghue accurately states, “The transfer of writing knowledge can (and does) go wrong...What we do as teachers, what institutions shape, and what we define as writing can all obstruct successful transfer of writing ability” (156). In recent CCCC presentations and current journals, like *Composition Forum*, there has been much talk about the Writing about Writing movement and Writing for Transfer. The overall call is to teach students a vocabulary for writing and writing instruction with an eye towards developing literacy that will move from one system to the next. Donoghue found that

In an activity theory model, students who transfer writing ability successfully apparently begin ‘seeing texts as accomplishing social actions’ and develop a ‘complex of activities’ (Carroll, qtd. in Rogers 18), rather than a set of generalizable skills. In addition, writers are clearly influenced by motivational factors in their likeliness to transfer. They transfer when they are ‘supported to participate in an activity system that encourages collaboration, discussion, and some form of ‘risk taking’ and when they ‘have opportunities to share and be inspired by a common motive for undertaking a specific learning task’” (Guile and Young 64). (154)

In order for writing ability to transfer, students must be vested in it for the right reasons. In the case of AP, wanting to take an advanced writing class because it *may* save money for the students or parents isn’t a satisfactory indicator for transfer. Likewise, some first-year composition programs must make changes too in order to really impart writing transfer. The

students must be vested in the task and see it as shaping part of the greater good, both personally, socially, and beyond.

Both systems could benefit greatly from utilizing literacies related to knowledge transfer, especially as it relates to writing.

Writing is one of the most important cultural practices in the age we live in, a practice that can be central in developing many dimensions of students' life – academic, personal, interpersonal, civic, ethical, moral, spiritual, as well as professional. Accordingly, choosing the optimum course in writing instruction for a given student should not be a matter of determining how to earn a few required credits in the cheapest and quickest way possible, but a matter of how to gain the most value at the right time and place in the student's education.

(“CWPA Position” 5)

The truth is no matter how many attempts are made to standardized students' learning today, there is nothing standardized about the world they'll enter post high school and post college. In *College Writing and Beyond: A New Framework for Writing Instruction*, Anne Beaufort discusses her two ethnographic research projects that guided her conclusions regarding the teaching of writing, mainly in a first-year composition course, and the transfer of writing related skills and knowledge to other settings. In a follow-up article published in the fall of 2012, Beaufort acknowledged some weaknesses in her apparatus and proposed several “course corrections” (2). Essentially, the student, Tim, she observed struggled with writing he encountered after his first-year composition course, as he tried to apply what Beaufort would call “expressivist's” goals to his other courses, including history and engineering. As Beaufort explains, he often experienced “negative transfer of learning” (3). His instructor, Carla, did not

relay the underlying assumptions related to the writing they were doing or the work of the discourse community they were reading, nor did she design the course in such a way that would help facilitate the principles of transfer. It seems the College Board has set AP English on a similar trajectory.

As it stands, I see three major failures of articulation across these two spaces (and beyond). First, writing is truly a life long skill. It is not something we perfect solely in one course and never have to “work at” again. Too often students in AP English courses come away feeling as though they’ve learned everything there is to know about writing, and thus are set for the rest of their academic and post-academic careers. For example, AP students might think that the writing they do in order to pass the AP exam signifies they’ve “made it” and are done learning about writing. I’ve experienced this sort of elation from my own composition students as they begin a new year and introduce themselves as, “Hi, my name is so-and-so. I took AP English in high school, so I pretty much know all there is about writing, and this course should be a breeze,” all while shaking my hand.

A second failure is how differently the two systems approach academic discourse. As already mentioned, a large part of what first-year composition does is acclimate new students to the discourse community, which as Bartholomae reiterates, is very different from other language communities they’ve recently been a part of. Take for example the communities represented in this research. The AP English classroom at the local high school is a stark contrast to the first-year composition course at the small, private college. In the college course, there are no brightly doodled construction paper assignments hanging from walls, literary terms written on white boards, or hula hoops in the corner. The “80/20” and “20/80” rules can be applied here. According to Leonard Geddes, in his article “Why Good Students Do Bad in College: Impactful

Insights,” he’s found that in high school students are practically given 80 percent of the material they have to learn. The teacher bestows all of the necessary information in class, follows up that information with related homework assignments, and even offers or reviews study guides in class. The other 20 percent of information is what the student has to do in order to fill the knowledge gap. Conversely, in college students are “given” only 20 percent of the information they need via class lecture and are therefore required to “find” the other 80 percent on their own by reading their text book, looking at online lecture notes, and so on (Geddes). These two classroom spaces mirror these two rules. In the first-year composition course, not only were students introduced to the language of the community, but they were also introduced to the inner workings of learning within that community and realized quickly that college learning is vastly different, and it requires a more self-guided approach to learning than high school.

Finally, a third failure of articulation across these spaces is the understanding that writing is contextual, rhetorical. Writing should have an exigency, a purpose, an audience, a form, and so on. In the AP English class, students often discussed various genres of literature and they were introduced to the research paper, but the point was never made to take these notions further. Never once was an audience mentioned or a purpose other than “x must be done to prepare for the test” given. Yes, students were introduced to the academic research paper, but the perimeters of the AP English research paper differed greatly from expectations of the Dr. F’s research paper. As Beaufort suggests, we need writing spaces that will connect writing goals to transfer goals. We need to show students that writing is an activity, which is rhetorically situated, and to offer frameworks for how writing works in other contexts (5).

As long as the AP Program continues to peddle AP English, and other AP courses, as a commodity, it will remain a barrier to knowledge transfer. Instead of selling AP English as a

“commodity” to replace a first-year writing course, we might re-think the ways the two programs can work together as sites where students collaborate to develop more sophisticated ideas about writing and rhetoric. Both courses need to work towards generating a meta-awareness of writing that will empower students.

Limitations and Future Research

As with most research projects, there are limitations, and this project is no exception. Because activity theory is such a complex theoretical frame, this project technically only utilized the top portion of the activity triangle, focusing mainly on the subjects, tools, and motives of the two systems. Although this project did discuss a brief history of both the AP Program and first-year composition, a larger analysis of the full socio-cultural and historical analysis is beyond the scope of this research project. Additionally, this project also included observations of only two sites. In order for the results to be more generalizable, a more thorough undertaking of observations involving several sites should be explored.

Future research projects could not only look at multiple course in both the AP English program and first-year composition courses, but the use of activity theory in this project also illustrated the limits of transfer. Both systems are so complex that it is difficult to identify transfer. Additional studies are needed in order to make viable claims about transfer.

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APPENDIX A: IRB MATERIALS



EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board Office
4N-70 Brody Medical Sciences Building · Mail Stop 682
600 Moyer Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office 252-744-2914 · Fax 252-744-2284 · www.ecu.edu/irb

Notification of Initial Approval: Expedited

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: [Elizabeth Dennis](#)
CC: [William Banks](#)
Date: 10/4/2012
Re: [UMCIRB 12-001722](#)
AP English and First-Year Composition

I am pleased to inform you that your Expedited Application was approved. Approval of the study and any consent form(s) is for the period of 10/4/2012 to 10/3/2013. The research study is eligible for review under expedited category #6, 7. The Chairperson (or designee) deemed this study no more than minimal risk.

Changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. The investigator must submit a continuing review/closure application to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The Investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The approval includes the following items:

Name	Description
AP English and College Writing History	Study Protocol or Grant Application
AP English Survey History	Surveys and Questionnaires
Barton College Informed Consent History	Consent Forms
ECU Informed Consent History	Consent Forms
FYC Survey History	Surveys and Questionnaires
Informed Consent History	Recruitment Documents/Scripts
Minor Participation History	Consent Forms
Participation Form for Minors History	Recruitment Documents/Scripts

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418

IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418 IRB00004973

**Research Participation Permission Form
for Students Under 18 Years of Age**

Title of Study: AP English and First-Year Composition Date: 8/23/12

Principal Investigator: Mrs. Liz Dennis

Faculty/Staff Sponsor (if PI is not): Dr. Will Banks

I would like to invite your son or daughter to participate in a research study that will examine the differences in contexts, activities, and motives for students taking either AP English Language and Composition in high school, AP English Literature and Composition in high school, or first-year composition in college.

