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CONTEXTUALIZING ISSUES OF POWER AND PROMISE
Classroom-Based Tutoring in Writing across the Curriculum

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This chapter begins with the true tale of two tutors, Jessica and Julie. The names and departmental affiliations have been changed to protect the innocent. Both tutors worked for the writing across the curriculum program at our institution as writing consultants for writing-intensive (WI) courses during spring semester 2002. Our WAC writing consultants function mainly as classroom-based tutors who conference with students on writing assignments for the courses; however, they are also expected to attend approximately 50 percent of the class meetings and work with instructors to develop WAC exercises and support materials. In addition, they collect student writing samples and write end-of-semester reflective reports. Here are their stories.

Jessica, who worked with an instructor in the economics department, had a good relationship with her WI course instructor. He communicated clearly with her from their initial meeting. He asked her to participate fully in the instruction of writing in the course. Jessica was responsible for teaching minilessons related to writing in the discipline. Together she and the professor developed assignments and split the reading of student drafts. She held student writing conferences, which she noted students attended fairly regularly. Jessica and the professor held office hours concurrently once a week. The professor gave her access to use his office because, as a graduate student in his department, she wasn't entitled to an office. He allowed her to use his computer to draft handouts for the course. Jessica and the professor reported that "the WAC assignments and handouts helped the students to understand the importance of writing as a tool to reinforce learning as well as learning to write in ways appropriate to our discipline" (end-of-semester report). Both professor and tutor noted that from their perspectives the WI component of the course was effective. Jessica truly served as a consultant.

Julie, who worked with an instructor from the marketing department, also had a good relationship with her WI course instructor. The professor communicated with her on a regular basis, but rarely took her suggestions into account until the end of the semester. The professor asked her only to be available to students for conferencing and to assist in the grading of student writing. She wasn't asked to participate in any course writing instruction until the semester was nearly over. She suggested and developed supplemental handouts and short lessons on writing to help the students grasp the assignments they were being asked to complete. However, the professor did not seem to consider Julie's contributions. Although the department provides office space for graduate students, several teaching assistants share each office. Therefore, Julie held office hours in various places on campus in order not to disturb her office mates. She arranged conferences with students, many of whom did not attend, and she read initial drafts of all WAC assignments. Julie reported that for most of the semester the students did not utilize the conferencing services she offered. She and the professor noted that they did not feel the students' writing was as advanced as they had expected it to be nor did it improve in ways they had hoped. In a private conference with one of the authors, Julie noted that if she were teaching a WAC course, she would do it differently so that the students would have better opportunities to learn about writing.

Although these stories are the isolated accounts of just two writing consultants, their experiences are similar to others in our WAC program. Writing consultants, both graduate and undergraduate, are an integral part of most WAC programs, but they are the least defined in terms of the various roles that are assigned to them. In this chapter, we assert that the lack of clear definition for their roles may stem from various power issues inherent in the postsecondary community. Foucault writes that power is the problem of our time, arguing that "no situation is excluded from the strategies of power" (1988, 99). In other words, in every context the distribution and balance of power, or control, affect the ways in which we act and react. Who dominates our discourse determines what work we are able to accomplish and how and controls our ability to access resources and information. For WAC consultants, instructors, and students, the ways in which power is distributed among the players in the classroom is inseparable from the effectiveness of classroom-based tutoring.

These power issues manifest themselves through the kinds of support graduate assistants in our program receive from individual professors,

their departments, and the university as a whole. In our experience, power becomes most evident in the consultant/professor relationship in the areas of communication and discourse—symbolic and real—between the professor and the consultants and access to resources and support, material conditions that relate directly to the work of the writing consultant.

Both symbolically and materially, writing consultants are empowered to facilitate writing and learning in WI courses. At times the communication and material support for writing consultants are successfully provided; at other times these support systems are inadequate, consciously or not. When the symbolic and material supports are evident, writing consultants report success with their students. As we will see from the tales related below and from other examples from our program, power plays an integral role in writing consultant effectiveness and student learning. As the director of training for writing consultants, the administrative assistant for the WAC program, and a graduate student who has served as a graduate research assistant for the WAC program, we provide a critical approach to addressing issues of power and promise by presenting a brief history and our current stance on consultant training and workshops for professors at our university. In addition, through a Marxist perspective, this chapter considers ways power impacts the teaching and tutoring of writing in WAC programs. We define and contextualize power in classroom-based WAC tutoring, looking closely at forms of communication and material indications of power.

