

CHAPTER 7.

PILOTING WEC AS A CONTEXT-RESPONSIVE WRITING RESEARCH INITIATIVE

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This chapter frames WEC as a collaborative research methodology that privileges context as the primary factor in curricular revision efforts. We explain how, at our small liberal arts college, the practice of rhetorical listening with both undergraduate and graduate programs served as a catalyst to initiate WEC. A case study of our WEC pilot in the English department underscores the contextual flexibility inherent in a modified model that includes interviews/focus groups as a qualitative data component and epistemological tool meant to be placed into conversation with both writing artifacts and survey data to guide group discussion and inform the development of writing plans.

[R]hetorical contexts should drive methods and . . . the most effective research methods in any given rhetorical situation (e.g., particular audiences and purposes) will depend on the specifics of that situation.

—Broad, 2012, p. 200

One of the greatest strengths of the WEC model is that it affords practitioners the opportunity to make context-informed modifications to the methodology established by Pamela Flash at UMN that best serve campus-specific needs while maintaining underlying WEC goals: sustainable effectiveness; department-retained agency; and substantial, meaningful, goal-driven conversation about writing and the teaching of writing, all “premised on the belief faculty members situated within disciplines are positioned to offer powerful, relevant writing instruction” (Wagner et al., 2014, p. 112).

As WEC proliferates through the campus of our small liberal arts college (SLAC) in southeastern Pennsylvania—across established and developing programs in both undergraduate and graduate contexts—we as the current leaders of this initiative at Moravian College find ourselves learning alongside each ac-

ademic unit with which we collaborate at every phase of the WEC process.¹ It is with this in mind, too, that we look back at the decision to frame our WEC process as research that stems from rhetorically listening to our colleagues who have shown us a faculty context that is small yet ambitious, autonomy-valuing yet highly collaborative, and desiring of strong internally sourced evidence to substantiate curricular revision.

LOCATING THE EXIGENCE FOR WEC AT MORAVIAN

The origins of WEC at our institution—both programmatically and methodologically—begin first from an inquiry of the Writing-Intensive (WI) model that preceded WEC. Crystal, who in 2014 was the newly hired assistant professor of English and WAC Director at Moravian, inherited a program that featured WI courses positioned across almost every undergraduate major on campus. She had very little knowledge about the program’s responsibilities, legacy, or reception. In order to understand this pre-existing WAC initiative and faculty perceptions of it, she met with each department over the course of a year and employed the feminist tactic of rhetorical listening described and theorized by Krista Ratcliffe (2005). Ratcliffe defines rhetorical listening as “a trope for interpretive invention and . . . as a code of cross-cultural conduct” (p. 17), making it an ideal practice to promote cross-disciplinary understanding about writing.

In action, it helped Crystal maintain a mindful stance of quiet, reflective openness—acknowledging to faculty of academic units that she came from a place where she did not yet know them or what she did not know about them (Ratcliffe, 2005, p. 73). This allowed her to position herself as an interested, non-judgmental writing specialist while she learned about the complex culture of writing at our college. Simultaneously she established important relationships across campus with the hope of fostering a shared vision of the value of writing. During each meeting, Crystal asked questions like “what is a typical writing assignment that a major in your department would be asked to complete, and what are the qualities of a successful piece of writing for that assignment?” Responses elicited from this early practice served as entry-points for better identification with disciplinary logics and the varied definitions of “good writing”

1 Moravian’s WEC process is broken into four phases, akin to the year-based model utilized at UMN. The major difference aside from the modifications described in this chapter is the overall timeline (i.e., phases versus years) because often the initial research process only takes a semester, and we start the research process conducted by the WEC Team (Phase 1) followed by two full unit faculty meetings and the creation of a Writing Plan by unit faculty (Phase 2), the plan’s approval and implementation (Phase 3), and recurring assessment of the plan conducted by academic unit faculty (Phase 4).

that exist from department to department and sometimes even from individual to individual within those departments (as also noted by Sheriff in this volume when discussing her own experiences with WEC in a similar institutional context). The contextually situated conversations among teacher-scholars that grew out of rhetorical listening forged a pathway for Crystal to begin designing a WAC program that not only achieved her primary aim—to graduate rhetorically flexible, reflective writers—but also honored the disciplinary positionalities and contributions to writing pedagogy of those across campus. (To learn more about the overall development of the Writing at Moravian program of which WEC is a part, see Fodrey et al., 2019.)

