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CLASSROOM-BASED TUTORING AND THE “PROBLEM” OF TUTOR IDENTITY *Highlighting the Shift from Writing Center to Classroom-Based Tutoring*

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In academic year 2000–01, the institutional support for writing across the curriculum at California State University–Chico solidified in the form of a tenure-track hire. Although WAC workshops for faculty in the disciplines had a long history at our campus, the hire of a new WAC coordinator made it possible to broaden the outreach and establish new programs for faculty. Based upon work begun by Judith Rodby and further developed by Tom Fox, a “Partnership Program” that joined faculty with WAC specialists and brought experienced and novice writing tutors into classrooms throughout the university became the principle means of support for faculty teaching writing-intensive courses.

By the time David Martins was hired to be WAC coordinator, there was already significant demand for assistance from faculty teaching writing-intensive courses. At the same time, Thia Wolf became the new director of the writing center. Together, Wolf and Martins, the authors of this chapter, attempted to merge the WAC program into the writing center, offering nineteen partnerships in Martins’s first year on campus. During that year, the tutors in the program provided well over fifty in-class writing workshops for classes in agriculture, health and community service, education, sociology, political science, civil engineering, geography, English, history, philosophy, mathematics, and religious studies. In addition to the workshops, tutors regularly observed classes and met with students individually and in small groups during out-of-class appointments. Depending upon their schedules, tutors occasionally attended faculty consultations among the writing center director, WAC coordinator, and participating faculty.

Making the Partnership Program a success meant providing good support for faculty in the disciplines while simultaneously complicating their understanding of literacy and literacy instruction. We knew that in order to do that, we needed to create an interdependent, interactive

structure between our tutor-training program and the structure of the Partnership Program itself. Overall, we aimed to introduce faculty to some of the ideas from literacy theory and writing center research that our tutors had encountered in our tutor-training seminar. Relying heavily on work by Nancy Grimm (1999), Laurel Black (1998), and David Russell (1991, 1995), tutors in the seminar learned to think about ways that writing assignments and expectations situated students in the academy; they learned to consider how literacy standards sort and rank students, selecting some for academic success and marking others (especially those from lower socioeconomic, nonacademic, or foreign backgrounds) as failures; and they learned to think of writing not as a single, invariable set of skills requiring mastery, but as a term for an array of socially meaningful practices used by a community in order to achieve shared goals.

Because the idea of literacy as practices rather than skills runs counter to widely held cultural beliefs and teaching approaches, we assumed at the outset that our work with faculty would be complicated and time consuming. David Russell, in his excellent history of writing in the academy, notes that ideas about the teaching of writing involve a “conceptual split between ‘content’ and ‘expression,’ learning and writing. . . . Knowledge and its expression could be conceived of as separate activities, with written expression of the ‘material’ of the course a kind of adjunct to the ‘real’ business of education, the teaching of factual knowledge” (1991, 5). It was this conceptual split we hoped to address and to mend.

Given this goal, we initially saw writing tutors situated in disciplinary classrooms as anything but “adjuncts.” We had faith in our tutors’ training and in their abilities to work with students from varied contexts, and we assumed our own work with faculty would be improved by the insights that tutors could bring to us from their classroom-based work. Thus we initially imagined a program structure that would begin with faculty-writing program administrators consultations, resulting in in-class work on writing assisted by program tutors, who would then report to us on their work and their concerns, allowing us to revise our work with faculty appropriately. The context-rich classroom setting would, simultaneously, allow us to revise and refine our approaches to tutor training as we attempted to complicate tutors’ understanding of how best to work with peers in disciplinary writing situations.

Through our semester-end survey, both faculty and students participating in partnerships indicated that there were writing practices they had learned that they would use in other classes. Many students wrote that

they would spend more time on prewriting activities. Other students listed citation, critical thinking, peer response, and proofreading as the kinds of practices they would take with them as they wrote papers in other classes. Faculty indicated the use of peer groups, assignment sequences, and the use of models for writing as the practices they would permanently integrate into their teaching. One promising success was demonstrated by the sense from faculty that their expectations to learn from the coordinators and the writing assistants about how to improve their writing instruction were satisfied "very well."

