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Writing Program Design for ESL Writers

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WRITING PROGRAM DESIGN FOR ESL WRITERS

by

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B.A. August 2007, Old Dominion University

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ABSTRACT

WRITING PROGRAM DESIGN FOR ESL WRITERS

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Old Dominion University, 2011
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Research and scholarship in the field of second-language writing have suggested that English as second language students (ESLs) require different modes of instruction than their native English speaking peers within the composition classroom (Matsuda, 1996; Silva, 1994). Yet ESL students are commonly marginalized in institutions' writing programs due to several commonplace beliefs shared by administrators that ESL students can be taught according to the same standards as mainstream students. Therefore, writing program administrators and instructors often do not have specific knowledge of ESL writing issues and, thus, do not know how to pedagogically accommodate these students or design a program that facilitates their unique learning needs. If WPAs, however, decide to redesign an institution's writing program to create an ESL-friendly environment, they are faced with many obstacles which they must navigate, such as determining which types of composition courses are most appropriate to offer these students, obtaining the resources and funds to do so, and more importantly, making the argument that the writing program does in fact need to be reinvented in order to accommodate ESL students.

To model how WPAs can go about negotiating these challenges, this project presents four case studies and analyzes how WPAs who run ESL writing programs presently view the issue of second-language writing, how they have reinvented their writing programs to meet the needs of ESL students, and how they have applied certain

concepts, such as Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabrill and Miles' (2000) institutional critique and Louise Phelps' (2002) institutional invention, to the creation of these programs. Likewise, two of the case studies yielded surveys results from ESL students which described the students' perceptions and experiences in the first-year composition courses of these writing programs. Based upon these case studies, I suggest that WPAs examine their situation to devise new strategies and practices for better meeting the changing student population's needs. In addition, I urge WPAs to invent a way to offer continuous educational and developmental opportunities for faculty on this subject and recognize that the construction of relationships beyond the realm of the writing program is a critical component for redesigning a writing program with ESL students in mind.

This thesis is dedicated to all of the writing program administrators and the visions that they have for their writing programs.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

If one were to glance around a present-day classroom in some elementary,

secondary, or post-secondary institutions, they might notice an increase in the diversity

amongst its occupants when compared to previous decades. Today more than ever,

educational institutions in the United States contain more cultural variety, and the trend

does not seem to exhibit any indication of slowing. This trend was predicted in 1988 by

Alice Roy who observed that "there are approximately 400,000 traditional foreign

students in U.S. colleges and universities, and [that] number was not expected to

diminish" (p. 17). To prove Roy's point, current statistics from the Open Doors Report

on International Educational Exchange indicates that in just one year (2009-10), the

international student population increased by 2.9 percent. This increase puts the total

number of international students in the United States at 690, 923, which makes up 3.5

percent of the total United States Higher Education Enrollment number of 19,562,000

(Institute of International Education). While the increase in this student population has

been felt by instructors of all academic disciplines, college writing instructors in

particular are faced with the task of creating course syllabi and incorporating teaching

pedagogies that are relevant and effective for both native English students and English as

Second Language students (ESLs)[1].

This pattern reflects the common misconception that ESL students' writing is

problematic and, thus, writing instructors are looked to by other instructors as a source to

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[1]The term "ESL" will be used throughout the research to refer to English as Second Language Students as it is one of the more common terms used to refer to this group of students and is highly recognizable amongst different institutions.

"fix" the issues that oftentimes show up in the academic work of these students. However, this signifies a complexity of issues brought to the classroom by both ESL students and instructors. While ESL students' writing may indeed be considered problematic in regard to areas such as organization, structure, and grammar, instructors also create their own set of problems by holding ESL students to the same standard of academic writing as their native-English peers. As a result of these expectations and ESL students' legitimate inability to fully meet them (Lippi-Green, 1997), their writing is automatically considered to be problematic by many instructors. Thus, writing instructors are often expected to fix these problems when, in reality, the responsibility lies with both the students and the instructors.

Oftentimes writing instructors are given little guidance or instruction in how to best accommodate and work with their ESL students; however, when the writing program administrator (WPA)[2] takes on the role of a leader through their position, these writing instructors can receive the guidance that they need in order to accomplish the task of teaching ESL students in composition courses. As the forefront of an institution's writing program, WPAs are often given the power to make critical choices that will determine a writing program's infrastructure and how it will operate, as well as the responsibility of acting as a leader for the writing instructors within the program. If during their time in their position WPAs recognize that the modern institution is no longer a predominantly American, monolingual population, then they must reinvent their writing program to consider the needs of both native English students and ESL students. Not only does this require significant changes in the infrastructure, curriculum, and strategies of the

[2]The term "writing program administrators" or "WPAs" will be used to refer to any administrator within an institution that oversees or coordinates any aspect of the writing program, including first-year writing courses.

program, but it also requires that the WPA lead their writing instructors in how to effectively adapt to this new infrastructure. There are many ways in which this can be done, but ultimately WPAs will need to create a community within their writing program in which they engage in and encourage conversation and collaboration of ideas and strategies amongst them and their faculty.

Prior to beginning the Master's degree program in Rhetoric and Composition at Old Dominion University, I was confronted with a preview of certain issues regarding writing program administration and second-language writing through my position as a high school English teacher. Not only was I given the responsibility of creating and implementing a writing curriculum for grades 9-12, but I was expected to teach a group of foreign exchange students how to write. Like many college composition instructors, I had no extensive training in either of these areas, and I was given no instructions, training, or advice on how to accommodate the learning needs of my international students. Furthermore, I was unable to seek advice from upper administrators, as they were just as unprepared and uneducated as I was concerning the issues that the international students brought to the classroom. With no other options or resources in sight, I was determined to work to the best of my ability with the students and the skills that they already possessed.

After the first week of school, I realized just how difficult my task would be in regard to providing the international students in my classes with the same quality of English education as their native English speaking peers. While two or three of these students possessed enough knowledge of the English language to engage in conversation with me, the rest of the foreign exchange students spoke very little English, broken at

best. This problem was easily forgotten during class when students were listening to my lectures or engaging in activities such as class discussions or group work. I felt that group work was the most effective part of my pedagogy in regard to my international students as they seemed to benefit from interacting with their native English peers. However, when it came time to assign the first writing assignment, I knew I would be faced with the inevitable challenge of trying to read, comprehend, and assess the international students' papers. As a first-year English teacher, I was only just beginning to form my own methods and attitudes toward assessing students' writing, and evaluating the writing of students whose first language was not English was certainly something that I was neither prepared for nor comfortable with doing.

Like me, other teachers were struggling with the issue of grading the international students' writing for assignments in their own classes. As the only English teacher in the high school, I quickly became what Gail Shuck (2006) refers to as "the ESL person" who my colleagues came to when they needed advice concerning the issues that they were encountering with the international students. They often asked me about how I graded the international students' essays, tests, and other writing assignments, looking for strategies that might work for them in their grading as well. I was never able to respond with what I felt was a well-informed answer; however, I did emphasize that I did not hold my international students to the same standards as their native English peers. Assessing their writing required more time on my part as their sentences were often poorly structured and their papers lacked organizational structure. However, I tried to detect their ideas and main points, which indicated to me whether or not they understood the assignment and were trying their best to fulfill it. As the school year progressed, my

requests for support or additional resources for the international students went unanswered by the administration. The only solution that was proposed came from the superintendent who fleetingly mentioned having *Rosetta Stone* software available in the computer lab. This proposal never manifested, and I was appalled and frustrated that the administration would not make any attempt to accommodate the international students.

Upon beginning my graduate work in the field of Rhetoric and Composition, I expected that I would be able to use the writing program at the university level to learn how issues such as those I encountered as a high school teacher are dealt with and solved. However, through my research and coursework, I have learned that the marginalization of second-language writers is not uncommon and often occurs for many reasons, such as lack of knowledge and education of writing instructors concerning the issues that accompany this specific student population. In hindsight, I am also able to recognize concepts such as Paul Kei Matsuda's "myth of linguistic homogeneity," which helps to explain the continued marginalization of second-language writers and the issues that they bring to the composition classroom. Matsuda (2006) argues that administrators and instructors have become so overly influenced by the widely held belief that most students represent a population of "default native speakers of a privileged variety of English from the United States" that their pedagogical practices reflects this belief, untrue as it may be (p. 640). The fact that the administration in the high school where I taught was unprepared for the enrollment of second-language students illustrates this very concept, as they had not anticipated that the student population within their school would consist of students who were non-native English speakers. Furthermore, the administration and instructors had never considered the fact that international students would require

different instructional strategies than native English students. As a result, teachers, such as I, were not prepared to teach such students and, furthermore, were not offered any opportunities for training or development in order to learn how to address the issues brought to the classroom by non-native English students.

As a graduate student and writing tutor at Old Dominion University for the past year and a half, I have seen that the marginalization of second-language writing issues and concepts such as Matsuda's myth of linguistic homogeneity are not only present in primary and secondary educational institutions, but are found in post-secondary institutions as well. For example, my tutoring experience has shown me that our institution's writing program is also not prepared to address the unique learning needs of its ESL students, and, furthermore, writing instructors often lack the specific knowledge and strategies to effectively teach these students, especially in sections of first-year and second-year composition, which is a critical time for ESL students as many of them are just beginning to learn how to write in English at the academic level. Many ESL students are sent to the writing center by their instructors to receive help with their writing, often because their instructors are uncertain how to address the writing issues that these students are having. In addition, ESL students come to the writing center for help understanding a writing assignment, thus illustrating that the majority of writing instructors are unaware of the importance in designing writing assignments that are appropriate for cultures that are different from the native English speaking culture. As someone who encountered uncertainty and difficulty with identical issues in the past as a high school English teacher, I not only identify with these writing instructors, but empathize with them as well.

Noticing this marginalization of ESL students within the university, I was compelled to ask why this was occurring and, more importantly, how it could be changed. Having a basic understanding and interest in writing program administration, I decided to learn more about the specific practices of writing program administrators in their decisions about second-language writing as I wanted to develop a better understanding of how second-language writing issues are addressed and handled within university writing programs. To do this, I decided to research the following questions: (1) What strategies are writing program administrators presently using to develop and implement writing programs in order to fulfill the goal of acknowledging the growing population and educational needs of ESL students and why have they chosen these particular strategies? (2) How are the goals of these strategies reflected through the experiences of ESL students at each of the examined universities? From the perspective of ESL students, are these strategies effective?

These questions were developed in an effort to gain an understanding of both WPAs' goals for their institution's writing program in regard to meeting the needs of ESL students, as well as the perspectives of the ESL students' in response to their institution's writing program. By adding additional data and research to the field of writing program administration and second-language writing, I hope that this study encourages WPAs and writing instructors who are presently unaware of these issues to recognize the growing population of ESL students who require different instructional strategies, support, and techniques.

To create a framework for the study, I review the literature and previous research written on the subject of writing program administration and second-language writing

within institutions of higher education. This review of the literature highlights certain movements in the development of second-language writing studies which I feel are foundational in the creation and understanding of my study's objectives. I begin with a brief overview of the history of second-language writing in composition studies, then move to a discussion of the research that has been done regarding placement options that WPAs might consider for ESL students, and finally, I address WPAs' existing views on the issues of second-language writing and how they are redesigning their writing programs to meet the needs of ESL students.

Chapter three describes the methodology I chose to use for my study, which includes a mixed methods approach of quantitative and qualitative data gathered from interviews and surveys. I discuss how I chose four universities and their respective writing program administrators and ESL students to act as participants in my study. In this chapter I also explain how interviews were conducted with those four WPAs to formulate an answer for my first research question. I also explain in detail my use of online surveys which were distributed to the ESL students at the same four universities as the WPAs who were interviewed. The obstacles and limitations that I encountered while conducting my research are also included in this chapter's discussion, as well as an explanation of certain changes to the original framework of my study. Furthermore, I explain my method of data analysis for both the WPA interviews and the student surveys and how I was able to interpret the responses that I received, which sets up the analysis of the data that I collected, which is covered in the two chapters immediately following chapter three.

Chapters four and five focus specifically on the data that I collected from the four WPA interviews, as well as the student surveys, respectively. Chapter four places emphasis on the individual WPA interviews, treating them as separate case studies and discussing the responses separately. At the end of this chapter, however, I include an analysis of the interviews as a whole, comparing and contrasting the different responses given by all of the WPAs. Chapter five shifts focus to a discussion of the student surveys and the responses that were collected from two of the universities. In addition to discussing the student responses and survey results, I match the two universities with their coordinating WPA, followed by an analysis of how the WPA's responses compare and contrast with the students' responses. Through this analysis, both sets of data (interviews and surveys) are combined in order to formulate a response to the second research question.

The final chapter provides an overview of my interpretation of the data that was collected, as well as what I believe to be the implications of this data. As previously mentioned, my goal in conducting this research and study is to contribute to the conversation in the field of rhetoric and composition, specifically pertaining to the areas of writing program administration and second-language writing. Based upon the data collected from the interviews with the WPAs as well as the survey responses given by ESL students in regard to the writing programs that were studied, this project thus serves as a model for WPAs and those who are working towards creating a more linguistically diverse writing program within their university as it provides four specific examples and individual analyses of writing programs that have already established such an infrastructure.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

As with the students I taught at the high school level, English as second language

(ESL) students require different modes of instruction than their native English speaking

peers within the college composition classroom according to research and scholarship in

the field of second-language writing (SLW) (Silva, 1994; Matsuda, 1996). ESL students

are commonly marginalized in institutions' writing programs because writing program

administrators (WPAs)and instructors, like the high school program I taught in, often

have limited knowledge and training in how to best accommodate these students or create

a program including pre-composition[3] courses or mainstream first-year composition

courses that facilitates their unique learning needs[4]. Sometime when WPAs do decide to

redesign an institution's writing program to be more conducive to ESL students' learning

needs the programmatic revision can create a new set of complications concerning

methods of placement and strategies for instruction.

In determining the placement of ESL students in first-year composition courses,

higher education institutions typically give these students the option of enrolling in pre-

composition courses or mainstream first-year composition courses, or rely on writing

placement tests to determine this placement. Though providing these placement options

might seem like a rather simple solution, it poses several problems in creating adequate

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[3]A **pre-composition course** refers to a writing course, often non-credit bearing and described as "developmental," "remedial," or "basic." It also includes language courses designed for ESL students, sometimes in independent programs, that are often non-credit bearing and need to be passed to take the university's composition course. This term will be used throughout the paper to collectively refer to any of these types of courses.
[4]Many scholars and instructors have concerns that pre-composition courses may not be suitable for ESL students as these students require different teaching strategies and practices than those used for native English students. (Preto-Bay & Hansen 2006, Silva 1997, Braine 1996, Silva 1993).

learning environments for ESL students. Pre-composition courses may not prove helpful for ESL students as "basic writing teachers may not have any more insight into the characteristics and needs of ESL writers than those who teach mainstream classes" (Silva, 1994, p. 39). Furthermore, these basic writing instructors often have little experience in teaching ESL students composition and receive much less training in the teaching of writing than composition instructors. ESL students who are placed in mainstream composition classes are held to the expectation that their English writing skills are as developed as their native English peers' writing skills and often receive little or no assistance, which can leave them feeling overwhelmed and lost. As Tony Silva (1997) argues, "those who would deal with ESL writers need to recognize that these students' differences may call for special instructional contexts" and that "it is necessary to offer ESL writers as many placement options as possible" (p. 360).

However, many university writing programs often marginalize the issues that are raised by the growing presence of ESL students and only offer little, if any, assistance to these students. Through speaking with the WPA at my own university, I discovered that our writing program does not offer any special assistance or accommodations to ESL students, thus serving as an example of how ESL students' unique learning needs are oftentimes neither considered nor addressed. Thus, while recognizing the constraints often placed upon WPAs, the goal of my study is twofold: to discover what strategies WPAs are presently using to develop and implement writing programs that acknowledge the growing population's educational needs and to understand how the goals of these strategies compare to the students' pre-composition or first-year composition experiences. In fulfilling this goal, I hope that this study will assist WPAs, such as the

one at my own university, to not only consider addressing the unique learning needs of ESL students, but that the writing programs studied offer a few examples of ways to do so.

Despite arguments that ESL students require additional placement options and support in the composition classroom, many higher education institutions continue to administer writing programs that offer only pre-composition or mainstream first-year composition courses and do not consider the growing presence of ESL students. Preto-Bay and Hansen (2006) address this issue in "Preparing for the Tipping Point," arguing that "to be prepared for this new generation [of ESL students], composition program directors must undertake needs analyses and then design curricula in light of those analyses" (p. 51). So, a framework to study how WPAs design writing programs to accommodate ESL writers needs to build upon the history of second-language writing in composition studies, the research that has been done regarding placement options that WPAs might consider for ESL students, and WPAs' present views on the issues of second-language writing and how they are redesigning their writing programs to meet the needs of ESL students.

History of First-Year Composition

To understand the current situation of ESL students in institutions' writing programs, it is necessary to be familiar with the history of the first-year writing curricula, as well as how second-language writing issues have become situated in composition studies up until the present time. Matsuda (2005) advocates the importance of historical inquiry, stating that it "can help identify what issues have been discussed, what questions have been posed, what solutions have been devised, and what consequences have come

of those solutions—and why" (p. 33). Thus, I begin with an overview of the history of the first-year composition course itself. The emergence of the standard U.S. college composition course was first implemented at Harvard University in the late 1890's as a product of the changes in post-Civil War American colleges. These changes included the emergence of a new population of students who were viewed as significantly underprepared, specifically in writing skills. Recalling how American scholars and administrators turned to the German model of instruction, Berlin (1984) recognizes that this was a push towards "a redefinition of purpose, a new curriculum, and a new way of defining the student" (p 59). All three of these components prompted administrators at Harvard to transform their view of the composition course as a service course, as it allowed for the social mobility of the new middle class. Furthermore, the "ability to write effectively…was one of the skills that all agreed was essential to success," both in the workplace and in society (Berlin, 1984, p. 60). Thus, the composition course became the first course to be required of all students admitted to Harvard University.

Over time, first-year composition came to be viewed as a course that taught students certain aspects of writing where secondary schools had failed to do so, thus shifting focus to the role of composition instructors. Brererton (1995) mentions that colleges "have long had an unspoken rule, 'You are what you teach…' and that just about anyone could teach [composition]" (p. 18). Furthermore, the composition course began to be viewed as "teacher slavery—relentless correction and strict supervision of writing" (Brererton, 1995, p. 18). As acknowledged by Berlin (1984), this occurrence manifested at Harvard, as instructors who knew nothing about the teaching of writing "focused on the most obvious features of the essays they read, the errors in spelling, grammar, usage,

and even handwriting" (p. 61). As a result of these views, the composition course began to focus more on the mechanical correctness of writing as opposed to the cognitive processes and development of thought that students experienced when composing. Seeing the detrimental effects of teaching composition in this manner, Berlin (1982) recognizes the importance of rhetorical and pedagogical theory in the composition classroom and argues that instructors must constantly be aware of their application and the effect that they have on students. He expresses a need for writing instructors to become more conscious of their pedagogical strategies and the impact that they have on students, arguing that "not doing so can have disastrous consequences, ranging from momentarily confusing students to sending them away with faulty and even harmful information" (Berlin, 1982, p. 766).

Berlin's concern can be applied to the situation of second-language writing within the university in that those involved in the teaching of writing (and more importantly, writing program design), should be cognizant of the pedagogical strategies that they choose to apply in the composition classroom. As it stands, many writing programs still use the same pedagogical theories that were implemented years ago, which Berlin (1984) recognizes as the classical, the expressionist, and the new rhetoric (p. 86). However, these theories may not be the most effective for the changing culture of the university population as Dayton-Wood (2008) suggests, stating that they are "embedded with narrow assumptions about [ESL] learners...that embraced cultural assumptions and assigned [ESL learners] to passive roles and encouraged them to assimilate at the expense of their home languages and cultures" (p. 409). This research into the background of composition courses offers an explanation as to why issues in second-language writing

often struggle to gain attention within university writing programs. Horner and Trimbur (2002) further explain the reason why these difficulties have occurred, stating that early composition courses with their monolinguistic foundation "have shaped the historical formation of U.S. writing instruction and continues to influence its theory and practice...[and] continue to exert a powerful influence on our teaching, writing programs, and our impact on U.S. culture" (p. 594-595).

Horner and Trimbur (2002) observe that these early composition courses were based on "a tacit language policy of unidirectional English monolingualism," a characteristic that has evolved into an unchallenged norm in the composition classroom and in many ways dictates the pedagogical choices of English writing instructors (Horner & Trimbur, 2002, p. 594). Paul Kei Matsuda (2006) takes Horner and Trimbur's theory a step further in what he calls "the myth of linguistic homogeneity—the tacit and widespread acceptance of the dominant image of composition students as native speakers of a privileged variety of English" (p. 638). He argues that this frame of thought is a product of the idea of unidirectional English monolingualism; thus the effects have been long-term and have "kept U.S. composition from fully recognizing the presence of second-language writers who do not fit the dominant image of college students" (Matsuda, 2006, p. 639). The recognition of this occurrence provides insight and explanation as to why "second-language writing has not yet become a central concern in composition studies" and, furthermore, why WPAs have shown reluctance or slow progress in recreating writing programs that accommodate the learning needs of ESL students, as evident in many writing programs, such as my own university's (Matsuda, 2006, p. 638). Thus, this study focuses on how the history of composition has affected

the design of writing programs and L2 writers and in addition, how concepts such as the "disciplinary division of labor" have influenced how WPAs and writing instructors approach the issue of addressing the needs of these students.

Approaches to L2 Writing

Over the course of the development of second language writing studies within the university, many writing programs have attempted to address the issue of how to accommodate the needs of ESL students through what Silva (1990) refers to as "a merry-go-round approach [which] has had a number of negative effects on the discipline" (p. 18). Since around 1945, the search for the best technique to teach ESL students in composition has been a process of trial and error in an effort to find the most appropriate and effective practices. Silva (1990) observes how writing programs often go through a five-phase cycle in attempting to accommodate ESL students in the program's infrastructure: the "approach is conceptualized and formulated in a rather limited fashion; it is enthusiastically promoted; it is accepted uncritically; it is rejected prematurely; and a shiny new (but not always much improved) approach takes its place" (p. 18). Furthermore, Silva describes this history as "a cycle in which particular approaches achieve dominance and then fade, but never really disappear" (p. 11). Thus, WPAs who are proactively helping their ESL students face a cluttered field with a number of different approaches, adding to their confusion and making their decision difficult.

Among the approaches that have been developed for instructing ESL students in composition are four main practices that have been commonly recognized. They include controlled composition, current-traditional rhetoric, the process approach, and English for

academic purposes. The practice of controlled composition views writing as a concept learned through exercise and habit, "similar to pattern drills [through which] the student is helped (guided, directed, and controlled) to produce a correct composition" (Paulston, 1972, pp. 36-37). This approach values the correctness of mechanics, grammar, and spelling; however, there is little concern for the writer's feelings, voice, or identity. Silva (1990) recognizes that this approach can be detrimental for students as "there is negligible concern for audience or purpose" (p. 13). However, this approach is still used by some writing instructors in teaching ESL students writing. Paulston (1972) suggests that this might be attributed to the fact that "many teachers...do not feel adequate to the task of teaching composition...[and] the controls of various forms of guided composition assist them as well as with the pupil" (p. 38).

As many instructors are unfamiliar with teaching ESL students how to write and are offered very little support in developing the means to do so, this method of composition instruction is often still favored, not only in the mainstream composition classroom but more specifically in the ESL composition classroom, as it provides a feeling of safety for instructors through its systematic method. Yet, it is this method of instruction that embodies Matsuda's "myth of linguistic homogeneity" in assuming that all students, regardless of cultural or linguistic background, learn to write in the same manner. However, through professional development opportunities for composition instructors in the form of workshops, seminars, and perhaps even collaborative discussion, WPAs can provide faculty with the opportunity to learn and develop skills that will better prepare and equip them to teach writing to ESL students and in addition, recognize that not all students will learn through the same pedagogical strategies.

The recognizable current-traditional rhetoric approach sought to remedy the failure of controlled composition to incorporate the writer's awareness of audience and purpose; thus, the goal of this method was to create "a bridge between controlled composition and freewriting" through focusing on form, meaning that students were instructed to view and practice writing as "a matter of arrangement, of fitting sentences and paragraphs into prescribed patterns" (Silva, 1990, p. 14). More specifically, this method of teaching writing assigned students "a series of themes or essays, which had to exemplify the various modes of discourse: the descriptive essay, the definition essay, the comparison-and-contrast essay, [etc]" which translated into teachers accepting the "notion that writing is a generic ability that could best be fostered by training the mind in certain basic organizational patterns" (Smit, 2008, p. 187). Berlin (1984) recognizes this as exercising the faculties and argues that it is "the business of the composition teacher to train the remaining faculties and despite the attention paid to argument, this effort focuses primarily on the understanding" (p. 63).

Henry (2000) recognizes Sharon Crowley's argument against the use of the theory of current-traditional rhetoric in teaching writing to ESL students and that "the current traditional discourse is not a rhetoric but a theory of graphic display, and so it perfectly met the humanist requirement that students' expression of character be put under constant surveillance so they could be 'improved' by correction" (pp.2-3). In addition, Henry (2000) argues that this strategy of relying on the current-traditional approach is problematic in teaching ESL students writing as they are "trained to become more focused on learning correct forms rather than engaging in their disciplinary content knowledge" (p. 3). Furthermore, Berlin emphasizes that current traditional rhetoric still

heavily influences college writing courses today, as they tend to use particular modes of discourse (as mentioned above) to teach students how to write in order to appeal to their audiences' understandings. Berlin observes that "college rhetoric is to be concerned solely with the communication of truth that is certain and empirically verifiable [or not] probabilistic," an objective that is most likely to be achieved through learned modes of discourse (p. 770).

According to Berlin (1982), current traditional rhetoric "dominates thinking about writing instruction" and, indeed, is a method often used by instructors in the teaching of second-language writers in the composition classroom where students are given a specific model to copy and then apply their own writing to the same mode (p. 700). For example, when conducting a previous study in which I interviewed several ESL students about their previous writing instruction in the English language, many students spoke of how they found copying out of textbooks and following modeled essays to be ineffective in learning how to compose their own texts and essays. Similarly, in the context of working with ESL writers, Ruth Spack (1988) argues against this pattern-centered approach because it is "a reversal of the normal writing process and turns attention away from the meaningful act of communication in a social context" (p. 31). In addition, Spack (1988) also expresses that such an approach is not the most effective when a program's focus is on teaching ESL students how to write academically, as such writing should urge students to rely on their own thought processes to create documents that reflect their ideas and understandings, as well as communicate with their intended audience of whom they are aware. In addition to Spack's reasons against this method, Smit (2008) references Dixon, Moffet, and Britton, who challenge current traditional rhetoric use in all

classrooms based upon their belief that "writing is much more than the manipulation of a number of discourse conventions and that writing as a whole is much richer than the mere transmission of information" (p. 188). Recognizing these scholars as reformers of the first-year writing curricula, Smit emphasizes that based upon their ideals, composition instruction should view "writing [as] based on the lived experience of writers...and should reinforce the students' developing cognitive abilities" (p. 188). As this idea prompted a revolution in first-year composition, the same argument can also be applied to second-language writers and composition studies. Therefore, in an effort to promote a similar revolution for composition studies in this context, writing program administrators should contemplate how to redesign first-year composition courses that accommodate the needs of second-language writers.