As Bastian (2014), who explains the benefits of the practice of rhetorical listening during her initial program development of a WAC initiative at The College of St. Scholastica, suggests, “rhetorical listening allows for Writing Program Administrators (WPAs) to hear people’s intersecting identifications with writing, their disciplines, and students. Moreover, this kind of listening . . . allows WPAs both to understand their colleagues’ ‘problems’ and to collaboratively redefine those ‘problems’ as opportunities” (Bastian, 2014). For Crystal, rhetorical listening was an important tactic for her to use to orient her own work at Moravian for the future and discover the actual problems that faculty had so that the program she developed would be responsive to them.

Through this practice Crystal learned first and foremost that faculty across the disciplines at this private SLAC wanted a WPA who gave support but not mandates. She also learned that some faculty were dissatisfied with the WI model either because it was arbitrarily placed in the curriculum or the campus-wide outcomes were too generic to be meaningful in a given departmental context, ultimately providing the exigence to look for an alternative model to the WI system.

From Crystal’s conversations with faculty, she determined that Moravian had what Carol Rutz and William Condon (2012) refer to as an “established” WAC program “focused on the pragmatic tasks of building support for WAC, inventing courses, and building an adequate resource base for the program” that she wanted to transition to “integrated,” a move that brings with it “deeper, more theoretically grounded understanding of the program’s role within the institution” (pp. 371-372). Crystal had relative confidence in the following: 1) WEC could provide faculty greater autonomy by decentralizing the Director of Writing’s perceived and actual authority over writing in the disciplines, and 2) WEC could either serve alongside the Writing-Intensive (WI) Writing-Across-the-Curriculum course requirement in place at our institution or replace it entirely, depending on faculty reception. Her immediate goal was to continue building connections with each faculty member by helping them articulate the intersec-

tions among their values and beliefs about disciplinary writing and those of others in their unit so that decisions about the teaching and integration of writing in those units could be a collaborative effort.

While the adoption of WEC seemed a valuable albeit time-intensive direction forward for the WAC program, Crystal was concerned about the feasibility of this work in tandem with her responsibilities as a pre-tenure faculty member who was expected to develop and teach new rhetoric and writing studies courses, produce scholarship, and administer most aspects of the writing program minus the Writing Center. She also hoped to use WEC as an opportunity to conduct context-specific qualitative writing studies research that would both facilitate more conversation about writing pedagogy on our campus and afford her the opportunity to research local disciplinary knowledge production practices at play in the activity systems of various programs that opted into WEC. In theory, our WEC program could also remove the burden of “selling’ the increased and enhanced use of writing down to the level of individual teachers” that Anson suggests in the Introduction of this volume (and that Crystal first employed when arriving on campus) and replace that site of administrative effort instead with the support of faculty-driven programmatic writing curriculum development. She therefore advocated that the English Department revise their scholarship statement to consider aspects of WPA work as scholarly production. In response, the department approved the addition of language stating “administrative contributions that promote intellectual growth” could count as scholarly production toward tenure and promotion.² Framing WEC as research after this revision allowed Crystal to concurrently use context-specific writing studies research to apply something akin to the whole systems approach to WAC program development (Cox et al., 2018) and also provided her the opportunity to share epistemological scholarship with the field in the future.

In the spring of 2016, Crystal recruited Chris and the two received an internal summer research grant to modify the WEC methodology in place at UMN for our SLAC context. We started with the English department—which had expressed an early interest in the program and an availability to participate over the summer. The exigence, then, for framing Moravian’s engagement with the WEC project as a collaborative writing research initiative first stemmed from a desire

2 A footnote in the Moravian College English Department’s Scholarship Statement includes the following language to justify this addition: “As noted in the Council of Writing Program Administrators (WPA) statement on ‘Evaluating the Intellectual Work of Writing Administration,’ such administrative work should be ‘a form of inquiry which advances knowledge and which has formalized outcomes that are subject to peer review and disciplinary evaluation’ and might include work within the categories of ‘Program Creation, Curricular Design, Faculty Development, Program Assessment, and Program-Related Textual Production’ (<http://wpacouncil.org/positions/intellectualwork.html>).”

to honor faculty feedback in our SLAC context and from our positionalities as researchers at the time.