Guidelines established by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services prohibit the use of children who are under the age of 18 as participants in research unless permission is granted by their parents or guardians.

Your son or daughter will be asked to attend class and participate as he or she normally would. During certain class sessions, I will be there to observe the activities and to take notes on what students are asked to do. Additionally, he or she will be asked to submit a copy of certain assignments to me that he/she is assigned by the instructor. I will be comparing assignments across three classrooms (AP English Literature and Composition, AP English Language and Composition, and a first-year composition class in college) but confidentiality will be maintained. Finally, at some point during this research project, your son or daughter may be asked to meet with some of his/her fellow students for a focus group interview lead by me.

The research study involves little to no risks. In order to protect the confidentiality of all students involved, I will remove the names from the assignments and use pseudonyms when necessary in the writing process. Additionally, all information recorded during the interviews will be kept confidential.

The research study will not provide any direct benefits to your son or daughter as a participant, but knowledge may be gained that will help create better practices for creating and administering AP English courses in the future and for working with student placement in first-year composition courses based on previous AP experience.

This study has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board at East Carolina University and Barton College, a committee of researchers and faculty/staff from different departments, whose job it is to protect the safety of research participants. The committee follows guidelines established by the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services and the American Psychological Association.

Prior to participation, your son or daughter will be informed about aspects of the study that could reasonably be expected to affect his or her decision to participate in the study, and will sign a statement indicating (or verbally agree) that he or she has received this information. In addition, she or he may drop out of any study at any time if he or she finds

that it is objectionable for any reason. Your son or daughter may refuse to answer any questions they wish, without fear of embarrassment or coercion. The names of the all participants serving in this study and the answers they give are treated as confidential information to the fullest extent possible. The names of the research participants are not associated with their responses in any published document.

If further information is desired about this research project, please contact:

Liz Dennis
Principle Researcher
Barton College
Box 5000
Wilson, NC 27893
(252) 399-6453
epdennis@barton.edu

Signing the form below gives me permission to ask your son or daughter if they would like to participate in this study. On the day of the study, I will ask him or her if he or she would like to participate. Only if he or she agrees, will we continue.

_____ has my permission to participate in the project as described above, which has been approved by the Institutional Review Board of Barton College.

Date

Signature of Parent or Legal Guardian

Please print your name here.

Mailing Address: _____

E-Mail Address _____

Phone Number _____



Informed Consent to Participate in Research

Information to consider before taking part in research that has no more than minimal risk.

Title of Research Study: AP English and College Writing: Take Two
Principal Investigator: Liz Dennis
Institution/Department or Division: ECU, Dept. of English
Address: Rocky Mount, NC
Telephone #: 252-450-5446

Researchers at East Carolina University (ECU) and Barton College study problems in society, health problems, environmental problems, behavior problems and the human condition. Our goal is to try to find ways to improve the lives of you and others. To do this, we need the help of volunteers who are willing to take part in research.

Why is this research being done?

The purpose of this research study is to determine the similarities and differences in the contexts, motives, and activities of an Advanced Placement (AP) English Language and Composition classroom in high school, an AP Literature and Composition classroom in high school, and a first-year writing classroom in college. The research is necessary because students who receive a 3, 4, or 5 on either the AP English Language and Composition exam or the AP English Literature and Composition exam are able to exempt a first-year composition class. Therefore, this study seeks to determine whether or not the three academic settings are similar enough to justify an exemption from a first-year writing course in college. The decision to take part in this research is yours to make.

Why am I being invited to take part in this research?

You are being invited to take part in this research because you are currently enrolled in either AP English Literature and Composition, AP English Literature and Composition, or a first-year composition class. If you volunteer to take part in this research, you will be one of about 90 people to do so.

What other choices do I have if I do not take part in this research?

You can choose not to participate.

Where is the research going to take place and how long will it last?

The research procedures will be conducted in your English classroom. Over the course of this research project, you may be asked to participate in a focus group interview with your peers. If/when that happens, I will provide more information about when, where and how long those interviews will last.

What will I be asked to do?

You are being asked to do the following: If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked

to attend class as you normally would. I will be there to observe the activities and to take notes on what students are asked to do. Additionally, you will be asked to submit a copy of certain assignments to me that is assigned by the instructor. I will be comparing assignments across three classrooms (AP English Literature and Composition, AP English Language and Composition, and a first-year composition class in college) but confidentiality will be maintained. Finally, at some point during this research project, you may be asked to meet with some of your fellow students for a focus group interview lead by me. The only time outside of class required of you would be for the focus group interview, which will last approximately 30 minutes to an hour.

What possible harms or discomforts might I experience if I take part in the research?

It has been determined that the risks associated with this research are no more than what you would experience in everyday life.

What are the possible benefits I may experience from taking part in this research?

We do not know if you will get any benefits by taking part in this study. There may be no personal benefit from your participation but the information gained by doing this research may help others in the future.

What will it cost me to take part in this research?

It will not cost you any money to be part of the research.

Who will know that I took part in this research and learn personal information about me?

To do this research, ECU and the people and organizations listed below may know that you took part in this research and may see information about you that is normally kept private. With your permission, these people may use your private information to do this research:

- Any agency of the federal, state, or local government that regulates human research. This includes the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), the North Carolina Department of Health, and the Office for Human Research Protections
- Barton College's Institutional Review Board, the University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board (UMCIRB) and its staff, who have responsibility for overseeing your welfare during this research, and other ECU staff who oversee this research

How will you keep the information you collect about me secure? How long will you keep it?

Data for observations will be taken via a pen and paper method and will NOT be video recorded. Data for the interviews (instructor and student focus group) will be audio recorded, transcribed, and then deleted from the recording device. The transcribed material will then be password protected on a computer not connected to the internet. Data collected from the instructor (syllabi) and students (assignments) will be kept under lock and key in my office and will be destroyed (shredded) 5 years after the complete of the dissertation project. Additionally, pseudonyms will be used in the final written product, so no names or identifying information will be used.

What if I decide I do not want to continue in this research?

If you decide you no longer want to be in this research after it has already started, you may stop at any time. You will not be penalized or criticized for stopping. You will not lose any benefits that you should normally receive.

Who should I contact if I have questions?

The people conducting this study will be available to answer any questions concerning this research, now or in the future. You may contact the Principal Investigator at **252-450-5446** (days,

XX College
INFORMED CONSENT FORM for RESEARCH

Title of Study: AP English and First-Year Composition Date: 8/23/12

Principal Investigator: Liz Dennis Faculty/Staff Sponsor (if PI is not): Dr. Will Banks

What are some general things you should know about research studies?

You are being asked to take part in a research study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You have the right to be a part of this study, to choose not to participate or to stop participating at any time. The purpose of research studies is to gain a better understanding of a certain topic or issue. You are not guaranteed any personal benefits from being in a study. Research studies also may pose risks to those that participate. In this consent form you will find specific details about the research in which you are being asked to participate. If you do not understand something in this form it is your right to ask the researcher for clarification or more information. A copy of this consent form will be provided to you. If at any time you have questions about your participation, do not hesitate to contact the researcher(s) named above.

What is the purpose of this study?

The purpose of this research study is to determine the similarities and differences in the contexts, motives, and activities of an Advanced Placement (AP) English Language and Composition classroom in high school, an AP Literature and Composition classroom in high school, and a first-year writing classroom in college. The research is necessary because students who receive a 3, 4, or 5 on either the AP English Language and Composition exam or the AP English Literature and Composition exam are able to exempt a first-year composition class. Therefore, this study seeks to determine whether or not the three academic settings are similar enough to justify an exemption from a first-year writing course in college.

What will happen if you take part in the study?

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to attend class as you normally would. I will be there to observe the activities and to take notes on what students are asked to do. Additionally, you will be asked to submit a copy of certain assignments to me that is assigned by the instructor. I will be comparing assignments across three classrooms (AP English Literature and Composition, AP English Language and Composition, and a first-year composition class in college) but confidentiality will be maintained. Finally, at some point during this research project, you may be asked to meet with some of your fellow students for a focus group interview lead by me. The only time outside of class required of you would be for the focus group interview, which will last approximately 30 minutes to an hour.