According to Silva, the process approach[5] emerged as the next teaching method in ESL writing instruction. This was a result of the concern that many instructors and scholars had that "neither approach adequately fostered thought or its expression—that controlled composition was largely irrelevant to this goal and the linearity and prescriptivism of current-traditional rhetoric discouraged creative thinking and writing" (Silva, 1990, p. 15). Vivian Zamel (1982) elaborates on this crucial need for writing to be taught (especially to ESL students) as a process, arguing that "if students learn that writing is a process through which they can explore and discover their thoughts and ideas, then the product is likely to improve as well" (p. 207). In contrast to the practice of controlled composition, this approach promoted guidance given to students by their instructors and also allowed for more collaboration and sharing of ideas. Zamel (1982)

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[5] While there are several ways in which the process approach can be perceived, I focus primarily on Silva's (1990) perception of this approach for the context of this project.

recognizes the importance of such a learning environment in the teaching of writing, as process-centered instruction encourages students to share their writing with other students, thus engaging in collaboration and building an awareness and skill in writing for an audience. For writing instructors of ESL students, this approach seems ideal in providing both a classroom environment that is conducive to learning as well as a more meaningful perception of writing for students. However, Silva (1990) notes that "although the process approach has been generally well and widely received in ESL composition…critics have perceived theoretical and practical problems and omissions and have suggested that the focus of ESL composition be shifted from the writer to the reader," in order to become socialized into an academic community (p. 16). It is this criticism that led to the development of yet another approach, English for academic purposes.

Because of the emphasis placed on writing for certain academic communities and fitting into a specific discourse community, many instructors of ESL composition expressed concern that the process approach inadequately prepared ESL students to write within the academy and argued that "the approach creates a classroom situation that bears little resemblance to the situations in which students' writing will eventually be exercised" (Silva, 1990, p. 16). Furthermore, Silva argues that through the use of the process approach, ESL students are more likely to view academic writing under the false impression that it is acceptable to "overemphasize [their] psychological functioning and neglect the sociocultural context, [or] the realities of academia" (pp.16-17). Similarly, Bazerman recognizes that relying only on the process approach to teach writing fails to convey that writing is "not contained entirely in the envelope of experience, native

thought, and personal motivation to communicate" (p. 657). All of these concerns are important to consider when teaching students how to write for the academic community, specifically in the context of L2 writers. Thus, Dwight Atkinson (2003) addresses the concept of "post-process," describing it as "including everything that follows the period of L2 writing instruction and research that focused primarily on writing as a cognitive or internal, multi-staged process, and in which by far the major dynamic of learning was through doing, with the teacher taking…a background role" (p. 10). In a composition classroom, this would take the form of a more student-centered learning environment, or one in which Atkinson describes as going "beyond now-traditional views of L2 writing research and teaching which focus on issues such as drafting, teacher feedback, peer review, editing, grammar correction, and the link" in an effort to "expand and broaden the domain of L2 writing" (pp. 11-12). By expanding this domain, writing instructors of ESL students would be required to rethink and reconceptualize not only the way that they teach their students to write, but more importantly, the way that they teach their students to think about writing. Writing instructors would need to recognize that the importance of teaching ESL students how to think about writing in regard to certain rhetorical situations is just as important as teaching them how to write academically. For example, an instructor might decide to include several different writing assignments which require ESL students to think about writing for a variety of audiences, thus teaching them how to consider the rhetorical situation in which they are composing. Through this strategy writing instructors create the opportunity to teach ESL students that writing goes beyond grammatical correctness and conforming to academic standards and includes knowing who the audience and rhetorical situation are and creating a text that is effective in these

contexts. English for academic purposes is referred to as the fourth approach formed in teaching ESL students in the composition classroom. Through this approach, students are taught that "writing is the production of prose that will be acceptable at an American academic institution, and learning to write is part of becoming socialized to the academic community—finding out what is expected and trying to approximate it" (Silva, 1990, p. 16). However, since college composition is primarily a course in the discipline of the humanities, it has been questioned as to whether it is weak in "its emphasis on writing in various disciplines (particularly in scientific and technical fields)" (Silva, 1990, p. 17). Thus, ESL students are not only instructed in writing in the English language, but are also taught how to produce writing that will carry them through their academic career in college.

As implied by these four very different approaches, several of which are also used in the instruction of native-English students, it is inevitable that institutions will choose different strategies regarding the instruction of ESL students in first-year composition. When WPAs decide which approaches to incorporate into the infrastructure of their writing program, these decisions must be made meticulously and on a carefully informed basis in order to avoid the detrimental continuation of the aforementioned "merry-go-round" of approaches. To make such decisions, WPAs should not only take into consideration the aforementioned approaches and the many strategies that can be used in designing such an infrastructure, but also consider the local factors surrounding their institution, such as demographics of the student population, outside resources, and funding.

Emergence and Development of L2 Writing in Composition Studies

In "Composition Studies and ESL Writing: A Disciplinary Division of Labor," Paul Kei Matsuda discusses the brief, yet important history of second-language writing in composition studies. He observes that "[the] absence of second-language writing discussions reflects and is reflected in the way composition studies have been constructed in its historical context" (p. 700). Matsuda bases this claim on the fact that for many years the issue of second-language writing was not addressed in any of the work of well-known researchers in the field of composition studies, such as James Berlin, Robert Connors, Susan Miller, and David Russell (Matsuda, 1999, p. 700). This absence led to difficulties for second-language writing to find a place in the practice of composition studies and also formed what Matsuda terms "the disciplinary division of labor"—the "two intellectual formations" of composition studies and Teaching English as a Second Language (TESL).

As the two disciplines were viewed separately and "establish[ed] their own unique identities as respectable professions," compositionists began to reduce their focus on second-language writing as they perceived it to be the responsibility of TESL experts (Matsuda, 1999, p. 700). Matsuda observes that this mindset, one writing teachers and composition scholars sometimes still have, not only keeps them from "applying the insights from the growing body of second-language writing scholarship in working with ESL writers in their classrooms, but also creates a tension that further divides teachers and researchers in the two fields" (p. 701). In addition, this division places ESL students in the middle, thus producing more problems than solutions in the way they are taught to write at the university level. When TESL emerged as a separate entity from composition

studies, the demand for professionalization of the discipline grew. As this professionalization manifested, Matsuda (1999) explains that "composition teachers were being told by applied linguists and TESL specialists that they lacked the needed expertise to teach ESL students" (p. 712). As a result, writing instructors and WPAs felt that they were neither skilled enough nor responsible to participate in the discussion and formulation of strategies to teach L2 writers, thus they have become less engaged in the process. However, this became problematic in the realm of teaching writing to ESL students since TESL focused more on speaking rather than writing. Addressing this issue, Matsuda acknowledges that in order to balance the teaching of writing and speaking to ESL students, there needs to be a formation of an interdisciplinary relationship of the two fields in an effort to create composition programs that are sensitive to the unique learning needs of ESL students.

In order to form such an interdisciplinary relationship between TESL and composition studies, Matsuda (1999) believes that we should examine the history of this divide. He cites the formation of the English Language Institute (ELI) at the University of Michigan in 1941 as "one of the most significant events in the history of TESL in the United States" (Matsuda, 1999, p. 702). The ELI, under the direction of Charles C. Fries, emphasized the linguistic aspect of second-language writing and thus "had a profound impact on the way ESL writing was positioned in the emerging field of composition" (Matsuda, 1999, p. 706). Shortly after, there was a large influx of ESL students after World War II, and this rapid and unexpected increase in the international student population caught many institutions off guard, creating additional difficulties in

determining how to integrate the praxis of second-language writing studies into the praxis of composition studies.

Another important development that Matsuda mentions is the establishment of the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) in 1949 and the importance of CCCC's role in developing and facilitating conversations on second-language writing through annual meetings, panels, and workshops. For example, in a CCCC panel Paul R. Sullivan argued that there was an increasing need to provide specialized instruction for the rising number of international ESL students. This set the stage for further discussion at CCCC gatherings concerning "the question of how to deal with international ESL students in the regular composition course at institutions where neither ESL specialists nor separate ESL courses were available," which Matsuda (1999) importantly recognizes, is still "a question that continues to be relevant today [in 1999]" and prompts my study because of its continued relevancy (p. 708). However, while second-language writing saw a period of growth in discussion and interest at CCCC's gathering, it also saw a decline around the 1960's. In 1965 no one attended the CCCC's workshop on ESL issues and the decline in interest eventually led to the absence of discussion regarding second-language writing in composition studies (Matsuda, 1999, p. 712). As TESOL (Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages) was developed during this same time, the decrease in discussion of second-language writing as a component of composition studies became more rapid, resulting in its absence from CCCC conventions for the next ten years, and therefore, contributing to the disciplinary division of labor (Matsuda, 1999, p. 713).

Matsuda acknowledges that the division of labor between composition and ESL specialists has been a major contributing factor to institutions' marginalization of ESL students in writing programs. He recalls a statement by Alice Roy which illustrates this implication rather well: "there is a tendency among administrators and English Department faculties to look for linguists and ESL specialists to 'deal with' second-language writers," an observation Shuck (2006) reiterates (Matsuda, 1999, p. 714). Matsuda (1999) builds upon this statement effectively by arguing that "ESL writing issues should be as much a concern for composition specialists as they are for second-language specialists" (p. 715). He provides several suggestions for bridging the division between composition and ESL specialists which compositionists might consider useful, such as urging composition specialists to educate themselves on ESL writing and writers by attending workshops, conferences, and reading literature on the subject. In addition (and of significant relevance to this study), Matsuda speaks directly to writing program administrators, urging them to "make every effort to provide an ESL-friendly learning environment" and offering a few examples of placement options and writing program designs to create such an environment (p. 717).

Discussion of Placement Options for ESL Students

George Braine (1996) observes that mainstream first-year composition courses with native English speakers and pre-composition courses are the two most common solutions used by institutions in placing ESL students in first-year composition. Jessica Williams (1995) supported the practice of mainstreaming ESL students with native English students in composition courses, arguing that "it is possible that NSs [native speakers] and NNSs [non-native speakers] could benefit from learning together" (p. 175).

Similarly, Alice Roy's (1988) earlier discussion on ESL writing placement favors the idea of placing ESL and native English students in writing classes together, citing distinct advantages for both groups of students. She states that in these classes, "nonnative speakers have access to language development that they do not get in lecture classes," while native speakers have an "opportunity to learn to accommodate and appreciate cultural diversity…and will have a greater comprehension of the world and their role in it" (p. 22).

Braine, however, argues that this placement option is oftentimes insufficient and may do more harm than good for ESL students. He situates himself with scholars such as Silva (1993), who states that "L2 writing is strategically, rhetorically, and linguistically different in important ways from L1 writing" (p. 669). Through his research, Silva (1993) reveals that the writing process of ESL students is significantly different from native English students in that ESL students do less planning, "[have] more difficulty with setting goals and generating and organizing material…their transcribing was more laborious, less fluent, and less productive" and they had more difficulty with reflecting on and revising their work," indicating that ESL students may require more guidance and instruction during these stages of writing instruction than their native English-speaking peers (p. 668). In citing specific disadvantages that ESL students may suffer from when placed into mainstream composition courses, Silva (1993) argues that "they might be expected to have native speaker intuitions about English and be penalized for making errors—for example, having problems with articles, prepositions, verb forms, etc. that represent a natural stage in second language development…and may be asked to adopt strategies and work under time constraints that do not make sense for L2 writers" (p. 39).

Linda Harklau (1994) is yet another scholar who, like Braine and Silva, argues against

the practice of mainstreaming ESL students. In "ESL Versus Mainstream Classes:

Contrasting L2 Learning Environments," she mentions "the pervasive folk belief that [L2

students] will learn English faster if they are in regular classes with native speakers of

English," though she acknowledges that "this notion is far from conclusive" (Harklau,

1994, p. 242).

Similar to placing ESL students directly into mainstream composition courses

with native English students, the practice of placing ESL students into pre-composition

courses has proven problematic as well. Many scholars and instructors have concerns

that pre-composition courses may not be suitable for ESL students as they require

different teaching strategies and practices than those used for native English students. As

most pre-composition courses are designed based upon the typical weaknesses of native-

English students, such as grammar, mechanics, and organization, these courses often do

not cover issues that are more problematic for L2 writers, such as higher-order concerns

like understanding writing prompts, articulating thoughts and meaning, and awareness of

audience. Furthering the discussion of the unique needs of ESL basic writers, Matsuda

(2003) argues that "in order to address the needs of ESL writers who will continue to be

enrolled in basic writing courses, all basic writing teachers, or better yet, all writing

teachers need to be prepared to work with ESL writers" (p. 83). As suggested by Linda

Adler-Kassner and Gregory Glau, WPAs and writing instructors should "recognize the

problem of the disciplinary division and make conscious efforts to include ESL issues in

the discussion of basic writers and basic writing" (Matsuda, 2003, p. 83). If the ESL

student population continues to be marginalized in this discussion, their needs will

continue to go unmet, contributing to their marginalization within composition studies in its entirety.

Despite studies such as Silva's which suggested that the limited placement options frequently used by institutions might be unsuitable for ESL students, Braine (1996) observed that at that time the majority of institutions were still placing ESL students in mainstream first-year composition courses (p. 92). The results of his study showed that "when given the option, an overwhelming majority of ESL students preferred to enroll in ESL Composition I classes[6]"; however, his study could not be considered conclusive as it was limited to a rather small sample of ESL students at one institution, and furthermore, he admitted that preferences for placement options would vary at different institutions (Braine, 1996, p. 99). Despite this caveat, Braine (1996) suggests that his study "may be useful to ESL specialists who need to increase the awareness of mainstream teachers and writing program administrators to the needs of ESL students and to justify the placement of ESL students in first-year writing courses" (p. 102). Therefore, he elicits a call for additional research and similar studies to be done in an effort to fulfill one of his study's goals—develop a theory regarding the preferences of ESL students for mainstream or ESL composition courses.

Shortly after Braine's study, Silva (1997) answered the call for further research on the issue by writing and publishing "On the Ethical Treatment of ESL Writers." Similar to Braine, Silva focuses on placement options for ESL students in first-year composition courses but addresses the subject from an angle aimed at writing program administrators. He defines his purpose not as an argument for a specific placement option, but "to explore each in terms of its implications for students, teachers, administrators, and

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[6] This term refers to an ESL-only section of first-year composition.

graduate education programs in ESL and rhetoric and composition" (Silva, 1997, p. 37).

Silva examines four specific placement options: mainstreaming, basic writing, ESL

writing, and cross cultural composition. He addresses the previously discussed option of

mainstreaming first, opposing Williams' (1995) advocacy of combining ESL and native

English students in the composition classroom. He argues that "mainstreamed ESL

writers could be put at a severe disadvantage; their differences might be seen and treated

as intellectual deficiencies [which could] result in resentment, alienation, loss of self

confidence, poor grades, and ultimately, academic failure" (Silva, 1997, p. 39).

Occurrences such as this indicate that the lack of composition instructors' knowledge and

development of skills in teaching ESL students writing will eventually cause unfavorable

consequences in the composition classroom.

Second, in examining the option of pre-composition courses—in both the context

of ESL-only and mainstream courses—Silva acknowledges both the advantages and

disadvantages. He notes that basic writing instructors may be more sensitive to ESL

students' needs; however, they often have limited skills or training necessary to instruct

these students in writing. This reiterates Braine's reference to Kroll (1993) who argued

that "many mainstream teachers of writing, even those with academic credentials in

writing pedagogy, may not be knowledgeable about ESL writers and how they learn"

(Braine, 1996, p. 102). Another disadvantage that Silva mentions in regard to placement

of ESL students in basic writing courses is the fact that many ESL students are not what

instructors would consider basic writers, but are actually quite skilled at writing in their

native language. In situations such as this, "curricula, syllabi, methods, and techniques

designed for NES [native English-speaking] basic writers may not be appropriate for ESL

writers" (Silva, 1997, p. 39). Furthermore, Silva cautions that when ESL students who are above the basic writing level are placed into such courses, they "could infer that they are being penalized for being culturally and/or linguistically different [and] that to be different is to be deficient" (Silva, 1997, p. 40). For Matsuda (2003) "the practical difficulty and ethical complexity of defining basic writers," prompts us to acknowledge that "given the increasing diversity of students who come to basic writing classrooms, it is no longer possible to define basic writers in terms of abstract and unreliable criteria such as writing placement test scores, language backgrounds or immigration status" (p. 83).

The third option that Silva (1997) discusses is the ESL writing course, which Braine (1996) also mentions as the preferred option of ESL students sampled for his analysis. While Silva emphasizes that this option exhibits an effort on the part of writing program administrators to accommodate ESL students, he recognizes that some institutions might be unwilling to put forth the time, effort, and financial support to create and maintain such an option. In addition, several institutions and writing program administrators argue against this option based on the concern that separate ESL writing courses segregate ESL students as these courses put them "in a separate but unequal position [and] deprive them [ESL students] of the opportunity to interact and learn from their NES peers and vice versa" (Silva, 1997, p. 40). Earlier Roy (1988) had confronted this issue, stating that "separate is never equal" and that "ESL-track courses often do not give nonnative speakers the same kind of composition experience that native speakers receive" (p. 22). In addition, she urged WPAs who do choose to implement this option to pair the sections "so that instructors can work together to set up mixed-group discussions

of reading and shared writing activities" (Roy, 1988, p. 23). Thus, it is implied that institutions whose writing programs include separate ESL composition sections within their infrastructures should strive to form a collaborative relationship between WPAs and instructors of both ESL and native students in order to provide both groups with an equal and beneficial experience.

Lastly, Silva proposes a fourth option of "cross-cultural composition courses" in which an equal number of ESL and NES students are enrolled in a first-year composition course. He explains that if the instructors of these courses are trained in teaching both ESL and NES students, the courses will function as a means to "enrich both groups involved, culturally and linguistically, as well as to enhance their writing abilities" (Silva, 1997, p. 40-41). In addition, Reichelt and Silva (1995-96) justify the implementation of cross-cultural composition courses in that they eliminate the concern that many administrators have of segregating ESL students in separate composition courses where they do not have the opportunity to interact with their NES peers. Based upon Reichelt and Silva's 1993 study of a cross-cultural communication course, this placement option is favored by ESL and native-English students alike, as course evaluations revealed that the most common student response was that "they like the course's diversity, openness, and discussion" (p. 18). This illustrates that not only do cross-cultural composition courses benefit ESL students but their native-English peers as well.

However, like the previous options, this placement scenario has its own set of disadvantages. Silva predicts that cross cultural-composition courses would be difficult to establish and maintain, as writing program administrators would need to form an entirely new section of the writing program and find suitable and adequately prepared

faculty members (or new hires if needed) to staff the new courses. As writing program administrators are responsible for creating and implementing new sections of an institution's writing program as well as hiring of writing faculty, exploring the various placement options for ESL students can be time-consuming and overwhelming considering all of the other responsibilities of their position. Furthermore, Reichelt and Silva (1995-96) recognize the logistical difficulty of enrolling an equal number of ESL and native-English students into the same section of a cross-cultural composition course. Though Silva offers a variety of placement options worth consideration, due to the demanding circumstances under which writing program administrators often find themselves, as well as the difficulty of establishing and helping ESL students navigate course registration infrastructures, second-language writing concerns often become marginalized amidst the more predominant issues in a writing program.

Despite the aforementioned challenges of cross-cultural composition courses, Silva and Matsuda combined efforts to conduct further research on the idea in a 1997 study at Purdue University. By studying a section of cross-cultural composition, Silva and Matsuda sought to examine how the course worked so that they might offer suggestions to writing program administrators as to how to implement the course as a viable option for second-language writers. They argue that "unlike mainstream writing courses, cross-cultural composition courses can create an ESL-friendly learning environment both because ESL students are no longer minorities in the classroom and because the teacher is prepared to work with both NES and ESL writers" (Matsuda & Silva, 1999, p. 249). They also recognize that segregated ESL composition courses can place students at a disadvantage, as they will not experience what Mary Louise Pratt

refers to as "contact zones," or "social spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other" (Matsuda & Silva, 1999, p. 249). Matsuda and Silva draw upon this concept to promote the importance of fostering collaborative learning environments in which ESL students are able to work with their native English peers, thus preparing them for the rest of their academic careers in which they will be exposed to such environments.

The implementation of cross-cultural composition courses will not only provide writing program administrators with an attractive placement option for ESL students where the writers will not feel segregated from their peers, but it also presents them with the opportunity to use their cultural background to contribute to the course's discourse community and learn from their peers' contribution of their own culture. Jay Jordan's (2009) study which focused on the competencies and benefits that ESL students bring to composition courses theorized that "[ESL] students' abilities to shift rhetorical ground in the composition classroom...could have a positive effect on L2 users' and other students' performance on specific writing tasks" (p. 321). Matsuda and Silva's data from their 1997 study supports Jordan's theory, as they found that most students from their sample considered the cross-cultural component of the writing course to be the most "valuable part of their learning experience" (p. 255). It may follow then that cross-cultural composition courses have the potential to fulfill a wide range of goals. Writing program administrators will be putting forth an effort to not only meet ESL students' needs but to also answer the call initiated by many scholars (Matsuda & Silva, 1999; Horner & Trimbur, 2002; Fernsten, 2005) to redesign writing programs that are more culturally diverse and appropriate for this new age of globalization that we find ourselves in. Linda Fernsten (2005) sums this concept up rather well by eliciting a call to "take up a political

discourse that empowers instructors and students to discuss language differences openly,"
thus reconstructing the composition classroom to become a "more inclusive, culturally
competent environment" (p. 385-386). However, these actions can only be accomplished
through the awareness and education of WPAs, as well as their fellow administrators and
writing instructors, which is critically important in leading university writing programs
toward a design that reflects the modern university and its changing student population.

Writing Program Administrators' Role in Addressing L2 Writing Issues

Prior to beginning this project, I spent a few weeks interviewing and shadowing
the WPA at my own university and was able to gain insight into the various duties and
situations WPAs often confront within their positions. As expressed by this specific
WPA, the numerous responsibilities and issues which he was expected to handle on a
daily basis often placed limitations on what he could do in regard to his goals and visions
for the program which often prioritize advocating for better working conditions for
adjunct instructors Schneider and Marback (2004) recognize this difficult dance that
WPAs must perform between pursuing new directions for a writing program, based upon
their ideas and the work of scholars they support, and fulfilling their responsibilities and
duties as defined by the departmental and administrative infrastructure under which they
are employed. They illustrate this point by stating that "appropriating composition theory
within any pedagogical culture always requires more from the writing program
administrator than doing what the research says and more often than not results in
something other than what the research describes" (Schneider & Marback, 2004, p. 9).
While they discuss this point from a broader standpoint, I see their concept as applicable
to the way second-language writing is addressed in most writing programs, although it

may or may not lead to effective pedagogical practices in the instruction of ESL composition.

In addition, Schneider and Marback argue that the intellectual work of writing administration is "a guided institutional action" and that the structure of a writing program will ultimately be dictated according to the culture and pedagogical beliefs by which it is surrounded rather than what the WPA believes is right. After engaging in conversation with the WPA at my university, I saw evidence of Schneider and Marback's understanding; the way the writing program is run is significantly influenced by the existing culture and pedagogical beliefs of the university. Hence this explains why there are no separate accommodations for ESL students in the program and why their learning needs are not considered in the writing program's design. In an effort to understand how WPAs, such as the one at my own university, work within these situations and the constraints that are placed on them, my study specifically looks at the strategies which WPAs use to negotiate the cultural attitudes and the beliefs of those in higher positions of power. Through the use of these strategies, I examine how WPAs can become agents of change in order to create a writing program in which they may implement their own pedagogical beliefs, thus serving the entire student population, and more specifically, ESL students.

Louise Phelps (2002) argues that at present, "we find ourselves in the midst of accelerating cultural changes that demand constant innovations and adaptation to new challenges," both in the university and other social contexts (p. 66). She observes that the university has been among the last of institutions to be affected by these changes due to the protectiveness of tenure and the unfailing ability of the university to "remake itself

radically in times of social transformation" (Phelps, 2002, p. 66). However, Phelps speaks to the potential for those in the field of rhetoric and composition, particularly WPAs, to promote the idea of institutional invention through the context of rhetorical convention. For example, while this idea presents an interesting framework, it is met with certain challenges of negotiating the administrative framework which often complicates the positions of WPAs. As observed by Schneider and Marback and through my interview and shadowing of my university's WPA, administrators in this position are awkwardly situated between those in power and the faculty and students below whom they must "serve." Thus, they often find themselves torn between their desire to be an agent of change and their obligation to adhere to the policies and procedures instilled by their administration. However, Phelps (2002) suggests that if WPAs strategically form an argument that conveys how the continuity of the university is "no longer adaptive, but is making the academy inflexible in meeting a situation of great fluidity and new societal demands," which in this context refers to the increasing diversity of the student population, then I believe they can use the power of their position to push their institution toward creating a writing program that is more accepting and accommodating of other cultures and diverse students, thus defying Matsuda's myth of linguistic homogeneity (p. 66).

As the number of ESL students continues to rise in the American university, the need for reevaluating the way writing instruction is delivered also intensifies. When this idea is applied to the larger concept of the WPA's role in designing the infrastructure of a writing program, I detect traces of Phelps' (2002) concept of reinvention of the university. She argues that this concept is not only important, but necessary as "higher

education, like every other sector of society from health care and business to government needs to be 'reinvented' to survive and thrive in this new century" (Phelps, 2002, p. 67). While Phelps speaks of institutional invention with the entire university in mind, I feel that it can be applied to the infrastructure of writing programs as well, though this calls for application of the concept on a much more defined level. For instance, Phelps states that institutional invention has two interpretations, which includes the academic institution and leadership. In regard to the academic institution, she recognizes that this involves "forming and reforming its ideals, governance structure, financial resources, curriculum, and so on," where in regard to leadership, one asks "what part do leaders play, and how is leadership to be understood in relation to institutional invention?" (Phelps, 2002, p. 64). How WPAs must respond to these necessary changes is to ultimately invent a new writing program which requires rethinking the culture, values, and content of the curriculum, as well as taking on a leadership position by building awareness among faculty of the changes needing to be made, as well as lead them to understanding and implementing new practices within their composition classes. Thus, Phelps' concept of institutional invention which involves both the academic institution itself, as well as the idea of leadership can be applied to the work of WPAs regarding second-language writing.

Coinciding with this way of thinking, Porter, Sullivan, Blythe, Grabrill and Miles (2000) state that WPAs should not view institutions as monoliths, but rather as "rhetorically constructed human designs" in which they can "change the practices of institutional representatives and improve the conditions of those affected by and served by institutions" (p. 611). Seeing potential for change and creating that change cannot be

successfully implemented without WPAs first realizing their potential to act as an agent of change. Thus, Porter et al. suggest that WPAs make an effort to redefine and recreate the framework of their writing program and the institutional structure under which they operate in an attempt to perform what they describe as "institutional critique," which argues that "institutions, as unchangeable as they may seem, do contain spaces for reflection, resistance, revision, and productive action" (Porter et al., 2000, p. 613).