DEVELOPING OUR PILOT OF WEC RESEARCH WITH THE ENGLISH DEPARTMENT

In English we began by modeling our work on that of WEC at UMN, as described by Flash in Chapter 1 of this volume—adopting the materials provided on the UMN website (i.e., faculty and student surveys, WEC informational documents for faculty, etc.) and then adapting them for our context. While this initial process of studying and using UMN materials was formative, we quickly recognized just how different our institutional context was from that of Minnesota. At Moravian, our above average-sized department consisted of only nine faculty including two new hires preparing to start in the fall of 2016. These logistical concerns raised questions about the practicality of the sequence of department-wide meetings about writing in the curriculum—a key component of WEC practice at UMN. First, on a pragmatic level, the two new hires were unavailable for these conversations, making the meeting model used at UMN a poor fit within our Summer 2016 pilot. Additionally, the dynamics at play in a conversation about what department members value in writing could be somewhat difficult for pre-tenure faculty—Crystal included—in comparison to an established cohort of tenured faculty, regardless of how welcoming those tenured faculty were in this context. Instead we decided to utilize faculty interviews preceding larger department meetings as a way to gather and represent everyone’s voice—which we would then share with unit faculty via anonymous representative excerpts from interview transcripts in a larger department meeting as a component of a findings report which we would produce for them.

Our interviews helped us establish connections between English faculty and the WEC process—moving into full department meetings with an idea of what each individual brings to the department and a group of faculty already aware of the areas of inquiry these WEC meetings were poised to investigate. We focused on faculty-specific writing expectations with questions modified from Crystal’s initial departmental conversations the year prior. For example we asked, “describe the essential writing assignments from [name of a particular core course taught by that faculty member],” paired with the following sequence of questions: “what are the qualities of a successful piece of writing composed for that sort of assignment,” and “why are these criteria particularly important?” to reveal the tacit assumptions about writing English faculty embedded within their assignments and by extension enacted across the curriculum. After compiling the full set of English data, we conducted a qualitative descriptive analysis to locate

areas of emphasis related to writing-specific values. While our coding process adapts to the context and questions we are asking of faculty, we consistently organize our developed codes into code groups modeled on the knowledge domains from which successful writers draw—specifically subject matter, writing process, rhetorical, and genre knowledge (Beaufort, 2007). Through our analysis of collected writing samples, corresponding prompts, and interview transcripts from faculty across the academic unit, we identified myriad assigned genres and approaches to the teaching of writing. That process punctuated what we already suspected to be true: that each faculty member metonymically represented what could be a program or a full department at a larger institution, and these specializations³ under the banner of English at Moravian were realized in assigned writing—often of specialized genres with respective expectations unique to a faculty member across their courses. English undergraduates echoed this discovery when participating in a focus group that supplemented our faculty interviews. Students implicitly picked up on differences in genre expectations across specific faculty emphasizing components of their experience in the curriculum by instructor instead of course title or class standing. Those genres/purposes for writing included the following, not all of which a given undergraduate English major would likely encounter given English's horizontal curriculum:

Thesis-driven scholarly/analytical: literary analysis/criticism (close reading only, or contextualized with sources, or contextualized via application of theoretical lens plus sources); cultural criticism written as scholarship; stylistic analysis/craft criticism; rhetorical criticism of any communicative artifact; rhetorical historiography via archival research; empirical writing studies research; critical reflection

Creative: poetry, short story, memoir, personal essay, play

Public Discursive: social justice-oriented public writing; letters to editor; blogging, digital public rhetoric via video, infographics, flyers, newsletters, web design, etc.; cultural criticism written as creative nonfiction; environmental writing; documentary

Professional/Technical: grant proposals, usability and feasibility reports, memos, technical documentation, project proposals, needs analysis reports, etc.

3 The following specializations are represented among the nine faculty in the department in Fall 2016: rhetoric and writing studies, African American literature, transatlantic modernism(s) and dramatic literature, creative writing and contemporary literature, postcolonial literature and queer studies, old and middle English and medieval saints' lives, theatre arts, and early nineteenth century British and American literature.

The findings report we produced and presented to the department at the initial department-wide Phase 2 WEC meeting shared these discoveries with faculty, who were then able to map specific genres they assigned in their courses to the larger curriculum that made up the English major. These conversations and meetings continued productively. For example, at a Spring 2017 meeting, faculty discussed the ways courses are positioned within the curriculum along with the student learning outcomes for English, ultimately noting how the expected ability levels of students play a role in defining writing pedagogy in a given course in tandem with one's disciplinary expertise and individual expectations. Department members then started conversations about how those curricular details could invite faculty to collaborate on the development of a writing plan with shared understandings and expectations for majors while still maintaining their own pedagogical identities.