Within the contexts of a classroom-based program, however, the possibility of ongoing revision is limited by the demands of each faculty member's syllabus and his or her expectations of tutor work negotiated during the initial consultations with administrators. Thus, while the tutors who worked in the Partnership Program had a semester's worth of experience working in one-to-one situations in the writing center, which offered them overt authority to make decisions about the focus of each writing session and the flexibility to change pedagogical approaches when needed, the partnerships offered tutors neither the same kind of authority nor flexibility. Tensions arose when tutors' sense of identity, based on writing center training in literacy theory, clashed with teachers' authority to construct writing assignments and classroom activities using a skills-based model of literacy. In the writing center, tutors experienced themselves as agents in writing sessions, while in Partnership classrooms tutors lost their sense of identity as agent when they encountered institutional pressure to comply with faculty agendas and instructions. Under this pressure, tutors sometimes engaged in critiques of teachers' pedagogy, abdicated responsibility for Partnership work, or complained to one another about their confusions and difficulties. This chapter examines these responses to the shift in tutors' roles. By viewing tutors' reactions to their work as an invitation to revise tutor training, we argue for the importance of moving tutors from a position of individual authority in a one-to-one writing session to a more complex position of shared authority required in the classroom-based setting. Our work with tutors in a classroom-based WAC program points to some difficulties with and possible approaches to training tutors who do situated literacy work.

IDENTITY FORMATION: TUTORS AS NEW PROFESSIONALS

In her visionary work, *Good Intentions*, Nancy Grimm argues that writing center workers "can be held responsible for changing the habits and

attitudes that contribute to oppression” (1999, 107–8) and describes her hope that *Good Intentions* will be read as “an invitation to reconsider the work of writing centers in higher education, to imagine a practice where social justice replaces pale versions of fairness” (120). Tutors in the Partnership Program emerged from an administrative model that stressed their role as agents for change in the university setting. They worked with the writing center administrator in training meetings, one-to-one conversations, and classroom discussions to name and address writing center problems, review and reconsider tutoring practices, and write critiques of program structures. This approach uses Grimm’s *Good Intentions* as a guide to reimagining the writing center, not as a site for the remediation and correction of students-in-the-wrong, but as a site for the inclusion and support of students who might previously have been excluded from the university,

For many students working as tutors in the CSU–Chico Writing Center, the role of tutor is the first professional role of their career. The administrative and training model they encounter in the center encourages them to question, to reflect, to make changes in their own teaching practices, and to suggest program changes to the center’s administrator. While many find this role unexpectedly demanding, most come to regard it as an engaging opportunity. Many tutors see the writing center as a site for future research and some see it as a possible career home beyond graduate school. Their sense of themselves as developing professionals helps them to construct self-definitions that place them centrally in conversations about literacy practices, instructional strategies, and administrative structures. The role definitions that emerge from their training include a strong sense of purpose, a belief in conversation and negotiation, and a belief in their right to participate in work-related conversations, negotiations, and structural change.

TEACHERS, TUTORS, AND WPAS: SHARED AUTHORITY AND ROLE CHANGES

As we look back at our WAC experiences and our work with tutors in the Partnership Program, we clearly see the strong institutional demand—on us, on program faculty, and on tutors—for the effective, efficient use of time and resources and for verifiable positive outcomes. The professional culture at our university is, we assume, similar to that of many other teaching institutions, where faculty must demonstrate regular improvement in teaching evaluations and progress/work on teaching. Every year, for

example, tenure-track faculty are evaluated by department, college, and university committees that review letters, teaching evaluations, a personal narrative, and any other demonstration of contributions to teaching, professional development, and service.

Because the majority of the faculty we worked with in partnerships were not yet tenured, they often expressed concerns about the Partnership Program's role in their retention, promotion, and tenure review. More than one teacher, for instance, expressed a fear that modifying teaching practices would result in poor student evaluations at the end of the term. Newer faculty also noted that there was no clear indication of the kind of "value" that participation in such a program might have in department, college, and university review committees. These faculty concerns certainly influenced our own identity construction as administrators relative to the WAC work. We heard faculty concerns, felt a need to respond to them, and believed we were positioned to do so. Given the pressures on the tenure-track faculty to continually produce strong teaching evaluations, our interest in placing trained tutors in their classes asked faculty, in effect, to relinquish some of their authority and to open up their classrooms for experimentation. For untenured faculty especially, our request for teachers to experiment with their pedagogy amounted to significant professional risk.

