

From the Editors

On Launching *Across the Disciplines*

Sharon Quiroz, Illinois
Institute of Technology



Web: <http://www.iit.edu/~quiroz/>

Email: quiroz@iit.edu

Across the Disciplines is an exciting new adventure for *Language and Learning Across the Disciplines*. Clearly, morphing into an electronic journal will make this forum for discussions of disciplinarity and writing across the curriculum programs more accessible to more people than it was as a print journal. But change always includes loss, and Mike and I have both struggled with the loss of the identities of *Academic Writing* and *Language and Learning Across the Disciplines*. However, while the loss of name recognition is worrisome, we think the quality of work found in this journal will do much to help with the transition. *Across the Disciplines*, with our subtitle, "Interdisciplinary Perspectives on Language, Learning, and Academic Writing" echoes the names and missions of the parent journals rather nicely—Mike gets credit for that.

The material in the first iteration of this volume represents an expansion of *LLAD* to include [Pam Childer's column on secondary education](#), an expansion that some *LLAD* readers have long wanted. It also expands to include reviews, which were welcome, but not published consistently in *LLAD*, and the reviewed

On Merging *LLAD & AW*

Mike Palmquist,
Colorado State
University



Web:

<https://english.colostate.edu/author/mp>

Email: Mike.Palmquist@ColoState.edu

When the WAC Clearinghouse was resurrected as a distinct entity in 2002, following a longer history in which it had initially stood on its own and then had been subsumed into *Academic Writing*, I began to recognize that I could no longer continue as editor of both the Clearinghouse and *Academic Writing*. I knew that Sharon was interested in moving *LLAD* online, partly in response to the growing cost of publishing in print and partly to expand access to the important work published in *LLAD*, and we began to talk about merging the two journals. The result of those discussions is *Across the Disciplines*, which combines the efforts and editorial staff of *LLAD* and *Academic Writing*. I can't think of a better person than Sharon to continue the mission of the two journals and I look forward to seeing *ATD* prosper. I hope you'll find its content as useful as that of its parent journals and I trust that you'll consider it when you decide to publish your next article on WAC, CAC, or ECAD.

Contributing to a journal such as *ATD* has become an issue of much interest in the field of English studies. I've written about this [elsewhere](#) and will no doubt continue to do so. Recently, I found myself expressing my enthusiasm to my

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publication of papers presented at conferences.

Charles Lowe's article, "[Copyright, Access and Digital Texts](#)," represents another expansion of *LLAD*'s mission as this merger implies. *A.W* has always published more than *LLAD* has on electronic communication, which makes sense for an online journal, and so makes sense for the newer online version.

Yvonne Merrill's article, "[Writing as Situated Thinking](#)," pretty much represents the traditional *LLAD* article, reporting research in the traditional WAC faculty training workshop.

Both hyperspatially and intellectually the [special issue on 9/11](#) presented here is something of a departure for both *LLAD* and *Academic Writing*. For me, coming to the online venue for the first time, it has been necessary to re-think my sense of a "special issue" as a complete entity in itself. It was jarring to think of including articles both relevant and irrelevant to the selected topic in the same "issue." Also, the intellectual content is not typical. It illustrates, at the profoundest level, the use of "writing" to find out what one thinks--though in at least one case, "writing" means "taking pictures." Some of the pieces are mostly about the instructor's effort to clarify his or her thinking, but most provide thoughtful material for engaging students in that project. Personally, I like the various illustrations of how instructors worked with and against disciplinary practice to come to terms with the event and its meanings. As guest editor Carra Leah Hood has rightly claimed, crisis clarifies what we do in the classroom.

Over the years *LLAD* has received many program descriptions. On the one hand those don't quite qualify as "engaging scholarly debate" in the discipline at this stage of our maturation; on the other, they provide valuable resources to readers, and readers liked them. Those will now go into the resources section, under "[WAC Programs](#)," in the WAC Clearinghouse, so they will be available.