In this pilot study, our findings report served as the deliverable for the department and our interviews a significant datapoint highlighted in that deliverable. As our first WEC unit, English helped us discover the ways in which the WEC process at Moravian could be designed to be most effective on our campus. These context-informed modifications, interviews, and reports that we share with faculty at our equivalent of UMN's Meeting 1 would quickly become the features of the program that were most exciting to potential WEC departments. The English pilot led us to recognize that the interview process in particular helps interviewees find both individual and collective value in the WEC process—assuaging worries that this is just another top-down initiative—and as a result improves departmental buy-in during the process and creates strong word of mouth advertising, convincing other academic units to opt in.

WEC RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AT/ FOR MORAVIAN COLLEGE

Our formative pilot study led us to conceptualize (and eventually promote) WEC at Moravian as a research initiative that privileged disciplinary participant ways of knowing and writing over our writing studies researcher interpretation. When we began implementing the WEC model, we quickly realized that in order for faculty to have a vested stake in the future of writing at Moravian, we needed to first invite them into the conversation as not merely agents through which mandated writing instruction happened but as active colleagues who were directly influencing, designing, and revising writing outcomes and pedagogical practices—an essential component of the larger WEC process. Anson (2006) highlights such sentiments when describing the WEC program he and colleagues established at North Carolina State University: “the process of negoti-

ating and articulating [writing] outcomes leads to faculty investment by tapping into what the department cares about in student learning and achievement” (p. 109). In a similar spirit, the semi-structured interviews we conduct with faculty are positioned, first and foremost, as knowledge-producing for the departments themselves, and work towards uncovering what each faculty member cares about in their own teaching practice.

Faculty are navigating these reflective spaces with us—a collaborative movement through and across disciplinary boundaries—with which we engage in two distinct ways: as WEC practitioners *and* as researchers. We therefore see faculty both as co-researchers and research participants across two distinct aims: 1) most importantly we hope that they research their department with us as they endeavor to improve student writing, and 2) we hope that the information they provide contributes to the understanding of knowledge production both at our institution and eventually through conference presentations and the dissemination of scholarship, within and beyond the fields of writing across the curriculum and writing studies.

In the interviews we conduct, we practice rhetorical listening in similar ways to Crystal’s first inquiries with departments on campus, taking a stance of what Ratcliffe (2005) calls non-identification, acknowledging the differences among what WEC research is, who we are as writing researchers, and the ideologies and tacit knowledge about writing and student writers that participants in WEC units bring to the fore. We believe that rhetorical listening provides an imperfect yet logical tactic to navigate unfamiliar yet fascinating cross-disciplinary terrain. For WEC at Moravian to work, we are creating a dialogue housed primarily in the discourse communities of the interviewee as opposed to our own—the tactic of rhetorical listening is meant to help “negotiate troubled identifications in order to facilitate cross-cultural communication about any topic” (Ratcliffe, 2005, p. 17)—and by doing interviews separately, we are able to learn about individual expectations for writing without being in a space that simultaneously must accommodate a number of additional perceptions and goals which can be, at times, overlapping and conflicting. This means placing our own disciplinary expertise outside of the conversational act (as best we can); representing ourselves as curious, active listeners; and ultimately working to table what we believe in order to be as open as possible to the perspectives of our interviewees. It also means that we listen metonymically, starting from a place where we assume that each interviewee is “associated with—but not necessarily representative of—an entire cultural group” (Ratcliffe, 2005, p. 78), in this case “cultural group” meaning discipline or academic unit. This, too, separates our work as researchers in which we produce interpretative analyses of department writing for communities outside of our campus and as WEC practitioners who work to

help academic units on our campus. This work is feasible *because* we are constantly recognizing, owning, and employing these identities by focusing directly on either programmatic or research goals, depending on what we are trying to accomplish at a given point in the process.