Mindful that faculty needed encouragement and support as they revised class plans, we poured our energies into faculty consultations and into the creation of writing workshops based on the faculty's stated needs. The result was that we thought of classroom-based tutoring as a response to faculty concerns more than as a site for tutor training. Our response to faculty concerns placed us more on the "side" of faculty than on the "side" of tutors, limiting our ability at the time to see faculty development and tutor training as mutually dependent, dialectical activities. Thus we were more likely to respond to faculty worries than to tutors' worries, and more apt to regard well-received classroom workshops as information about the program's success than to place emphasis on tutors' critical commentary.¹

The cultural capital of WAC in the university setting was not sufficient to encourage change in most teachers' approaches to writing instruction. As a result, though many teachers participated in the program, for some that "participation" involved little more than scheduling classroom periods for tutor-led workshops. During these workshops, teachers sometimes absented themselves or sat in the back of the classroom doing paperwork. Such behaviors clearly indicated that the teachers understood writing to

be separate from disciplinary content. That teachers felt it reasonable to hand their classes over to tutors, some of whom were undergraduates, indicated as well that they saw the writing component of the course as basic, a low-level skill that could be handled by individuals with far less training than their own.

Another kind of teacher emerged in the context of the program, however. These professionals developed and maintained some level of interest in literacy theory, especially in the idea that disciplinary genres “evolved to meet [disciplinary] objectives” (Russell 1995, 66) and that writing in a discipline cannot be adequately taught while the myth of a single, “universal educated discourse” (60) remains in place. Teachers intrigued by this view of writing in the disciplines often spent significant amounts of time revising writing assignments with an aim to demystify for their students the reasons why certain kinds of writing were valued in a given field. This shift in understanding did not, however, necessarily result in major pedagogical changes. Rather, the changes we saw repeatedly had more to do with assignment design and making room within their calendar for WAC-designed writing workshops than with discipline-specific ways of discussing and teaching writing.

In the program’s busiest year, as we said, the demand for these in-class workshops was so high that tutors gave over fifty workshops in twelve different disciplines. While this indicates WAC popularity, it does not indicate, or necessarily lead to, a change in how faculty understand literacy instruction. That is, WAC-lead workshops may be viewed by faculty as a way “to teach students to write better in general,” rather than as a way to “improv[e] the uses of the tool of writing” in a particular disciplinary setting or undertaking (Russell 1995, 69). The necessary guiding involvement of the faculty member, who was, after all, the expert in disciplinary genres, remained elusive in most partnerships. Even when faculty remained present in classroom workshops, moved among groups, and answered questions, their announcement that writing center personnel would “handle” or “lead” the class session signaled to students that writing existed in some way apart from the central work of the course, the part directly controlled by the teacher.

Because we wanted to assist faculty with the work they identified as important for their teaching, and at the same time needed to demonstrate the program’s effectiveness to both the administration and the faculty, in the end we accepted and acted on faculty requests for individual workshops that focused on teachers’ biggest worries about student

writing: research, plagiarism, organization, and editing. At the same time, we engaged faculty in ongoing conversations about literacy theory and its application to future classes they might teach. This way of working encouraged many faculty to make repeat requests for WAC support across semesters, allowing us, we hoped, to encourage further development over time. In some cases, though, depending on the extent of faculty involvement in providing disciplinary reasons for each workshop's focus, the effect of this approach was to continue breaking writing down into separate parts that seemed to exist on their own, as skills to be mastered without reference to disciplinary values or aims.