As the volume grows we expect it to include more of the highly successful forums which have appeared in *Academic Writing*. We also have more special issues in the works:

department's chair about Chuck Bazerman and David Russell's recent edited collection, *Writing Selves / Writing Societies*, which is published by the WAC Clearinghouse. My chair expressed interest in the project, but seemed to feel that the collection wasn't really a book. I'm puzzled by this attitude, which seems to confer a mysterious power to wood pulp. To me, the codex book is simply another form of monograph. The importance is not its physical manifestation, but rather the content and the process through which that monograph was produced. *Writing Selves / Writing Societies*, like the other new books now in development in the Clearinghouse and its partner, [Parlor Press](#), went through the same development and review process as any other academic book. The *only* differences -- and these are important differences -- is that the time between completion of the editing and review process and publication is significantly shorter (weeks instead of ten to fourteen months), the cost to the reader is minimal, and the distribution of the monograph is significantly wider. Chuck Bazerman told me recently that the typical press run in a series he edited for Lawrence Erlbaum -- one of the leading publishers in English studies -- was typically less than 500 books. In contrast, within the first six months following its publication, *Writing Selves / Writing Societies* was downloaded as a complete book more than 4800 times and individual chapters were downloaded more than 20,000 times.

Clearly, if our goals as academics is to distribute our ideas as widely as possible, digital publication beats print publication hands down. It's time to dispense with our infatuation with wood pulp and turn our attention to issues of real concern. When tenure and promotion committees evaluate a "tenure book," let's hope that book is available to a wider range of scholars than is typically the case with most codex books, whose small press runs result in purchase by as few as twenty libraries world wide.

In 2002, *Academic Writing* received more than 95,000 visits, and the site containing the back issues of *LLAD* recorded a similar number. Compare these visits with the subscription rates of journals that we recognize as particularly strong,

- Cultural Studies and Writing in the Disciplines, Guest Editor: Sharon Stockton
- Oral Communication Across the Curriculum and WAC, Guest Editor: Deanna Dannels
- WAC and Linguistically Diverse Students, Guest Editor: Ann Johns
- "WAC, WID, ECAC, CAC, CXC, LAC-VAC? Incorporating the Visual into Writing/Electronic/Communication/Learning Across the Curriculum, Guest Editor: Joan Mullin

So welcome to Volume 1 of *Across the Disciplines*. Please do note that it is designed so that you can print out copies of the wonderful articles you publish here, for inclusion in your T&P file. So keep those manuscripts coming! Join us in making the best practices in writing instruction available all over the world!

such as *Written Communication and Computers and Composition*, and it's clear that digital access is growing in importance. NCTE recently recognized this and has put its journals online as well, although only subscribers have access.

Like other online journals in English studies, such as *Kairos*, *Enculturation*, and *The Writing Instructor*, *ATD* offers its work freely to the academic community. I'm excited about the prospects for this new journal and hope that you'll consider it as a home for your ideas and will turn to the work it publishes in the coming years.

Let me conclude by offering my thanks to the many people who contributed to the founding and success of *Academic Writing*. Linn Bekins, Bill Condon, and Christine Hult were the first people I turned to when I first began to consider working on the WAC Clearinghouse and they have continued to play an important role in setting the direction for *Academic Writing* and the Clearinghouse. Luann Barnes, Nick Carbone, Donna LeCourt, Gail Hawisher, Will Hochman, Kate Kiefer, Paul Prior, Donna Reiss, Martin Rosenberg, and Cindy and Dickie Selfe were also among the original group that planned the WAC Clearinghouse and, ultimately, *Academic Writing*. Their guidance and the contributions of our strong editorial board and editorial staff members, who in addition to many of those mentioned above include Jonathan Alexander, Pam Childers, Dan Melzer, and Janice Walker, have been invaluable. Thanks to all of you for your hard work, integrity, and inspiration.