BACKGROUND

Writing across the curriculum at our university began in 1996 with a mandate and a budget from the provost. Initially, the program was headed by the director of composition, who established an interdisciplinary, ad hoc committee of full-time faculty from several colleges within the university. The director of composition and the committee established a mission and began promoting the teaching of WI courses throughout the colleges. In 1998, the university, through the English department, hired an assistant professor to serve as full-time director and teach at least two courses per academic year for the English department. The new director expanded the program in several ways. She established faculty grants for course development, which included faculty workshops on writing to learn and learning to write. The workshops emphasized constructing syllabi with sequenced writing assignments and writing instruction and assessment. She brought in experts to work with faculty: Art Young, Cynthia Selfe,

Kathleen Yancey, and others. In addition, the program funded writing consultants to work with faculty.

Although hiring writing consultants seemed like an advantage for the faculty, it sometimes complicated their academic lives as well. Not only did professors have to learn to think differently about writing within their content areas, they were expected to manage a graduate or undergraduate consultant. The first writing consultants had little training, and many were English majors who were unfamiliar with the writing in the discipline they consulted for. The role of consultants in our program was fashioned after Mary Soliday's classroom-based tutors at CUNY and the Brown University model for WAC writing consultants. Our consultants were (and are) expected to work with individual classes to provide additional writing expertise in various forms both in and out of the classroom itself. However, as the WAC program was new and understaffed, and the consultant facet of the program was in its beginning stages, there was no formal training for consultants, no written guidelines or requirements that helped professors utilize the expertise of their consultants in ways that might enhance student learning in the classroom. Therefore, most of the writing consultants spent much of their time grading papers. Many of the consultants, who were initially hired as classroom-based, on-site writing assistants for students in WI courses, became alienated from the courses they were assisting, existing only in the background behind the red pen and the professor's final comments. This was not the case for all consultants, of course, but the frustration experienced by both the professors and the assistants was evident.

During the next two years, the WAC program developed more effective consultant guidelines, consultants' training seminars, and workshops. And eventually, the program incorporated an administrative coordinator, research assistantships, and a director for training for WAC writing consultants. Focusing workshops with and beyond the professor not only provided the necessary training for writing consultants, it also communicated to departments and instructors that the writing consultant was an integral part of the WAC program at our institution.

ALIENATION, IDENTITY, AND SYMBOLIC MANIFESTATIONS OF POWER

"Alienated" is a word that several writing consultants use to describe their experiences working with professors who seem to resent their presence in the classroom. Unfortunately, some instructors appear to view consultants

as a threat to their own authority in the classroom and, consequently, fail to communicate with them. Consultants like Julie, for example, encounter professors who deny them inclusion in the way of contributions to the course pedagogy, and in the case of other consultants, professors fail to provide access to a job description or list of expectations, as well as pedagogical materials such as detailed lesson plans, handouts, and assessment guidelines. We are not suggesting here that professors consciously feel threatened or intentionally withhold communication or materials from consultants, though some may. Rather, we are more interested in the ways that the consultant's perception of alienation may affect the outcome of classroom-based tutoring. The alienation many consultants experience when occupying the position of middle management (between students and the instructor) can be directly addressed and analyzed by looking at power relationships.

In Madan Sarup's book *Marxism and Education*, he notes that "an individual cannot escape his dependence on society even when he acts on his own: the materials; skills; language itself, with which he operates; are social products" (1978, 134). In her essay "Marxist Feminism," Rosemarie Tong concludes: "[I]t is not the consciousness of men that determines their existence, but their social existence that determines their consciousness" (1989, 40). Tong, like Marx, suggests that our economic or social existence determines our sense of identity or consciousness. As writing consultants become an integral part of the university's social existence, their knowledge of themselves, their identities, and their power to affect student writing become clear as well.

Considerations of power relations in this context must include dialogue and communication, more symbolic manifestations of power that occur between the professor and the consultant and between the consultant and the students she works with. It is within this symbolic realm that issues of alienation become most powerful for writing consultants. They are acutely aware of their "identities" as middle managers in the classroom. But what must be accomplished in this dynamic is the enhancement of their identities as people of knowledge, people of experience, and people who care to share the talk and text of their discipline while encouraging students to engage in the conversation.