This situation created a crucial point of conflict for several program tutors because, as a result of our strong focus on faculty, we came to employ classroom-based tutoring more and more as a response to faculty concerns, with less emphasis than we had originally intended on simultaneously developing the program as a site for tutors' strong participation and training. In this way, while tutors had developed their sense of identity and authority within the center as made up of continual negotiation and discussion, the Partnership Program began to mirror more typical institutional structures that distributed authority to individuals in particular positions—namely the teacher and the WAC administrator. These changes resulted in identity crises for several tutors and in a rejection of Partnership work by some.

TUTORS' IDENTITY VERSUS INSTITUTIONAL VIEWS OF LITERACY

This crisis in identity was most clearly manifest in training meetings, especially those in which partnerships in technical disciplines were discussed. Often, when Martins discussed plans for potential future classroom activities, tutors repeatedly expressed high levels of anxiety about their lack of disciplinary knowledge. During one Partnership meeting, for example, after tutors had experienced a particularly contentious class visit, tutors requested that Martins step in to become the primary initiator of all future discussions with the faculty member. Although he had not wanted to play such a directive role, Martins believed that his expertise and experience, and the institutional authority that supported him, would save time and frustration for the tutors, the teacher, and the students in the class.

This mode of operation, however, signaled a shift in how the program was administered; tutors' reflections for this partnership changed from engaged questions about the role of writing in the field and its pedagogical uses to more rote descriptions of classroom activity and its discussion.

After an extended conversation about a student's draft, for example, one tutor who had previously taken a leadership role in the partnership simply recapped the key points that the students had made about the paper.

By the end of the course, Martins felt that the tutors had helped the students do the work of the assignments, and that he had helped the faculty member think differently about how to structure assignments and scaffold students in their work. The end-of-semester survey, however, suggested something different. When asked what they had learned about the discipline-specific expectations of writing, the students all responded that they knew they were expected to write with clarity and precision. They knew that they needed to pay attention to the audience of a text, and to use "clear examples" and "not make too many assumptions about the readers." But the student comments did not address the discipline-specific aspects of the writing assignments. The faculty member himself indicated that he had learned a lot about writing instruction as a result of the partnership, but was skeptical about how much he might do in the future to integrate writing into his math classes because of the amount of time involved.

In terms of professional identity, such responses from tutors, students, and faculty indicate an ambivalence toward effective writing instruction when that instruction could interfere with what might be seen as managerial expectations for smooth, effective, effortless work. The participants in this particular Partnership session continued to see writing as a surface device for encoding knowledge; its roles in shaping knowledge in a field, revealing values among professionals, and supporting learning remained obscured. In spite of "successes" one might point to, this partnership may have actually reinforced notions of literacy that we had hoped to challenge.

TUTORS' NEGOTIATION OF IDENTITY CONFLICTS

When we hired experienced tutors from the writing center to work in the Partnership Program, some reacted strongly to the shift in administrative structures. In postprogram interviews, some tutors noted that they had felt literally constrained during Partnership work, unable to ask questions, propose changes, or negotiate their roles with students, faculty, and administrators. For example, two of the program tutors reported that, while they saw their roles in the writing center as "work" in the sense of "a commitment," "a passion," "my work," they saw their involvement in the Partnership Program as "a job." One tutor went on to say, "I hardly

recognized myself when I was a Partnership tutor. I missed meetings. I avoided responsibilities. I was like my teenaged self."

But, upon reflection, postprogram interviews were not the only moments when tutors gave us indications of their struggles. Tutors in the Partnership Program also revealed concerns about identity issues in tutor-to-tutor conversations, small-group training sessions, and in e-mail exchanges and written reports. In these other arenas, the questions tutors frequently asked included: What is my role? What is my work (what is expected of me)? How am I perceived in this role? What change/plans can I make to ease my discomfort or confusions about my role? How am I positioned in my team? How do I feel about what is happening to/around me? How can I express to others (teachers and students) my understanding of literacy practices and literacy instruction? Though we mistook these as personal or individual issues at the time, we now see that these concerns can all be viewed as a set of questions pertaining to tutor's sense of agency, revealing information about inevitable tensions tutors must face when making the transition from one-to-one work in the writing center to classroom-based tutoring work in a WAC program.