Risks

The research study involves little to no risks. In order to protect the confidentiality of all students involved, I will remove the names from the assignments and use pseudonyms when necessary in the writing process. Additionally, all information recorded during the interviews will be kept confidential.

Benefits

The research study will not provide any direct benefits to your son or daughter as a participant, but knowledge may be gained that will help create better practices for creating and administering AP English courses in the future and for working with student placement in first-year composition courses based on previous AP experience.

Confidentiality

The information in the study records will be kept strictly confidential. Data will be stored securely by password in a computer not connected to the internet. Additionally, no reference will be made in oral or written which could link you to the study.

Compensation

You will not receive anything for participating in this research study.

What if you have questions about this study?

If you have questions at any time about the study or the procedures, you may contact the researcher, Liz Dennis, at epdennis@barton.edu or at 252-399-6453.

What if you have questions about your rights as a research participant?

If you feel you have not been treated according to the descriptions in this form, or your rights as a participant in research have

been violated during the course of this project, you may contact Rob Hudson, Director of the Barton College IRB for the Use of Human Subjects in Research, at 252-399-6345 or at rdhudson@barton.edu or at Barton College, Box 5000, Wilson, NC 27893-7000.

Consent To Participate

"I have read and understand the above information. I have received a copy of this form. I agree to participate in this study with the understanding that I may withdraw at any time."

Subject's signature _____ **Date** _____

Investigator's signature _____ **Date** _____

IRB# 20120019

AP English Initial Survey

- 1) Which course are you currently enrolled in. Please place an X in the corresponding blank.
 - a. AP English Literature and Composition ____
 - b. AP English Language and Composition ____

- 2) Why did you enroll in this course? Please rank your top three choices with 1 being your top reason why.
 - a. I heard I can get college credit ____
 - b. My parents encouraged me ____
 - c. My parents made me ____
 - d. My friends are taking it ____
 - e. A teacher encouraged me ____
 - f. Other (please specify) _____

- 3) How did you hear about this course? Please place an X by the BEST answer.
 - a. My parents told me about it ____
 - b. I saw a flyer in school ____
 - c. A teacher told me about it ____
 - d. A friend told me about it ____
 - e. I saw it on a website ____ If so, what website: _____
 - f. Other (please specify) _____

- 4) Have you taken other AP classes before?
 - a. Yes ____
 - i. If yes, please list the AP courses you've taken _____
 - b. No ____

- 5) What do you think this class will do for you? Please rank your top three choices with 1 being the greatest impact.
 - a. Improve my writing skills ____
 - b. Improve my critical thinking skills ____
 - c. Prepare me for writing in college ____
 - d. Other (please specify) ____

First-Year Composition Initial Survey

1) Did you take AP English in high school?

- a. Yes ___
- b. No ___

If you answered YES to number 1, please proceed to question #2.

If you answered NO to number 1, please proceed to question # 5

2) What AP English class did you take in high school? Place an X by the AP class(es) you took.

- a. AP English Literature and Composition ___
- b. AP English Language and Composition ___

3) Did you take the AP English exam for the corresponding course?

- a. AP English Language and Composition: Yes ___ No ___
- b. AP English Literature and Composition: Yes ___ No ___

If yes, what score did you make on the exam:

- c. AP English Language and Composition Exam ___
- d. AP English Literature and Composition Exam ___

4) Why are you enrolled in this first-year writing course?

- a. My AP score didn't exempt me from the class ___
- b. I didn't take the AP exam ___
- c. I took the exam, but I wanted to take the course anyway ___
- d. Other (please specify): _____

5) What do you think this first-year composition class will do for you? Please place an X by all that apply.

- a. Improve my writing skills ___
- b. Improve my analysis skills ___
- c. Prepare me for writing in other college classes ___
- d. Other (please specify) ___

6) If you did not take AP English in high school, what English course did you take in high school?

- a. Honors ___
- b. College Prep ___
- c. Other (please specify) _____

**Listed here are a sample of the questions I will ask in the interviews and focus groups, but I will need to leave room for follow up questions that arise out of the observations and sample assignments I collect.

Instructor Questions:

- 1) Are you familiar with the outcomes statement for the AP English Language and Composition course?
- 2) Why are you teaching this course?
 - a. How does one become able to teach this course?
- 3) How did you decide on the kinds of assignments to create and assign?
- 4) How do you perceive these assignments will help students later in college?
- 5) How is AP English advertised in the school?
- 6) How would you describe your AP English course?

AP English Student Questions:

- 1) Why are you taking this course?
- 2) How is AP advertised in the school?
- 3) How would you describe your AP English class?
- 4) How would you describe your AP English course?
- 5) How do you think the assignments in AP will help you later in college?

FYC Student Questions:

- 1) What kind of English did you take in high school? Why?
- 2) Why did you take this course?
- 3) How did your high school English class prepare you for writing in college?
- 4) How will this class (FYC) prepare you for writing in your other college classes?

APPENDIX B: AP ENGLISH LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION

English Literature and Composition Course Syllabus
Kathy Proctor
2012 - 2013

Brief Description of Course: The AP College Board describes this course as " a year-long course that engages students in the careful analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students will deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for readers." Simply put, students will have two important goals throughout the school year: 1. Notice words. 2. Use words. My hope is that every activity, every discussion, every book, and every paper will help students achieve these two goals in ways they have never experienced before. Although I realize that not every student enrolled in the course notices words the way I do (like seeing the "Blind Driveways" road sign and thinking, "What a great name that would be for a band!"), I hope that the literary works and our discussions of them will inspire students to think about words a bit more than they did before taking this course. To go beyond the mere identification of literary techniques like similes and metaphors, we will apply a simple "How? So what?" strategy when analyzing authors' rhetorical devices. Students will learn to consider not just the technique itself but also the effect of the technique both within the text and on the reader.

The reading requirements in the course are rigorous, as AP English is meant to emulate college-level courses. Thus, students must be prepared to have a reading assignment every night. My expectation is that every student can devote one hour per night to read the assignments; however, there will be some nights that more time is required for longer novels. AP English also requires students to write reflectively, analytically, and persuasively. Writing instruction will include attention to developing and organizing ideas in clear, coherent, and persuasive language. Students will learn how to develop a "voice" in writing and how to develop stylistic maturity by using sophisticated vocabulary, a variety of sentence structures, specific illustrative details, and effective tone. We will also practice how to write timed essays both for the SAT and for the AP exam. Students are required to keep a reader-response journal to accompany the assigned readings. These journals will include reflections about the reading assignments. Usually, I will assign a topic or two per literary work. Often, students will be expected to respond to a quotation from a work and argue its relevance and validity. I will take up the journals each grading period. Generally speaking, students must have ten journal entries per grading period.

Students in AP English must also submit a Senior Project during their second semester. You will submit the research papers for the Senior Project during the first semester and then begin the mentor/project part of the Senior Project during second semester. After the AP exam in May, students will begin presenting their projects.

Semester One: Advanced Composition/British Literature

Reading List: (While the AP College Board does not dictate which selections we read, teachers are encouraged to include an intensive study of both American and British works in several genres from the sixteenth century to contemporary times. The works selected for the entire year require careful, deliberate reading that yields multiple meanings. I try to include classic works as well as more contemporary pieces. Occasionally, I change a selection, and I like to add one new work each year.)