Much of the research that has been conducted on Marxism and education focuses on the relationship between the instructor, who functions as a manager, and the students, who fulfill the role of the workers. The introduction of a consultant into this already tenuous dynamic

dramatically alters the power structure of the classroom. Sarup claims that "the monopoly of knowledge by management is used to control the steps of the labour process and its mode of execution; conceptualization is separated from execution" (1978, 159). In Julie's case, the writing consultant works directly under the instructor, often grading papers and maybe designing a writing assignment that does not get incorporated into the class. In this scenario the consultant is alienated from the conceptual design of the course and occupies a space on the periphery of the classroom psychologically and physically. In *Karl Marx: Selected Writings*, Marx concludes that alienated labor alienates "(1) nature from man, and (2) man from himself . . . (3) species-life and individual life . . . (4) man from man" (2000, 81–83). If the consultant is not allowed into the discourse of the instructor's class, the work becomes just that—work, a means to a meager monetary end.

As a result of denied access to knowledge, the consultant also enters the classroom with very little status. Sarup notes that status "can be seen as a form of profit" (1978, 141). The instructor serves as the authority figure because he has the well-earned title of "professor," backed by years of hard work and experience. Yet, the writing consultant occupies the liminal space of being a student as well as a teaching assistant. Students sometimes disregard conferences with consultants because they view them as powerless and consider the professor to be the sole authority figure—the one holding the almighty power of assigning grades. In addition to this, some instructors might resent a graduate student in their classroom suggesting ways to improve their students' writing—and in essence, the professor's teaching. Thus, the middle-management role and identity of the writing consultant remain static.

Identity is a theme found not only in Marxist theories discussed by Foucault and Freire, but also explored on a more practical level in Black's discussion of student-teacher conferences (*Between Talk and Teaching*, 1998). In her chapter "Power and Talk," Black writes that "one concern of critical discourse analysis is access to and participation in discursive events, particularly those events which have the power to affect lives in important ways" (40). Whether the discourse involves the sharing of course information and writing instruction between a writing consultant and a professor, or whether it centers around conferences among writing consultants and students in the class, participation in the construction of knowledge creates identity for all participants in the discourse community. In addition, Black quotes Peter Mortenson, P.L.: (1989) Analyzing Talk

About Writing. In G. Kirsh ND p. Sullivan, EDS. Method and Methodolgy in Composition Research. 105-129 Carbopdale: Southern Illinoise UP. in her discussion of social construction: "Since talk involves both consensus and conflict, to document this is to document negotiation of both consensus and conflict that constitute communities. These negotiations determine nothing less than who is allowed to say what to whom, when, how, and why—the social construction of texts" (120). When a writing consultant is denied the power of negotiation with the professor, to agree or disagree or suggest methods to enhance student writing, her identity as a writing consultant for the students in the class is thus shaped. She will struggle throughout the semester to identify herself for the students as one who has the knowledge and power to help them with the writing required in the discipline.

In his introduction to Freire's *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, Macedo relates the importance of blending theory and practice, the "unity" of the two in dialogue. One without the other results in disconnection and reduction and "leaves identity and experience removed from the problematics of power, agency, and history" (Freire 1970, 17). Jessica's experience indicates that she not only had the support of her professor in terms of material power, she also had the communication and dialogue with her professor that empowered her to share content knowledge as well as writing knowledge within the discipline. As an active participant in developing pedagogy for the class, she was empowered to share both theory and practice, which then enabled students to "transform their lived experiences into knowledge and to use the already acquired knowledge as a process to unveil new knowledge" (Freire 1970, 129) It seems to us that Jessica—and her students—benefited greatly from her professor giving up power in order for her to gain identity in the classroom and in the conferencing situations. Julie, on the other hand, lacked the dialogue with the professor that would empower her to the position she needed—initially at least. Because she found ways to develop the dialogue with the students, she was eventually somewhat successful in her position. But one must wonder how much more might have been accomplished had she been empowered from the beginning. People benefit from others giving up power in order for them to gain "position" or access, but as Julie's experience demonstrates, some will find the power within themselves to get the job done.