In 693 lines of printed e-mail exchanges and individual reports, the concerns listed above account for 49 percent of tutors' conversations and reflections about the Partnership Program. In what follows, we examine the written e-mail exchanges and postprogram responses of three tutors who participated together in three Partnership classes. They repeatedly describe the tensions caused by their roles in the program—roles that they felt prohibited them from intervening when they recognized teachers using skills-based notions of literacy—and seek to imagine themselves and their work in ways consonant with their training and their sense of their professional identities.

Studies of individuals in workplace and other institutional settings (e.g., mental hospitals and prisons) by sociologist Erving Goffman (1959) reveal the many ways that hierarchy, work expectations, and social rules affect each individual's self-definitions, behaviors, and in-group/out-group identifications. One's "front," the aspects of self made visible to others in social interactions, "tends to become institutionalized," according to Goffman, "in terms of abstract stereotyped expectations to which it gives rise, and tends to take on . . . meaning and stability. . . . The front becomes a 'collective representation' and a fact in its own right" (27). Tutors' sensitivity to being "typed" and thereby trapped in roles that will render them ineffective is evident in e-mail exchanges from early in the

term. For instance, writing about a class meeting tutors attended in a social sciences class, Liselle describes a growing sense of unease:

He [the teacher] introduced Margret and me as “the tutors who are going to help with the second writing assignment.” From what I understand, the goal of Partnerships is that we complicate the thinking of the students and professor on what writing is, and find ways to make writing in the discipline more clear, its function in the field more understandable, and come together with the students and professor to find ways of explaining that writing more fully. I get the feeling that Professor L. thinks that we are here to help edit these second writing assignments. I have met him and discussed at some length his views on this Partnership, and I know that he is extremely willing to learn about writing in the field . . . and he is open to new ideas, so I am a little confused with regard to how he defined our role in the class. Any thoughts? (e-mail, 9 September 2001).

Nowhere does Liselle suggest that the tutoring team should continue to negotiate with the teacher about its classroom role. In spite of her strong belief that the teacher is “open to new ideas,” she cannot find room in the program structure to address the teacher directly with her concerns or to propose new ideas. Another tutor, Margret, admits in the same e-mail exchange that she has been avoiding Professor L’s class, skipping a session she was supposed to attend because the construction of her role in the classroom made her uncomfortable (e-mail, 9 September 2001). Thom, on the other hand, responds with a strategy for analyzing the dilemma: “I think that our feelings of awkwardness are due in part to others’ ideas of ‘writing assistants.’ These are my own thoughts here so take them as such. I try to imagine how I am being seen through others’ eyes so that I can more readily be prepared for those moments when we ‘don’t seem to fit.’ I am thinking that [the students] think that we are ‘experts’ and that we are there to evaluate them in some fashion.”

All of the tutors indicate that something is amiss, but they have no ready ideas for addressing their concern about being misidentified and assigned unacceptable roles and work. Yet all of them had previous experiences of interacting with students in the center who saw them as editors, and each had strategies for helping student users of the center to see them as offering a wider array of support strategies for writers. At the heart of their dilemma, then, is not their lack of familiarity with responding to faulty role identification, but their lack of experience with addressing that misidentification in their new, low-status role.

In reviewing this exchange, we see Liselle's statement of program goals as consonant with our intentions. Indeed, we also had hoped that through interactions with us and with program tutors, teachers would find themselves invited into an ongoing dialogue about writing, a dialogue that would shift teaching practices because it would shift understanding. Russell argues that this is a "crucial step" in WAC work because "unless disciplines first understand the rhetorical nature of their work and make conscious and visible what was transparent, the teaching of writing in the disciplines will continue to reinforce the myth of transience" (1991, 300). This myth of transience, a term Russell borrows from Mike Rose, describes a widely held belief that a simple, formulaic solution to solve all writing problems exists. In objecting to being handed only an editing job, Liselle responds with appropriate alarm, for the cost of "reinforcing the myth of transience," according to Russell, is to "[mask] the complexities" of writing instruction (7).