Unit One: When Love Goes Wrong (approx. six weeks)

Wuthering Heights by Emily Bronte

Jane Eyre by Charlotte Bronte

All the Pretty Horses by Cormac McCarthy
Wide Sargasso Sea by Jean Rhys

Unit Two: Monsters, Madmen, and Machos

Lord of the Flies by William Golding (Sometimes I have substituted *A Separate Peace* here if students have already read *Lord of the Flies*)
Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde by Robert Louis Stevenson
A Lesson Before Dying by Ernest Gaines

Unit Three: Tragic Heroes and the Humpty Dumpty Syndrome

Macbeth by William Shakespeare
Hamlet by William Shakespeare
Frankenstein by Mary Shelley
Cyrano de Bergerac by Edmund Rostand

Assessments and Activities:

- Seminar of Summer Reading: *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre* –We will spend the first two weeks of school discussing the books from the assigned summer reading. I frequently change the selections for summer reading but have found that assigning the two Bronte novels has worked well in recent years to acclimate students to the level of reading for this course and to provide experience with canonical texts that are often referenced in subsequent works. It is often interesting (and fun) to compare these literary classics with more contemporary novels during their literary seminars. For example, one year we compared Heathcliff and Rochester to Edward and Jacob in the *Twilight* series, which also helped me introduce and solidify the use of allusion, as *Twilight* has many allusions to the Brontes. (I'm wondering about the possibilities for this year with the recent craze about *Fifty Shades of Grey*...) The formal literary seminars give students an opportunity to respond personally to literary works and to argue viewpoints intelligently and convincingly. I grade your participation in the seminars, and you will receive bonus points for being able to cite specific passages (and page numbers) to substantiate your claims.
- Test and literary essay on each work - Tests always include quotations requiring you to identify the speaker, situation, and significance as well as an essay question that resembles question #3 on the free-response section of the AP exam.
- Quick quizzes and reading checks – In order to encourage students to read nightly, we will have reading quizzes periodically. Students must be prepared to identify characters and speakers described in quotations in addition to plot detail questions.
- Journal writing – You will bring your journal to class every day because we usually begin the class with “quick writes,” timed responses to quotations or evocative questions from the assigned reading. We will sometimes begin class by reading a poem from the poetry180 website, writing a response, and sharing students’ interpretations.
- Timed essays – We will have at least one timed essay per week to prepare you for both the SAT essay writing and the AP exam. Often you will write these essays in your

journal, and I will write responses about your writing. Many of the timed writings are formative assessments; that is, they do not “count” against you if you do not do well. They are meant to help you think and organize faster than you may have done in your prior English class.

It is my hope that by the end of the year, you will be able to compose an intelligent, well-organized, sufficiently developed literary essay in 40 minutes. During the first week of class, you will complete one prose passage analysis from a released AP exam in order to introduce you to the rhetorical devices we will discuss all year. Typically, this interpretive essay will be on a passage from a novel other than the ones you have already read. (I often use a passage from McCarthy's *The Crossing*.) One of the timed essays you write this semester will be an analysis of one of the novels studied considering the work's historical context. (*A Lesson Before Dying* would work especially well for this assignment.) Early in the first semester you will also practice writing poetry analyses, as many students do not have much experience with analyzing poetry. By the end of the year, you will have written several poetry analyses; some of the poems I have used for practice in the past are “Siren Song,” “Helen,” “To Helen,” and several sonnets.

- SAT practice (weekly vocabulary instruction and quizzes; weekly “quick writes”) – While students at this level are expected to have better-than-average knowledge of grammar, I realize that is not always the case. We will have grammar mini-lessons each day to help with any lapses in your prior grammar instruction. We will also have daily vocabulary instruction, especially before October when you take the SAT, in hopes of increasing your SAT score and in improving your ownership of words you may not have used in your own writing before. With a small group, you will present a short video illustrating the meaning of an SAT word and upload the video to our class website.
- Literary terms instruction – For poetry and prose analysis, you will need to realize there are certain tools that contribute to the meaning of literary works. We will use many fun activities to learn over 100 literary terms and techniques (yes, there are more techniques than simile and metaphor!). While I will use formative assessments for learning these terms initially, by the end of the year, you will have daily quizzes on the literary terms. And always, when you write literary essays, you will need to incorporate not just the techniques you notice but also the effect of these techniques.

- How to write a college application essay (as topics and applications become available) –We will analyze several models of effective college application essays, and you will write at least one formal college essay for me to grade. These essays will incorporate various modes of writing – personal, anecdotal, narrative, reflective, descriptive – as required by the individual prompts.
- "Bucket List" essay (personal essay) –We may not get to this essay until mid-semester, but you will complete this at some time during the second semester because it is an excellent activity for setting goals for your senior year. We will watch the movie *The Bucket List* and follow up with an essay of your own "bucket list" of five goals to accomplish before graduating. This 3-5 page essay will be personal in nature, obviously, but will encapsulate much of the lessons about effective writing – organization, main ideas, supporting details including personal anecdotes and examples, etc.
- Introduction to the Senior Project – We will spend several days early in the semester brainstorming about topics for the Senior Project, choosing topics, securing a mentor, and formulating an essential question for the research component of the project. You will write a proposal letter for the project and a resume of your high school activities to be included in your Senior Project portfolio. You will submit your drafts of these business-style documents to me sometime during the first six weeks, and I will edit them and store them in your writing folder until it is time for you to put your Senior Project portfolio together. Your final drafts in your portfolio must be error-free.
- Senior Project Research Paper – Throughout the semester we will work on conducting research for the Senior Project. Students will write an argumentative essay proving your thesis about the topic of choice. You will have some time in class to work on research, and I will read all rough drafts and have writing conferences with each student before you submit final drafts.
- How to "mark up" texts in order to read actively and notice literary techniques like figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone how to "mark up" texts in order to read actively

Major Assignments and/or
Assessments:

- *Wuthering Heights* by Emily Bronte
- *Jane Eyre* by Charlotte Bronte
- *All the Pretty Horses* by Cormac McCarthy
- *Wide Sargasso Sea* by Jean Rhys
- Diagnostic writing during first week - prose and poetry analysis (interpretation of a piece of literature not seen before)

- Most class days will consist of literary discussions that are relatively informal (but brilliant, nevertheless). We will also have formal literary seminars on novels at least once per grading period.
- Writing portfolios and response journals will be due at the end of each grading period and will count as a test grade. Portfolios must include rough drafts of writing pieces and must show evidence of revision. Final drafts chosen for the portfolio must reflect students' "best" writing. Students must also include an introduction to the portfolio each time, justifying their selections and reflecting on strengths and weaknesses of each piece.

Tests/Essays/Portfolios/Journals/Projects - 60%

Homework/classwork/quizzes -- 40%

Assessments:

- literary seminars tests on novels
- response journals - Response journals must include the topic, date, and at least a one-page reflection about the topic.
- quizzes - In order to encourage students to read nightly, we will have reading quizzes periodically. Students must be prepared to identify speakers and characters described in quotations. Students should
- "mark up" texts while reading and highlight important comments while reading and be able to explain
- the significance to the entire work.
- Interpretive essay passage by Cormac McCarthy (from *The Crossing*)

Unit Name or Timeframe:

- 2nd six weeks: *Monsters*, *Madmen*,
and *Machos* Content and/or Skills

Taught:

- prose and poetry analysis (ongoing)-Students will practice writing 'med essays like those required on the AP exam. We will often go to the computer lab or use laptops to type these; students will use pseudonyms so classmates will not guess identities when editing and scoring the essays.
- "marking up" literature (ongoing)
- Journal writing -- responses to literature
- Writing a research paper for Senior Project-----Much of the writing focus this grading period will be on writing the research paper -- how to document sources, how to write an arguable thesis, and how to use sources to support a thesis. We will spend one week conducting research and taking notes. Students will write rough drafts on their own. We will have two---three days of writing conferences about rough drafts. After these conferences, students will revise rough drafts and complete final drafts of research papers.

- Submitting college application essays
- Writing a literary essay with a three---point thesis (considering the work's structure, style, and themes)

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Beowulf

Lord of the Flies or A Separate

Peace Dr. Jekyll and Mr.

Hyde

A Lesson Before Dying

vocabulary and literary terms

quizzes college application

essays (as needed) tests on

novels

literary seminars

Journals

Continue writing literary essays showing ability to use the text effectively,

incorporating quotations smoothly, providing commentary to substantiate claims.

Prose analysis 'med essay on one of the novels studied considering the novel's historical context (A Lesson Before Dying would work especially well for this assignment.)

Research Paper Final Draft (two test

grades) Unit Name or Timeframe:

3rd six weeks: Tragic Heroes and the Humpty Dumpty

Syndrome Content and/or Skills Taught:

We will continue prose and poetry analysis, vocabulary development, and journal writing.