Through the implementation of this concept, WPAs can work to change the infrastructure of not only the tacit hierarchy of power within their program but also work towards creating an environment in which faculty and those in administrative positions can work in a collaborative environment. For example, as urged by Kelly Ritter (2006), it is imperative for WPAs to embrace their potential power and begin to think of themselves as "a primary public figure who can collaborate with higher administration when such collaboration benefits one's program, [specifically] the academic well-being of students," or, in the context of this research, ESL students (p. 48). While WPAs can indeed incorporate instances in which they welcome and encourage collaboration and feedback from instructors and upper administrators alike, as indicated by the WPA at my university, this is not always an easy task for WPAs to accomplish.

Despite these difficulties, Preto-Bay and Hansen (2006) strongly urge WPAs to recognize the increasing population and demand of ESL students in their institutions. Echoing traces of Phelps' and Porter et al.'s aforementioned ideas, they encourage WPAs to reevaluate and redesign their writing programs to reflect the international student population's overwhelming impact on them, stating that "when the population for whom instruction is designed changes, the whole system often needs to be re-envisioned"

(Preto-Bay & Hansen, 2006, p. 43). Similarly, Daniel Horowitz's (1986) argument resonates with Preto-Bay and Hansen's in that he suggests that WPAs must first and foremost consider the needs of the student populations before designing the curriculum for composition courses. However, Preto-Bay and Hansen (2006) argue that this redesign cannot simply be done without a great deal of observation and assessment. They instruct WPAs to learn as much as possible about local ESL students through interviews and to study the skills of this specific student population until they know how to best structure and implement a writing program that is suitable for these students. Such action calls for implementation of what Porter et al. see as searching for places where the possibility for resistance and change exists. They state that these "gaps or fissures" are what make the university or program "flexible and open to change" and therefore, result in the opportunity for research and action to be combined (Porter et al., 2000, p. 631). For example, as indicated by the research of this study, many WPAs admit to such "gaps" in their writing programs concerning the study and accommodations for ESL students. Therefore, these gaps provide opportunities for WPAs to implement innovation and change where there is presently a resistance to and marginalization of issues.

As suggested by Preto-Bay and Hansen's discussion, I see Porter et al.'s argument that any type of change, whether in the university or writing program, comes from searching for and recognizing places where change might be needed as applicable to the composition classroom, as it is this space that requires such critique and change. This is a process that will understandably require a great amount of time, therefore Preto-Bay and Hansen urge WPAs to "begin now and debate the particulars of philosophical basis of instruction, [materials] for teacher preparation courses, teacher selection and

development, and program location" (p. 51). Relating to the idea of critique and change, Silva (1997) argues that in regard to second-language writers, WPAs and writing instructors must recognize that ESL writers' differences need to be addressed through specific instructional strategies and that this requires offering ESL students various placement options for first-year composition courses. In order to determine the best placement options to offer ESL students in a writing program, it is critical to research and develop an understanding of their unique learning needs. Phelps suggests that through institutional invention, the university (or in this particular context, the writing program), might need to reform its ideals or curriculum in order to become more suitable in its mission. If additional placement options for ESL students are to be incorporated into a writing program, this requires such consideration.

It is important to recognize, however, that performing a needs analysis or critiquing current ideas and practices in regard to the ESL student population does not always occur within university writing programs. As with my own university, the WPA finds himself so consumed with numerous other responsibilities and duties that the issue of assessing and evaluating composition courses with ESL students in mind often becomes marginalized in favor of other issues. I see this as not only characteristic of the situation of most WPAs in which they are overwhelmed with the tasks of their position, but also a testament to the culture and attitudes of the university in regard to the ESL student population and the idea of changing the writing program to reflect its growth. Therefore, WPAs are faced with yet another task, which involves educating and building awareness among themselves and their colleagues regarding the unique learning needs that are characteristic of ESL students. If WPAs are successful in raising awareness of

issues such as this which are directly related to the growing diversity and changing needs of the student population, a cultural shift may result, thus changing the values and views of the entire university.

Indeed, in order to be prepared for the future of the academy (which will undoubtedly serve an ever-increasing population of second-language students), WPAs must prepare and educate themselves, as well as others within their department so that they may provide an equal educational experience to these students. Silva (1990) recognizes that this is a challenge and that WPAs must strategically plan the best way to accomplish this. Again, his metaphor of the "merry-go-round" approach which explains how writing programs often go through a five-phase cycle in attempting to accommodate ESL students in the program's infrastructure can be applied within this framework. He argues that this approach has a negative effect on composition instructors of ESL students and further complicates the task of WPAs to create a writing program which includes elements of appropriate courses and teaching strategies for ESL students. In keeping with such an inconsistent approach to teaching writing to ESL students, these students might eventually develop an even higher level of doubt in their ability to write in English, thus hindering their confidence and progress. Furthermore, they could potentially develop the idea that writing is a mechanical process and that they, as Brereton (1995) described of all composition students, "are on trial and not really a part of things until they get through their ordeal" (p. 19); however, the situation is exacerbated for ESL students.

Thus, Silva (1990) offers several suggestions on how to efficiently create such a program, calling for the evaluation of approaches to teaching ESL composition, as well as considering "the place or role of approaches (theories of L2 writing instruction) within

a coherent model of the interrelationship of ESL writing theory, research, and practice" (pp. 18-19). He urges WPAs and others involved in the formation of writing programs to ask the following questions to better inform their practices and strategies:

- Is a given approach informed by an appropriate and adequate theory of L2 writing?

- Is that L2 writing theory supported by credible (valid and reliable) empirical research?

- Is the approach itself supported by valid and reliable research? That is, to what extent have programs based on the approaches been shown to be efficient and effective in improving students' writing? (Silva, 1990, p. 19).

The third question in particular, "...to what extent have programs based on the approach been shown to be efficient and effective in improving students' writing?" directly relates to the goal of this study, though the question is not answered outright, but rather as a formed idea drawn from a sample of students' perceptions. Through seeking an understanding of how writing programs' strategies for accommodating ESL students are compared with the experiences of ESL students within the programs, WPAs will be able to see how effective their programs are for their ESL students enrolled in first-year composition courses, thus incorporating an important objective of Porter et al.'s concept of institutional critique. This objective indicates that institutional critique "aim[s] to change the practices of institutional representatives and to improve the conditions of those affected by and served by institutions"—in this context, the students. Yet it is important that in addition to measuring the effectiveness of their programs in fulfilling the needs of ESL students, WPAs recognize that an analysis of these needs must first take

place. As suggested specifically by Preto-Bay and Hansen (2006), only through this process can WPAs gain the most thorough understanding of how to go about restructuring their writing programs to be more effective in accommodating the growing and changing international student population.

In reflecting upon the difficult task of navigating within the political and bureaucratic environments of their institutions, Gail Shuck (2006) describes such challenges in her role as coordinator of English language support programs at Boise State University. She recalls how she used her position "to challenge the ideology of monolingualism and on the ways the position, and even the programs that [she] initiated, may [have] inadvertently supported that ideology" (Shuck, 2006, p. 60). Shuck argues that in order to effectively address the issues of second-language writing in composition, instructors, scholars, and writing program administrators must "develop administrative and curricular structures that support a more inclusive, multilingualist stance," which she suggests can be achieved through faculty education and specialized course structures, such as ESL-only and cross-cultural composition courses (p. 60). While Shuck advocates these strategies as a means of achieving a multilingual perspective, her arguments suggest the dilemma that writing program administrators often find themselves in when determining their abilities and power in their sometimes awkwardly situated position, which is inherent within the administrative framework of the university. As a result, this change could promote the discussion of different strategies through which they might be able to better assist the ESL student population.

Based upon her experience, Shuck (2006) offers several suggestions to WPAs as to how to use the power that they are given within their position in order to draw

attention to second-language writing issues. Drawing upon Matsuda's (1999) theory of the disciplinary division of labor, she cautions WPAs that institutions will commonly charge second-language specialists with the responsibility of handling all ESL issues, including writing. Furthermore, I see Matsuda's theory as an embodiment of the aforementioned "gaps and fissures" referred to by Porter et al. As Shuck is able to see the opportunities for change, she urges WPAs to resist this disciplinary division of labor, encouraging them to work across the disciplines and take equal ownership of educating and forming suitable curricula and programs for ESL students. In addition, Shuck also draws upon Matsuda's theory of linguistic homogeneity, observing that "because monolingualism is so pervasive, it would indeed be difficult to imagine an administrative position that could be created pointedly to raise awareness of linguistic diversity among native English-speaking students and faculty" (p. 68). However, Porter et al. argue that through the process of institutional critique, "zones of ambiguity can often (but not always) be found within the processes of decision making…and it is within these processes that people within an institutional space talk, listen, act, and confront differences" (p. 625). Furthermore, it is these zones of ambiguity that offer the opportunity for WPAs to investigate the "lines of action," or how power and authority are mapped out within an administrative hierarchy. Shuck illustrates such an investigation and negotiation of power in her attempt to restructure her university's writing program by promoting cross-cultural composition courses. However, she acknowledges that while positions such as the WPA's are structured so that they "justify continued marginalization…those holding such positions must continue to work for change,

knowing that change will be the result of [the] intricate web of human interaction" (Shuck, 2006, p. 75).

Offering an alternative perception, Matsuda (2006) argues that in order to resist and counteract this perception of "linguistic homogeneity," that "composition teachers [or in this instance, WPAs] need to re-imagine the composition classroom as the multilingual space that it is, where the presence of language differences is the default" (649). Furthermore, Matsuda's argument can also be interpreted as recognition of the composition classroom as an example of a zone of ambiguity. Thus Shuck and Matsuda's arguments advise WPAs to recruit the assistance of other administrators, faculty, and instructors to aid in the effort to research and create writing programs that are more suitable for ESL students. Speaking specifically to WPAs, Shuck prompts them to use the power given to them in their positions to assume what she sees as "a critical role as advocates for students and as agents of change" (p. 74). Similar to institutional critique, she also draws upon Giddens' theory of action that "recognizes that the very rules and systems that seem to constrain individual practice also contain within them the means for change" (p. 75). Shuck seeks to instill an emotion of hope and encouragement in WPAs who feel confined within the institutional rules and expectations of their university.

In addition to the arguments of scholars within in the field of second-language writing and composition, the "CCCC Statement on Second Language Writers and Writing" has been instrumental in advocating the treatment of ESL students by university writing programs. Divided into sections, the statement sets out guidelines for several aspects of writing programs, including: guidelines for writing and writing-intensive

courses, guidelines for writing programs, guidelines for teacher preparation and preparedness and suggestions for considering L2 writing concerns in local contexts (CCCC Statement on Second Language Writers and Writing). In creating this statement, CCCC has made an attempt to provide WPAs and composition instructors with the basic information necessary to better inform the creation of their writing programs in order to offer a more culturally diverse learning environment where ESL students are recognized as a growing part of a university's student population. Furthermore, the statement urges WPAs to "actively seek to determine the language use and language backgrounds of their students" and to "familiarize themselves with the multilingual populations surrounding their institutions," which I believe advocates the concept of institutional critique as these ideas put into practice the concepts and principles expressed by Porter et al (CCCC Statement on Second Language Writers and Writing).However, many WPAs are unaware of the existence of this statement and are thus limited in their knowledge of the proposed treatment and considerations of ESL students.

When taken into consideration, acting upon the principles set forth in the CCCC's statement could lead to Phelps' idea of institutional invention, in which certain practices and curriculum regarding the teaching of writing are reconceptualized and reinvented. However, while the statement and those involved in its creation seek to combat what Matsuda sees as "the myth of linguistic homogeneity," this can be difficult to begin due to many WPAs' unawareness of the statements' existence, as in the case of the WPA at my university. While he knew of the statement itself, he admitted to only reading it briefly and not through a critical lens. Furthermore, he had not given thought to what it meant for the university or how it could be applied to the writing program, and as a

result, the marginalization of ESL students in the writing program has unintentionally continued as a result of the constraints often placed upon WPAs in their positions.

Yet, if the statement were to be read thoroughly and taken into consideration by WPAs at each university, the issue of how to deal with ESL students in composition classes could be handled both easier and more efficiently. I feel that certainly when combined with the theory of Porter et al.'s institutional critique, as well as Phelps' institutional invention, the ideas set forth in the guidelines of the CCCC statement can provide WPAs with a foundation through which they can make use of their administrative power to acknowledge the growing population of ESL students within their own university. This use of administrative power informs a component of the research conducted for this study, as the role of WPAs is examined in determining how they can be involved in the needs analysis of the changing student population, as well as recreating the infrastructure of their institution's current writing program, especially in the programs' considerations of ESL writers.

Connections to the Study

The research and scholarship published on the issue of second-language writing in composition studies up until this point strongly argues that the ESL student population will only increase in the coming years (Institute of International Education). Thus, as suggested by many of the aforementioned scholars and research, it will only become increasingly necessary for WPAs to take notice of the issue of second-language writing and begin to form their own solutions and strategies in regard to how to address these issues within their own institution's writing program. As past research has shown, ESL students require unique and special instruction in the composition classroom which can

no longer be marginalized or ignored by WPAs. In order to provide these students with the same quality of education offered to their native English peers, WPAs must take the initiative to use this research to educate themselves, their faculty, and inform the "reinvention" of writing programs that will reflect the modern institution.

Through the use of a methodology which includes both qualitative and quantitative data collection, interviews with WPAs, as well as a survey of ESL students who have experienced different first-year composition courses, this study seeks to understand the decisions of WPAs in determining the infrastructure of their writing programs, as well as the ESL students' responses to them. Many of the observed writing programs include several of the placement options as mentioned by Silva (1997). By revealing and analyzing the choices of WPAs to include these options within their writing program's infrastructure and studying ESL students' responses to each option, this study seeks to provide further research on the most appropriate and effective strategies to successfully teach and design writing programs suitable for ESL students in the pre-composition and first-year composition course.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The framework for this study was created to examine the different strategies used by WPAs in their institution's writing program in an effort to meet the unique learning needs of ESL students within different universities across the United States. I chose to focus specifically on the perceptions and decisions of the WPAs regarding the issue of placement options and additional resources (such as tutoring or ESL specialists) for ESL students in first-year composition courses. My goal is to compare the strategies and goals designed by the WPAs to a sample of ESL students' perceptions in the writing programs. The resulting data will produce information that will help WPAs and writing instructors not only develop their knowledge of second-language writing issues, but also become more aware of the distinct learning needs of ESL students and which strategies are most effective in accommodating these needs. I chose to fulfill this goal by asking the following questions:

1. What strategies are writing program administrators presently using to develop and implement writing programs in order to fulfill the goal of acknowledging the growing population and educational needs of ESL students? Why have they chosen these particular strategies?

2. How are the goals of these strategies reflected through experiences of ESL students at each of the examined universities? From the perspective of ESL students, are these strategies effective?

In order to answer these research questions, I chose to use a mixed methods approach for my study, relying mostly on qualitative data collection. As suggested by Ken Hyland (2003), the use of both forms of data is effective in that "much writing research combines both quantitative and qualitative types of data, analysis, and interpretation to gain a more complete picture of a complex reality" (p. 252). The use of a variety of methods allowed for the collection of both broad and detailed data that provided a holistic and more in-depth interpretation of the WPAs' and ESL students' attitudes and perceptions of the examined writing programs. In addition to the use of a mixed methods approach, I draw upon Denzin's (1978) theory of triangulation, which is defined as "the combination of methodologies in the study of the same phenomenon" (p. 291). By designing the framework of my study to include an analysis of both the perspectives of WPAs and ESL students, I was able to apply Denzin's theory to research one issue (second-language writing within university writing programs) from two different angles: the perspectives of the writing programs' WPAs and the perspectives of their coordinating ESL student population. As a result, I was able to triangulate my sources of data.

The framework for my study was originally designed to focus specifically on three writing programs—their respective WPAs and their student populations—treating them as individual case studies. I chose this particular research strategy as the aim of my study is to research what Robert Yin (1994) refers to as "'how' or 'why' questions," which are posed "when the investigator has little control over events and when the focus is on a contemporary phenomenon within some real-life context" (p. 1). By treating three chosen universities as individual case studies, I was able to investigate these questions on

a more specific level, analyzing the "how" and "why" of my research questions in regard to each writing program, the strategies of the WPAs, and the experiences of the ESL students. In the specific context of my study, the "how" question was in regard to "how" WPAs were choosing to address the issue of second-language writing within their universities' writing programs and thought what strategies. The "why" question was thought of in regard to "why" have they chosen these specific strategies and "why" do ESL students find them effective or ineffective?

The two specific methods that I used to research each of the case studies were interviews with the WPAs, which were conducted over the telephone and through *Skype*[7], and surveys, which were distributed online using *Jotform*[8]. These two methods would effectively provide the most detailed data in attempting to answer both research questions for my study. Considering the scope of the project, I conducted interviews with the WPAs during a three-month period ranging from October 2010 to December 2010. Furthermore, the surveys were distributed and remained available to students over a four month period, ranging from October 2010 to January 2011.

Sample of Writing Program Administrators and Corresponding Writing Programs

Relying mainly on purposive sampling for my study, I based my selection of participants and institutions on certain criteria which I felt most accurately reflected the design of my study. For example, in gathering a sample of participants for this study, I chose to include three institutions, each from a different area of the United States such as the east coast, Midwest, and west coast. My justification for this was that I wanted to

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[7]*Skype* (http://www.skype.com/intl/en-us/home) is online software that enables communication through video and voice calls.
[8]*Jotform* (http://www.jotform.com/) is an online form builder that also distributes surveys and collects submissions

include a university from each part of the country, as research and scholarship in the field (Garcia, 2000; Harklau et al. 1999) suggests that certain parts of the country attract different cultural groups, and therefore, a university's ESL student population will vary according to the part of the country in which it is located. Thus, in an effort to include a variety of backgrounds and cultures in the ESL student sample used for my study, my aim was to include a sample of universities from significantly different geographical locations within the country.

In selecting the institutions for the sample, I first researched different universities' writing programs in order to learn more about which institutions already had writing programs with specific accommodations for L2 writers. I felt this was an important part of selecting a sample for the study as I wanted to include writing programs that had already created and implemented certain elements within their program to accommodate their ESL student population. As a result, I anticipated that they would serve as a model to other universities whose writing programs have not yet made such accommodations or are contemplating restructuring their programs to include certain elements that will offer assistance to ESL students. Once I had narrowed my selections down to the writing programs at three universities who each had unique and interesting courses or accommodations designated specifically for ESL students, I contacted the WPAs of the programs via email to ask if they would be interested in participating in the study.

While I was able to obtain two participants through this method, I had difficulty in obtaining a third. This was due to several obstacles that I encountered during the process, such as WPAs explaining that they were too busy to participate in the study or expressing that they did not feel that their writing program would be able to offer data

that was relevant to my study. Therefore, in an attempt to find a third WPA who would be willing and able to participate in my study, I chose to post a summary of my project on the WPA-L listserv, an email discussion list which enables international communication among WPAs of post-secondary institutions. I found this strategy to be much more time-efficient and effective, as I was able to reach a larger audience of WPAs and was able to obtain a third participant in less than twenty-four hours after posting my inquiry on the WPA-L listserv. Under different circumstances I would have chosen to wait and see if more volunteers would respond, but because of the time frame in which I needed to complete my study, I chose to select the first volunteer who responded.

After all three of the WPAs and their respective writing programs were selected for my research, I realized that I was not able to achieve my goal of creating a sample of writing programs from distinctly different areas of the country. However, I found this to be of less importance, as I learned through the WPAs that the ESL student populations at each of the chosen universities were very different from each other and included students from various cultures and backgrounds. Thus, the final sample of universities chosen for the study came from locations in the Midwest (University A) and (University B) and the southwest (University C). These pseudonyms were chosen to refer to each university and WPA throughout my study in order to maintain the anonymity and privacy of each. In addition, because certain universities' policies are pertinent to my research, it is necessary to cite from specific university documents. In an effort to continue to protect the anonymity of the institutions, these same pseudonyms will be used in both the narrative and the in-text citations in these instances.

To illustrate the different contexts and situations in which each of the three case studies were situated, certain demographical information such as the type of institution, number of students enrolled, main source of funding, geographical location within the United States, basic description of the infrastructure of the writing program, and statistics regarding diversity demographics for each of the three universities is presented in Table 1.

In order for other WPAs to be able to think about and apply the strategies used by the WPAs in these three case studies within their own writing programs, it is important to understand the contexts in which they occur since every institution is unique and different in its own way. WPAs must also consider a multitude of factors when choosing how to create (or recreate) their university's writing program. For example, the amount of funding or resources available to a WPA at a small, private liberal arts college may be drastically different than those available to a state-funded, public institution. In addition, if a university is situated in a geographical location where the majority of the student population consists of Caucasian, native English-speaking students, then the demand for an entirely separate ESL writing program may not exist.

Each of the three writing programs was unique in their design and infrastructure as a result of their differences in location, resources, values, and demographics. For example, University A is a state-funded public university in the Midwest with an enrollment of about 30,455 undergraduate and graduate students. University A's writing program is housed under the English department, but is separate from the ESL writing program, which is referred to as the "ESL Intensive English Program," or IEP. The mainstream writing program offers a first-year composition course sequence of basic

writing (if students needed to be placed into this course), and two semesters of college writing. The IEP track offers ESL students the option of a basic writing course before enrolling in three semesters of ESL-only course sections of first-year composition. After completing this series of ESL writing courses, ESL students then matriculate into the mainstream second semester course of first-year composition.

Similar to University A, University B is a state-funded public university in the Midwest, but with a smaller enrollment of about 23,000 undergraduate and graduate students. Also similar to University A, University B's writing program is situated under the English department. However, unlike University A, the ESL writing program is housed within the writing program itself, more than likely due to the smaller enrollment numbers. The mainstream track and the ESL track of first-year composition follow the same sequence, with both tracks offering a basic writing section (pending students' placement) and a one-semester composition course. This one-semester ESL composition course does not result in ESL students' matriculation into a second-semester composition course, which is another difference from University A's writing program.

University C possesses many differences when compared to universities A and B. For instance, while University C is state funded, it is classified as a public research university. Located in the southwest portion of the United States, University B is about twice the size of both universities A and B, with an enrollment of approximately 70,440 students among their different campuses. University C's writing program has a few characteristics which are similar to University A and University B's programs. University C's writing program is situated within the English department and houses both mainstream and ESL first-year composition course sequences. However, University C

offers students the option of "Stretch" courses (mainstream and ESL), which are a version of the first semester composition course which extends over two semesters, or the entire academic year. For students who choose not to enroll in the Stretch courses, separate mainstream and ESL first- year sequences are offered, consisting of first and second-semester composition courses.

Design for Writing Program Administrator Interviews

In answering the first of my research questions, which focused on the strategies and decisions of WPAs in designing writing programs with accommodations for L2 writers, I chose to use individual interviews to learn more about each WPA in regard to this question. In Jeffrey Jablonski's (2006) model of case study research and qualitative interviews with writing across the curriculum (WAC) coordinators which focuses on the methods and models of cross-curricular literacy work, Jablonski supports the use of case studies and interviews, stating that they "can provide access to external conditions, in the form of accounts of events only witnessed by those interviewed [and] also provide information about internal conditions, about people's perceptions and their interpretation of their perceptions" (p. 49). Drawing upon Jablonski's model, I felt that interviewing the WPAs for my study would provide detailed accounts of each writing program that described the program's infrastructure, the strategies that were being used to accommodate ESL students, and why the WPAs felt the need to include these strategies into their university's writing program (p. 49).

I also used Hyland's reasoning behind interviews to inform my decision, as he states "participants are able to discuss their interpretations and perspectives...rather than responding to preconceived categories...This flexibility and responsiveness means that

interviews are widely used in L2 writing research…as a means of clarifying and expanding potentially interesting answers" (p. 255). To achieve the greatest level of responsiveness possible, my goal was to leave the interviews rather informal and open-ended, thus giving the WPAs the opportunity to go into further detail with their answers and include examples and descriptions of specific situations within their university's writing program that supported those answers. Jablonski (2006) also advocates the use of open-ended interviews, stating that in such instances where "the interviewer is guided by a desire to understand rather than explain," open-ended interviews allow the interviewer to "explore questions of the moment, raised in the context of the on-going conversation with the respondent" (p. 49). As one of the most important objectives of my study was to understand the goals and strategies of the WPAs rather than to explain them, I felt that this method of qualitative, open-ended interviewing would best accomplish what I hoped to achieve.

In preparation for the WPA interviews, I compiled a list of eleven questions (see Appendix A) which I felt best related to the first research question and would provide the data that I would need in order to formulate an answer to this question. The first interview question asked the WPAs to give a detailed description of the strategies that were adopted by their university's writing program to help L2 writers succeed (see Appendix A, question1). I framed this as the first question as it served as the foundation for my study and was critical in answering my first research question. Only upon learning about the specific strategies that WPAs were using to accommodate their university's ESL student population would I be able to further research how these writing programs were functioning and progressing in regard to this issue. I also chose to ask

questions concerning how the WPAs arrived at their program's infrastructure and to describe their role in creating, maintaining, and advancing this infrastructure (see Appendix A, questions 3-4). These questions were asked in order to urge WPAs to think about and describe their roles and participation in developing their university's writing program. I felt that this would be an effective way for them to speak about their perspectives on the program and how they felt their goals and strategies were being implemented.

In addition, I also chose to ask questions regarding the placement options available to ESL students, their success and retention rates, as well as the methods of assessment used to measure the success of the program (see Appendix A, questions 6-10). Asking such questions allowed me to gain a better understanding of how the WPA viewed the perceptions of the ESL students in regard to the writing program, which I would be able to use later to compare with the perceptions that the ESL students reported on the student surveys. I anticipated that this would help me discern whether the WPA's and the students' perceptions aligned or were drastically different in regard to what extent the writing program's goals were being met and whether or not they were effectively addressing the needs of L2 writers.

As previously expressed, of particular importance to my research was focusing on how the WPAs viewed their writing program as fulfilling the unique learning needs of the ESL student population. To find out more in regard to this area, one question asked the WPAs to elaborate on why they felt it was important at their university to focus on this specific population (see Appendix A, question 2). According to Davis, Scriven, and Thomas (1987), "personal and professional interests of the faculty, goals imposed

by...students, program and scheduling restrictions legislated for administrative convenience [are] all factors [that] influence the nature and format of a writing program" and furthermore, they acknowledge that the identification of such factors "is important in identifying whose needs a program is serving and if unique circumstances determine a program's functioning" (p. 60). Therefore, I felt that if I was able to gain insight into the particular attitudes and culture surrounding each university's administration, I would be able to better understand the context in which the framework for each institution's writing program was designed.