Because we thought that we were mindful of this myth as we worked with faculty in consultations, we failed to see the significance of the tutors' concern when they believed the myth was reasserting itself. For us, faculty development could take place over a number of semesters as teachers worked in the program and/or availed themselves of consulting services; for tutors, on the other hand, the problem felt urgent. Working in the Partnership Program episodically, sometimes for only one semester, they hoped for rapid, visible change in literacy instruction. In retrospect, the difference between our perspective and tutors' experience seems so great as to suggest that the administrators and the tutors worked in separate programs. While writing administrators expected slow change and frequent reassertions of literacy myths, tutors' frequent confrontations with those myths created a sense of emergency; the tutors, of course, had to *do something* in classrooms tomorrow or the day after, while administrators could look forward to conversations with faculty next week or next term.

While Liselle deals with that sense of emergency by asking her tutoring team for suggestions to solve the problem and Margret avoids going to class, Thom analyzes the dilemma by imagining that "[the students] think that we are experts and that we are there to evaluate them in some fashion" (e-mail, 16 September 2001). He offers, however, no evidence for this claim, nor does he suggest why the insight might be useful to the group. Each tutor, then, employs a strategy to counteract the stress of this situation; further, Liselle and Thom appear to use strategies aimed at addressing the situation in some way.

Their inability to reach a decision about what to do in response to their dilemma is particularly telling, as all of them had extensive previous experiences of interacting with students in the center who saw them as editors, and each had strategies for helping student users of the center see them as offering a wider array of support strategies for writers. In complicating students' views of tutoring, the tutors also intended to complicate students' views of writing. While Liselle and Margret would not hesitate to negotiate a shared understanding of their role with a student in the writing center, they apparently fear that such negotiation would amount to a "faux pas" in the classroom setting. In the center, the tutors excelled in part because they were perceived by students either as equals or as superiors.² In the Partnership Program, tutors saw themselves as called in after the "real" work of negotiating the classroom plan had already taken place; the perceived lack of control in the situation translated for tutors into a loss of agency and professional status.

The problem of tutors' feeling disempowered to assert their authority over their own role when confronted with a teacher's authority to assign that role strikes us now as predictable, but we did not consider it deeply at the time. One goal of our pre-semester consultations with faculty was to establish the kinds of work tutors would undertake in classes; this work most frequently took the form of participation in writing workshops, where tutors could circulate among peer groups to assist students by providing feedback. That this work was often changed, simplified, or reduced to skills work later by faculty indicates how entrenched a skills-based view of literacy is in the academy and how comfortable faculty are employing it.

In our effort to provide effective, efficient support for faculty, we had unwittingly made the tutors technicians, much like the carpenters who have the skill to follow a vision created by an architect, but who are rarely called upon for their opinions about the plans. While we valued their role in the classroom because they could lead workshops that demonstrated that "writing" is a term for socially meaningful practices, to be discussed and reviewed according to the goals and standards of a discipline, we did not explicitly engage tutors in a dialogue about these changes in their roles and practices. Such a dialogue could have helped tutors to describe their concerns in more detail and might have challenged us to involve them differently in consultations with faculty. In other words, foregrounding tutors' concerns might have led to long-term revisions, both in tutor training and in work with faculty.

ROLE CONFLICT AND TEAM IDENTIFICATION

One way to encourage such dialogue is to notice and respect more fully the tutors' conversations among themselves. When the meeting space failed to yield a means for dealing with the dissonance tutors felt between their writing center training and their Partnership work, they relied on their membership in a tutoring team to help define their professional roles. Most e-mail exchanges among Liselle, Margret, and Thom end with queries about other team members' perspectives on whatever issue the group has chosen to discuss. Team members frequently praise each other, signaling their interest in being supportive ("Wow! That was a great reflection!") (Thom, e-mail, 8 November 2001) and hasten to correct any possible misimpression, even before other team members had a chance to respond in an e-mail exchange ("I am not saying that's what you meant, but I am definitely saying that I feel more comfortable, less tense, in the dominant [power role]") (Liselle, e-mail, 8 November 2001). Liselle in particular frequently asks her team members to provide information, opinions, and ideas and lets team members know she cannot do Partnership work without thoughtful, ongoing team interaction.