Listen to lecture about William Shakespeare and the elements of a tragic hero. Apply these elements to characters in the works read this grading period.

memorization of Macbeth's "Out, out" speech

Major Assignments and/or Assessments:

Macbeth by William

Shakespeare Hamlet by

William Shakespeare

Frankenstein by Mary Shelley

Cyrano de Bergerac by Edmund Rostand

Interpretive essay --- "Crumbling Is Not an Instant's Act" (how the poem develops one of the themes of the tragedies studied)

literary seminars

Timed essay (open---ended question 3 on AP exam) Unit Name or Timeframe:

Second Semester: In Search of Family, In Search of

Self Content and/or Skills Taught:

Students will read a variety of texts about characters in search of family and in search of self. Students will learn to compare and identify authors' styles by analyzing subject, tone, and diction.

Students will continue writing timed essays for exam practice and will study sample essays and discuss strengths and weaknesses.

As we discuss the various novels, students will recognize the cultural and historical values evident in literary works.

Students will compare the family relationships in several literary works and discuss how parents react to tragic events.

Students will continue studying authors' rhetorical devices with an emphasis on plot development, diction, imagery, details, tone, characterization, and point of view.

We will continue applying the "How? So what?" strategy when analyzing prose and poetry. Students will continue to read and write poetry on our designated "Dead Poets' Society" days.

In preparation for the exam, students will practice taking 'med multiple choice tests on literature. Students will learn how to create a professional portfolio, how to write an effective speech, and how to create a visual product for their Senior Project presentations.

Major Assignments and/or

Assessments: We Were the

Mulvaney's

The Lovely

Bones Push

The

Handmaid's

Tale Song of

Solomon

The

Poisonwood

Bible

Senior Project (last six weeks after AP exam) Writing portfolios

Journals

Tests and quizzes

Painting a picture of an author's description (recognizing imagery) Literary seminars
Senior Project portfolio, presentation, final product

Textbooks

Title: The Prentice

Hall Reader

Publisher: Prentice

Hall Published Date:

2004 Author: George

Miller Description:

Websites URL:

www.poetry180.org

Description:

This website includes many of the poems we will analyze, discuss, and write about in class.

AP English Syllabus

Kathy Proctor

The Course

A Rather Daunting Course Description from AP College Board: “Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition engages students in the careful reading and critical analysis of imaginative literature. Through the close reading of selected texts, students will deepen their understanding of the ways writers use language to provide both meaning and pleasure for their readers. As students read, they will consider a work’s structure, style, and themes, as well as smaller-scale elements such as the use of figurative language, imagery, symbolism, and tone. The course includes intensive study of representative works from various genres and periods, concentrating on works of recognized literary merit. Students will read works from the sixteenth to the twenty-first century. They will read deliberately and thoroughly, taking time to consider a work’s complexity, to absorb its richness of meaning, and to analyze how that meaning is embedded in literary form. In addition to considering a work’s literary artistry, students will consider the social and historical values it reflects and embodies.”

A Less Intimidating Course Description from me: Students in AP English have three major academic goals throughout the school year: 1) Read. 2) Write. 3) Discuss. Simple enough? My hope is that every activity, discussion, book, and paper will help you notice both the beauty and complexity of language and will motivate you to articulate your appreciation of language in both written and spoken form. Although I realize that not every student will notice words as I do (like seeing the road sign “Blind Driveways” and thinking, “What a great name that would be for a band!”), I hope that the literary works and discussions will inspire you to think about language and literature a bit more openly, creatively, and enthusiastically than you did before you began the course.

Expectations

AP English is a college-level course. As such, the expectations are high. Students should enter the class with a sincere desire to improve their ability to analyze and create texts, along with an understanding of the dedication this work requires.

Students are also expected to have a strong foundation in grammatical conventions and an ability to analyze and discuss texts with a level of sophistication commensurate with that of a college freshman.

Students in AP English must read every night. In general, thirty minutes per night should suffice, but occasionally, you may have to read more. Please don’t whine. If you are not willing to do the work, you should take an honest look at your motives for choosing such a demanding course. If you think you can fake your way through by using online resources like sparknotes.com, you should seriously consider a

schedule change. I cannot prepare you for a rigorous national exam if you are not willing to do your part. As another AP English teacher stated on her website...

“To not read is to not be part of the group, and to not be part of the group would be a tragedy. We read and think and write, not just because it sharpens our minds, but because it helps us understand who we are and why we are here and how we ought to live. We read some great stuff in this class and talk about really cool ideas...So, if that’s not interesting to you, you should find a different class.

Because if you are just sitting there all year while the rest of us ‘get it,’ you’re going to be awfully bored, and you won’t be much fun to have around.”

Supplies

Every day: blue or black pen, loose leaf notebook paper, large 3-ring binder or composition book with sections

Nice to have: highlighters, glue sticks, markers

We always need hand sanitizer, tissue, paper towels, copy paper, and old magazines.

Behavioral Expectations

Students are expected to behave as professionals who are here to learn. I will notice your level of professionalism every day and will remember your actions when a situation like a six-weeks average of 84.4... The highest level of professionalism requires that you consistently do the following: bring all materials to class, be in your seat and ready for class when the bell rings, have your notebook and text on your desk during class, raise your hand before speaking, contribute to class discussions, use class time wisely, stay on task during group work.

Other pointers:

- Don’t have side conversations – they’re distracting.
- Don’t talk when your classmates are working quietly – again, distracting.
- Don’t ever, ever, ever put your head on your desk.
- Always raise your hand to speak when I am talking. Always.
- Make this room a place where we are all comfortable taking academic risks.

Cheating

Intellectual dishonesty will not be tolerated. All of the following are examples of cheating:

- Copying someone else’s work. This includes copying from books, the internet, magazines, newspapers, or classmates.
- Allowing someone to copy work.
- Giving answers to a classmate.
- Receiving answers from a classmate.
- Texting during class.
- Using sparknotes (or something similar) in lieu of the primary text.

Consequences of cheating:

- 0 on the assignment
- Conference with parent
- Referral to administrator

Grading Scale Homework/Classwork/Quizzes/Daily grades = 40%

Tests/Essays/Projects/Class participation/Major Grades = 60%

The following is a tentative, admittedly ambitious schedule of the activities and readings for the first semester:

1st nine weeks

Literary Theme: [When Love Goes Wrong](#)

Summer reading selections: *Wuthering Heights* and *Jane Eyre*
All the Pretty Horses

Shakespearean sonnets

Movie: *The Bucket List* (and accompanying essay)

SAT preparation

Literary terms

Grammar review as needed

In-class timed essays (ongoing with emphasis on SAT “quick writes” before SAT)

College application essays (as topics become available)

Senior Project –choosing topic and mentor, writing resume, writing proposal letter, beginning research

2nd nine weeks

Literary theme: [Monsters, Madmen, and Machos](#)

Beowulf

Lord of the Flies (or *A Separate Peace* if most people have read LOF)

Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde

A Lesson Before Dying

Vocabulary and literary terms (ongoing) College application essays

Senior Project – submitting research paper, begin meeting with mentor

Literary theme: [Tragic Heroes and the Humpty Dumpty Syndrome](#) *Macbeth*

Hamlet

Frankenstein

Weekly vocabulary and literary terms quizzes

Sneak peak of second semester:

Cyrano de Bergerac

Pygmalion

We Were the Mulvaneys

Song of Solomon

The Poisonwood Bible

Push

A Prayer for Owen Mean

APPENDIX C: FIRST-YEAR COMPOSTION MATERIALS

ENG 102B Composition II
MWF 9:00-9:50 in Hines 202
Dr. Michael Fukuchi
Spring 2013

ENG 102E Composition II
MWF 12:00-12:50 in Hines 204
Dr. Michael Fukuchi
Spring 2013

Syllabus

Required Material:

1. *Good Reasons with Contemporary Arguments* by Lester Faigley and Jack Selzer. 5th ed. New York: Longman, 2012. (GR)
2. *Harbrace Essentials* by Cheryl Glenn and Loretta Gray. Boston: Wadsworth, 2012. (HE)
3. Three (3) blue exam booklets (available at the Barton Bookstore) – due Monday, Jan. 14.
4. \$8 for additional paper on your printing quota account

- Jan. 7 M Introduction to the Course (in our classroom)
Using Campus Connect for ENG 102 (in the computer lab, H-103)
- 9 W Peer Interviews – in class
For homework, write (don't type) a 100-word paragraph on each person you interviewed. Due Friday, Jan. 11.
Also, start thinking about a good, argumentative, narrowed-down topic for your research paper – to be discussed on Monday, Jan. 14. Refer 4a – Research Paper Propositions – Spring 2013.
- 11 F Peer Introductions – in class
Handwritten (not typed) interviews to be turned in today after peer introductions.
Last Day for Adding Courses
- Jan. 14 M **Turn in three (3) blue exam booklets today.**
Deciding on Research Paper Propositions – in class.
(1) Review the research paper topics found on Campus Connect (4a – Research Paper Propositions –Spring 2013).
(2) You may choose one of the approved propositions from the list.
(3) Or, if you want a different proposition of your own choosing, it must be approved by the instructor.
(4) After the propositions are chosen, you must write in class a minimum 100-word **paragraph** on what you know about your topic.
Due at the end of class. (SA#1)
- 16 W **Searching for Books** online and in Hackney Library – **Meet in Computer Lab.**
(1) Do the self-paced exercise 6a – Hackney Library – How to Do Research – Books

(2) After you finish the exercise, find two good books on your research paper topic using the Hackney Library online catalog.

Note: Make sure that the books have good information from which you can quote or paraphrase in your research paper. You must have at least one quotation or paraphrase from each of these two books that you find. Choose wisely, or you may have to go back and do more research later on.

(3) Copy and paste the book information into a Word document.

(4) Print out the book information list.

(4) Then go to the library to find the books.

(5) Evaluate the books and photocopy the title pages and pages with good information.

(6) **Read and annotate the photocopied pages.** Review the document on Campus Connect (7a – How to Annotate Your Sources).

(7) Bring the book information list that you copied and pasted and your annotated photocopies to the next class.

18 F MLA Bibliography and Citation for Books – **Bring your book information list printout and your annotated photocopies to class.**

(1) How to do the MLA bibliographic entry for your books

(2) How to do the MLA citation for your books

(3) Go down to the **computer lab** and type up in alphabetical order the bibliographic entries for your two books and the citations for your two books.

(4) The following are part of your portfolio that **will be turned in at the end of today's class: (SA#2 and SA#3)**

(a) the printout of your Word book information list,

(b) your **annotated** photocopies from your books, and

(c) the typed alphabetical bibliographic entries and the citations.

Jan. 21 M **Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday – College closed.**

23 W **Searching for Journals online – Meet in Computer Lab.**

(1) Do the self-paced exercise 6b – Hackney Library – How to Do Research – Journals

(2) After you finish the exercise, find two good peer-reviewed journal articles on your research paper topic using the Hackney Library online databases.

(3) Look at the end of the article to make sure they have references, bibliography sources, footnotes, or endnotes in order to qualify as a peer-reviewed journal article. **Note:** Abstracts and book reviews of journal articles are unacceptable and should not be used in your research paper.

Note: Make sure that the journal articles have good information which you can quote or paraphrase in your research paper. You must have at least one quotation or paraphrase from each of these two journal articles that you find. Choose wisely, or you may have to go back and do more research later on.

- (4) Copy and paste the journal information into a Word document.
- (5) Print out the journal information and the **complete article**.
- (6) **Read and annotate the articles.** Review the document on Campus Connect (7a – How to Annotate Your Sources).
- (7) Bring the journal information printout and your complete, annotated journal articles to the next class.

25 F MLA Bibliography and Citation for Journals – **Bring your journal list and your complete, annotated journal articles to class.**

- (1) How to do the MLA bibliographic entry for your journal articles
- (2) How to do the MLA citation for your journal articles
- (3) Go down to the **computer lab** and type up in alphabetical order the bibliographic entries for your two journal articles and the citations for your two journal articles.
- (4) The following are part of your portfolio that **will be turned in at the end of today's class: (SA#4 and SA#5)**
 - (a) the printout of your Word list of journal articles,
 - (b) your **complete, annotated** photocopies of your two journal articles, and
 - (c) the typed alphabetical bibliographic entries and the citations.

Jan. 28 M **Searching for Magazines** online – **Meet in Computer Lab.**

- (1) Do the self-paced exercise 6c – Hackney Library – How to Do Research – Magazines
- (2) After you finish the exercise, find two good magazine articles on your research paper topic using the Hackney Library online databases.
- (3) Check the magazine articles to make sure that they are NOT book reviews, commentaries, letters to the editor, or abstracts; they are **un**acceptable and should not be used in your research paper.

Note: Make sure that the magazine articles have good information which you can quote or paraphrase in your research paper. You must have at least one quotation or paraphrase from each of these two magazine articles that you find. Choose wisely, or you may have to go back and do more research later on.

- (3) Copy and paste the magazine information into a Word document.
- (4) Print out the magazine information and the **complete article**.

- (5) **Read and annotate the articles.** Review the document on Campus Connect (7a – How to Annotate Your Sources).
- (6) Bring the magazine information printout and your complete, annotated magazine articles to the next class.

- 30 W MLA Format for Magazines – **Bring your magazine list and your complete, annotated magazine articles to class.**
- (1) How to do the MLA bibliographic entry for your magazine articles
 - (2) How to do the MLA citation for your magazine articles
 - (3) Go down to the **computer lab** and type up the bibliographic entries for your two magazine articles and the citations for your two magazine articles.
 - (4) The following are part of your portfolio that **will be turned in at the end of today's class: (SA#6 and SA#7)**
 - (a) the printout of your Word list of magazine articles,
 - (b) your **complete, annotated** photocopies of your two magazine articles, and
 - (c) the typed alphabetical bibliographic entries and the citations.
- Feb. 1 F Formatting Your Papers and Converting your MLA bibliographic material into a properly formatted, alphabetized Works Cited page – Bring all your research material with you and **meet in the Computer Lab.** Refer to Documents 8a-8d.
- Feb. 4 M **I-Search Paper #1 – to be written in class** in one of the blue exam booklets you turned in – 550 words minimum
Print out and bring to class 9a - How to Write Your I-Search Paper #1.
- NOTE: Bring to every class (until you turn in your research paper) all your research paper material – (1) your articles, (2) your book photocopies, and (3) your typed MLA material.**
- 5 T **Last Day for Dropping Courses by 5 p.m.**
- 6 W Formatting Paper and Typing Paper #1 – **Meet in Computer Lab. Due at the end of class (in this order): (SA#8 and SA#9)**
- (1) 9b – Evaluation Form for I-Search Paper #1
 - (2) Cleanly typed and properly formatted Paper #1
 - (3) Works Cited page – consecutively numbered, in proper MLA format and style, in alphabetical order. (Do NOT turn in the book photocopies, the journal articles, and the magazine articles.)
 - (4) Insert the first three items into your Paper #1 blue exam booklet.
- 8 F Print out and bring to class 11a – How to Write Your Critical Analysis Paper #2 and 11b - Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2.

We will work on this in class. **Completed form due at the end of class.**

Feb. 11 M **Critical Analysis of Research Paper Topic (Paper #2) – to be written in class in a blue exam booklet.** You must turn it in at the end of class, but you will have 25 minutes at the beginning of the next class to finish your paper.

Print out and bring to class:

- (1) 11a – How to Write Your Critical Analysis Paper #2
- (2) 11b - Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2
- (2) 11c – Evaluation Form for Critical Analysis Paper #2

13 W **Meet in the computer lab.** You will have 25 minutes to finish writing your paper. For the other 25 minutes, you will use the time to type up your Paper #2 – properly formatted. You must also attach a corrected version of your Works Cited page that includes all of your sources for your research paper in alphabetical order.