Selfe and Hawisher (2012) describe the use of feminist research methodology in relation to their study of the digital literacy practices of U.S. citizens, noting that “intimate and richly situated information . . . emerges most productively from interviews . . . in which all participants—researchers and informants—understand that they are engaged in mutually shaping meaning and that such meaning necessarily is local, fragmentary, and contingent” (p. 36). In our context, that means asking open-ended questions like “define writing in your discipline” that invite interviewees to share knowledge from their own understanding of writing at a given point in time. We ask participants for these definitions immediately after giving the one adopted by the Writing at Moravian program as a whole: writing here is broadly defined as communication in which audio, visual, spatial, gestural, and/or textual components convey meaning (including words, sentences, tables, figures, images, video, etc.). By beginning the exchange with this definition, we move towards a state of non-identification, a concept “important to rhetoric and composition studies because it maps a place, a possibility, for consciously asserting our agency to engage cross-cultural rhetorical exchanges across both commonalities and differences” (Ratcliffe, 2005, p. 73). The stage is then set for an abstracted definition from our interviewees by showing them the breadth of writing we recognize already and encouraging them to explore the openness of this definition in their response. We provide no further emphasis on our own disciplinary values; instead we simply invite them to share their expertise. In sum, this rhetorical move allows us to work against our identities on campus as writing specialists physically located in and representative of the English department, and it disrupts a more narrow definition of writing that interviewees may bring into the space of the interview (and that they may believe is how we as writing studies scholars understand writing).

As our interviews continue, participants attempt to explain an abstract and commonly unexplored idea: what is writing in my disciplinary context? We hope that answers to this question are then productively delivered throughout our second organization of questions, which are tied to the specifics of one’s pedagogy in a course: “describe the essential writing assignments from [course]” and “what are the qualities of a successful piece of writing composed for that sort of assignment, and why are they important?” and ultimately in a final sequence of questions, which ask participants to be interpretive and reflective of their larger curriculum. In every sequence we are still working towards the initial question about the definition of writing in a discipline, but as we change scopes

we can approach that larger question from different entry points. In the spirit of semi-structured interviewing as described by Prior (2004), we “move between scripted questions”—those we have listed—“and open-ended conversations” (p. 188) that productively arise both from these and other academic-unit specific questions we develop with the help of a given WEC liaison and the data we have gathered to that point.

An additional layer of complexity to this process comes from the disciplines themselves and are unearthed in follow-up conversations—productive diversions embedded in our interviews that help us uncover the tacit understandings of writing that faculty bring to their academic units. As we ask faculty to rationalize and reflect on the choices that they are making, they also begin speaking about their places within the larger curriculum of an academic unit—providing their macroview which we can then place in conversation with not only what we find but also the contributions of their colleagues. This process helps us define disciplinary writing specific to contexts and the faculty who represent them within a particular academic unit.

Given that English was the first unit with which we collaboratively researched writing, the department represented the most significant development of our methods and an early example of how a specific departmental context defined the research process. For us, what initially served as a response to logistical concerns, became a recognition of the value of such small department sizes because this extra data was not only available but entirely feasible to collect.

FINDINGS REPORT AND WRITING PLAN AS WEC DELIVERABLES

Findings reports serve as culminations of the research practices utilized within a given academic unit with relevant descriptive findings triangulated from the various components of our method. Our intention is to represent the stakeholders of an academic unit as they see themselves in relation to the discipline-relevant writing they assign, placing the overlapping writing-related values and beliefs of each faculty member into conversation, and providing the occasion for faculty to look at how those conceptions of writing and student writers interact. By this point late in Phase 1 of our WEC process, we will have collected as much data as possible in order to create a holistic picture of what writing looks like at a specific point in time. Our hope is for each faculty member to see what writing looks like at a macro-level and also recognize their individual contributions. Findings reports are owned by the units for which they are produced and become important primary sources for liaisons as they construct writing plans. These doc-

uments are oftentimes additionally used by departments to communicate with outside audiences like accreditors and potential funding sources.

As we finished our work within the English department and began to look at the initial process with that unit as a guide which could inform future WEC research, we continually returned Broad's (2012) contention that "rhetorical context should drive methods" (p. 200). Our expectation at the end of the pilot study was that the research methods used in English could be replicated across other Moravian College contexts. As of 2020, we have produced findings reports in both undergraduate programs (English, education, modern languages, chemistry and biochemistry, and mathematics) and graduate programs (education, occupational therapy, and speech-language pathology), finding that while some processes have worked across academic units others had to adapt to fit the needs of the context; as Broad (2012) suggests, "our methods choose us" (p. 202). After working with these programs we have found that the rhetorical situation oftentimes defines the ways information is communicated on our findings reports, whether that be through the inclusion of curriculum maps of writing assignments in core courses, coded transcripts of faculty dialogue with provided explanation, graphical representations of quantitative survey data, relevant scholarly research, audio clips of professional affiliates speaking on the desired writing abilities of new hires, images of student work, and much more. These findings reports, we have found, must communicate in ways that are valued by the disciplines represented in the discourse community; this makes them both accessible and actionable for the group as they begin to conceptualize (initially) the ways in which they will respond to the process in Phase 2.