As evidence of their sense of responsibility to and dependence on each other, all of the tutors write in self-derogatory ways when they worry they have not lived up to their team members' expectations or fear they are about to disappoint team members in some way. For instance, Liselle writes that she is a "loser" when she cannot open a team member's attached document through her e-mail (Liselle, e-mail, 20 October 2001), Margret writes a lengthy apology one day when she is out sick, and Thom ends some transmissions with regrets that he has not handled his schedule properly and is therefore unable to write as much in his e-mail response as he would like.

These strategies for communicating with team members, establishing themselves as belonging to the team and trying to imagine the impressions other members might have of them, provide important areas for reflection and pedagogical intervention. In the problem with Professor L described earlier, when Liselle felt confused about her role in the classroom, the team might have decided to voice their concerns as a collective, either to the WAC coordinators or to the teacher. This suggestion did not arise, however, perhaps because when left to their own devices, team members who must perform activities together develop an in-group/out-group mentality, learning to rely on each other in stressful situations and

to downplay outsider perspectives that challenge the team's self-concept. Goffman notes that the very act of collaborative performing requires that team members maintain an impression for their audience that they cannot maintain before one another. Because team members are "[a]ccomplices in the maintenance of a particular appearance of things, they are forced to define one another as persons 'in the know,' as persons before whom a particular front cannot be maintained" (1959, 83).

This pressure to develop and maintain a shared public "front" is inevitably part of team activities; Goffman points out that public teamwork can be viewed as a kind of performance. In managing the performance before an audience (in this case, students and teachers), team members want to avoid embarrassment and therefore often move self-consciously through unfamiliar interactions. While tutors in the writing center use questions to address gaps between the student writer's knowledge and the tutor's familiarity with genre and course expectations, in Partnership classrooms tutors did not feel as free to resort to questioning as an instructional strategy. A question in the classroom might be misread as an undermining of teacher authority or as a sign that the team lacked expertise. The pressure to avoid making a mistake multiplies when one works with others in a team effort because "[e]ach teammate is forced to rely on the good conduct and behavior of his fellows, and they, in turn, are forced to rely on him" (Goffman 1959, 82).

Another manifestation of role conflict and team negotiation we eventually noticed was tutors' negative critique of the faculty they were working with. In effect, tutors had a different orientation toward Partnership faculty than we did, often feeling as though these instructors lacked key information that would enable tutors to do their work. Though we attempted to bring the tutors into the loop by repeating the plans made between WAC administrators and faculty, our secondhand accounts about our exchanges with faculty rarely affected tutors' understanding of their own classroom roles. They had no felt personal or professional relationships with the program's teachers; those relationships seemed confined to authority figures only: WAC administrators and program faculty. Finding themselves situated outside of the conversations they most needed to enter, tutors challenged our accounts of faculty development with accounts of their own, using the evidence they had at hand to level critiques at the teachers they had been assigned to assist.

Tutors' critique of teachers and surprise at students' successes may be attributable in part to their way of working with each other, of team build-

ing. If the group begins to self-define as "in the know" about literacy, about pedagogy, or about student learning, this must contrast with those "not in the know." In other words, the dynamic of team building alters perception, providing strong reasons of mutual dependence, shared experience, and performance stress to develop and maintain a team identity that, in this case, supported particular ways of thinking about teachers and students. For example, of Professor Z, who taught in a technical field, Thom noted: "From the way that Professor Z presented the material I think that maybe the students are afraid of the grammar. I thought . . . that her understanding of writing is stock. . . . I know that our job is not to critique professors' teaching styles, but I just feel that the lack of explanation of the why's is adding to the student's apprehensions about writing."

Liselle responds by noting that she is "really concerned that I don't know anything about technical writing," identifying one possible reason for Thom's critique: fear of the course's subject matter and writing requirements.