As all of the universities that were chosen for the study were at a distance from my location, each interview was conducted over the telephone, with the exception of University A, whose WPA opted to be interviewed via *Skype* audio. The interviews took place in the order of the WPAs' responses to my request for participation in the study and were as follows: University A, Friday, October 08, 2010; University B, Monday, October 18, 2010; and University C, Thursday, October 21, 2010. Each interview lasted an average of 55 minutes from start to finish and was fairly unstructured. I chose to use this approach in order for each WPA to describe their writing program and their experiences as the writing program administrator in as much detail as possible. For this reason, I did not follow the specific order of the questions as I had them listed in my interview notes. I found that allowing for deviation from this order gave the WPAs the freedom to naturally progress from one question to the next. Oftentimes I found that I did not even need to ask certain questions, as the WPAs would end up answering these questions when describing a situation in response to an entirely different question[9].

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[9] WPAs often gave such an elaborate and detailed response that they ended up answering multiple questions in their response to one specific question, therefore, I did not follow the order I planned.

Towards the end of each interview, I asked the interviewee if they had any questions for me as the researcher and if so, I spent the last few minutes responding. I then thanked the WPA for their time and participation, reminded them that I would be in touch if I had additional questions for them, and also reminded them that I would provide them with a summary of the data collected from the surveys that were distributed to the students at their university. In addition, I followed up each interview with an email thanking the WPA again for their participation.

Sample for Student Surveys

The student sample was selected in accordance with the universities of the WPAs who were selected to participate in the WPA interviews. A few of the WPAs whom I interviewed offered specific information regarding the cultures and diversity of their university's ESL student population. While one of the first questions in the online student survey asked students to provide their native language and ethnicity, this information provided by the WPAs in the interviews allowed me to gain a better sense of each university's culture prior to the distribution of the surveys. For example, the WPA at University A described the ESL student population as made up of a large number of Latino, Southeast Asian, and Hmong students. The WPA at University B reported that the ESL population at her institution consists of many Chinese and Arabic students. Lastly, the WPA at University C described his university's ESL student population as one of the largest populations of international students and multilingual writers in the United States, consisting mainly of Korean, Thai, Japanese, Chinese and Indian students, although there is a good deal of variety amongst students' cultures and ethnicities.

At the completion of each interview with the WPAs, I asked each one to forward my email about the survey to all ESL students who had completed their university's first-year composition requirement. This email informed students of the study, explained their rights as consenting participants, and contained a link to the online survey. The exact number of students who received this email at each university was unknown, as the WPAs were not able to provide this information due to their limited time and resources. At the conclusion of the time frame in which I conducted my research, the student sample resulted in responses from 17 students at University A and18 students at University B. I did not receive any responses from the students at University C.

Design for ESL Student Surveys

In collecting data for the second research question, which sought to answer how the goals and strategies of the WPAs were reflected through the experiences and perspectives of the ESL students, I chose to create and distribute online surveys to the ESL students at each of the three universities chosen for my study as researchers (Costino & Hyon, 2007) suggest that surveys are one of the most useful methods in researching student perspectives. In addition, MacNealy (1999) advocates the use of this method, stating that surveys are effective as they "provide a sense of anonymity" and "allow the respondent time to think over the answers" (p. 149). As one of my most important objectives was to gather detailed and realistic data which reflected the ESL students' perspectives, I anticipated that students would be more likely to respond to the survey and provide such data if they felt comfortable and were given sufficient time to think about their responses. Therefore, I constructed the surveys so that students would be able

to access them over a three to four-month time period, ranging from October or November 2010 until January 2011.

Since my aim for this part of the study was to focus on the perspectives of the ESL students and how they are receiving the strategies which are being implemented, I chose to survey the student to learn how they perceived the program design. The usability testing-like approach allows me to learn about the program first hand from those whose academic lives and careers are affected by it. As Kessler and Plakans (2001) argue, "there are many reasons why learners should be involved in the development of educational materials," and in this particular situation, the need is for ESL students to be involved in the development of the infrastructure of a writing program (p. 16). Kessler and Plakans (2001) further argue that the perspectives of students—in this case, ESL students—is important because since "learners are stakeholders and the audience for the material, their ability to use and learn from it must be considered [and] obtaining feedback from a variety of learners provides insights into how individuals approach a particular language learning task" (p. 16). Drawing upon this argument, I view the surveys that I distributed to the ESL students as tools to test the usability of the writing programs from the perspectives of the ESL students who are affected by these programs.

For the construction and distribution of these surveys, I utilized *Jotform*, an online form builder that also distributes surveys and collects submissions. I chose this particular technology as it was simple to use and offered free services with certain limitations within the realm of my needs. I first created a template survey that consisted of three different sections, as I found it necessary to divide the survey into sections due to the different placement options available to ESL students at each university. For example,

some students were placed directly into the equivalent of a first-year composition course, while others were required to complete a pre-composition course before they were permitted to enroll in regular first-year composition course. As each of the WPA interviews was conducted prior to the distribution of the student surveys, I was able to ask the WPAs to look over the surveys in order to make sure that they approved all of the questions that were being asked. However, upon doing so, the first WPA who I interviewed brought to my attention that the students at this institution might not be able to identify with or understand certain terms that I had chosen to use in the survey. For example, the term "pre-composition course," in spite of the definition I provided on the survey, would not resonate with the students at this university, as their writing program referred to courses that students took prior to regular first-year composition by the actual course name. Therefore, this particular WPA offered to assist me in revising the survey in an effort to replace terms that would be problematic for that university's ESL student population with terms that would be familiar or recognizable to them. In an effort to be aware of and sensitive to my audience for the surveys, I used the template that I had originally used for the design to customize each survey that was distributed to the three individual universities.

Part 1 of the survey was designed to ask general questions about the students' language, background, and ability to write and speak using both their first language and English (see Appendix B, Part 1, questions 1-3). These questions were included in order to better understand how the students felt about their speaking and writing abilities in both their native language and English. By gaining a better understanding of their perceptions of their abilities in these areas, I felt that I would be able to gain a sense of

whether their confidence was a significant factor in how they viewed their performance in their first-year composition course(s), as well as how much assistance they felt that they needed in these classes. Part 1 also asked general questions about the placement options offered to the student through their university's writing program, as well as their overall satisfaction with the placement method used (see Appendix B, Part 1, questions 5-7). As mentioned in the previous chapter, Silva (1997) emphasizes the importance of placement options in designing effective writing programs that are cognizant of ESL students' unique learning needs. Therefore, I felt that since placement is such an important issue concerning L2 writers in a university's writing program that it was necessary to ask questions on the survey regarding this topic. After responding to these questions and completing Part 1, students were given a choice to proceed to Part 2, which was designated for students who were placed into a pre-composition course prior to first-year composition, or to skip to Part 3, which was designated for students who were placed directly into a first-year composition course.

Students who chose to proceed to Part 2 of the survey were asked to respond to questions that asked them about their experience in their pre-composition course(s), such as how many courses they were required to complete at the pre-composition level and how many semesters it took them to pass the course(s) (see Appendix B, Part 2, questions 1-2). I chose to ask these questions as I anticipated that the students' responses would provide data that would allow me to gain a better understanding of their need for pre-composition courses as opposed to direct placement into mainstream, first-year composition courses. In addition, I asked students to describe their overall experience and opinion of their pre-composition course(s) in an attempt to determine whether the

goals and strategies of the WPAs were being reflected in the experiences of the students. However, I recognized that if students were required to take a sequence of pre-compositions courses they may have become frustrated and these feelings would be reflected in their opinion of their pre-composition courses. Furthermore, students were asked to use a scale of frequency (see Appendix B, Part 2, question 3) to rank how often they encountered difficulty with certain aspects of their pre-composition courses, such as completing or understanding writing assignments, following class discussions, participating in peer review, and communicating with the instructor. By ranking their responses through a scale of frequency, I anticipated that I would not only gain a more detailed understanding of the students' experiences in their pre-composition course(s), but that I would also be able to provide the WPAs with a summary of this data, thus giving them information that would help them gauge the effectiveness of their writing programs in regard to L2 writers.

Part 3 of the survey consisted of identical questions to those asked in Part 2; however, students were asked to respond to these questions in regard to their first-year composition course(s). In addition to these questions, Part 3 also asked students about their preference for composition courses in terms of separate ESL sections, mixed sections with native-English speakers, or sections with mostly native English-speakers (see Appendix B, Part 3, question 4). I felt that this question was necessary as it would provide insight into the ESL students' perspectives on different designs of composition courses, as well as help to identify and define how their learning needs are different from their native English-speaking peers'. Furthermore, I felt that this data would be useful for WPAs, as they would gain a better understanding of which types of composition courses

(i.e. cross-cultural, ESL-only, or mainstream) are most useful for ESL students in their first year. Finally, Part 3 asked students to rank several aspects of their university's writing program, such as the amount and quality of resources available, the opportunity for assistance and tutoring, and the quality of the instructors. Students were also given the option to write a short response detailing their opinion or ideas of what their university could do in the future to improve or enhance the quality of writing instruction offered to L2 writers (see Appendix B, Part 3, questions 9-10). By offering students the opportunity to respond to open-ended questions such as these, I hoped that they would feel comfortable enough to express specific needs or suggestions that would encourage the WPA at their university to weigh the students' needs against institutional policy as they consider new strategies for redesigning their writing program to accommodate this population.

Changes and Additions to Research Design

As expressed in the beginning of this chapter, I originally designed my study to include only three WPAs and three sample sets of ESL students. However, I encountered unforeseen obstacles, such as limited communication with one of the three WPAs. While I was successful in conducting interviews with each of the three WPAs originally chosen in the beginning of the study, the online survey was unable to be distributed to students at the institution of the WPA with whom I had limited communication. Therefore, I chose to include a fourth university (University D) with the intention of obtaining a third group of responses to the student survey. Thus, my data includes a larger sample of WPAs than I had previously anticipated. While this was not included in the original framework of the study, I found this change to be beneficial, as the addition of a fourth WPA interview

increased the amount of data that I was able to collect in response to the first research question.

Drawing upon one of the responses I received after posting my inquiry to the WPA-L listserv, I contacted a fourth WPA who had previously expressed interest in participating in my study. Thus the fourth WPA for my study was chosen through the same method as the third WPA. After emailing this WPA and sending my project proposal, this person gave me consent and we proceeded to set up an interview. This fourth interview was conducted via telephone on Tuesday, December 21, 2010 and lasted approximately one hour.

Like the previously discussed three universities, University D is a state-funded, public university. However, it is located in the northwestern part of the United States and is much smaller than the other three institutions with an enrollment of about 19,933 students (for demographics in comparison with Universities A, B, and C, see Table 2). Unlike the other interviewees, the WPA from University D did not specifically describe the ESL student population at the institution, but explained that the writing program was seeing a steady growth of ESL students due to the high volume of immigrants to the area and the fact that the university is located in a refugee settlement area. While this WPA sent the email and survey link to all of the ESL students who had completed the first-year composition course(s), this university also did not yield any responses to the survey. Therefore, the final student sample size remained at 17 students from University A, 18 students from University B, and no students from University C or University D.

Table 1

Demographics for Universities A, B, C, and D

	University A	University B	University C	University D
Type	Public	Public	Public Research University	Public
Enrollment	30,455	23,000	70,440	19,933
Funding	State	State	State	State
United States Geographical Location	Midwest	Midwest	Southwest	Northwest
Infrastructure of writing program	Mainstream writing program is housed under the English department while the ESL writing program (referred to as the "ESL Intensive English Program") is separate from the mainstream writing program, but still under the English department	One writing program housed under the English department (ESL first-year composition track acts as a "shadow" program of the mainstream first-year composition track)	One writing program housed under the English department with separate mainstream and ESL sequences of first-year composition courses	Mainstream writing program is housed under the English department while the ESL writing program (referred to as the English Language Support Programs) is separate from the mainstream writing program, but still under the English department
Diversity demographics	7% African-American 4% Latino 77% White 12% Other *880 international students	66% White 8.4% Unknown **22.1% Ethnic minority	4.8% African American 2.2% American Indian 5.8% Asian American 14.6% Hispanic 62.*% White 5.2% International 4.7% Unknown *18,600 minority students	*80.9% White 1.4% African-American 6.2% Hispanic/Latino 3.0% Asian 1.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native 7.5% Unknown

*Includes undergraduate and graduate students
**Includes undergraduate students only

The infrastructure of University D's writing program was similar to University

A's in that the mainstream writing program and the ESL writing program were both

situated within the English department but separate from each other. The mainstream writing program consisted of the rather typical basic writing course (for students who placed into it based on test scores) and first and second-semester courses of first-year composition. However, the ESL writing program (referred to as the English Language Support Program) consisted of three different sections of a basic writing course for ESL students, called "Academic ESL Writing." Based on students' SAT, ACT, TOEFL, or Michigan Test scores, they can place into one of these three sections. Upon passing their section, the ESL students who are enrolled in the English Language Support Program can then matriculate into the mainstream first-semester section of first-year composition.

Among the changes and additions to the design of my study was the recognition that while I had originally intended for the sample of WPAs to consist of individuals who worked under the title of "writing program administrator," none of the four participants actually had this title. WPA A's position title was ESL Writing Coordinator, WPA B's was referred to as the Director of the ESL Writing Program, WPA C was an associate professor in University C's English department at the time of the interview but was soon transitioning to the position of Director of Second Language Writing, and like WPA A, WPA D's title was ESL Writing Coordinator. Though all of these administrators had titles other than "writing program administrator," their positions and duties bestowed upon them the responsibility of designing and implementing the strategies for ESL students within their university's writing program. Thus, for this reason and to reflect the context of my study, I chose to refer to them as "WPA."

Data Analysis

Once all of the WPA interviews had been conducted, I reviewed the notes from each interview in order to gain a better sense of the WPAs' writing programs, as well as their individual perspectives, goals, and strategies for the programs. After doing so, I wrote an in-depth summary of each interview, detailing the responses of the WPAs to the interview questions. By analyzing each of the interviews on an individual basis and looking for specific themes and trends, my intention was to present them as case studies in the data chapter that is dedicated to the interviews. During this analysis of the WPA interview data, I used Jablonksi's (2006) text, *Academic Writing Consulting and WAC* as a model for how to structure case studies and report data collected through interviews. Following Jablonski's model, I chose to treat each case study and WPA interview as an individual profile, in which I discussed the overall infrastructure of the WPA's university's writing program and the detailed responses that the WPAs gave in regard to these programs. In doing so, I was able to focus on each case study in its own context, allowing for me to analyze the data from each interview and detect specific themes (such as issues of placement, faculty development, and assessment), as well as other characteristics within each university's writing program.

To analyze the data from the two universities whose ESL students chose to participate in the survey I used Microsoft Excel spreadsheets that were provided for each survey though *Jotform*. I first reviewed the data in spreadsheet form to get a general idea of how students responded to the various questions and to make sure that the number of students who responded was accurately reported. I then chose the questions that I felt would be specifically instrumental in answering my second research question. Using the

original spreadsheets, I proceeded to create tables for each of these questions, inserting the number of students' responses into columns for each question according to their chosen answers. This method allowed for me to easily look at different questions individually and immediately see how many students responded and which answers they chose. Thus, just by looking at one of these tables, I was able to quickly gain insight into how the majority of the ESL students who responded to the survey felt about a certain topic or issue. In addition, as I found this to be a simple and quick way to look at the data from the surveys, I included some of these tables in chapter five.

In treating each of the WPA interviews as separate profiles and summarizing them individually, I was able to easily pair the responses of the WPAs to the responses of the ESL students on the survey. This allowed for me to analyze and discuss whether the WPAs' goals were being reflected in the experiences that the ESL students were reporting in their first-year composition courses on the survey. In addition, I was able to compare all of the WPAs' interview responses, thus giving me a better understanding as to whether or not these WPAs' have similar goals for their writing programs and if not, how they approach the issues of second-language writing and ESL students using different strategies. In analyzing the data in this way, I drew upon what Yin (1994) describes as explanation-building, in which a phenomenon is explained by stipulation of "a set of casual links about it" (p. 110). I felt that this analytic strategy was the most appropriate given the infrastructure of my study, as I included data from four different case studies and then compared the data from each in order to build a theoretical explanation about the strategies and methods used in each writing program and how they are perceived by the ESL students in each program. All of these aforementioned aspects

are of significant importance to my study, as my goal is to provide WPAs with four case

studies that offer unique strategies and practices for them to consider implementing

within their own university's writing program in an effort to better understand and

accommodate ESL students.

CHAPTER IV

WPA DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter discusses the four WPAs whose programs help the field to

understand writing program administrators' strategies for developing and implementing

writing programs that are both aware of and accommodate the unique educational needs

of ESL students. To research this aspect of my study to the fullest extent possible, I

chose to treat each writing program as an individual case study. Thus, this chapter

presents four profiles of the WPAs who participated in the interviews, an overview of

their responses, and an analysis and interpretation of the strategies that they have chosen

to incorporate into the infrastructure of their university's writing program in regard to

accommodating their institution's ESL student population.

While these case studies model several different strategies and methods for

addressing the needs that ESL students bring with them to a writing program, it should be

recognized each of the four case studies have a separate ESL writing program or a

separate ESL track of first-year composition which shadows the mainstream track. In

addition, it should also be noted that the WPA who are interviewed in the four case

studies are not the WPAs for the mainstream writing program, but coordinators or

program administrators for their institution's ESL writing program. Given these caveats,

these case studies are meant to be viewed as illustrative of how certain strategies for

addressing and accommodating ESL writers can be implemented and to demonstrate

what they look like and how they function.

University A: The ESL Writing Coordinator

The WPA whom I interviewed from University A works under the title of ESL Writing Coordinator for the university. When asked to elaborate on her position and describe her role in the design and implementation of the university's writing program, she informed me that she has been in her position as the ESL Writing Coordinator for 10 years. When asked how this was different from the position of the WPA, she explained in detail the complexity of the writing program at her university (see Figure 1). To begin with, the writing program is actually housed under the English Department, which is situated within the College of Letter and Sciences. The writing program is a separate program from the ESL writing program, which is also situated within the College of Letters and Sciences, but functions within a program referred to as the Intensive English Program (IEP). The purpose of this separate program is to "prepare [international or U.S. resident] students for university level academic work in English" (IEP website). WPA A explained that whether or not ESL students are placed into the ESL writing program or the mainstream first-year composition program under the English Department is based upon placement test scores, which were discussed further into the interview.

WPA A explained the numerous options the program design offered ESL students for their sequence of first-year composition courses (see Figure 1). The most common option for ESL students who have been accepted to the university is to enroll in composition courses through the university's ESL Intensive English Program, which offers several ESL writing courses for credit. These courses follow a sequential pattern, beginning with ESL 115 (Basic Writing in ESL), followed by ESL 116 and ESL 117 (Introduction to College Writing in ESL and College Writing in ESL, respectively), ESL

118 (Advanced College Writing in ESL)[10], ESL 120 (Grammar and Editing in ESL), and

an ESL section of English 102 (College Writing and Research). WPA A explained that

in order to enroll in this series of writing courses, all ESL students must take the English

as a Second Language-Placement in Composition (ESL-PIC) test which will determine

whether students need to begin their first-year composition sequence in ESL 115 (Basic
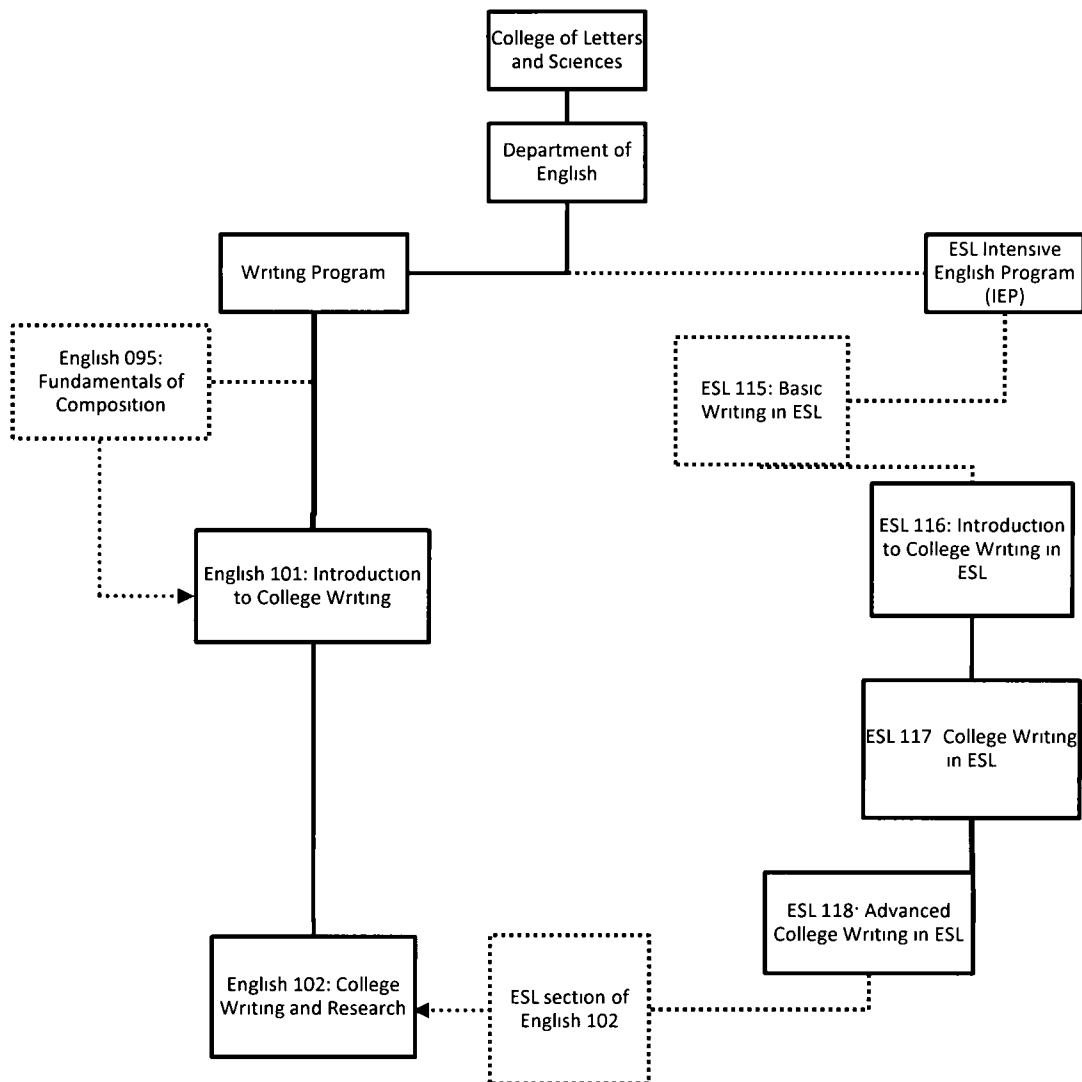
Figure 1. Organization of University A's Writing Programs

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[10] ESL 118 follows a curriculum that is equivalent to the mainstream English 101 composition course.

Writing in ESL) or ESL 116. WPA A emphasized that the ESL-PIC test is entirely different from the English Placement Test (EPT) which is administered by the university to all native-English students.

However, WPA A explained that complications in this placement method often arise. ESL students often become confused during new student orientation and either do not know that the ESL-PIC test is offered by the university or accidentally register for the EPT instead. Therefore, many ESL students unintentionally end up in mainstream first-year composition courses[11] that are designed for native-English students and offer no accommodations for ESL students. For instance, the ESL students who are unaware of the ESL-PIC test will take the EPT test, which results in these students often being placed into English 095 where they receive the same type of instruction as their native English peers and is more difficult for them as their different learning needs as ESL students are neither considered nor met. This misunderstanding in placement testing not only leads to inappropriate placement of some ESL students but can also lead to higher risks of failure and lower confidence in the development of English writing skills for these ESL students.

After learning of the complexity of University A's writing program and how there was an entirely separate writing program designed with ESL students in mind, I was interested to learn more about why administrators and faculty within the writing program felt so strongly about accommodating ESL students. WPA A's initial response alluded to the fact that bringing in international students brings in additional money for the university, and thus, the university benefits financially from the presence of ESL students. I was surprised by this response, as I assumed that the university would value

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[11]The non-ESL first-year composition courses at this university consist of a non-credit bearing, basic writing course referred to as English 095 (Fundamentals of Composition), English 101 (Introduction to College Writing), and English 102 (College Writing and Research).

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the addition of international students for the purpose of the cultural diversity that it would

bring to the campus rather than the financial benefits that the addition of international

students would bring to the university. However, the value of cultural diversity is not

ignored by the university, as WPA A explained next that the ESL student population

brings "an element of cultural diversity to the university and the writing program," which

creates a richer learning environment for everyone and reflects a positive aspect that the

university strives to promote (personal communication, October 8, 2010).

When asked about the pass rate[12] of the university's ESL students in first-year

composition courses, WPA A stated while she did not have any solid numbers to report,

"in general it seems that the pass rate of ESL students who enroll in ESL 118 is higher

when compared to ESL students who enroll in mainstream sections of English 101 and

102" (personal communication, October 8, 2010). WPA A suggested that this could be a

result of several variables, such as the smaller class sizes in ESL 118 courses, which are

capped at 16 students or the tendency of ESL students to recognize that they need the

first-year composition courses to graduate and, as a result, are motivated by a fear of

failure to work harder. However, when I inquired about the retention rate[13] of ESL

students within both the ESL and mainstream writing programs, WPA A did not have any

specific numbers to report, but surmised that the increased drop-out rate for ESL students

could be explained by the fact that students are able to gain admission to the university

fairly easily, but might not be prepared or suited to work at the university level.

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[12] The pass rate refers to the percentage of ESL students who successfully complete the required first-year composition course by earning a passing grade.
[13] The retention rate refers to the percentage of ESL students who continue their enrollment in the university after the completion of each semester.

Transitioning to the issue of professional development for administrators, faculty, and writing instructors, I asked WPA A if there had been any workshops, training, or other educational tools provided by the university or the writing program in the past, or if there were plans to do so in the future. She explained that in the past, there have been occasional master's and doctoral level courses focused on the teaching of writing to non-native speakers. However, these courses have not been offered consistently. While WPA A explained that the university does offer professional development programs for all administrators and faculty, none of these programs focused on addressing ESL issues in writing. In terms of faculty and writing instructors who do have training and educational backgrounds in the area of ESL writing issues, 12-15 faculty members hold degrees in ESL studies, although it was not articulated whether or not their degrees were specifically in ESL writing studies. If not, then this would indicate the presence of the issues characterized by the disciplinary division of labor as the writing instructors who hold degrees in ESL studies may be viewed as adequately equipped to address the learning needs of ESL students, but may in fact only be knowledgeable in the area of linguistic needs and not in the area of writing. However, more specifically, WPA A explained that ESL 118 is usually taught by a graduate student who has been trained in the area of second-language writing issues and has experience teaching English 101, as well as experience in teaching ESL students.