To be turned in at the end of class (in this order):

The STAPLED packet:

- (1) 11c – Evaluation Form for Critical Analysis Paper #2**
- (2) Your How to Write Your Critical Analysis Paper #2 instructions**
- (3) Your Work Sheet**

- (4) Your cleanly typed and properly formatted paper.
- (5) Your corrected version of your Works Cited page consecutively numbered after your paper with sources in alphabetical order.
- (6) All five of these items should be inserted – in order – into your blue exam booklet.

15 F **Meet in class.** Start work on Paper #3, which is a two-page version of your research paper. Later, this will be expanded into a six-page version of your research paper. Each paragraph you write for Paper #3 will later be expanded into a full page each.

- (1) Print and bring 12a – How to Write Your Position Paper #3
- (2) Print and bring 12b – Format for Typed Paragraphs (Paper #3)
- (3) Review Document 12c – Introductory Paragraphs (Paper #3)
- (3) After we finish, we will go down to the computer lab to type up your paragraph.
- (4) Write a 100-word minimum **Introduction for Paper #3.**

Due at the end of class: (SA#10)

- (1) handwritten version of your paragraph and
- (2) cleanly typed and properly formatted introductory paragraph.

Feb. 18 M Using Quotations, Paraphrases, and Citations – **Meet in class.**

We will go over the following:

- (1) how to set up your arguments with a required quotation or a required paraphrase for each argument,
- (2) how to document them in your paragraphs, and
- (3) what to watch out for in writing your arguments.

Print out and bring to class 12e – Work Sheet for Your Argument Paragraphs (Paper #3). Also bring Document 11b – Work Sheet for Critical Analysis Paper #2

Note: Make sure you **bring your casebook articles every day** in your folder with at least two books, two journals, and two magazines. You will need them so you can quote from them in your argument paragraphs. Transfer your three arguments and support for your research paper from your 11b - Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2 to 12e - Work Sheet for Your Argument Paragraphs (Paper #3). Make any necessary revisions.

Find a quotation or paraphrase for each argument from three different sources in your portfolio (which should contain at least two books, two journal articles, and two magazine articles).

- (1) Highlight them in your photocopies or articles.
- (2) Write your quotations/paraphrases onto 12e – Work Sheet for Your Argument Paragraphs (Paper #3).
- (3) Be sure to include the parenthetical citation/documentation.

This work sheet is due at the end of class.

20 W Writing Your **First One-Paragraph Argument** – **Meet in the computer lab.**

Using the information from 12e –Work Sheet for Your Argument Paragraphs (Paper #3), write a 100-word minimum paragraph that incorporates your quotation or paraphrase. Be sure to include your parenthetical citation/documentation.

Type the paragraph (double spaced) with the header, but exclude the course information. **Due at the end of class. (SA#11)**

22 F How to Revise Your Work – **Meet in our classroom.**

Print out and bring to class the following:

- (1) 10a – Revision Guide
- (2) 10b – Revision Guide Tabulation Grid - ENG 102
- (3) Your graded Papers #1 and #2.

Introduction for Paper #3 will be returned

Do the tabulations for Paper #1 and Paper #2.

Work on the revision of your Introduction for Paper #3.

- (1) Write the corrections directly onto the graded paragraph.

- (2) Later, on your own time, type the revisions into your Introduction.
- (3) You may recoup some of the lost points for your Introduction grade, depending upon the quality of your revisions, but they must be written directly onto the typed, graded paragraph.

Feb. 25 M Writing Your **Second** One-Paragraph **Argument** – **Meet in the computer lab.**

Review material on transitions.

Using the information from 12e – Work Sheet for Your Argument Paragraphs (Paper #3), write a 100-word minimum paragraph that incorporates your quotation or paraphrase. Be sure to include your parenthetical citation/documentation.

Type the paragraph (double spaced) with the header, but exclude the course information. **Due at the end of class. (SA#12)**

For the remainder of the class time, work on the revisions for your Argument One paragraph. Be sure to make the revisions directly onto the graded paragraph, and then, after that, type the revisions into your Argument One paragraph.

27 W Writing Your **Third** One-Paragraph **Argument** – **Meet in the computer lab.**

Using the information from 12e – Work Sheet for Your Argument Paragraphs (Paper #3), write a 100-word minimum paragraph that incorporates your quotation or paraphrase. Be sure to include your parenthetical citation/documentation.

Type the paragraph (double spaced) with the header, but exclude the course information. **Due at the end of class. (SA#13)**

For the remainder of the class time, work on the revisions for your Argument Two paragraph. Be sure to make the revisions directly onto the graded paragraph, and then, after that, type the revisions into your Argument Two paragraph.

Mar. 1 F **Spring Break (through Sunday, Mar. 10)**

Mar. 11 M Writing Your **Opposition** Paragraph – **Meet in the computer lab.**

Review 12f – Opposition Paragraph (Paper #3)

Using the information from 11b – Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2, write a 100-word minimum paragraph that incorporates your three opposition arguments.

Type the paragraph (double spaced) with the header, but exclude the course information. **Due at the end of class. (SA#14)**

For the remainder of the class time, work on the revisions for your Argument Three paragraph. Be sure to make the revisions directly

onto the graded paragraph, and then, after that, type the revisions into your Argument Three paragraph.

- 12 T **Advisor/Advisee Meeting at 11 a.m.**
Advanced Registration Period – Tuesday, Mar. 12 through Friday, Mar. 22
- Mar. 13 W Writing Your One-Paragraph (100 word minimum) **Conclusion for Paper #3** – Review 12g – a Concluding Paragraphs (Paper #3) – **Meet in comp. lab.**
Using the information from 11b – Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2, write a 100-word minimum paragraph that concludes your paper.
Type the paragraph (double spaced) with the header, but exclude the course information. **Due at the end of class. (SA#15)**
For the remainder of the class time, work on the revisions for your Opposition paragraph. Be sure to make the revisions directly onto the graded paragraph, and then, after that, type the revisions into your Opposition paragraph.
- 15 F **Short Version of Research Paper (Paper #3) due at end of class – 9:00 meets in Computer Lab H-103; 12:00 class meets in Hines 102.**
- (1) Revise your marked and graded Conclusion paragraph that was returned to you. Write your revisions directly onto the graded paragraph.
 - (2) Then incorporate your written revisions into your computer version.
 - (3) Combine your six revised paragraphs into one properly formatted essay by cutting and pasting your previously revised paragraphs into one new document. Save the file as Paper #3. Refer to 13b – Instructions for Paper #3 and Uploading.
 - (4) Write good transitional sentences to tie your paragraphs from one to the next so that they flow smoothly. Refer to 13a – Transitions (Paper #3).
 - (5) Make sure the paper is properly formatted.
 - (6) Upload Paper #3 to your QEP Cohort Archive. Refer to the Document 13b – Instructions for Paper #3 and Uploading (second half).
 - (6) **Turn in the following at the end of class** – this order:
 - (a) The evaluation form for Paper #3 (13c - Rubric for Grading ENG 102 Paper#3)
 - (b) Your cleanly typed, properly formatted Paper #3
 - (c) Your latest, corrected Works Cited page, consecutively numbered, with sources in alphabetical order.
 - (d) Your six revised paragraphs that show your handwritten revisions. Put them in order – Introduction, Opposition, Arguments 1-3, and Conclusion **(SA#10-SA#15)**.