While students in Professor Z's class developed a clearer understanding over time about ways that writing functioned in their field—to persuade others that their plans are sound, to provide instructions for those carrying out physical work, and to work through possible problems with design in advance of a project's being implemented—and while Liselle in particular would come to admire this teacher's ability to describe writing in ways that mattered in the field, working with Professor Z brought many insecurities to the fore for the tutors in our program. Tutors' own lack of expertise in technical writing made them deeply uncomfortable, and except where they reflected on the meanings of that discomfort, they moved fairly automatically to assuming that the teacher's authority gave her the power to teach badly. In the absence of crucial conversation among Partnership participants, tutors often adopted blaming and complaining strategies, which Goffman notes are predictable "defensive" behaviors arising among members of a team (1959, 174–75). "Derogation" helps team members to save face, alleviate fears, and build team solidarity. The tutors did not appear to recognize their blaming responses in this context as defenses, and the program administrators tended to see the blaming as "bad behavior" rather than as indicators that tutors—along with student writers in classes—felt "out of their depth" when faced with certain writing assignments.

The tutors' way of working together—collaboratively, through ongoing negotiation with colleagues—is, in fact, a crucial part of professional

development and should be highlighted as a positive, if sometimes difficult, part of literacy work in the academy. We have no evidence, however, that tutors in our program consciously valued the team experience or saw the Partnership Program as a place where they could develop collaborative approaches to institutional difficulties. Our own wish now is that we had drawn their attention to the ways they tried to work together. While we believed in the importance of tutors' relationships to one another, we took those relationships for granted, thus missing an opportunity to review e-mail transcripts among team members in training meetings and to discuss how collaborative work (between administrators and faculty, between WPAs and tutors, and among tutors, faculty, and students) provides opportunities for negotiating *shared* authority among all team members.

CONCLUSION

As David Russell notes in his history of writing in the American academy, "on an institutional basis, WAC exists in a structure that fundamentally resists it" (1991, 295). A WAC program that works toward real change will encounter opposition. Because we aim to educate colleagues and administrators about current literacy theory and research, we must expect to encounter significant resistance—some intentional, some the result of normalized notions of literacy as a set of skills. Our view, then, is that if the central goal of writing across the curriculum programs is faculty development, the opportunities for faculty development and support need significant overhaul. Institutional hierarchy suggests that faculty interact in particular, professional ways, but that faculty interact with students in professorial, teacherly ways. We envision a classroom-based tutoring program that combines the best of both approaches. Faculty, like the students who have learned how to be literacy workers, can benefit from immersion in a literacy curriculum prior to undertaking course reform; the best model of this would be a course in literacy theory and research for faculty, accompanied by the useful incentive of assigned time for course revision. Offering classroom-based tutoring as a support for that revision, rather than as the only available example of it, counters the view of such efforts as "service" and helps to define the tutor's significant role in this process.

A course alone will not, however, necessarily alter the traditional view of tutors as "hired help." Any program using classroom-based tutoring to further any larger WAC goal must recognize the fundamental

importance of tutor training and the ways that writing center work differs from classroom-based tutoring. Our experiences suggest that the shift in tutors' roles from individual authority in one-to-one sessions to shared authority in the classroom-based program directly affects their sense of professional identity. As the tutor responses described above suggest, this change in identity can cause significant confusion and frustration, limiting tutors' ability to work effectively with faculty across the disciplines.

During our work in the Partnership Program, we often misrecognized opportunities for continued reflection and learning with and from our tutors because we were most concerned with presenting a "successful workshop." From the perspective of the faculty members and students in the Partnership classes this may not appear to be a problem, but in our minds it reiterates the view that the work tutors do is limited to a specific event or assignment. While any classroom-based tutoring program will likely experience its moments of frantic planning and frenzied preparation, periodic meta-reflection during the semester will surely provide opportunities for adjustments to be made at the level of how faculty, tutors, coordinators, and students interact.

Writing program administrators in charge of classroom-based tutoring programs must then become responsible for highlighting the difficulties and opportunities inherent in the shift from writing center to classroom-based work. Tutors' work in classroom teams provides an important site for the construction of new, more complex professional identities, identities that may enable tutors to express concerns and contribute to programmatic changes through productive critiques of class plans, tutors' roles, and training activities. Increasing tutor participation in the program in this way should provide better access to and more information about faculty perceptions of literacy instruction, thus enabling WPAs to work more effectively with faculty in WAC programs.