For the last portion of the interview I asked the WPA to explain how she thought the writing program could improve in understanding and accommodating the university's ESL students. Her main concern was in regard to the placement process for first-year composition courses, as she mentioned earlier in the interview that there is often a great

deal of confusion for ESL students surrounding the two placement test options. She sees a need for improvement in this area, as the current method is confusing and misguiding for ESL students. Oftentimes ESL students are either not paying attention or overwhelmed with information during orientation and miss the opportunity to sign up for the ESL-PIC test. As a result, they register for the placement test intended for native-English students and are therefore placed into mainstream first-year composition courses. This leads to a higher risk of failure for these ESL students, which is problematic in that it hinders their academic progress and also causes frustration and lower self-confidence. WPA A stated that she has been trying for years to make improvements regarding the issue of placement testing and would eventually love to have an overall English placement testing method set up that would be good for all students (ESL and native-English alike). She explained that she is currently working on strategies for such a setup with the mainstream pre-composition (English 095) coordinator in which the writing program would rely on students' essay scores from the ACT, SAT[14], and TOEFL[15] for placement into first-year composition courses to ensure more accurate placement. By relying on essay scores from previous tests such as the ACT, SAT, and TOEFL, this method of placement would focus specifically on all students' writing ability, as opposed to putting them through the complicated and confusing process of university-administered placement tests that is currently in place.

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[14] The ACT and SAT are administered to self-selecting, often college bound students (usually during their junior or senior year of high school) by the College Board in order to assess students' ability to perform at the college level.
[15] The TOEFL is administered by the Educational Testing Service (ETS) and measures non-native English students' ability to understand the English language at the college level.

University B: Director of the ESL Writing Program

The second WPA interview was conducted with the Director of the ESL Writing

Program at University B. She began by explaining the overall infrastructure of the

writing program (see Figure 2) so that I would be able to easily follow the rest of her

responses in the interview. Similar to WPA A, the university's writing program is

situated under the English Department, but the ESL writing program is a separate

program in itself. However, unlike University A's ESL writing program, which is housed

under a separate program from the English Department, University B's ESL writing

program in only a subdivision of the English Department's mainstream writing program.

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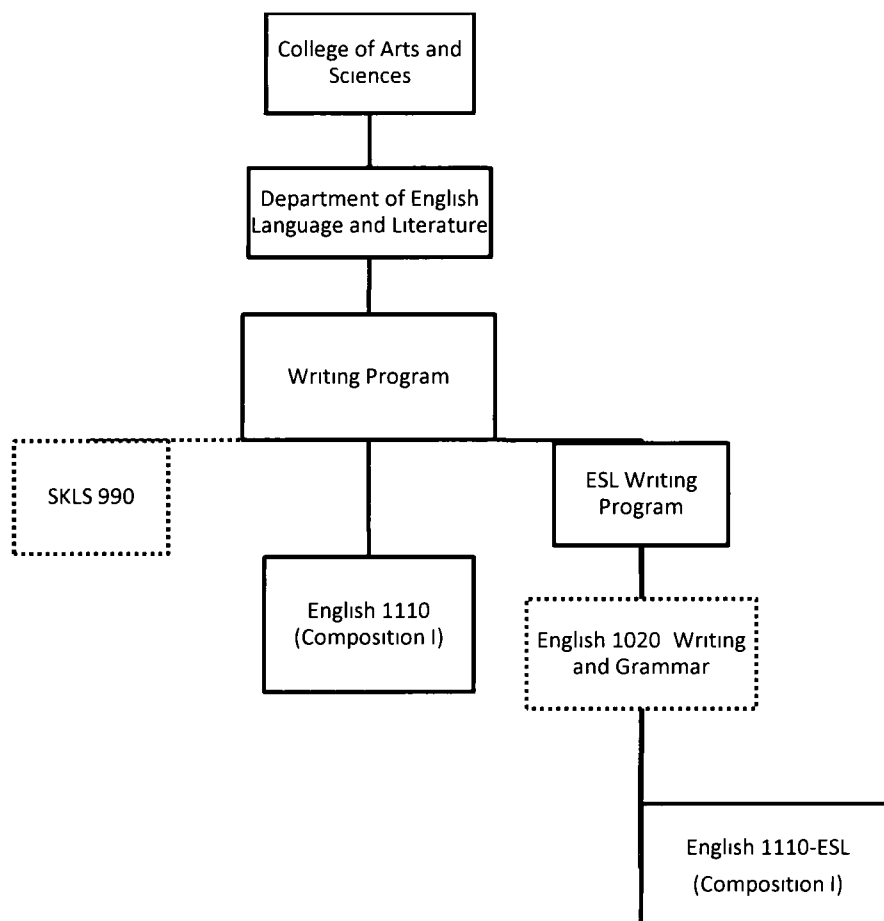
Figure 2 Organization of University B's Writing Program

According to WPA B's explanation of the writing program's first-year composition course sequence, University B offers two courses within the ESL writing program: English 1020 (Writing and Grammar) and English 1110-ESL (the ESL equivalent of English 1110: Composition I) (personal communication, October 18, 2010). ESL students who are placed into English 1020 (Writing and Grammar) are considered to be lower-level writers who are deemed by the writing placement test not to be ready for English 1110-ESL. Therefore, they are placed into English 1020 to develop their writing and grammar skills and must pass the course before they can move into English 1110-ESL. As mentioned above, English 1110-ESL is the equivalent of English 1110 (Composition I) and teaches ESL students how to write at the university level while providing them with additional instruction in grammar, composition, organization, and analytical skills. However, ESL students who take the English placement test designed for native-English students, whether by choice or accident, are either mainstreamed into English 1110 (Composition I) or placed into SKLS 990 (Academic Writing), which is a non-credit bearing course designed for students who are deemed unprepared for English 1110 by the English placement test. As expressed by WPA B, this placement track can be extremely problematic for ESL students, as they will be treated the same as their native-English peers and not provided with any of the support which is available to ESL students who choose to follow the ESL writing track. Thus, the likelihood of ESL students succeeding in SKLS 990 or English 1110 (Composition I) when placed on the mainstream track decreases.

WPA B informed me that these writing programs were already in place when she arrived 13 years ago, and therefore, her knowledge of the writing program's history and

formation is limited. However, she had much to offer in regard to the development of the writing program's current infrastructure, as she "completely revamped everything" when she accepted her position as the Director of the ESL Writing Program six years ago (personal communication, October 18, 2010). For example, WPA B explained that some of the ESL composition courses were heavily grammar-driven and neglected other important concepts that ESL students needed help with. Miller-Cochran (2010) acknowledges this occurrence of ESL composition courses being centered around grammar issues as yet another one of the five common myths about ESL students, which is that "second language writers need to focus on grammatical issues more than rhetorical ones" (p. 215). In response to such issues, WPA B focused on re-developing the ESL composition courses to focus on language concerns within the context of writing and helping ESL students develop their rhetorical skills. Her goal in doing so was to teach ESL students that "the purpose of writing is to communicate" (personal communication, October 18, 2010).

WPA B's goals and vision for the program seemed to be driven by other underlying issues that served as additional motivation to continually improve the university's ESL writing program. Therefore, I asked her to elaborate on the reasons why she felt so strongly about providing accommodations for the university's ESL students. WPA B explained that University B is an open admissions university—requirements for admission to the university are minimal—and, as a result, ESL students often matriculate in with very low TOEFL scores. Therefore, when asked about why the university's writing program makes an effort to accommodate ESL students, WPA B stated that since many of the ESL students enter into the program with very low TOEFL scores and

English writing skills, they would do very poorly if they did not receive additional support in the writing program. As a result, the writing program makes an effort to provide ESL students with instructors who have at least some type of training or background in ESL writing, yet this effort cannot be verified as successful or unsuccessful without comparison to the ESL students' perceptions of their experiences, which was my purpose in conducting the student surveys. WPA B further emphasized the importance of the ESL writing program's accommodations for ESL students, stating that "it is a matter of survival for them [ESL students]" (personal communication, October 18, 2010).

Like WPA A's writing program, the series of first-year composition courses at University B is quite complex, but offers two main options for ESL students beginning with placement tests. Upon entering University B, all students (ESL and native-English alike), are required to take an English placement test[16]. Also like University A, there is oftentimes much confusion for ESL students in regard to placement testing, as they have the option to take the English placement test designed for native-English students or the placement test designed specifically for ESL students. Depending on which test ESL students take, they can either be placed in the ESL writing program or the mainstream writing program, but once students are placed, they must remain on the track designated by their placement test (e.g., "if a student takes the ESL placement test and places into English 1110, they must take English 1110-ESL"); (ESL Placement Test Information, n.d.). Interestingly, the university's placement test designed for ESL students serves as a testimony to the university's goal of understanding and accommodating ESL students, as

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[16] Native-English students with an ACT verbal score of 20 or higher and/or an SAT verbal score of 480 or higher are exempt from the university's English placement test and are automatically placed into English 1110.

the guidelines for the ESL student placement test specifically state that "ESL students are not expected to write like native-English speakers…" (ESL Placement Test Information, n.d.). WPA B's goal is to ensure that this statement is put into practice in the first-year composition courses within the writing program, as she believes that the instruction delivered in these courses should strive to be helpful to ESL students in their academic and writing endeavors.

When asked to describe the opportunities for professional development available to administrators, faculty, and writing instructors, WPA B stated that she offers a course every other fall called "Issues in ESL Writing," which is a required course for all of the teaching assistants who teach ESL writing courses. The purpose of the course, as suggested by its title, is to train writing instructors (specifically those who teach ESL students), how to recognize and address the unique learning needs brought to the composition classroom by L2 writers. Rather than continuing to offer the course every other fall, it is her goal to start offering it each fall, which she has already received permission to do for the upcoming academic year, provided that she is not on sabbatical. In addition to the "Issues in ESL Writing" course, WPA B explained that she holds meetings with all of the writing instructors almost every week to discuss issues that writing instructors may be experiencing with their ESL students.

WPA B also placed an emphasis on discussing the training and development of the writing program's teaching assistants (TAs), who are a vital part of the ESL writing program. She stated before the beginning of each fall semester, she trains the new TAs (who often have varying levels of experience in working with ESL students) for several weeks in the scoring procedures for the ESL placement exams to ensure that they are

familiar with certain issues that are characteristic of ESL students' writing and know how to fairly assess them, as some of these TAs will be involved in scoring placement tests. She also explained that the TAs consult regularly with each other on both an informal and formal basis, engaging in discussion of important issues and strategies that help them deal with their ESL students. Furthermore, WPA B stated that the close working relationship amongst the TAs is beneficial in that the experienced TAs can then informally train and mentor the new TAs each fall. Beyond the writing program itself, TAs are also an important part of the education of ESL students as there is a group of TAs who are specifically designated to work as writing tutors in the university's writing center. Similar to the working relationship of the TAs in the writing program, one TA works as a "lead tutor" in the writing center and is responsible for training the new TAs as ESL tutors.

Drawing upon her description of the heavy reliance on TAs as instructors in the ESL writing program, WPA B transitioned into her opinion on how the university's writing program could improve in understanding and accommodating ESL students. She expressed concern over the lack of continuity in writing instructors since the turnover rate of TAs is so high and a continuous occurrence. Thus, she would like to see more permanent writing instructors in the ESL writing program in an effort to establish a more consistent infrastructure and sense of pedagogy within the ESL composition courses. In response to my inquiries about methods of assessment, WPA B expressed that this is another area of the writing program that she is interested in improving. She explained that this is often difficult, as she only gets one course release for her position and as a result, has not had the time to devise a solid plan for assessing the success of the program

and the ESL students who are affected by it. However, she mentioned that ESL students who are enrolled in English 1020 must take an exit exam, which is identical to the placement exam in order to pass the course and move into English 1110. If students fail this exam, a writing portfolio[17] is then reviewed by certain administrators and faculty. Yet while this classifies as a method of assessment in this context, it is inconsistent and only required on a situational basis. Thus, the goal to develop a better plan for assessment seems to be high on WPA B's list of priorities for improving the writing program in the future.

University C: The Director of Second-Language Writing within the Writing Programs

The WPA from University C was an associate professor in the Department of English at his university at the time of the interview. However, he had served as interim director of the second-language writing in the past and explained that beginning in 2011, he would be taking over as the director of second language writing within the writing programs at his university. As he has a strong background in second-language studies and works closely with ESL students at the university level, it was suggested by the university's director of second-language writing at the time of my interview that he might be better suited to participate in the interview for my study.

In explaining the overall structure of the writing program at the university, WPA C described a first-year composition course sequence for ESL students that seemed to be less complex and simpler to understand than the previous two universities. Unlike University A and University B, the writing program consists of both mainstream and ESL first-year composition courses, thus there is no division of the two writing programs (see

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[17]The writing portfolio consists of the students' writing over the course of the semester and is not connected with the exit exam.

Figure 3*)*. The writing program currently offers a two-semester sequence of first-year composition courses for admitted ESL students, English 107 and 108, which are equivalent to the two-semester sequence of first-year composition courses, English 101 and 102, which designed for native-English students. The ESL sections of first-year composition are designed to "increase students' ability to develop ideas, to express ideas effectively, and to engage in different literacies," as well as "help students develop sophisticated, situation-sensitive reading and writing strategies" (University C, Writing Programs webpage). While these courses have many of the same objectives as the first-year composition courses designed for native-English students, it is taken into consideration by administrators and writing instructors that ESL students have other skills (such as grammar, organization, and rhetorical awareness), which need extra attention and practice. Thus, these courses serve as an opportunity for ESL students to develop these skills and write efficiently at the university level.

In addition to the ESL sections of first-year composition, WPA C explained that about 16 years ago the "Stretch" program was designed and implemented into the first-year composition program. The purpose of this program is to "stretch the first semester English course [English 107], over two semesters, to give more time to those students who may not have a lot of experience at 'academic,' college-level writing" (University C, Writing Programs webpage).Though the Stretch program is offered for both native-English and ESL sections of first-semester, first-year composition courses, this strategy is especially beneficial for ESL students, as they often require more time during the composing process. In addition, WPA C expressed the importance of these courses' ability to create learning and writing communities, as ESL students remain with the same

classmates and writing instructor for the duration of the course (personal communication,

October 21, 2010).

College of Liberal Arts and Sciences

Department of English

Writing Program

WAC 101/English 101 *

English 101

English 102

English 107 (ESL section equivalent to English 101))

English 108 (ESL section equivlent to English 102)

WAC 107/English 107*
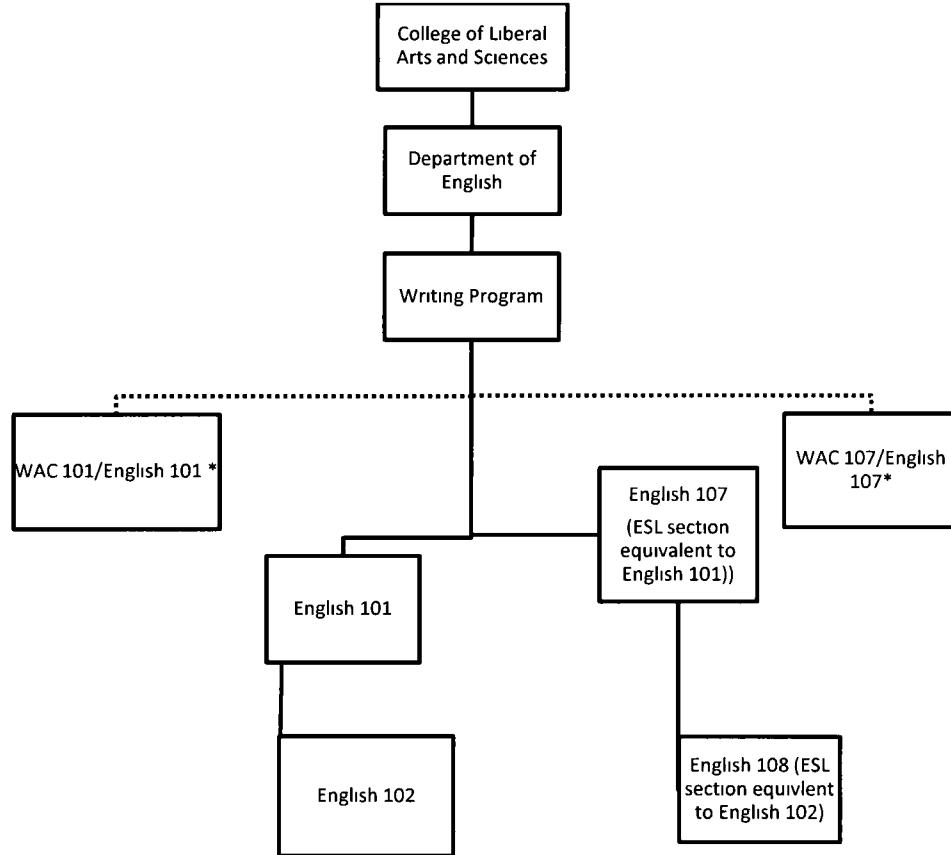
Figure 3. Organization of University C's Writing Program

*Indicates "Stretch" courses

WPA C explained that while he served as the interim director of second language

writing for one year, he learned that the program was created during the 1970s or 80s,

which was considered during that time to serve as a first-year composition track for

foreign students. When I asked him why he thought it was important at his institution to

continue to address the needs of the ESL student population, WPA C stated that the

university has one of the largest populations of international students and multilingual writers, specifically many are Korean, Thai, Japanese, Chinese, and Indian. In order to best meet and serve the unique learning needs of these students, it is therefore important for the university, and more specifically the writing program, to be aware of and conscious of the presence of ESL students in the classroom (personal communication, October 21, 2010).

After learning of the different options available for ESL students for first-year composition, I was interested in how these students were placed into the writing courses, as well as the pass rates of the different sections. WPA C stated that presently, the writing program relies on students' SAT, ACT, or TOEFL test scores to determine which first-year composition courses they should be placed into. For students who do not have scores from any of these tests, the university administers the "Accuplacer" test, which then determines which section of first-year composition that they are placed into. WPA C acknowledged that in the past, relying on the standardized test scores rather than writing placement tests has been challenged in the field of composition and second language studies. However, he explained that it has remained as the preferred method as it is "fast and cheap" (personal communication, October 21, 2010). WPA C mentioned that he is interested in studying directed self-placement and how ESL students make decisions in regard to which sections of first-year composition they feel most comfortable in. He stated that he believes sometimes ESL students' choice of first-year composition courses might be influenced by rumors they have heard from their peers (for example, ESL sections are easier or harder than other sections) (personal communication, October 21, 2010).

Though WPA C was unable to provide me with definite numbers indicating the pass rate of ESL students in first-year composition courses, he stated that he thought it was "pretty good." In order to learn more about the information behind his statement, I went to the writing program's website where I found specific percentages indicating the pass rate of students in the Stretch program. The data shows that the pass rate (92.58 %) is consistently higher for native-English students enrolled in the Stretch program than the pass rate (88.33 %) of native-English students who enroll in regular first-year composition courses. While, this data was only reported for native-English students and not ESL students, the information on the website did indicate that "overall, about 23 percent of University C's first-year student population comes from underrepresented groups (Asian American, African America, Hispanic, Native American) [and] about 36 percent of Stretch students come from these groups" (University C, Writing Programs webpage). In regard to the overall success and retention rate of ESL students, WPA C stated that for international students in particular, the rate tends to be higher, "because they don't have the option of dropping out and coming back—they have to be full time… [and] international students are much harder-working than resident students, but it is hard to say for sure" (personal communication, October 21, 2010). WPA C also informed me that the success and retention rate of ESL students who are simply multilingual and not international is more difficult to report, as the university does not have a system in place to track these students.

When I asked WPA C to discuss the professional development methods that are currently in place for the writing program, he was able to provide a good deal of information, though most of his discussion included plans for the future. WPA C

explained that in the past he has conducted a workshop and provided a resource book so that administrators, faculty, and writing instructors can read and discuss second language writing issues amongst themselves. His goal is to conduct at least one workshop per year and further develop their content. WPA C also explained that he teaches a master's level course on teaching second language writing which, in the future, will be a co-requisite for anyone who wants to teach ESL composition courses in the university's writing program. He also plans to implement a new practicum for instructors who teach second-language writing sections for the first time, in addition to them being mentored by instructors with previous experience in this area of instruction. In addition, WPA C would like to form an ongoing support group for new and experienced second-language writing instructors so that they may have the chance to regularly convene and discuss the issues that they are encountering.

Perhaps one of the most interesting portions of the interview with WPA C was toward the end when I asked about his plans and vision for the future of his university's writing program. He began by explaining that curricular change in terms of teacher preparation will be a major step in the future. Currently the writing program does not have specific criteria for hiring instructors for ESL sections of first-year composition and in the past, "those who have taken linguistics or are non-native speakers themselves" have qualified as eligible instructors (personal communication, October 21, 2010). However, as previously stated, instructors of second-language writing courses will be required to take WPA C's course in teaching second-language writing and will also have access to other resources, such as the aforementioned support group and mentoring system.

In regard to the composition courses themselves, WPA C stated that he would like to change the names of the courses in order to accommodate a wider range of students who are multilingual, although he did not specify what the course would be called. However, he believes that this will improve "how [placement] options are communicated to students so that they can make decisions that make sense" (personal communication, October 21, 2010). WPA C also expressed his goal to strengthen the multilingual aspect of the writing program and the university as a whole. He sees his position as an opportunity to "do something creative with the [cross-cultural] curriculum" and believes that this will help all students become "stronger global communicators" (personal communication, October 21, 2010). In addition, his goal is to work with the university's writing center, which is run separately from the writing program and English department, to strengthen their multilingual component by conducting regular workshops, talks, and other informative sessions. Lastly, he expressed a need to establish graduate-level courses for multilingual writers, as there are currently none in place.

University D: The ESL Coordinator

Similar to University A, University D's WPA is actually the ESL coordinator for her institution's writing program. However, her position was only created after she arrived at the university. She originally replaced an adjunct instructor who taught all three sections of ESL first-year composition courses and also handled all of the placement decisions. Recognizing the weight of this workload, the university decided to hire a second language specialist (WPA D). This resulted in the formation of an infrastructure very similar to the one in place at University A. While the ESL writing program falls under the English Department, as does the mainstream writing program, it

is situated within its own program designed specifically for ESL students within the university, which is referred to collectively as the "English Language Support Programs" (see Figure 4). The two goals of this program are "1) To provide support resources for people from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds and for people who work with them and 2) To raise awareness about the value of language diversity in [University D's] community" (University D's English Language Support Programs website).
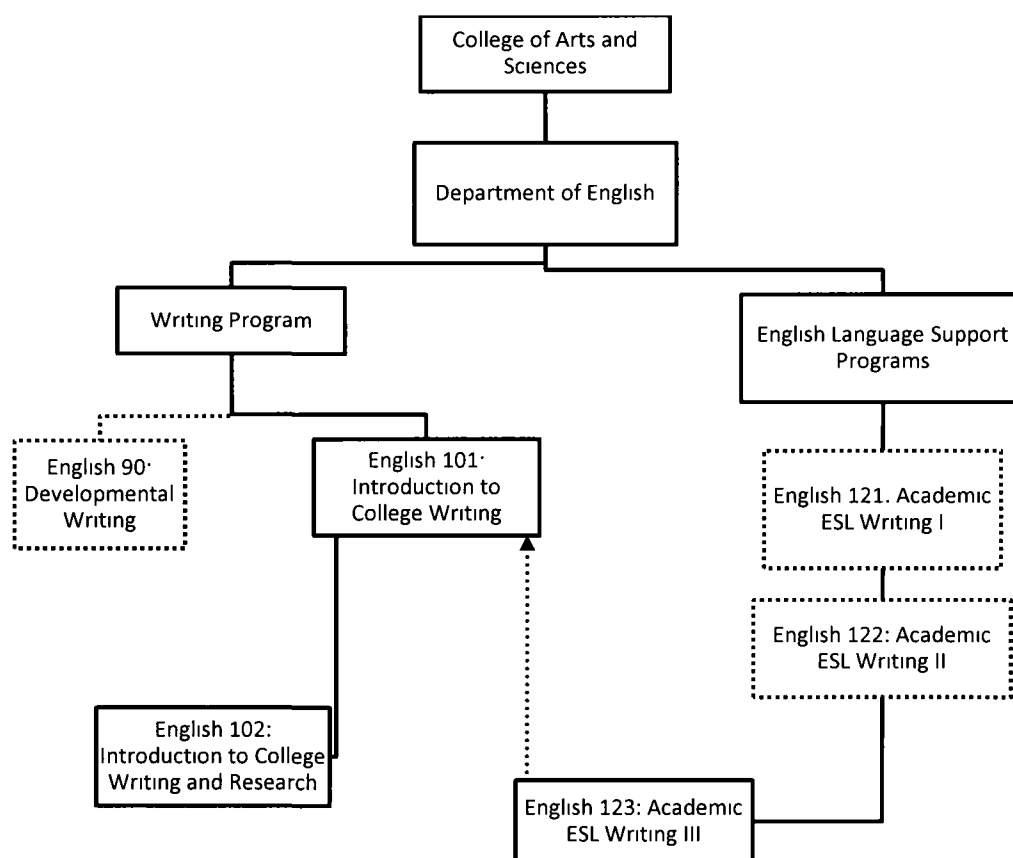

Figure 4. Organization of University D's Writing Programs

Since she has been in this position, WPA D has made several significant contributions and changes to the structure of the writing program. She explained that the

English Language Support Program offers ESL students a series of first-year composition courses specifically designed to meet their needs (see Figure 4). These courses are referred to as the "120 series" and consist of English 121: Academic ESL Writing I, English 122: Academic ESL Writing II, and English 123: Academic ESL Writing III. In order for ESL students who are placed on this track of ESL writing courses to matriculate into English 101, which is a mainstream first-year composition course that they must take for graduation credit, ESL students must pass English 123. WPA D explained that when she first came in, her job was to figure out how to coordinate each of these course sections, as she stated that "none of the first-year teachers knew what was going on in the 120 series," as they are seen by many writing instructors as completely separate from the first-year composition courses designed for the university's native-English students (English 90: Developmental Writing, English 101: Introduction to College Writing, and English 102: Introduction to College Writing and Research) (personal communication, December 21, 2010). However, WPA D recalled that she was easily able to hire instructors who were able to help her align the goals of the ESL and native English first-year composition courses so that they were more similar than in the past. Ensuring that the goal of the ESL and native English first-year composition courses are coordinated reflects WPA D's belief that "if you are teaching writing, you are teaching mono- and multilingual students no matter what you believe [and] they should all be under the same umbrella" (personal communication, December 21, 2010).

In addition, WPA D is currently working on promoting cross-cultural composition courses as a way to merge ESL and native-English students in the composition classroom. The writing program presently offers at least two sections of the cross-

cultural composition course each semester. In order to ensure that a fairly equal number of ESL and native-English students are enrolled in the sections, WPA D explained that they place a cap of five students for the course at the beginning of registration, then individually give out permission numbers to students, and lastly, they open the courses up to general enrollment.