Bakhtin's theory of the dialogic may help us to understand issues of power among WAC consultants, faculty members, and students. In *Speech Genres*, Bakhtin states that thought itself "is born and shaped in the

process of interaction and struggle with others' thoughts" (1986, 92). Adding Foucault's assertion that power is an integral part of the control and production of knowledge, it becomes clear that the consultant must not only address the notion of dialogue as a struggle with others' thoughts, but as a struggle with an authority figure or faculty member. However, students in the classroom may be at an advantage because the consultant is not often perceived as an authority figure or gatekeeper, but rather as a coach who is part of a level playing field. Bakhtin's solution to the constant struggle between speaker and listener involves the idea that "in order to understand, it is immensely important for the person who understands to be located outside the object of his or her creative understanding in time, in space, in culture" (xiii). Thus, improved communication between the professor and the writing consultant can be achieved if both parties are willing to abandon any preconceptions they may have about the other and re-create identities for each. For faculty members this may mean becoming more open to the suggestions of the consultant, and more conscious of whether or not they perceive discussions as a threat to position. Writing consultants must also be willing to embrace the power to offer ideas about improving students' writing while remaining willing to accept constructive criticism and suggestions that, hopefully, result in effective teaching strategies for the course. Language is a reflective process that allows the listener to respond to another's ideas and attempt to reveal a layer of meaning or understanding about a given subject. In this case, dialogue becomes the construction of knowledge and, indirectly, a construction of identity. If the consultant and the professor are unable to communicate effectively and share a dialogue of knowledge, then how can we expect students to benefit from and understand the concepts involved in writing to learn?

Professors need to empower consultants on at least two levels: first, they need to include and draw them into the conversation, the dialogue of their discipline and teaching within that discipline; second, they need to empower writing consultants to do the same with the students in the classroom. This means that not only are they to serve as "graders" and "reviewers" of material for courses in their respective disciplines, but they become the "object" of knowledge empowering students to engage in learning and knowing as well. As long as writing consultants remain alienated from the knowledge and communications inherent in the workplace, their identities will remain separate from the classroom. As professors model the kind of interaction that empowers students to

identify themselves as knowledgeable in their discipline and as social agents of change for students they tutor, the consultant is more likely to mirror that approach to empower the student toward shaping an identity as a writer in a particular discipline.

POWER AND ALIENATION: MATERIAL CONDITIONS FOR WRITING CONSULTANTS

The materials and other resources we have access to are dependant upon our social positioning. The more social power we wield, the more material power we hold. As we apply Sarup's idea of dependence on society to the classroom, it becomes clear that in order for consultants to function effectively, they must be able to depend on the instructor and the program to meet their material needs. When the professor or program is unwilling to offer the material support the consultant needs to conduct his job (or even merely negligent in doing so), unfortunate results often occur. The consultant denied access will be unable to understand or perform his job well. Consequently, the writing consultant is alienated, outside the social "loop." As Sarup and Marx would argue, in order for the consultant to avoid alienation, he must gain some personal satisfaction from the labor, and he must see how his work fits into the instructor's and program's plan. Providing access to the materials required to conduct that work is essential for consultants—for all productive people actually. If the consultant understands his work and has access to the materials he needs, he will find value and satisfaction in his labor. He will more likely be an effective tutor. Jessica, who fully understood the professor's goals for the course and had full access to all pedagogical materials, was able to devise assignments that meshed with the professor's pedagogy and tutor students effectively. However, Julie, whose professor did not share many course materials and expectations, ended up generating unused materials for the class and felt her tutoring wasn't very effective.

Access to space may also complicate the job of writing consultants. In their introduction to *The Power of Geography: How Territory Shapes Social Life*, Jennifer Wolch and Michael Dear assert that "social practices are inherently spatial, at every scale and all sites of human behavior" (1989, 9). What this means for writing consultants is that their access to tutoring or office space is most often equivalent to their access to agency or power. As Foucault asserts, "space is fundamental in any exercise of power" (Driver 1994, 116). Therefore, writing consultants who have been granted no space, no place to work, conference, assess, or prepare, have

no power. In the case of Jessica, the professor allowed the consultant to meet with students in his office. However, Julie had to hold office hours in various places so that she would not disturb her office mates. Office space is a practical, material need, yet it also functions as a status symbol as well. Students are acutely aware of the difference in authority between a consultant who has no office and a faculty member who does. Space becomes representative of the consultants' place within the social hierarchy between instructor and student. If the consultant has no space, she becomes alienated, hovering between students and instructor, office and classroom, no place to sit down and claim her authority. Having a designated space to work and tutor within the department or in a WAC facility helps consultants, instructors, and students to realize that consultants are a vital component of the success of the university.