- Mar. 18 M Writing Your Research Paper – **Meet in class.**
- (1) Print out and bring to class 14b – Sentence Outline Work Sheet (Research Paper).
 - (2) Bring all your research paper material, including 11b - Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2 that you did earlier.
 - (3) Review the Structure of Your Research Paper in the Research Paper Guide.
 - (4) Write and fill out your Sentence Outline Work Sheet, using the information from 11b – Work Sheet for Your Critical Analysis Paper #2 that you did earlier.
 - (5) Your completed Sentence Outline Work Sheet is **due at the end of class. (LA#1)**
- Note:** *Of the three expanded arguments, make sure at least one of them includes one block quotation.*
- 20 W **Meet in the computer lab.** Expand **First Argument** to One Page. **Due at the end of class. (LA#2)**
- (1) You must use one or more quotations or paraphrases from your books, journals, or magazines.
 - (2) Type in your parenthetical citations/documentations.
 - (3) Make sure the quotations or paraphrases are highlighted in the articles or book photocopies.
 - (4) Set up the quotation or paraphrase with some introductory comments.
- 21 Th **Last Day to Withdraw from a Course by 5 p.m. (except for English composition courses)**
- 22 F **Meet in the computer lab.** Revision of First Argument page
- (1) Write the revisions directly onto the graded page.
 - (2) Then type the revisions into your typed document.
 - (3) Write an opening transition sentence that connects this page to your opposition arguments.
- Mar. 25 M **9:00 class meets in Computer Lab H-103; 12:00 class meets in Hines 102.** Expand **Second Argument** to One Page. **Due at the end of class. (LA#3)**
- (1) You must expand your one paragraph First Argument into a full page.
 - (2) You must use one or more quotations or paraphrases from your books, journals, or magazines. Use different sources from those used in your first argument so that eventually you will be using all six of your sources.
 - (3) Write in your parenthetical citations/documentations.
 - (4) Make sure the quotations or paraphrases are highlighted in the articles or book photocopies.

- (5) Set up the quotation or paraphrase with some introductory comments.
- Mar. 27 W **9:00 class meets in Computer Lab H-103; 12:00 class meets in Hines 102.** Revision of Second Argument page
- (1) Write the revisions directly onto the graded page.
 - (2) Then type the revisions into your typed document.
 - (3) Write an opening transition sentence that connects this page to your first argument.
- 29 F **Good Friday – College closed**
- Apr. 1 M **Meet in the computer lab.** Expand **Third Argument** to One Page. **Due at the end of class. (LA#4)**
- (1) You must expand your one paragraph Second Argument into a full page.
 - (2) You must use one or more quotations or paraphrases from your books, journals, or magazines. Use different sources from those used in your first and second arguments so that eventually you will be using all six of your sources.
 - (3) Write in your parenthetical citations/documentations.
 - (4) Make sure the quotations or paraphrases are highlighted in the articles or book photocopies.
 - (5) Set up the quotation or paraphrase with some introductory comments.
- 3 W **Meet in the computer lab.** Revision of Third Argument page
- (1) Write the revisions directly onto the graded page.
 - (2) Then type the revisions into your typed document.
 - (3) Write an opening transition sentence that connects this page to your second argument.
- 5 F **Meet in the computer lab.** Expand **Opposition Arguments** to One Page. **Due at the end of class. (LA#5)**
- (1) You must expand your one paragraph Opposition Arguments into a full page.
 - (2) You should have three paragraphs, approximately 200 words in length each, for each of your three opposition arguments to give you one full page.
 - (3) If you used five quotations and one paraphrase in your three argument pages, then you do not need to quote or paraphrase in your opposition page.
 - (4) Tone is very important so that you do not sound as though you are siding with the opposition.

- Apr. 8 M **Meet in the computer lab.** Revision of Third Argument page
(1) Write the revisions directly onto the graded page.
(2) Then type the revisions into your typed document.
(3) Write an opening transition sentence that connects this page to your second argument.
-

Sign the Sign-up Sheet for a meeting time this week with Dr. Fukuchi

Meeting with Instructor
This Week ONLY – Apr. 8 (M) – 12 (F)

I will not accept a research paper from you if you do not meet with me.

*For your **Meeting with Instructor**, you must bring:*

1. a **typed, completed Sentence Outline** of your research paper (use the form found on Campus Connect),
 2. your three graded, argument pages showing handwritten revisions directly on the graded pages,
 3. your printed articles, your book photocopies, and your latest, revised Works Cited page, and
 4. **Document #15 – How to Prepare for Your Meeting with Dr. Fukuchi**
-

- 10 W **Meet in the computer lab.** Expand **Introduction** to One Page – **due at the end of class. (LA#6)**
(1) You must expand your one paragraph Introduction into a full page.
(2) Do not write summaries.
(3) Review Campus Connect material 12c - Introductory Paragraphs
- 12 F **Meet in the computer lab.** Revision of Opposition page
(1) Write the revisions directly onto the graded page.
(2) Then type the revisions into your typed document.
(3) Write an opening transition sentence that connects this page to your introduction.
- Apr. 15 M **Meet in the computer lab.** Expand **Conclusion** to One Page – **due at the end of class. (LA#7)**
(1) You must expand your one paragraph Conclusion into a full page.
(2) Do not write summaries.

(3) Review Campus Connect material 12g - Concluding Paragraphs

17 W **9:00 class meets in Computer Lab H-103; 12:00 class meets in Hines 102.** Revision of Introduction and Conclusion pages
(1) Write the revisions directly onto the graded page.
(2) Then type the revisions into your typed document.
(3) Write an opening transition sentence that connects your conclusion to your third argument.

19 F **9:00 class meets in Computer Lab H-103; 12:00 class meets in Hines 102.** Putting Together Your Research Paper Packet – Bring all your articles and printouts to class. Include finished research paper, Works Cited page, and articles/photocopies in alphabetical order of Works Cited.

Research Paper due at the end of class. See page 5 of the Research Paper Guide for specifics on what to do and what to turn in.

Apr. 22 M Oral presentation of research papers
Last Day for Requesting Changes in Final Examination Schedule

24 W Oral presentation of research papers

25 Th **Academic Recognition Luncheon at 11 a.m.**

26 F Oral presentation of research papers

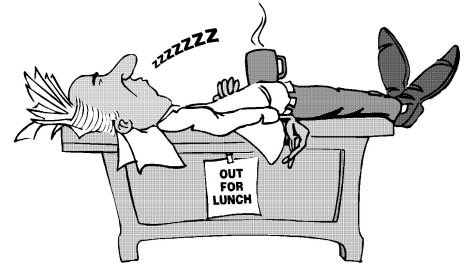
Apr. 29 M **Review of Final Exam Topics**
Course evaluation
Last day of class for this course

May 1 W Reading Day

May 6 M **ENG 102E (12:00 class) – Final Exam at 3:30 p.m. in Hines 204**
7 T **ENG 102B (9:00 class) – Final Exam at 8:00 a.m. in Hines 202**

Rules of Common Courtesy

1. Don't chew **gum** in class. I really hate it, and it makes me think less of you. **Learn to be polite.**
2. Don't **eat or drink** in class (including water), including nibbling and sipping under cover.
3. Don't wear a **baseball cap** or any other head gear or head covering, **including earphones and sunglasses**, in class. You don't need to hide behind such barriers to openness.
4. Don't bring beepers, **cell phones**, or concealed weapons into class. Be considerate toward your classmates. Also, **cell phones, iPods, etc. are now considered as cheating devices.**
5. Don't **sleep** in class. If you do, the instructor will wake you and send you out of class. Learn to manage your nap time better.
6. Don't come **late** to class. If you do come late, don't disturb or disrupt the class as you take your seat. After class, let the instructor know that you came in late so you won't be marked absent. Be prompt.
7. Don't get up and **leave** while class is going on. Always ask for permission. **Learn to be polite.**
8. Don't **talk** or chitchat while the instructor is talking or while your classmate is talking with the instructor. Be considerate.
9. Don't disturb or **disrupt** the class or your classmates. Show some respect for other people.
10. Don't do **homework or other assignments** in class if they are not part of the class activity.
You hurt yourself when you do that.
11. Don't **cheat** in class. Keep your eyes on your own work, and keep your work covered to avoid being suspected of cheating. **It is your moral responsibility to report any cheating.**
12. Don't depend on or refer to papers, tests, or quizzes kept on file by students, fraternities, or sororities. When you do so, you are guilty of **plagiarism** and cheating. Do your own work for this class.
13. When the class is watching a video or slide presentation or when the instructor is using overhead transparencies, that is not a time to chat, sleep, or do your own thing. **Pay attention and take notes.**



***I will not lie and I will not act in any dishonest way in dealing with you,
so I expect you to do the same in this class and in dealing with me.
What you do in college will have serious consequences after college.
You create your own karma and your own future.
You determine what people will think of you and what I will think of you.***