In regard to the current method of placement for ESL students into first-year composition courses, University D's system is notably different than the placement methods of the aforementioned three universities. WPA D explained that if a student is under the age of 21, their ACT or SAT scores will get them placed into either basic writing (English 90) or mainstream first-year composition (English 101). Neither of these options includes an ESL writing course as those courses are offered under the English Language Support Program. However, WPA D stated that the writing program does rely on the Compass test for placement of incoming ESL students. Currently, the writing program also relies on the "Michigan Test," which is an older test that was developed in the 1970s and is administered by the admissions office. This test is usually only administered to ESL students who are not able to provide TOEFL or Compass scores to the university. WPA D expressed dissatisfaction with these methods of placement and expressed a desire to change how ESL students are assessed for placement into ESL or mainstream first-year composition courses. She stated that in the past, she has suggested that the university offer ESL students the option of a sit-down, timed essay test in addition to a multiple choice test. In addition, WPA D informed me that she has hired an ESL specialist who would grade these essays and place ESL students into the appropriate track of first-year composition courses, either through the English Language

Support Program or mainstream writing program. However, these ideas and strategies are still being developed and negotiated, but WPA D hopes to see them implemented in the near future.

When I asked WPA D about the importance of addressing the needs of ESL students within the writing program, she informed me that a lot of people within the writing program and the university as a whole were interested in doing so. She was excited to report that more students (ESL and native-English alike), were requesting cross-cultural sections, which as previously mentioned, WPA D is striving to promote and increase. In addition, WPA D explained that the university is located in a refugee settlement area, so the ESL student population is constantly growing and more L2 students are entering the writing program with diverse learning needs which could be possibly be served by cross-cultural composition courses. These courses would not only help L2 students from the surrounding community develop their writing skills, but would also give them the opportunity to interact with native English-speaking students, thus helping them to acquire better English speaking skills and help them to learn more about the culture.

WPA D stated that because she is referred to as the writing program's "ESL coordinator," that this might have initiated a push for ESL students to be accommodated as she obviously possesses the knowledge and skills to design and implement strategies within the writing program to support ESL students. Miller-Cochran (2010) recognizes this situation that WPA D describes, stating that it is a common belief that "as long as you have a second language writing specialist at your school, that person can handle any language challenges that [ESL] students might face" (p. 214). Based upon WPA D's

description of how she is perceived as the writing program's "ESL coordinator," it may follow that this belief described by Miller-Cochran is present within WPA D's university. Yet this position can become problematic if all second-language writing issues are brought to the one person who is seen as the "ESL coordinator," as this may leave them feeling overwhelmed and unsupported in their position.

In addition to the aforementioned ESL sections of first-year composition courses, WPA D discussed several other strategies that the writing program has in place for accommodating the unique learning needs of its ESL students. Aside from cross-cultural composition courses, WPA D mentioned that the writing program's budget allows for funding to pay tutors who are available to meet with ESL students upon the students' request. These tutors, who are available to meet with ESL students for as long as they need help are mentored and trained to specifically deal with second-language writing issues. In addition, WPA D explained that new writing center coordinators have made sure that second-language writing issues are well-addressed within the writing center to ensure that ESL students can receive the same level and quality of tutoring assistance as their native-English peers.

When asked about the pass rate of ESL students in the first-year composition courses, WPA D stated that the pass rate is fairly high for ESL students who start out in English 121, which is the first composition course in the 120 (ESL) composition series. However, she noted that the language skills of these ESL students oftentimes do not develop as quickly as those ESL students who test out of English 121 and are placed into English 122 or English 123. Though it is not certain why the students who are placed into English 121 develop English skills at a slower rate, it is speculated that it is because

these students matriculate into the university with a lower level of English skills to begin with. WPA D also pulled data from the university's Office of Institutional Research and Assessment, which reported that when ESL students begin their composition sequence in the 120 series, they are twice as likely never to make it to or complete English 101 (mainstream first-year composition). However, the data showed that when ESL students do make it to English 101, they have as much of a chance of getting an A or B as the ESL students who place directly into English 101 (personal communication, December 12, 2010). In regard to the retention rate of ESL students in the university, WPA D admitted that they do not have good data because they do not have a method of identifying students who are considered immigrants, refugees, or generation 1.5[18]. She expressed that she is currently trying to work with the admissions office to get a question on the university's application that will ask student applicants if they have had more than five years in academics that have all been in English. As a result, this question would provide more information that might allow for the writing program to better identify the linguistic background of all of its students.

While WPA D mentioned the need for more significant faculty development for writing instructors who teach first-year writing courses, she described a few strategies that had been implemented in the past that have been rather effective and well-received. For example, there have been classes held for teaching assistants that instruct them in how to handle second language writing issues or basic language issues. However, due to university budget issues, these classes are fairly infrequent. WPA D also recalled that in the past, half-day and all-day in-service training sessions have been held for composition

[18] Generation 1.5 students are considered those students who "share characteristics of both first- and second-generation immigrants and do not fit into any of the traditional categories of nonnative English speakers enrolled in college writing courses" (Harklau et al., 1999).

faculty and writing instructors. Two of these in-services were specifically based on ESL writing and featured visiting speakers, as well as WPA D as a speaker herself. WPA D briefly mentioned other development opportunities that have been held in the past, such as WAC workshops and a faculty learning community mechanism, in which faculty learning communities are formed around various topics, such as how to incorporate and address language and cultural issues across the curriculum. Lastly, WPA D emphasized that discussion on cross-cultural composition sections has been a key component in faculty development within the writing program. She stated that "writing instructors are anxious in getting more assistance and training in addressing ESL issues" and she sees a great deal of interaction and communication amongst writing instructors concerning these issues. Thus, this communication has served as one of the most important methods of faculty development, despite its informal structure.

As previously mentioned, WPA D's vision and goals for the future of University D's writing program are primarily focused on developing a directed self-placement system for ESL students, as well as developing more faculty development opportunities. She also mentioned a desire to design another system for ESL first-year composition that is not a three-course sequence and also to create more of a relationship with developmental writing instructors to form a cross-cultural section of English 90 (personal communication, December 12, 2010). In doing so, she hopes to continue to promote the idea of cross-cultural composition courses within the university's writing program. WPA D's remaining large goal is to create and implement a better method of tracking and assessing the success and retention rate of the university's ESL students. To date, she has not been able to work on this goal much, as she stated that in her position, the numerous

duties and responsibilities (which include a 2-1 teaching load with one course release each semester) result in her feeling "very fragmented" (personal communication, December 12, 2010). Yet, achieving this goal would provide the writing program with a better idea of the effectiveness of their current strategies and how the ESL students seem to be responding to them.

Discussion of Interviews

Upon reviewing the profiles and responses of the four WPAs who were interviewed for my study, I was able to detect certain similarities and trends that were reoccurring throughout all of the interviews. The areas that seemed to exhibit similar characteristics as expressed by the four WPAs were in regard to the design of first-year composition courses, disappointment in methods of placement, faculty development, assessment of ESL students' success and retention rates. In the following sections, I discuss each of these areas in the context of all four of the WPA interviews in order to analyze the similarities and trends that appeared. This enables me to form ideas and draw conclusions about the infrastructure and strategies used in these writing programs and thus, offer this information and insight to other WPAs who are seeking models of writing programs that have already established an infrastructure in which the needs of ESL students are addressed.

Design of first-year composition courses. Each of the WPAs who participated in the interview revealed that their writing programs offer either first-year composition courses or sequences designed specifically for ESL students, or an entirely separate writing program for ESL students. While each of these universities had different designs and sequences for their ESL writing courses, the concept behind them was ultimately the

same: provide the ESL students at their universities with additional placement options in order to fulfill their writing program's first-year composition requirement. These separate options for ESL students in first-year composition signify the universities' and WPAs' awareness that ESL students do indeed require special instruction that is different from the needs of their native-English peers, as Silva (1997) argues. By offering ESL students the option to enroll in first-year composition courses that are considerate of their needs, the writing programs of all four of the universities chosen for my study are making an effort to not only accommodate the ESL student population, but move their writing programs into a new age of higher education in which writing programs acknowledge the growing diversity of the composition classroom.

In comparing the four universities' overall writing program infrastructures, there were many similarities and differences. University A and D both have separate mainstream writing programs and ESL writing programs which are housed under the Department of English. However, University B and C both have one writing program under the Department of English, which contains an ESL writing program or a series of ESL composition courses. As described by WPA D in her interview, when an ESL writing program is completely separate from the mainstream writing program, there is the possibility that there will be a disconnect between the two writing programs and the goals of the composition courses will not align. This can become problematic if ESL students choose to matriculate into mainstream composition courses after taking a few ESL composition courses as they may not be familiar with how the mainstream composition courses are taught. Furthermore, if such a disconnect exists between mainstream and ESL composition courses, ESL students might become accustomed to certain

pedagogical and rhetorical strategies used by writing instructors in their ESL courses and be completely unprepared to learn through another more stringent and disciplined pedagogical or rhetorical approach that they might encounter if they switch to a mainstream composition course. For instance, Silva (1997) discussed four main pedagogical strategies (see chapter two) that are often used by writing instructors in the ESL classroom, including controlled composition, current-traditional rhetoric, the process approach, and English for academic purposes. As chapter five will indicate, ESL students may be accustomed to pattern drills and controlled composition exercises in their ESL composition courses; however, if and when ESL students enter the mainstream composition classroom where these practices are not used as often, they may struggle learning how to write under a different pedagogical approach. Therefore, while a separate ESL writing program can be beneficial in providing additional academic support and attention for ESL students, there is also a significant advantage in having one writing program under which mainstream and ESL writing courses are situated together: a connection may exist between the two tracks and course goals can be somewhat aligned.

Three of the four universities (A, B, and D) each offered a basic (or pre-composition) course in their mainstream first-year composition track designed for native English students. Reflecting this infrastructure in their ESL writing programs, Universities A and B both offered pre-composition courses specifically designed for ESL students. For University A, this course is ESL 115: Basic Writing in ESL, and for University B, this course is English 1020. This strategy of providing separate pre-composition courses for ESL students illustrates that the WPAs of these universities both acknowledge that ESL students require different instructional strategies in learning how

to write in English and have thus made sure that specific courses are included for this purpose. This concept echoes the observation mentioned by Braine (1996) and Silva (1997) in chapter two that most pre-composition courses are designed based upon the typical weaknesses of native English students and often do not cover the issues that are more problematic for L2 writers, such as higher-order concerns like articulating their thoughts and meaning, as well as gaining an awareness of their audience. However, the fact that these universities' WPAs have designed writing programs to include pre-composition courses designed specifically for ESL students shows evidence that the WPAs are aware that these separate courses are necessary for ESL students' success in writing.

Slightly different in structure, but with this similar concept in mind, University D's English Language Support Programs offers not just one pre-composition course for ESL students, but rather a series of three courses which ESL students can take before matriculating into English 101: Introduction to College Writing, which is situated under the mainstream writing program. Thus, the ESL students at this university have adequate time and opportunities to prepare for enrollment into a mainstream writing course. As previous research in second language writing studies has suggested, it takes ESL students more than one semester to learn and retain adequate English skills to successfully matriculate into a mainstream composition course. Thus, University D, as well as University C, with its "Stretch" program which lasts an entire year as opposed to just one semester, both acknowledge and take into consideration that ESL students may need more than one semester to prepare to enter a mainstream composition course.

Despite the different infrastructures of the four universities' writing programs, each of them is making a conscious effort to accommodate the ESL students. As each of the universities offer separate ESL composition courses, it could be argued that they are simply segregating ESL students. However, as noted in previous research (Braine, 1996; Silva, 1993), separate composition courses for ESL students can be beneficial as they require different instructional methods and pedagogical strategies in order to learn how to write in English. Yet, as discussed in chapter two, others such as Williams (1995), Roy (1988), and Matsuda (1996) caution against the practice of segregating ESL students into separate composition courses. This addresses one of the five myths of second language writers as perceived by Susan Miller-Cochran (2010), which is that "second language writing students can just be placed in a separate class, and then you don't have to worry about them anymore" (p. 215). While this is indeed a myth and is problematic when WPAs and instructors believe and act upon it, the four universities chosen for my study avoid segregating ESL students into such separate courses as they offer more than one placement option, which allows ESL students to eventually matriculate into mainstream first-year composition courses if they do not place into them at first. However, this leads into another issue: placement, which can produce many problems within a writing program.

Issues of placement. All four WPAs expressed dissatisfaction with their writing programs' method of placement for ESL students in first-year composition courses and mentioned in their interviews that their goal was to improve or change how placement was determined. All of the WPAs reported using some sort of placement test to determine which composition courses ESL students should be placed into during their

first year. With the exception of University A's writing program, which relies on the university-administered ESL-PIC test, Universities B, C, and D reported using ESL students' TOEFL scores. When students are unable to provide TOEFL scores, the WPAs from Universities C and D stated that their writing programs require ESL students to take university-administered tests (i.e. Accuplacer and the Michigan Test, respectively) in order to be placed into first-year composition courses.

All of the WPAs reported dissatisfaction with using test scores as the only method of placement because the process is often confusing and misleading for ESL students, resulting in inappropriate placement, which in many cases leads to poor performance or failure of ESL students in first-year composition courses. This is an important point to recognize, as numerous placement options for ESL students (while offered with good intentions in mind) can be extremely ineffective and even detrimental for these students if they are poorly placed into first-year composition sections. Furthermore, as discussed in chapter two, Matsuda (2003) states that writing placement test scores are "unreliable" criteria to use when determining the best placement for ESL students. Because ESL students are entering the university with more diversity and more complex linguistic backgrounds, it is difficult to categorize their abilities much less assess the students' writing abilities based upon one test. In addition, Miller-Cochran (2010) suggests that "determining placement and curricular options needs to be context-specific, and a placement strategy needs to be realistic, given the institution's mission and resources" (p. 215). Therefore, as suggested by Matsuda (2003) and recognized by all of the four WPAs, better placement methods are needed to more accurately decide where ESL students should begin in their English composition studies.

Faculty development. Each of the WPAs also expressed dissatisfaction with the amount of opportunities available for faculty development in regard to second language writing issues. While all four WPAs reported having conducted at least a few workshops, talks, classes, or discussion groups in the past, they all admitted to the need for consistency in this area. However, WPAs B and C did report that they both taught courses in addressing second language writing issues on a fairly regular basis, which they were attempting to implement as a required course for writing instructors who taught multilingual or ESL sections of first-year composition courses. It also seemed that when discussing faculty development and training for writing instructors in the area of second-language writing, all four of the WPAs were responsible for planning and conducting whatever opportunities were made available to their colleagues.

As expressed by several of the WPAs and as suggested in the literature that was reviewed on the topic of writing program administration (Enos, 2002; Schneider & Marback, 2004), WPAs are often overwhelmed by the responsibilities of their position (e.g. teaching, managing student and instructor issues, and administrative tasks), that they are left with minimal time to do much else, which in this context means planning and conducting faculty development and training. However, WPAs, such as the ones chosen for my study, find themselves not only in charge of ensuring that faculty and writing instructors are aware of the issues of second-language writing, but also conducting the training of faculty and instructors themselves. Recognizing this issue, Miller-Cochran (2010) states that if ESL specialists, (and in the context of this study, WPAs), are "expected to 'fix' all second language writing 'problems,' that leaves little time for them to work on such faculty development" (p. 214). Thus, it can be understood why many

WPAs have seemingly marginalized the issues of second-language writing within their writing programs; they simply do not have the time to take on such a large responsibility amidst their other duties.

In an effort to find an alternative approach to faculty development and training for writing instructors in the area of second-language writing, the WPAs of universities B and D reported relying heavily on mentoring and discussion amongst faculty and writing instructors to foster learning in this area. Interestingly, these WPAs seemed to view this method as the most effective and consistent method of faculty development, as it creates a sense of ongoing community amongst their department. In addition, this method of developing knowledge of ESL issues amongst faculty and writing instructors is viewed as highly effective by the WPAs of universities B and D as it undoubtedly relieves them of taking on the responsibility to educate faculty and writing instructors alone.

Assessment of ESL students' success and retention rates. One of the most striking similarities present throughout all four of the WPA interviews was the feeling of inadequacy in the area of assessment of ESL students' success and retention rates. Each WPA reported that they did not have any sort of consistent method of assessment in place due to (once again) the overwhelming responsibility of their position and a lack of resources. As discussed in chapter two, this occurrence embodies the difficulties that WPAs often encounter in their positions within the university, as they are often charged with the responsibility of implementing, managing, and maintaining the structure of a writing program. As there is often little time or resources left over for creativity or exploration of new concepts and strategies, WPAs, such as the four who were interviewed for my study, are limited in pursuing their goals for their writing programs.

However, as recognized by these four WPAs, change can only be implemented within their writing programs once they know the condition and effectiveness of their current strategies. As expressed by each of the participants, this can only be achieved through adequate methods of assessment, which they all hope to create and implement on a consistent basis.

* * * *

The profiles of the four WPAs who participated in interviews for my study provide a significant amount of insight into how writing programs are structured and carried out with ESL students in mind. Each of the four writing programs includes certain concepts and strategies that are suggested by much of the fields' research and literature. While the goals of the WPAs are carried out through these strategies with the objective to create a more conducive learning environment for ESL students, it is uncertain as to whether they are fully effective or not. Thus, student surveys were distributed to ESL students at these universities in order to gain additional insight into each writing program's goals and strategies from the students' perspectives. The following chapter provides discussion on the survey results and how they align with the responses from the four WPA interviews.

CHAPTER V

STUDENT DATA ANALYSIS

In order for WPAs and writing instructors to accommodate the unique learning

needs of ESL students within their university, they must not only research and implement

certain strategies regarding placement options, academic support, and faculty

development and education, but WPAs must also ensure that the goals behind the use of

these strategies are being met and reflected in the experiences of ESL students in the

writing program. Thus, the second part of my study focuses on how the perspective of

the ESL students at two of the four universities chosen for my study are instrumental in

reflecting the effectiveness of the WPAs' goals for ESL students in their universities'

writing programs. As mentioned in chapter three, researching the perspectives of the

ESL students' affected by the strategies of the WPAs also contain principles similar to

usability testing; these online surveys were distributed to ESL students in order to gather

a set of data that would provide insight into how these students—the users—interact with

the product—their university's writing program. Student surveys were distributed at

three of the four universities, however, only two universities yielded responses, which

came from University A and University B. These sets of data are presented in the

following sections and then analyzed and compared with the responses given by their

corresponding WPA in their interview. However, it should be noted that due to the small

sample size of the ESL students who responded to the surveys, I do not perceive these

results to be interpreted as generalizations, but rather intend to present them as

illustrations of two situations in which ESL students are experiencing writing programs which are seeking to accommodate their learning needs.

Student Survey Results from University A

To best understand the ESL student perspectives regarding their university's writing program and ability to accommodate the unique learning needs of the ESL population, I began the student surveys by asking the ESL students a series of questions about their speaking and writing skills in both their native and English language. When asked how they would rate their ability to speak in their first language, most of the 17 ESL students who responded to the survey seemed to be very confident, with 10 students rating their ability as "excellent." In addition, three students rated their ability as "above average," two rated their ability as "average," one rated their ability as "below average," and one student did not provide a response. However, when asked how they would rate their ability to speak in English, the ESL students seemed to be slightly less confident, with only five students rating their ability as "excellent," seven rating their ability as "above average," three rating their ability as "average," and two rating their ability as "below average." When asked how they would rate their ability to write in their first language, six students chose "excellent," five chose "above average," and two chose "average." However, unlike the results of the question which asked about their speaking abilities, the ESL students seemed to be slightly more confident when asked about their ability to write in English. Of the 17 surveyed ESL students, three chose "excellent," six chose "above average," eight chose "average," and none of the students chose "below average" or "poor."

The next question, which was important in answering the second research question, asked the students to select the type of writing course that they were first placed into at their university. Two students reported that they were placed into English 095 (the mainstream basic writing course), 10 students reported being placed into ESL 115, 116, or 117 (the pre-composition courses for ESL students), one student reported being placed into English 101 or 102 (the mainstream first-year composition course), and four students reported being placed into ESL 118 (an ESL section of English 101 or 102). To learn how students felt about their placement into these courses, they were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their placement into their first composition course. Of the 17 students who responded, five students responded that they were "very satisfied" and these students later reported being placed into ESL 115, 116, or 117 (the pre-composition courses for ESL students), ESL 118 (an ESL section of English 101 or 102), or English 101 or 102 (the mainstream first-year composition course). Six students responded that they were "satisfied" with the courses they were placed into and later reported that these courses included either English 095 (the basic writing course), ESL 115, 116, or 117, or English 101 or 102. Five students responded that they were "unsatisfied" with their placement and all of these students reported being placed into ESL 115, 116, or 117. Lastly, one student responded that they were "very unsatisfied" with their placement, which was in ESL 118.

While the majority of the students who were surveyed seemed to be either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their placement into their first composition course, which included a wide variety of all of the courses available for them to be placed into, there was also a substantial number of students who were "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied"

with their placement and these students were most commonly placed into ESL-only courses. In addition, all of the students who reported being "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied"—with the exception of two—had ranked their ability to write in English as "excellent" or "above average." Thus, it is possible that these students felt that the courses into which they were placed were below their skill level.

Students who proceeded to Part 2, which asked about pre-composition courses, were those students who had been placed into English 095, ESL 115, 116, or 117 prior to enrolling in the mainstream first-year composition courses. Students who proceeded to Part 3 of the survey were those students who had been placed directly into English 101, 102, or ESL 118. Of the 17 students who responded to the survey, 13 students chose to continue to Part 2 of the survey, while four students chose to continue to Part 3.

In Parts 2 and 3 of the survey, I asked students many of the same questions in order to gain insight into their experiences in the pre-composition series of English 095, ESL 115, 116, 117, as well as the first-year composition series of English 101, 102, and ESL 118. One of these questions (question 3, Part 2 and question 2, Part 3) asked students to rate how often they encountered difficulty in certain areas such as assignments, understanding course content, or communicating with their instructor during their pre-composition of first-year composition courses. In addition, students were asked to rate the frequency of how often they engaged or participated in certain activities, such as peer review, asking for additional help outside of class, conferencing with their instructor, or visiting their university's writing center (see Table 2). The same question discussed above was also asked in Part 3 of the survey in order to better understand how students felt about their experiences in their first-year composition courses (see Table 3).

Table 2

University A: Student Responses to Part 2, Question 3.

While enrolled in English 095, ESL 115, 116, or 117, how often did you:	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never	N/A
Have difficulty understanding a writing assignment?	0	0	7	6	4
Have difficulty composing an in-class writing assignment?	0	1	9	3	4
Have difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class?	1	0	8	4	4
Have difficulty communicating with your instructor?	0	0	3	10	4
Felt lost in a class discussion because you were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed?	0	0	5	8	4
Participate in peer review?	2	1	6	4	4
Ask for additional help outside of class?	1	2	7	3	4
Visit your university's writing center?	2	1	7	3	4
Attend a one-on-one conference with your instructor?	3	5	5	0	4

Table 3

University A: Student Responses to Part 3, Question 2

While enrolled in English 101, English 102, or ESL 118 how often did you:	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never	N/A
Have difficulty understanding a writing assignment?	1	2	8	5	1
Have difficulty composing an in-class writing assignment?	2	1	12	2	0
Have difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class?	2	2	11	2	0
Have difficulty communicating with your instructor?	1	0	3	13	0
Felt lost in a class discussion because you were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed?	1	0	7	9	0
Participate in peer review?	5	5	6	1	0
Ask for additional help outside of class?	2	4	9	2	0
Visit your university's writing center?	3	1	9	4	0
Attend a one-on-one conference with your instructor?	2	7	6	1	1

To further understand the ESL students' perceptions of the different forms of first-year composition courses offered at University A, I included a question in Part 3 of the survey that asked students which type of composition course they would prefer to enroll in if given a choice. Out of the 17 students who responded, five students expressed that they would prefer to enroll in a composition course with other ESL students only, nine students would prefer to enroll in a composition course evenly divided between ESL students and native-English students, and three students would prefer to enroll in a mainstream first-year composition course consisting of mostly native-English students.

In addition to questions about the ESL students' placement, levels of satisfaction regarding their experiences in their composition courses, and their preferences for specific types of composition courses, I chose to include a question on the survey that asked students to rate their experiences with University A's composition instructors, writing center, and ESL tutors and/or ESL specialists. Based upon the student responses, seven students rated their experiences with University A's composition instructors as "excellent," seven rated their experiences as "good," and three rated their experiences as "fair." In regard to their experiences with University A's writing center, four students reported "excellent," eight reported "good," one reported "fair," one reported "poor," and three reported that they were "not sure." Lastly, when asked to rate their experiences with University A's ESL tutors and/or ESL specialists, seven students responded with "excellent," four responded with "good," one responded with "fair," one responded with "poor," and four indicated that they were "not sure."

In regard to how well the surveyed ESL students viewed their university's ability to understand the needs of ESL students, two students rated their university as

"outstanding," nine rated it as "very good," four rated it as "average," one rated it as

"poor," and one did not give a response. When asked about their university's ability to

accommodate ESL students, one student rated their university as "outstanding," 12 rated

it as "very good," three rated it as "average," one rated it as "poor," and one did not give

a response. In addition to this question, which asked students to choose their responses

from a list of ratings, I asked students the first of five open-ended questions. While many

of the ESL students who responded to the survey chose to omit these questions, a few

students offered their thoughts and opinions on their university's writing program, which

were helpful in comparing their perspectives of the program to the goals of their WPA.

The first open-ended question asked students to explain their answer to the

question, "How would you rate the ability of your university's writing program to

understand the needs of ESL students?" One student explained that he "didn't like

writing about the same topics over and over… [it was] boring." Another student stated

that "As an ESL transfer student, I found it very irritating that because of the ill fated

organization of ESL courses, I had to take one full semester longer to graduate. In

addition, I do not feel that these classes helped me to improve my English skills."

However, other students recognized and appreciated the writing program's attempts to

understand their needs as ESL students, as one student responded:

> I see that the program is tailored to us to help adjust and be able to compete with
>
> our counterpart English speakers. I liked having English [ESL] 118 only for non
>
> English speakers but sometimes I wonder how [if I would] get better if I had some
>
> English speakers in class. I don't want to have all English speakers because I feel

will be discouraged and embarrassed if I keep making mistakes since English is my third language.

In addition, another student had praise for the writing program's efforts to understand the needs of ESL students, stating of the writing instructors, "They were experienced and helpful, understood the need of ESL students, and helped us move in the same level with non-ESL courses."

The second and third open-ended questions were placed in Part 2 and asked students to briefly discuss their experiences in their pre-composition courses (English 095, ESL 115, 116, or 117), as well as provide any suggestions that they had for ways that the WPAs might improve the writing program for ESL students. The student responses that were submitted for both of these questions are listed in Table 4.