Additionally, space facilitates student learning by providing a "safe" environment where students can meet one-to-one with the consultant to discuss writing. While the consultant still serves as an authority figure to the students, the power dynamic is less rigid than that between instructor and student. Hence, a consultant's office space fosters the informal atmosphere of a tutorial, rather than a formal conference with the instructor or leading authority figure.

Finally, along with course materials and space, consultants must have access to the physical, temporal, and monetary support their job requires. Without the supplies, time, and money consultants need, they again become alienated and unsatisfied with their work. In chapter 1 of *Capital*, Marx and Engels note that commodities become valuable once an exchange value is placed upon them (2001, 777). They add: "[T]he social character of labour appears to us to be an objective character of the products themselves" (778). Consequently, when defining pay or wages, value is placed upon the object instead of the amount of work/labor that went into producing the commodity. While we would disparage the idea of attaching a price tag to knowledge (the product the consultant produces), we cannot ignore the amount of labor writing consultants expend tutoring, preparing writing exercises, giving lectures, responding and assessing, and so on. All of this work takes time and requires supplies. Consultants' work must be assessed and valued for the time they expend. They must be provided the monetary and material support for all of the tasks that they complete. Again, Jessica's experience provides a good example.

At the beginning of the semester Jessica did not have an access code to the copier in her department. Nevertheless, she was responsible for

providing students with instructional handouts and assignments. A few weeks into class, she came to one of us and asked if she could have access to the WAC copy code in our department. She informed us that her professor had asked his department to provide her with a code, but the code was refused and the instructor was told not to share his code with her or face consequences. In the interim she had been paying for the copies with her own money. Making copies for a class of fifty students several times a week would surely not be economically feasible for her to continue on a writing consultant's stipend. Fortunately, the professor and the WAC program were able to work out a reasonable way for Jessica to have access to a copy machine. The lack of access to supplies potentially alienated her from her work, denied her the agency to provide the students with the knowledge they needed to complete the course successfully.

Marx's concepts of the division of labor and alienation provide us with a theoretical lens through which we can examine the writing consultants' isolation when occupying the awkward role of someone in middle management. Only when the professor and the program meet the material needs of the consultants and effectively empower them within the community of the university can the writing consultants work successfully as a vital part of the community and social structure.

MODELING A PROGRAM OF PROMISE

When we started looking at the difficulties our classroom-based writing consultants were having and how these problems might impact student learning, we did not initially notice that many of our concerns were power related. In positions of administration (those with power), power is easy to overlook or ignore. As Black writes, "When we are in our culture, firmly a part of it, it is invisible to us" (1998, 90). But as we stepped back to analyze and document what we observed, and as we began to listen and dialogue with the writing consultants, power relations manifested more than we had ever expected. In the previous sections we have demonstrated how issues of power are meshed with the work of writing consultants tutoring in our program. In this section we outline the ways we have developed/designed our program to address the problem of power in our consultant training and WI course workshops.

Program Development: Faculty Workshops and Seminars

Early in the development of our WAC program, neither the consultants nor the WI instructors had any idea how the consultants should be

working. Some were exclusively tutors and had little or no real interaction with the instructor, although they attended the class periodically. Others were merely graders who held office hours that students rarely utilized. However, there were a few exceptions in which writing consultants and instructors communicated clearly, and one example wherein the writing consultant developed an online feedback/tutorial through e-mail.

During the first year of her appointment, the WAC program director initiated a faculty grant that awarded faculty a stipend for attending a spring workshop and several follow-up seminars. The first several workshops focused on Art Young's learning to write and writing to learn concepts, emphasized WI course development, included guest lecturers and workshop hosts that incorporated technology and assessment, as well as specific activities that professors could incorporate into their syllabi. In addition, a document for professors and instructors of WI courses suggested ways in which instructors might collaborate with their consultants (see appendix). None of the models suggested using the consultant as a grader exclusively, but rather encouraged collaboration for developing course materials, assisting in the assessment of student work, participating in writing instruction and tutoring—face-to-face and/or through an online system. The professor or instructor was encouraged to view the writing consultant as a classroom-based tutor as well. Once or twice a year, the consultants might meet to share experiences, but the first years of our program focused mostly on faculty and program development.