After the findings report meeting occurs at the start of Phase 2, agency and expectation shifts to the academic unit faculty who begin to run their own meetings (unless we are requested to do so), and the liaison begins the process of drafting a writing plan. Writing plans at Moravian, again modified from the UMN template, are designed to address this sequence of questions (about units either at the undergraduate or graduate level):

- How can writing in this academic unit be characterized?
- What writing abilities should students demonstrate proficiency in by the time they graduate, and how do these abilities synergize with your student learning outcomes?
- How is writing instruction currently positioned in this academic unit's curriculum (or curricula), and what, if any, structural plans does this academic unit have for changing the way that writing and writing instruction are sequenced across its course offerings?
- How does this academic unit currently communicate writing expect-

tations to students, what do these expectations look like when they are translated into assessable criteria, and how does/will faculty in this academic unit assess that students have met these expectations?

- What does the academic unit intend to implement during the period covered by this plan, and what sorts of support do faculty need in order to achieve the optimal integration of relevant writing instruction and assess the efficacy of the plan?

During the spring 2019 semester, Moravian faculty voted in favor of adopting the WEC and writing plan approval process proposed by the Writing at Moravian Advisory Committee.

Writing plans for academic units at Moravian can exist as curricular documentation that coexists alongside or replaces pre-existing assessment structures. Units with writing-enriched curricula that are articulated in the writing plan, enacted in the unit's curriculum, and assessed by the unit faculty, have the option to remove the WI designation from core courses if they so choose. In our context, we believe giving faculty in academic units the choice to decide to either maintain their WI courses or remove them after engaging in the WEC process creates another opportunity for increased autonomy to the options at Pound Ridge College in Chris Anson's chapter in this collection). As such, our proposal to faculty includes discussion on how these two can articulate together, how a group that has gone through the WEC process can apply for writing-enriched status, and how that status carries with it both opportunities for curricular change and plans for assessment moving forward. Returning to the English department who completed their writing plan two years after the initial discussion of their findings report, the group has begun implementing components of both the report and writing plan into their curriculum. For example, English is redesigning 100-level literature courses, developing a better articulation between 200 level-gateway courses and the English major capstone, updating the direct-assessment method for the department focused on mutual understanding across faculty, and discussing the potential removal of the WI label from certain English courses.

THE FUTURE OF WEC AT MORAVIAN

We have been asked before "why not just use the descriptions of discipline-relevant writing characteristics and abilities from writing plans available on UMN's website?" Our answer is that we, and increasingly our colleagues, find it of utmost importance to understand writing within the local context of academic units at Moravian College because only then can WEC liaisons develop writing plans that speak to their department's culture and writing values, not simply

impose context-specific writing standards of another campus into our specific SLAC context.

Our adoption of WEC recognizes a critical feature of what Gladstein and Re-gaignon (2012) describe in *Writing Program Administration at Small Liberal Arts Colleges*: “Small college faculty are simultaneously autonomous agents and expected to dedicate significant time to the institution, its policies, and its future” (p. 21). For us as WEC practitioners, the goal is to honor the autonomy and expertise of the faculty at our SLAC while supporting them with our expertise as well.

WEC at Moravian works because we are able to capitalize on our small campus size and collaborative faculty culture. Each academic unit carries with it a set of (often overlapping) disciplinary ways of knowing and doing, and it is through our engagement with these shared contexts and the experiences of the faculty, students, and affiliated professionals informing the writing that happens in each academic unit, that WEC at Moravian continues to refine our methods and the methodology informing them. Through a rhetorical listening framed interview practice, we found we are able to take the varied individual perspectives in an academic unit and present them back to the larger group in ways that recognize the importance of every stakeholder a liaison puts us in contact with. Our conversations with faculty of an academic unit, then, begin not at “how is writing defined in this discipline” but rather, “let us look at how the stakeholders of this unit define writing” because of the interview data we collect. This allows the unit faculty to work toward a unified yet multifaceted definition with these individual perspectives outlined on the findings report. These modifications are emblematic of a larger trend toward locally informed design in both WEC and other WAC initiatives. Simply put, WEC at Moravian stems from both our critical reflections as members of the Moravian community and our disciplinary positionalities as writing across the curriculum scholars. While we have found situating WEC as a research initiative to be productive at Moravian, we recognize that this will not work as well in every context and advocate for WEC models that are informed by not only successful implementations of similar models by others but also responsive to the nuanced details of each individual institutional context.

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