Table 4

University A: Student Responses to Part 2, Questions 5 and 6

	Question 5. Please describe your experience in English 095, ESL 115, 116, or 117.	Question 6. What suggestion(s) do you have for your university's writing program that might improve the educational experiences of ESL students in English 095, ESL 115, 116, or 117?
Student 1	"It was weird that all we did was talk about a thesis…we spent all semester rewriting the same paper. It get[s] boring."	"Try to do some stuff. It is ESL but I think that the best way to learn will be to include something that an ESL student can relate to: culture topics. Share cultures."
Student 2	"The experience was great because I had to keep up with the reading assignments which helped speed up my reading for future classes."	"I believe we will need to focus more on writing samples. I can understand giving us take home projects which gives us enough time to write about a certain topic but sometimes it doesn't help us think quickly and implement our ideas in our writing. It will be nice if we could do some writing in class randomly."
Student 3	"It was very helpful for me to make transition to college writings,"	
Student 4	"[ESL] 115 was very easy for me while [ENGLISH] 102 was challenging for me…a big difference there."	Try to meet with individual needs than as in a group because we all come from different background. I grew up with both ASL and English background. I already have some English understanding I only need to improve my writing skills that is all.
Student 5	"I took ESL 117 during the second semester of freshman year, and on many occasions, the class was challenging and very time consuming. However, the net result was absolutely worth it. There were many times I	"ESL 117 is a 6 credit class which demands a lot of work but the credits do not count towards one graduation. This was something that disappointed me over the course of 117. I hope at least three

	was confused doing homework assignments but I never gave up."	credits will count towards graduation on successful completion of this course."
Student 6	"I learned a lot!"	"More reading assignments would help to improve the student's ability to write."
Student 7	"Our teacher was a great person because she knew exactly what problems I was having."	

Table 5

University A: Student Responses to Part 3, Questions 9 and 10

	Question 9. Please describe your experience in English 101, 102, ESL118.	Question 10. What suggestion(s) do you have for your university's writing program that might improve the educational experiences of ESL students in English 101, 102, ESL118?
Student 1	"It was challenging...I have learned a lot."	"Stop the thesis torture please."
Student 2	"My experience was great. I felt the professor was challenging us enough because whatever I wrote she was asking for more. At the beginning I thought it was too much but later on I understood that it is making my writing clearer and more focused."	"Give some focus for in class writing samples."
Student 3	"The placement was not very helpful. In addition, the organization of enrolling into the classes was very poor and therefore, I had to take one full semester longer to graduate. I did not learn much in my ESL classes and they did not help me improve my grasp of the English language. Due to the poor organization, I was forced to take my ESL classes during the last two semesters of my undergraduate studies	"Do not require transfer students who are only finishing one more year of college to take ESL 118 and English 102. I think English 102 would have been efficient. Also, find a way to let international transfer students test out of ESL 118. I wish I would not have had to waste my time with ESL 118. According to

	which does not seem very logical or helpful."	my advisor, there was no way around taking ESL 118."
Student 4		"The teachers need to build a more one on one relation[ship] with students. In addition to conference meetings, the instructor should also make it mandatory to meet every student for 20 to 30 minutes every other week. If it is too time consuming then 10 to 15 minutes meeting but meet the students and do a general survey of the student's understand[ing] of the material and how he/she is approach[ing] it to complete the assignments.
		Further, graduate student should teach only one section of a course else it is too much work for them and it can affect their contribution toward the class.
		So far I did not have the opportunity to sit in a composition class with native and nonnative speakers but I think classes like ESL118 and Englishish102 should be taught with variety of students."
Student 5	"I'm still glad that I was enrolled in ESL at [University A]."	"More reading assignments!! And I mean more books to read.
Student 6	"Female instructors/tutors were more helpful."	

Discussion of Student Survey Results from University A

As indicated by the student responses, the ESL students at University A seemed to feel more confident in their ability to speak in their native language as opposed to English. However, all 17 of the ESL students who participated in the survey rated their ability to write in English as "excellent," "above average, or "average," whereas only 13 of the 17 students chose one of these three answers when rating their ability to write in their native language. As all of the ESL students who were asked to participate in the survey had already completed and passed their first-year composition courses, it is possible that the higher level of confidence in the ESL students' writing abilities in English is the result of the instruction that they received in their composition courses. If this is indeed the case, it reflects one of the goals of the ESL writing program of University A within the Intensive English Program (IEP), which is to prepare ESL students for academic writing at the university level. However, it is also possible that some students' cultures discourage the development and practice of writing in their native language, and thus, this might also serve as an explanation for some ESL students' higher confidence in their English writing skills versus their native language writing skills. Regardless of the explanation, the student responses discussed above illustrate that their experiences in their composition courses at University A have helped them to develop more confidence in their English writing skills, thus preparing them to write at the university level and meeting the goal of the IEP.

The interview with WPA A indicated that she had a significant amount of concern regarding the placement method used for determining which composition courses ESL students were placed into during their first year. When students were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their placement into their first composition course, eleven of the

students expressed that they were either "very satisfied" or "satisfied," while only six students were either "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied." In addition to asking students about their level of satisfaction regarding their placement into their composition course, the survey also asked students to indicate which type of composition course that they were first placed into. Based upon the responses given, the majority of the ESL students who responded to the survey reported being placed into ESL 115, 116, or 117 (the pre-composition courses for ESL students). When compared with the responses regarding the students' level of satisfaction with their placement, a possible conclusion could be that since the majority of the ESL students who responded to the survey were placed into ESL 115, 116, or 117, most of these ESL students were pleased with being placed into ESL sections of pre-composition.

As previously mentioned, after the completion of Part 1, the survey directed students to proceed to either Part 2 or Part 3 of the survey based upon whether they were placed into a pre-composition course or a first-year composition course. Table 2 presents the results of student responses in regard to their experiences in their pre-composition courses (ESL 115, 116, or 117). As indicated by the results, students reported rarely having negative experiences in their pre-composition courses as far as keeping up with the instruction or completing assignments. For example, in the first five sections of the question, only two students indicated that they had some difficultly in their course: one student reported that they "often" had difficulty composing an in-class writing assignment and one student reported that they "very often" had difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class. However, the rest of the students who responded to these questions reported only "sometimes" or "never" having difficulty in these areas,

which could imply that the courses were structured in a way that adequately addressed the learning needs of these ESL students by designing writing assignments that were culturally sensitive and easy for ESL students to relate to and understand. In addition, the fact that the ESL students reported that they were able to keep up in the course with little difficulty indicates that the courses and writing instructors keep the courses at an appropriate pace for the students so that they could learn and understand the content of the course and the skills that they were being taught.

Within this same question, students were also asked to rate how often they encountered difficulty in their experiences with their instructors during their pre-composition courses. Only three students responded that they "sometimes" had difficulty communicating with their instructor, while 14 students indicated not having problems in this area. Furthermore, 13 of the 17 students indicated that at some point during their pre-composition course, they attended a one-on-one conference with their instructor. Both sets of these responses indicate that University A's writing instructors are at least somewhat aware of the unique learning needs of the ESL students in their pre-composition courses and that they are making a conscious effort to accommodate these students through the writing assignments that they design, the way that they structure their classes, and the fact that they are available to provide assistance to their ESL students and communicate with them on a regular basis. While this evidence seems to contrast with the lack of faculty development and teacher training described in the interview with WPA A, it is possible that these writing instructors are composed of some of the 12-15 faculty members who WPA A reported as having degrees in ESL studies. Regardless, the ESL students' responses seem to describe an overall competence of the

current writing instructors in addressing second-language writing issues, which have the potential to become even stronger if WPA A chooses to add additional faculty development and training opportunities that prepare writing instructors to address the issues of ESL students.

Immediately following this question, the ESL students were asked to rate their overall experience during their pre-composition courses. All of the students who responded to Part 2 of the survey seemed to be generally pleased with their experiences in their pre-composition courses, as eight students reported that they were "very satisfied" and five students reported that they were "satisfied." Students were also asked to explain their answers to this question (see Table 4). Most of the responses were positive, indicating that students had good experiences in their pre-composition courses and found them challenging yet helpful. However, one student responded that she or he found the work repetitive and boring, which might signify a problem with placement, as WPA A expressed a great deal of concern over ESL students being incorrectly placed into their first composition courses. In connection with this question, students were also asked to write in their own suggestions as to how the writing program could improve the educational experiences of ESL students who are placed into pre-composition courses such as English 095, ESL 115, 116, or 117. Many of the ESL students expressed the desire for more reading and writing assignments through which they could practice and further develop their English skills. In addition, one student specifically stated a need for assignments that ESL students can relate to. This indicates that while ESL students tend to be generally satisfied with the performance and teaching strategies used by their instructors, students seem to feel that there is a need for their instructors to improve in

their understanding of how to design assignments that they can more easily relate to. As WPA A mentioned in the interview, there are not many faculty development or training opportunities for writing instructors within the writing program. Therefore, this could possibly explain the difficulty that instructors might be experiencing in designing assignments that are appropriate for ESL students and easy for them to understand and relate to.

Upon viewing the responses given by the ESL students who proceeded to Part 3 of the survey and who had been placed directly into English 101, 102, or ESL 118, both similarities and noticeable differences occurred when compared with the responses given by the students in Part 2. Like Table 2, Table 3 presents the responses given by ESL students when asked about the frequency with which they encountered difficulty in their composition courses. However, in Part 3 this question was asked of students in regard to their experiences in English 101, 102, or ESL 118. As indicated in Table 3, there was a slight increase in the frequency of difficulties that students encountered in their first-year composition courses when compared to the frequency of difficulties that students reported in their pre-composition courses, although this could be attributed to the fact that all 17 students ended up responding to Part 3 while only 13 students responded to Part 2. When the responses from Part 2 and Part 3 were compared, only one student reported that they "often" had difficulty composing an in-class writing assignment in their pre-composition courses while three students reported that they "very often" or "often" had difficulty in this same area in their first-year composition courses. Also, whereas only one student reported that they "very often" had difficulty composing writing assignments

outside of class in their pre-composition courses, four students reported that they "very often" or "often" had difficulty in this same area in their first-year composition courses.

The level of satisfaction of students in the first-year composition courses was almost identical to the level of satisfaction indicated by those students who were placed into pre-composition courses, with eight students reporting that they were "very satisfied," seven students reporting that they were "satisfied," and two students reporting that they were "unsatisfied." These students, like those in Part 2, were also asked to describe their experiences in their first-year composition course in their own words (see Table 5). Similar to the student responses given to this question in Part 2, most of the students who chose to respond described their experiences as challenging, but rewarding. One student, however, was unsatisfied with her or his placement into the course and stated that she or he "did not learn much in [her or his] ESL classes and they did not help [her or him] grasp the English language." As noted with a similar student response given in Part 2, this student's response also echoes WPA A's concern over the placement method currently used by the writing program. However, as one of WPA A's main goals is to improve the placement strategies and methods in the near future, there is a possibility that the dissatisfaction that ESL students in the writing program are reporting will be remedied with the new method of placement in the future.

When the ESL students in this group were asked in Part 3 to offer suggestions as to how the writing program at University A might improve the educational experiences of ESL students in English 101, 102, or ESL 118, several students chose to respond. Like the pre-composition students who responded to this question in Part 2, a few students expressed a need for more reading and writing assignments that would allow them to

practice and develop their English skills. In addition, a few students indicated that they would like to have more opportunities to establish relationships with their writing instructors, whether through group meetings or weekly one-on-one meetings. The previously mentioned student who expressed dissatisfaction with placement into ESL 118 offered a suggestion in which transfer students could possibly test out of ESL 118, which might be helpful for WPA A to consider when reevaluating and restructuring the placement methods of University A's writing program.

In response to the question which asked students about their preference for composition courses, nine students indicated that they would prefer to enroll in a composition course consisting of an equal number of ESL and native English students. Otherwise known as a cross-cultural composition course, this preference of the ESL students' echoes what WPA A mentioned about the ESL population bringing "an element of cultural diversity to the university and the program" and creating a richer learning environment for everyone. Furthermore, the interest in cross-cultural composition supports Silva's (1997) ideas that cross-cultural composition courses not only enrich the education of both ESL and native English students, they also help to alleviate concerns that administrators and writing instructors have about segregating ESL students into separate composition courses from their native English peers. The benefits of combining ESL students and their native English peers was even pointed out by one ESL student's response to an open-ended question which asked the students how they would rate the ability of their university's writing program to understand the needs of ESL students. Since this student is representative of other ESL writers, their speculation that their English writing skills might improve if they had more native English students in their

class indicates that based on the survey, not only are ESL students interested in sharing cultural diversity with their native English peers through cross-cultural composition courses, but they also feel that they would improve their English speaking and writing skills if they were surrounded by more native English students in their writing classes.

Student Survey Results from University B

The survey which was distributed to the ESL students at University B was identical to the survey which was distributed to the ESL students at University A, with the exception of the specific composition course names. When asked how they would rate their ability to speak in their first language, most of the 18 ESL students who responded to the survey seemed to be very confident, with 14 students rating their ability as "excellent." Only three students rated their ability as "above average" and one student did not provide a response. However, when asked how they would rate their ability to speak in English, the ESL students seemed to be much less confident, with only three students rating their ability as "excellent," six rating their ability as "above average," six rating their ability as "average," and two rating their ability as "below average," while one student did not respond. When asked how they would rate their ability to write in their first language, 10 of the 18 ESL students who responded to the survey ranked their abilities as "excellent," five responded with "above average," two responded with "average," and again, one student chose not to respond. Similar to the question which asked students to rate their ability to speak in English, the ESL students seemed to be noticeably less confident when asked about their ability to write in English. Of the 18 surveyed ESL students, only one rated their ability as "excellent," nine responded with

"above average," five responded with "average," two chose "below average," and one did not respond.

The next question asked the students to select the type of writing course that they were first placed into at their university. Five students reported that they were placed into English 1020 (a pre-composition course), one student reported being placed into English 1110 for native speakers (a mainstream first-year composition course), 11 students reported being placed into English 1110 for ESL students (an ESL section of first-year composition), and one student chose not to respond. To learn how students felt about their placement into these courses, they were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with their placement into their first composition course. Of the 18 students who responded, three students responded that they were "very satisfied," all reporting different placements including English 1020, English 1110 for native speakers, and English 1110 for ESL students. Twelve students responded that they were "satisfied," reporting that they were all placed into either English 1020 or English 1110 for ESL students. One student responded being "unsatisfied" and indicated that they were placed into English 1020, another student responded being "very unsatisfied," indicating that they were placed into English 1110 for ESL students, and one student chose "not applicable." As indicated by these results, the majority of the students who were surveyed seemed to be either "very satisfied" or "satisfied" with their placement into their first composition course, which was typically English 1020 or English 1110 for ESL students, while the two students who were unhappy with their placement were enrolled in ESL only sections as well. In addition, I noticed that these two students who were either "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" had previously reported very high levels of confidence

in their ability to write in English, with one student selecting "above average" and the other selecting "excellent." Thus, it is possible that these students felt that they were placed into composition courses that were below their skill level.

Following this series of questions, I asked students to proceed to either Part 2 or Part 3 of the survey based upon their placement into their first composition course(s). Students who proceeded to Part 2 were those who had been placed into SKLS 990 or English 1020 prior to enrolling in the mainstream first-year composition courses. Students who proceeded to Part 3 of the survey were those students who had been placed directly into English 1110 for native speakers or English 1110 for ESL students. Of the 18 students who responded to the survey, four students chose to continue to Part 2 of the survey, while 15 students chose to continue to Part 3.

In Parts 2 and 3 of the survey, I asked students many of the same questions in order to gain insight into their experiences in the pre-composition series courses of SKLS 990 and English 1020, as well as the first-year composition series of English 1110 for native speakers or English 1110 for ESL students. One of these questions (question 3, Part 2 and question 2, Part 3) asked students to rate how often they encountered difficulty in certain areas such as assignments, understanding course content, or communicating with their instructor during their pre-composition of first-year composition courses. In addition, students were asked to rate the frequency of how often they engaged or participated in certain activities, such as peer review, asking for additional help outside of class, conferencing with their instructor one-on one, or visiting their university's writing center (see Table 6). The same question discussed above was also asked in Part 3 of the

survey in order to better understand how students felt about their experiences in their

first-year composition courses (see Table 7).

Table 6
University B: Student Responses to Part 2, Question 3

While enrolled in SKLS 990 or ENGL 1020 how often did you:	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never
Have difficulty understanding a writing assignment?	1	1	2	0
Have difficulty composing an in-class writing assignment?	0	1	3	0
Have difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class?	1	1	2	0
Have difficulty communicating with your instructor?	0	1	2	1
Felt lost in a class discussion because you were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed?	0	0	4	0
Participate in peer review?	1	0	3	0
Ask for additional help outside of class?	0	1	2	1
Visit your university's writing center?	0	1	1	2
Attend a one-on-one conference with your instructor?	0	1	2	1

Table 7

University B: Student Responses to Part 3, Question 2

While enrolled in English 1110, how often did you:	Very often	Often	Sometimes	Never	N/A
Have difficulty understanding a writing assignment?	1	1	9	8	1
Have difficulty composing an in-class writing assignment?	0	0	6	12	0
Have difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class?	0	2	6	10	0
Have difficulty communicating with your instructor?	1	0	4	13	0
Felt lost in a class discussion because you were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed?	0	0	7	11	0
Participate in peer review?	7	1	6	4	0
Ask for additional help outside of class?	0	3	9	6	0
Visit your university's writing center?	1	5	8	4	0
Attend a one-on-one conference with your instructor?	1	3	8	6	0

To further understand the ESL students' perceptions of the different forms of first-year composition courses offered at University B, I included a question in Part 3 of the survey that asked students which type of composition course they would prefer to enroll in if given a choice. Out of the 18 students who responded, six students expressed that they would prefer to enroll in a composition course with other ESL students only, nine students would prefer to enroll in a composition course evenly divided between ESL students and native-English students, and three students would prefer to enroll in a mainstream first-year composition course consisting of mostly native-English students.

In addition to questions about the ESL students' placement, levels of satisfaction regarding their experiences in their composition courses, and their preferences for specific types of composition courses, I chose to include a question on the survey that asked students to rate their experiences with University B's composition instructors, writing center, and ESL tutors and/or ESL specialists. Based upon the student responses, six students rated their experiences with University B's composition instructors as "excellent," 10 rated their experiences as "good," one rated their experience as "fair," and one rated their experience as "poor." In regard to their experiences with University B's writing center, five students reported "excellent," seven reported "good," three reported "fair," and three reported that they were "not sure." Lastly, when asked to rate their experiences with University B's ESL tutors and/or ESL specialists, one student responded with "excellent," 11 responded with "good," two responded with "fair," three responded with "not sure," and one chose "not applicable"

In regard to how well the surveyed ESL students viewed their university's ability to understand the needs of ESL students, two students rated their university as

"outstanding," 10 rated it as "very good," five rated it as "average," and one rated it as "poor." When asked about their university's ability to accommodate ESL students, one student rated their university as "outstanding," 12 rated it as "very good," four rated it as "average," and one did not give a response. Like the survey that was distributed to the ESL students at University A, in addition to this question, I asked students the first of five open-ended questions.

When asked to explain their answers to the question, "How would you rate the ability of your university's writing program to understand the needs ESL students?" a few students offered advice on how they thought the university could improve in this area. One student commented that "the reading that was given was really good but the students needed more instruction before doing any homework." Another student wrote:

Some of the [ESL] students really need to get help with their English writing skills and some [ESL students] do not really need that much of help, but the University put all the international students into the same ESL classes. I think they should separate the classes more specifically. And also, I think that it would be very helpful if there are some native English speaker students in the class.

However, other students had positive comments about the writing program's efforts to understand the needs of ESL students. One student wrote:

[I was] given assignments [that] were familiar that [I] could easily explain in [my] own words in writing. In-class writing helped me to organize my thoughts and to correct my sentence formation. [The] instructor made us aware [of] what mistake[s] we do more often and what kind of, so that helped more.

The second and third open-ended questions were placed in Part 2 and asked students to briefly discuss their experiences in their pre-composition courses (SKLS 990 or English 1020), as well as provide any suggestions that they had for ways that the WPAs might improve the writing program for ESL students. One student responded that "English 1020 was [an] easy course and not many papers to do…I remember I did four papers in this class." Another student said of the class, "It was very beneficial. The instructors did their best to improve our writing skills and expertise." None of the students in Part 2 chose to offer any suggestions as to how they thought the university's writing program might improve the educational experiences of ESL students in SKLS 990 or English 1020.

Similar to the second and third open-ended questions in Part 2, the fourth and fifth open-ended questions placed in Part 3 also asked students to briefly discuss their experiences, but in the context of their first-year composition courses (English 1110 for native students or English 1110 for ESL students). A very small number of students chose to respond to these questions, but one student seemed to be frustrated with a visit to the university's writing center, possibly for help with a composition assignment. The student wrote, "The university's writing center is not very helpful, the tutoring doesn't give a lot of help and suggestions, just correcting the grammar of the writing essays." However, one student seemed to be very satisfied with their experience in English 1110, writing simply that "it [English 1110] helped a lot." Only one student chose to provide their suggestions for ways that the WPAs might improve the writing program for ESL students, writing that "ESL students need additional common English reading (i.e.

children's' story books) and they need to focus on speaking in-class (discussion), that will help them to put their ideas in second language."

Discussion of Student Survey Results from University B

The student responses to the survey questions which asked the ESL students from University B to rate their speaking and writing abilities in both their native language and in English revealed that the majority of the students felt much more confident in their ability to speak in their native language as opposed to English. In addition, the majority of students also reported feeling more confident in their ability to write in their first language rather than in English. For example, 10 of the 18 ESL students who responded to the survey rated their ability to write in their native language as "excellent,' while only one of the 18 students described her or his ability to write in English as "excellent." As all of the ESL students who participated in the survey had completed some form of a first-year composition course, this data indicates that perhaps their writing abilities and confidence did not improve as much as after their first-year composition course as those students at University A. However, it is likely that this low level of confidence in English writing skills reported by the ESL students at University B is evident of what WPA B described as an ESL student population that matriculates into the university with very low TOEFL scores. As mentioned in her interview, WPA B emphasized that there is a great demand on the ESL writing program to provide academic support and accommodations for ESL students, as they would do very poorly without it.

Upon gaining a better understanding of University B's ESL students' feelings about their speaking and writing abilities in their native language and English, I turned my focus to the students' perceptions of their placement into their first composition

course. Of the 18 students who participated in the survey, 11 of them reported being placed into English 1110 for ESL students. Only five students reported being placed into English 1020 (an ESL pre-composition course), while only one student was placed into English 1110 for native speakers. Most students rated their level of satisfaction with their placement as either "very satisfied" or "satisfied," indicating that they did not have any major complaints or issues with University B's writing program's method of placement. However, this data conflicts somewhat with the responses concerning the writing program's method of placement given by WPA B in her interview. WPA B, like WPA A, expressed concern over the level of confusion that ESL students experience when choosing which placement test to take. Yet, the data from the student responses shows that most ESL students seem to be placed into composition courses that they feel are appropriate for them and are satisfied with their situation. As previously mentioned however, the two students who indicated that they were either "unsatisfied" or "very unsatisfied" with their placement felt that their ability to writing in English was "above average" or "excellent." Thus, it is possible that these students felt that they were placed into composition courses that were below their skill level, indicating that not all of the ESL students feel that the current method of placement is accurate.

Based upon the four students who participated in Part 2, Table 7 presents the results of their responses in regard to their experiences in their pre-composition courses (SKLS 990 or English 1020). In regard to how often students encountered having difficulty understanding or composing writing assignments (both in-class and outside of class), students responded with "very often," "often," and "sometimes." In addition, all four of the students who proceeded to Part 2 reported that they "sometimes" felt lost in a

class discussion because they were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed. This data indicate that these students encountered a regular amount of difficulty in their pre-composition courses, whether it was assignment or discussion based. Again, the difficulty that the ESL students encountered could possibly be attributed to their low confidence and abilities in the English language as described by WPA B in her interview. It seems unlikely that the difficulty that the ESL students are experiencing is due to poor performance or preparation of the writing instructors, as WPA B described that the writing instructors are well-prepared to address second-language writing issues through courses such as "Issues in ESL Writing," numerous training and development opportunities, as well as weekly staff meeting that are held to discuss issues that the writing instructors may be experiencing with their ESL students. This preparation and competence of the ESL writing instructors is also exhibited by the students' responses that they really only "sometimes" or "never" had difficulty communicating with their instructors or understanding class discussions and assignments. However, it should be recognized that WPA B's opinion, which speculates that writing instructors' training and preparation can explain the high satisfaction of ESL students, could be biased and, thus, be neither accurate nor conclusive.

When asked about how often they sought help outside of class, whether through tutoring, visiting the writing center, or attending a conference with their instructor, the four ESL students seemed to rarely engage in these activities. Most of the students chose "sometimes" or "never" as their responses to these three areas, indicating that they were either not informed of these options or not comfortable with using them. However, based upon WPA B's description of the ESL writing program, it is highly unlikely that ESL

students are unaware of the resources that are available to them, as WPA B explained that the administration and writing instructors are aware that these students are often admitted into the university with very low TOEFL scores and thus, make every effort to provide assistance and accommodations available to the students.

In Part 3 this same question was asked of the 18 students who participated in this section in regard to their experiences in first-year composition, whether it was English 1110 for native speakers of English 1110 for ESL students. The results of the student responses are displayed in Table 8. Unlike the students who were enrolled in the pre-composition courses, the majority of students in English 1110 reported that they either "sometimes" or "never" experienced difficulty in composing writing assignments (in-class or outside of class), following a class discussion, or communicating with their writing instructor. This decreased level of difficulty could be attributed to the fact that the students who are placed into English 1110 are often higher-level writers and do not struggle with as many issues as those ESL students who are placed into SKLS 990 or English 1020. As expressed by WPA B, students who are placed into pre-composition courses are often lower-level writers who are deemed by the writing placement test not to be ready for English 1110.

While a few of the students who responded to Part 2 indicated that they only "sometimes" sought help outside of class through tutoring, the writing center, or by conferencing one-on-one with their writing instructor, there was a noticeable increase in the number of students in Part 3 who reported that they "often" or "very often" engaged in these activities. While WPA B did not provide any responses in her interview that might explain this increase, it could be possible that over time, the ESL students gain

confidence and motivation in improving their writing skills, which pushes them to seek additional assistance with their writing.

In order to gain insight into the types of composition courses that the ESL students at University B would prefer to enroll in if given a choice, I asked students to choose from three types of composition courses. Unlike the ESL students from University A, a larger number of students (six) at University B reported that they would prefer to enroll in a composition course with other ESL students only. However, the majority (nine) of the students would choose to enroll in a composition course consisting of equal numbers of ESL and native English students, while only a small number (three) of ESL students reported that they would prefer to enroll in a composition course with only native English-speaking students. In looking at this data, I felt that the increased number of students who would prefer to enroll in a composition course with other ESL students only could be attributed to the fact that so many of the ESL students were indeed placed into this type of course at University B, which is English 1110 for ESL students. As this is a course that is familiar to them and they have undoubtedly become comfortable with, it might follow that they would prefer this type of composition course over others. In addition, this high preference for ESL-only composition courses could also be traced back to WPA B's description of how the ESL writing program's TAs and writing instructors are well-trained in second-language writing issues. Therefore, ESL students might prefer to stay in a composition course where they can be sure that their needs are understood and met, as opposed to enrolling in a composition course with native English students where their needs as ESL student may not be taken into consideration.