The Identity of the Writing Consultant

Early in the development of the program at Georgia State University, the writing consultants came from the English department. During these first few years, issues of communication and space were most apparent. The writing consultant was sometimes unaware of the expectations of the professor and/or the discipline for which she tutored, and communication between them was sometimes strained. In addition, because the consultant was not working for the English department, or specifically for the particular discipline in which she consulted, space was not provided in either place. Fortunately, at that time, the director of the learning center, through the Learning Support Program, offered the location of that center as space for the writing consultants to meet with students. Providing space solved only some of the problems the consultants experienced, however. Many writing consultants expressed frustration and confusion about how to tutor the students from the disciplines, where to find the

information they needed, how to talk with the students about their writing rather than edit their papers for them. So, the director of WAC and the director of the learning center collaborated to offer training workshops specifically for the writing consultants. In addition, the director of the learning center invited the writing consultants to join the training sessions she designed for the tutors in the learning center, generally more generic sessions on tutoring and communicating with students who came to the center for help.

During the first semester that we worked with consultants, we primarily listened to their concerns. We noticed that some consultants were very happy with their positions; these consultants worked with both the students and the instructor, functioning as a true consultant to both. But as a whole, the majority of the consultants seemed a little confused about their role in and out of the classroom—were they tutors? Graders?

The first couple of spring workshops for faculty addressed only briefly the role of the consultants, but faculty were encouraged to initiate dialogue with the writing consultants about workload and student learning issues that the consultants were ideally there to help with. By the third year, faculty seeking WAC grants were asked to include a request for a writing consultant that outlined ways the instructor might work with the consultant to facilitate student learning in the WI course. We also asked that before submitting a proposal, the grant applicants identify the consultants they would like to work with and strongly encouraged professors to find a consultant who was a graduate student or undergraduate from the department designing the WI course. These changes were designed to emphasize the participation of writing consultants in the conception and implementation of WI courses. In addition, including writing consultants in the initial proposal addresses the ambiguity about the consultants' role and their alienation from the knowledge generation associated with the course development.

With three years behind us, we had gathered enough material and confidence in our program to develop a handbook for the consultants. The handbook contained writing samples and writing to learn/learning to write assignments from a number of disciplines. It included some writing theory, a history of the program—at our university and generally throughout the country—and several tutor-training guidelines. We hoped that this handbook would provide solid ground for the work we were beginning. We added workshops designed specifically for the consultant,

a time to share both frustrations and successes, teaching ideas, assessment ideas, and suggestions for future workshops.

To further develop the interaction between the consultant and the instructor at the early stages of course development, we now invite the consultants to attend the spring seminar. Fortunately, the program is able to provide the consultants with a small stipend for attending the workshop. We feel that the addition of consultants to the seminar makes a significant difference in the consultant/instructor relationship and consequently the student/consultant relationship as well. We want to provide the consultants with greater access to the resources (both discourse and material based) that they need to do their job.

The addition of the consultants to the spring workshop implemented at the end of the fourth year has been wonderfully successful. The seminar addresses the role and positioning of writing consultants, making instructors and consultants aware of how access to the discourse and materials they need would empower consultants and instructors alike and ideally increase student learning. Workshop participants work in collaborative sessions that address ways to implement access and then begin the process through collaborating on the development of assessment rubrics, revised WI course syllabi, WAC assignments and exercises, and classroom activities to enhance student learning. Instructors and consultants are also asked to develop a list of expected duties and requirements of the consultant. The collaborative aspect of the spring seminar truly facilitated the changes we hoped to see.

In the past year and a half, we have seen a significant difference in the consultant program. This semester not one consultant is used only as a grader. Consultants and instructors have attended workshops and luncheon roundtables together, and all but one pair seem satisfied with their relationship. Although we have not "fixed" all the problems inherent in the complex role of the WAC writing consultant, empowering the consultants through programmatic support of various kinds has helped everyone involved begin to understand the complexity of power dynamics at work in the writing consultant (middle-management) position. Consequently, our consultants are now better equipped to help.