As discussed in the previous data section, when asked to rate their experiences with University B's composition instructors, writing center, and ESL tutors and/or ESL specialists, the majority of students responded that their experiences were either "excellent" or "good" in all of these areas. Based upon WPA B's belief that the writing program should strive to be helpful to ESL students in their academic and writing endeavors, it seems that this goal is being successfully met. Another example of how this goal is being met is illustrated by the students' responses to the question which asked them to rate University B's ability to understand the needs of ESL students, as the majority of students responded with "excellent" or "good." In addition, the majority of students also described University B's ability to accommodate ESL students as "outstanding" or "very good." To further understand these answers, students were asked to explain their answers to each of these questions. In regard to University B's ability to understand the needs of ESL students, one student commented that they would like to receive more instruction before they were given assignments, while another student suggested that the placement of ESL students be rethought, with more native English students included in the classes. Once again, this second comment alludes to the desire of ESL students to enroll in cross-cultural composition courses, which was also expressed by ESL students at University A.

When the ESL students who were placed into pre-composition were asked to provide suggestions as to how the WPA might go about improving these courses, students did not have any suggestions, indicating that they were either completely satisfied with their experiences in their pre-composition courses or that they felt the need to withhold their suggestions. As the data from a previous question suggests however,

few students reported being "unsatisfied" with the experience in pre-composition; thus, it is probable that some of the students did not feel comfortable sharing their suggestions or opinions on the survey. As the same open-ended question was asked of students in Part 3, this speculation could also apply, as none of the students chose to respond with their suggestions.

* * * *

As suggested by the data collected by the two student surveys at University A and University B, much can be learned from ESL students in regard to their university's writing program. While WPAs can design the infrastructure of a writing program to the best of their ability and based upon what is suggested by research in the field of second-language writing, the effectiveness of the practices, strategies, and designs used within these programs cannot be fully known without an assessment of the ESL students. Since it is these students who are affected by these programs and strategies, there is a strong need for WPAs to initiate needs analysis, which can aid administrators and instructors in discovering the best strategies and the appropriate program infrastructures for effectively accommodating the unique learning needs of ESL students in first-year composition.

One trend that emerged from both the WPA interviews and the student surveys was the theme of dissatisfaction with their current placement methods and tools, signaling that these methods may require the WPAs to assess and critique how they are being used, what their shortcomings are, and how to adjust these practices so that they produce more accurate and satisfactory results. While the WPAs seemed to exhibit a greater amount of dissatisfaction in this area than the students, it was indicated by both sets of student survey data that the students who were dissatisfied with their placement

felt that they were not properly assessed and placed. The feelings of these students are reflected in the WPAs' disappointment with the tools that are being used to assess ESL students in order to place them into the most appropriate section of composition. As all of the WPAs indicated that their writing programs rely on some form of test score to place ESL students, it is possible that these tests do not accurately assess ESL students' ability to write in English. As previously mentioned, Matsuda (2003) and Miller-Cochran (2010) both recognize the inadequacy of placement testing in determining the best courses for ESL students, as placement needs to be determined on a contextual basis and not hinged on the results of one test or a combination of standardized tests. Thus, the responses provided by the ESL students in the surveys echo the concerns of the WPAs in regard to placement methods, indicating that this particular area possibly needs to be rethought in the context of designing a writing program that is more aware of the needs of ESL students.

As explained by all four of the WPAs, there was a rather diverse variety of writing program infrastructures included in this study. University A's infrastructure is designed so that the ESL writing program is entirely separate from the mainstream writing program while University B's ESL and mainstream writing program are combined, with only an option of a separate sequence of ESL composition courses. As the ESL students in these two universities are more than likely accustomed to certain sections of composition courses, I assumed that their preferences for composition courses would be drastically different. However, when asked which type of composition course they would prefer to enroll in given a choice, the majority of ESL students at both universities chose the option of a composition course which consists of an equal number

of ESL and native English students. Though this data cannot be viewed as a generalization, the overwhelming preference for cross-cultural composition courses by ESL students at these two universities illustrates the desire of ESL students to build relationships with their native English peers and to learn from them. As indicated by WPA D and other scholars (Fernsten, 2005; Jordan, 2009; Matsuda and Silva, 1999), these cross-cultural composition sections foster the creation of a diverse and mutually beneficial learning environment for both ESL and native English students, thus transforming the composition classroom for a new era in higher education in which the student population is rapidly changing.

CHAPTER VI

CONCLUSION

Each of the four case studies presented in this thesis indicate that WPAs face a

challenging task riddled with many obstacles and arguments to consider if they decide to

pursue the idea of accommodating the growing population of ESL students by

reinventing their university's writing program. Though the four examined writing

programs vary in structure and strategies, all of the information and ideas discussed by

the WPAs contribute to the discussion and action of designing a writing program that

accommodates the unique learning needs of ESL students in addition to the native

English student population. Although the WPAs who were interviewed in my study were

not in fact WPAs of mainstream writing programs, but rather administrators or

coordinators of their institution's ESL writing program, I believe that the strategies and

practices that they have implemented, as well as the obstacles that they have encountered,

are relevant to the work of WPAs of mainstream writing programs who seek to make the

same changes to their writing program as the WPAs in these case studies have done.

Therefore, these case studies can act as models for other WPAs who are searching for

ways to reinvent or create culturally inclusive writing programs.

In response to my first research question which inquired about the strategies that

WPAs are using to develop and implement such writing programs, I discovered through

the interviews that these strategies will vary depending on certain universities' attributes

(e.g., location, funding, culture, and attitudes), which must be carefully considered before

the process of institutional invention can begin. Aside from considering the situation of

their university and writing program, WPAs must also be aware of certain issues that may

arise when reinventing their writing programs. Each of the four WPAs in this study

expressed that these issues are most often directly related to the design of first-year

composition courses, disappointment in methods of placement, faculty development, and

the assessment of ESL students' success and retention rates. Thus, WPAs must be

prepared to negotiate these issues in addition to the issues surrounding the culture and

environment of their institution.

As an administrator, a WPA must view their position as a rhetorical task in which

they must consider their situation, their audience, and how to maneuver among and

negotiate the confines and obstacles that they often face. Furthermore, by developing an

understanding of the university (specifically the writing program) as a rhetorical

construction, WPAs may be able to begin to engage in Porter et al.'s (2002) concept of

institutional critique, in which they view the writing program as a rhetorical construction

that can be reshaped and changed according to the present situation and the needs of the

audience, which in this context, is the students.

With the audience of the ESL student population in mind, the four case studies

were also instrumental in answering the second of my research questions which asked

how the goals the WPAs' strategies were being reflected through the experiences of ESL

students. Based upon the results and responses of the student surveys which were

received from two of the four universities, the current practices and strategies being used

within these institutions' writing programs are being received quite favorably by ESL

students. The students' responses, with a few exceptions, indicated a great deal of

satisfaction with having a variety of first-year composition course options to choose

from, reflecting truth in Silva's (1994) argument that ESL students need as many

placement options available as possible since their learning needs require different instructional strategies than their native English-speaking peers. Students who expressed dissatisfaction, however, seemed to disagree with their placement into certain course sections, specifically basic writing. Thus, WPAs need to take into consideration that ESL students, as Silva (1997) explains, may not view themselves as a basic writer and therefore they will be confused or displeased with their placement into such courses. To try to prevent such occurrences, WPAs must recognize that with the invention of new course structures and placement options for ESL students, new methods of placement must also be invented. While the perceptions of ESL students seem to be positive overall, it is difficult to know for certain whether or not these strategies and practices are having an equally positive effect on the pass and retention rates of ESL students, as the WPAs who were interviewed expressed that there were no methods currently in place to assess this information. Yet it seems that if ESL students are responding positively to these practices, both the pass rate and retention rate would increase as a result.

This information regarding ESL students' perceptions of their university's writing program is vital to the process of institutional critique and furthermore, institutional invention. Not only must a WPA consider their audience when deciding how to restructure a writing program, but they must also understand how the new ideas and strategies that they implement are being received by that audience. The only way that this is possible is to assess the effects of these strategies through gaining insight into how the students are experiencing them. However, the WPAs who I interviewed for my study indicated that because of the demands of their positions, they did not have the time or resources to conduct any type of assessment in order to measure the success or effects

that the strategies of their writing program were having on ESL students. Thus, their responses suggest that one of the greatest obstacles that WPAs face is finding a way to establish a method through which they are able to communicate with this audience in order to understand whether their efforts are productive and being well-received. It is for this reason that I chose to conduct surveys with the ESL students at each of the four universities since the WPAs were not able to provide such information.

Finding the time and resources to conduct assessment of how ESL students feel about their experiences in their first-year composition courses is only one of many obstacles that WPAs face in their position when they attempt to create a writing program with ESL students in mind. In addition to the observations I was able to make in my study, Miller-Cochran (2010) specifically addresses some of the more common challenges that WPAs encounter, such as negotiating among the differing attitudes and culture contained within their institution. As noted by Matsuda (2006), "the presence of language differences is the default," and this is an issue that is becoming impossible to ignore, specifically in first-year composition courses (p. 649). Once this new "default" is acknowledged and accepted, a WPA is often faced with what Miller-Cochran (2010) describes as a questioning of "the ways in which we structure programs, place students into classes, design curricula, and prepare graduate students" (p. 212). As mentioned by Preto-Bay and Hansen (2006), this questioning comes from WPAs' realization that when the population for whom instructional practices and methods are designed changes, it is necessary to rethink and redesign those practices and methods. Yet the dilemma which WPAs most often face in regard to the issue of second-language writing is that they are caught in a paradox in which they "want to honor (and if possible, preserve) students'

home languages and cultures, but are expected to teach them 'Standard American English'" (Miller-Cochran, 2010, p. 212). Thus, WPAs are caught between the growing demand to restructure writing programs in order to more accurately reflect and meet the needs of the increasing diversity of the student population and the demand placed upon them by upper administration to teach students how to write in English at an academically acceptable level. However, as Miller-Cochran (2010) argues, this dilemma does not necessarily need to be perceived as negative, but rather as an opportunity to initiate the first step in achieving change in university writing programs.

Similar to the arguments made many by scholars, as well as policy statements (CCCC Statement on Second Language Writing and Writers, 2009; Matsuda, 1999; Preto-Bay and Hansen, 2006; Shuck, 2006; Silva, 1994), Miller-Cochran emphasizes the need for WPAs to increase their understanding of ESL students by identifying these students' particular learning needs and how they are different from those of native English students. Moreover, she urges WPAs to "reveal the inadequacies and inconsistencies of current practices" in order to rethink these practices and create ones that are more effective (Miller-Cochran, 2010, p. 212). It is in these specific instances that WPAs can draw upon Porter et al.'s (2002) concept of "gaps and fissures," in which opportunities exist for WPAs to rethink and reform certain practices, thus instituting changes in the writing curriculum and writing program. As illustrated in all four of the case studies in this project, each of the WPAs revealed their thoughts and views on the inadequacies of their own writing programs and how they are currently working to change certain practices or have plans to do so in the future. Thus, it is evident that these specific WPAs are already engaging in institutional critique and furthermore, institutional

invention, as they are taking a critical look at how their programs are run, seeking to discover how to improve them and making plans to change the infrastructure of their programs in order to better serve the ESL student population.

Most of the difficulties that WPAs encounter when attempting to reinvent their writing programs to meet the learning needs of ESL students stems from what Miller-Cochran (2010) refers to as the five myths about second-language writing. Oftentimes, it is these myths, or commonplaces, which are responsible for the tendency of writing programs to ignore or marginalize linguistically diverse students, as these myths lead WPAs to believe that:

- Second language writers are easy to identify.

- Second language writers are a small minority

- As long as you have a second language writing specialist at your school, that person can handle any language challenges that students might face.

- Second language writing students can just be placed in a separate class and then you don't have to worry about them anymore.

- Second language writers need to focus on grammatical issues more than rhetorical ones (Miller-Cochran, 2010, pp. 213-215).

Because these myths have become so deeply embedded within the university over the course of time, they have developed into arguments against many of the changes that WPAs and scholars (Braine, 1996; Kroll, 1993; Matsuda, 1999; Silva, 1994, 1997) have suggested in an effort to acknowledge that the student population is no longer monolingual; instead it is a diverse mix of students who require the use of different instructional strategies and methods in the composition classroom. As discussed in

chapter two and in each of the interviews with the four WPAs in this study, these suggested changes often include ideas about providing ESL students with a variety of placement options, such as ESL-only and cross-cultural composition sections, the development of a more accurate method of placement testing, and even the invention of a separate ESL writing program. However, because the five myths mentioned by Miller-Cochran (2010) marginalize the need for changes such as these, administrators (from the department to the university-level) and others within the university who firmly believe these myths to be true often discourage or argue against WPAs who seek to redesign the writing program or implement certain strategies to better accommodate ESL students, especially if it involves an expenditure of financial resources.

Despite the institutional power of these myths, WPAs, whether they are in charge of an ESL writing program, a mainstream program, or both, can develop counterarguments to build an infrastructure based upon sound ESL writing practices. However, to do this, there are many variables that WPAs need to consider, including logistical and local issues central to the writing program. In terms of logistics, WPAs must take into consideration various factors such as the environment of their university (e.g. size and demographics), availability of resources (e.g. faculty, ESL specialists, graduate teaching assistants, and tutors), and availability of funds, as it is these variables that will influence the way that WPAs make their argument for creating a writing program that implements writing practices that consider the needs of ESL students. For example, the WPA of a small private liberal arts college who can afford to be more selective of the students they admit will more than likely not feel the demand to include ESL writing practices into their writing program as much as the WPA of a large public state university would. This is

due to the fact that small private colleges are often less diverse as they have a much smaller student enrollment than a large public university. Furthermore, due to a smaller population, the WPAs at private colleges may not have as much access to as many resources as the WPAs at larger universities, such as faculty, ESL specialists, graduate teaching assistants, and tutors. Thus, the strategies and practices that WPAs at smaller colleges choose to implement concerning ESL students will most likely be very different from those which the WPAs of larger universities choose to implement based upon the demands and resources that they are presented with in their own situation. Therefore, WPAs must be familiar with the environment surrounding their institution's writing program and determine which strategies will work best in the infrastructure that they hope to build.

The accessibility to funding and other resources is yet another logistical obstacle that WPAs often face when trying to advocate for changes within their university's writing program in an effort to include ESL students. As acquiring the necessary funds and resources is often a difficult process for any administrator or faculty member to successfully negotiate, WPAs who seek funding to support the addition of elements to assist ESL writing practices (e.g. the addition of ESL sections of first-year composition, additional faculty and TAs, a separate writing program at institutions where it is feasible) to their writing programs must also make an argument for the need for such funds. Again, this is due to upper administrators' belief in the aforementioned myths surrounding second language writing. Therefore, it is necessary for WPAs to view their position as a rhetorical task in which they consider the values and interests of their audience (in this case, upper administrators), when framing their argument to persuade

them as to why additional funds or resources are needed to support ESL writing practices. For example, WPA A stated in her interview that one of the main reasons that her university felt it was important to incorporate ESL writing practices into their writing program was that the university benefits from these students' attendance as they bring in a significant amount of money for the institution. Thus, if WPA A were to make the argument to upper administrators that additional funding was needed to support the practices that help ESL students in the writing program, she would recognize that making an appeal to the administration's interest about the financial benefits that they can gain from international students would strengthen her argument. I see this as a prospective additional "sixth" myth to Miller-Cochran's (2010) five, which acknowledges the belief that international students are vital to the financial gain of a university. However, to counter this belief, I suggest that WPAs form the argument that if the university brings these students in, then specific accommodation and strategies must be provided for them in order to ensure their academic success[19].

With these variables taken into consideration, I believe there are several ways in which WPAs, both of mainstream and ESL writing programs, might begin to formulate their own strategies and plans to reinvent or create a writing program which considers the unique learning needs that ESL students bring to the composition classroom. As illustrated by the four case studies in chapter four, there is a multitude of strategies and ideas that WPAs have incorporated into the design of such infrastructures. First, previous arguments and research (Braine, 1996; Matsuda, 2006; Silva, 1994) have suggested that ESL students need to have several placement options available for first-year composition

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[19] I would like to thank Dr. Kevin DePew for his idea of how the classical terms *tropes* and *topoi* can be applied to the context of thinking about these myths as arguments which in turn, require WPAs to form counterarguments to these myths, or commonplaces in order to make their case to upper administration.

in order to meet their learning needs. These placement options require the creation of different sections of first-year composition, such as ESL-only, cross-cultural, and mainstream courses. However, WPAs need to understand that these sections might not all be able to be implemented at once and furthermore, may require pilot sections in order to assess their effectiveness and see what adjustments need to be made, if any. Also, the addition of these different course sections would require significant changes to be made to the writing program's placement system. As expressed by all four of the WPAs in this study, methods of placement are often difficult and complex, yet crucial to the accurate placement and success of ESL students in their first-year composition courses. At universities such as my own, this would require a close working relationship between the WPA and those who are responsible for designing and administering placement tests. Thus, WPAs must recognize that the construction of relationships beyond the realm of the writing program is a critical component of redesigning a writing program with ESL students in mind.

To gain support and resources for their writing program, I suggest that WPAs establish relationships with other departments and spaces outside of the writing program, which may also help to bridge the gap that is created by the disciplinary division of labor. This is most likely to occur in the context of the basic writing course or an entirely separate ESL writing program. If WPAs decide to pursue the option of offering ESL students ESL-only basic writing courses, then they will need to recruit faculty members to teach these courses who are trained in ESL issues. As explained in chapter two, the division between TESL and composition studies has created a dynamic in which TESL focuses more on the teaching of spoken English while composition studies focuses more

on the teaching of writing in English. Therefore, if WPAs are only able to staff these sections of ESL basic writing with faculty from another department (for example, International Studies), whose background is in TESL, then they must provide additional training and faculty development opportunities in order to educate these faculty members in pedagogical practices to use in the composition classroom. Through this process, WPAs will be able to create an environment in which the two disciplines of TESL and composition studies merge, thus bridging the divide that has existed for so long.

Similar to the situation described above, I believe it is important for WPAs to consider the fact that in order to develop a system of composition faculty, tutors, and TAs who are well-informed on ESL writing issues and practices, they must invent a way to offer continuous educational and developmental opportunities on this subject. As indicated by several of the WPAs in their interviews, this can often be a challenging task, as it requires time, effort, and resources. WPAs B, C and D suggested the use of graduate-level courses in which faculty and TAs could expand their knowledge and skills in regard to second language writing. While it may be difficult for such courses to be made available on a regular or mandatory basis, they are still helpful in building a community that is aware of these issues. Also, several of the WPAs in this study mentioned that the most effective method of faculty development and education regarding second language writing issues and practices was a system of mentoring amongst composition faculty and TAs. Through establishing relationships in which faculty and TAs discuss, share, and invent strategies to use in the ESL composition classroom, not only do individuals become better informed instructors, but a community is created in which there is an awareness and a constant discussion of these issues.

Most of the strategies and ideas mentioned above stem from several themes that emerged from my discussion with the four WPAs in this study. As these themes are solely based on the analysis of four case studies, additional research must continue to be done in this area. These models represent only a small sample of WPAs' and ESL students' perspectives and furthermore, they are limited in their representation of the many different types of situations that WPAs might find themselves in based upon the characteristics and qualities of their own institution.

Thus, I suggest that further research be conducted on this issue of writing program design for ESL writers. This would involve additional studies involving a more diverse and larger sample size of universities, WPAs, and ESL students. Furthermore, I believe that it would be beneficial to interview WPAs of both mainstream and ESL writing programs to gain a better understanding of how the strategies and practices of the different WPAs compare and contrast. In regard to information gathered from ESL students to assess their perceptions of the strategies and practices being used within their writing programs, I suggest that researchers, both those looking at their own campuses and others' institutions, adopt several different strategies to collect student data ranging from paper surveys which the researcher personally distributes, electronic surveys distributed through physical and virtual spaces (such as social networking) that ESL students go, interviews, and focus groups. Each method has its advantages and limitations, so researchers will want to understand the context to decide which methods will work best. Since the ESL students' perceptions are a major part of the data needed to assess how the strategies of WPAs and writing programs are being received, the

research methods used to collect this information must be carefully considered before moving forward with additional research on this issue.

Throughout this study, the one underlying message that appeared in each of the four case studies and can speak to all WPAs is that they must recognize that through their administrative power they can initiate the invention of new strategies and practices within their university's writing program. The power that they possess through their position, combined with the strategic use of concepts such as institutional critique and institutional invention, can enable WPAs to make these critical changes to their writing program, thus successfully acting as agents of change who will lead their writing programs into this new age of cultural diversity in which all students' needs are considered and addressed.

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APPENDIX A

Writing Program Administrator Interview Questions

1. What strategies have been adopted by your university's writing program to help ESL students succeed, especially within their first year? (Prompt: What are your writing program's pedagogical approaches and what goals does the program have for ESL students? In what ways are they articulated?)[20]

2. Why do you think it is important at your institution to address the needs of ESL students?

3. How did the writing program arrive at this infrastructure and what research was used to inform these decisions?

4. What was your role in forming the infrastructure of the writing program? If the program was already in place when you came into your position, why did you keep it?

5. Do you offer any professional development, workshops, or training for composition instructors in teaching ESL students?

6. What placement options do ESL students lean toward regarding first-year composition? How do you think they feel about their decisions?

7. Statistically or anecdotally, what is the pass rate of ESL students in first-year composition courses? Is the trend increasing or decreasing?

8. What is the retention rate and of ESL students in the university and is it improving?

9. To your knowledge, how well do ESL students perform in other classes?

10. What methods of assessment do you currently use in order to measure the success of the program and the ESL students affected by it?

11. In what ways do you think the writing program could improve in understanding and accommodating the university's ESL students? Are there any plans to change the program's infrastructure in the near future?

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[20] Questions 1, 3, and 4 were adapted from Enos and Brown's *The Writing Program Administrator's Resource* (Chapter 19).

APPENDIX B

ESL Student Survey Questions

Part 1 (to be completed by all students)

1. What is your first language?

2. How long have you been speaking English?

3. *Students will be asked to rate the following on a scale of "Excellent, Above Average Average, Below Average, and Poor."*
    How would you rate each of the following?

    a. Your ability to write in your first language

    b. Your ability to speak in your first language

    c. Your ability to write in English

    d. Your ability to speak in English

    e. Your communication skills with your native-English peers

    f. Your ability to speak to an English audience

    g. Your ability to write for an English audience

4. To your knowledge, how does your university support ESL students' writing? (Check all that apply)

    a. Separate ESL sections of first-year composition

    b. Separate ESL tutoring

    c. ESL services at the university writing center

    d. On-site ESL specialist(s)

    e. Other (please specify)

5. What type of writing course were you first placed into at your university?

    a. Pre-composition course (i.e., developmental, remedial, basic) for all students

    b. Pre-composition course for ESL students

    c. Mainstream first-year composition

    d. An ESL section of first-year composition

    e. Other (please describe in the box below)

6. How were you placed into this first writing course?

    a. Writing placement exam distributed by the university

    b. Scores from the TOEFL or other test

    c. Self-directed placement

    d. Other (please specify in the box below)

7. How satisfied were you with your placement in your composition course?

    a. Very Satisfied

    b. Satisfied

    c. Unsatisfied

    d. Very Unsatisfied

Pre-composition course: If you were placed into a pre-composition course prior to first-year composition, please select "proceed to part two."

First-year composition: If you were placed directly into a first-year composition course, please select "proceed to part three."

Part 2 (to be completed only by students who were placed into a basic or remedial course prior to first-year composition)

1. How many pre-composition courses did you have to take?

2. How many semesters did it take you to pass your pre-composition course(s) and move into a mainstream first-year composition course?

3. *Students will be asked to rate the following on a scale of "Very Often, Often, Sometimes, or Never."*

   While enrolled in your first composition course(s), how often did you:

- have difficulty understanding a writing assignment?
- have difficulty composing in-class assignments?
- have difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class?
- have difficulty communicating with your instructor?
- felt lost in a class discussion because you were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed?
- participate in group work with native English peers?
- participate in peer review?
- ask for additional help outside of class?
- visit your university's writing center?
- attend a one-on-one conference with your instructor?

4. Which response best describes your experiences in the course(s)?
   a. Very Satisfied
   b. Satisfied
   c. Unsatisfied
   d. Very Unsatisfied

5. Please describe your experience in the pre-composition course(s).

6. What suggestion(s) do you have for your university's writing program that might improve the educational experiences of ESL students in pre-composition courses?

Part 3 (for all students)

1. How many semesters did it take for you to pass your first-year composition course?

2. *Students will be asked to rate the following on a scale of "Very Often, Often, Sometimes, or Never."*
   While enrolled in your first-year composition course(s), how often did you:
   a. Have difficulty understanding a writing assignment?

b. Have difficulty composing in-class assignments?

c. Have difficulty composing writing assignments outside of class?

d. Have difficulty communicating with your instructor?

e. Felt lost in a class discussion because you were unfamiliar with the topic being discussed?

f. Participate in group work with native English peers?

g. Participate in peer review?

h. Ask for additional help outside of class?

i. Attend a one-on-one conference with your instructor?

3. Which response best describes your experiences in the course(s)?

a. Very satisfied

b. Satisfied

c. Unsatisfied

d. Very unsatisfied

4. Given a choice, which type of composition course would you most likely choose to enroll in?

a. A composition course with other ESL students only

b. A composition course evenly divided between ESL students and native-English students

c. A mainstream composition course with mostly native-English students

5. *Students will be asked to rate the following on a scale of "Excellent, Good, Fair, Poor, Not Sure."*

Based on your past experience with each, how would you rate your university's

• Composition instructors

• Writing center

• ESL tutors and/or ESL specialists

• Other (please explain)

6. In what ways did your peers in your class contribute to your development as a writer in English?
    a. They were very helpful
    b. They were helpful
    c. They were somewhat helpful
    d. They were not helpful at all

7. How would you rate the ability of your university's writing program to understand the needs of ESL students?
    a. Outstanding
    b. Very Good
    c. Average
    d. Poor

8. How would you rate the ability of your university's writing program to relate to and accommodate ESL students?
    a. Outstanding
    b. Very Good
    c. Average
    d. Poor

9. Please describe your experience in the first-year composition course(s).

10. What suggestion(s) do you have for you university's writing program that might improve the educational experiences of ESL students in first-year composition?

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Education

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- Master of Arts in English; Concentration in Rhetoric and Composition

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Old Dominion University   Norfolk, VA
Graduate Assistant, Writing Tutorial Services   August 2010-May 2011
- Worked with both undergraduate and graduate students in all disciplines in developing their skills in revision and the writing process
- Assisted students with composing essay assignments, theses, dissertations, and application materials

Alliance Christian School   Portsmouth, VA
High School English Teacher   2008-2009
- Educated students grades 9-12 in English literature and writing
- Developed writing curriculum and syllabi for grades 9-12

Conference Presentations
- "Connecting with Distance Student through Online Tutorials 2: Students and Teachers Respond." The Southeastern Writing Centers Association Conference, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, February 2011.
- "Connecting with Distance Student through Online Tutorials: The Workshop." The Southeastern Writing Centers Association Conference, Tuscaloosa, Alabama, February 2011.

Membership & Positions in Societies
- Golden Key International Honour Society
- Rhetoric Society of America, Old Dominion University Chapter, Secretary
- Sigma Tau Delta, English Honor Society