CONCLUSION

As writing consultants on our campus move from alienation to identity, and as our program grows—not only in numbers, but also in advocacy for professors, writing consultants, and students—the issues of power

continually shift. And the tales of tutors shift and emerge as well. Toward the end of the semester that Julie worked as a writing consultant, she and her professor began to communicate more effectively. Julie tells us that she had to learn ways to talk with her professor about the needs of students that made "sense" to him. As Black reminds us, the amount and direction of "talk" matters (1998, 40). Julie reports that she also encouraged the students individually to come see her during her office hours, and we provided space in the WAC office. At this time, Julie is teaching her own class as a TA in her department. She tells us informally and with great enthusiasm that she uses many writing to learn activities to enhance content and to understand what students know and still need to know. And her sequenced assignments are proving effective for writing in her discipline. So perhaps one of the most rewarding outcomes for writing consultants is their empowerment in their own classrooms. Their experiences as writing consultants may indeed enhance their teaching as they join the professorate. But that's another story.

APPENDIX

WORKING WITH WAC CONSULTANTS AT GEORGIA STATE UNIVERSITY

As the purpose for writing-intensive courses in the various disciplines is to offer sequenced writing experiences with feedback, finding ways to work with graduate assistants that are appropriate and effective in particular disciplines is essential. Following are three "models" to consider as the professor and the writing consultant work together to meet the needs of the students in writing-intensive courses. Ideally, the writing consultant could incorporate all three models during the semester.

Students in writing-intensive classes need to know not only that writing is an important part of the learning process in a course, but also that someone is there to help the professor help them with the writing aspects of the subject. Early in the semester, within the first week preferably, the professor should introduce the writing consultant to the class. The professor and the writing consultant should explain the kinds of writing tasks that will occur during the semester and the role that the writing consultant will play in guiding students toward meeting the expectations of the professor (and the discipline).

SUGGESTED MODELS

Writing Consultant as Participant/Guide

In some situations, and especially the first semester a graduate student works with the writing-intensive course for a professor, an effective method for communication and for meeting the needs of students is to have the writing consultant observe the class as a participant for much of the semester. This model serves many purposes. The consultant is available to the students in the course who are then more likely to seek help and advice on their writing; it gives the graduate student an opportunity to observe the professor and to understand more clearly the expectations for the writing experiences in the class; it keeps the graduate student up-to-date about the content issues in the course; it builds community among the writing consultant, the students, and the professor. Some writing consultants and professors may want to include observation for only certain

parts of the course, and others may want to involve the graduate student more consistently during the semester. Also, as the consultant is present and becomes comfortable with the classroom setting, the professor may choose to ask the consultant for short presentations about the writing process and assignments as they emerge during the semester.

WAC Consultant as Guide

The professor and the writing consultant may choose to hold specific office hours, during which the writing consultant is available to students for face-to-face feedback on writing assignments. The place for these office hours should be arranged through the professor's department, or the WAC director may be able to arrange some time for these meetings in the writing center. In addition, writing consultants may choose to create a handout for students to inform them of these hours and to explain what students should bring to the feedback sessions. The consultants will focus on writing issues defined by the professor and guide students toward the kinds of writing valued in the discipline. Once a week or so the professor and the writing consultant should meet to review expectations, assignments, and to look at models of "good" writing appropriate for the assignment. The consultant will share concerns and successes, and together the consultant and professor can monitor progress.

Some professors may choose to conduct some feedback sessions along with the writing consultant (especially during the first part of the semester). These collaborative sessions are helpful to both the students and the writing consultants as they hear directly from the professor issues regarding content and writing pertinent to the course.

Writing Consultant as Cyber Guide

Along with the office hours for face-to-face feedback, some writing consultants and their professors may choose to work with students online. During the introduction to the consultant, students may be given an e-mail address to which they may send drafts and questions concerning the writing process and assignments. The writing consultant would reply over e-mail, providing feedback and answering questions. This e-mail address may be available through the Web site of the course, or the consultant may choose to obtain a special e-mail address through the university for this purpose. During the regular meetings between the writing consultant and the professor, the process and progress of this model of feedback should be carefully monitored.

These suggestions are meant to provide professors and writing consul-
tants with a few ways to think about working together in writing-intensive
courses. We would welcome any feedback regarding successes and pitfalls of
these options, as well as other ways to work with students and their writing.