

# TEACHING WITH WRITING

THE OREGON STATE UNIVERSITY WRITING INTENSIVE CURRICULUM (WIC) NEWSLETTER

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## Pre/Views

by Vicki Tolar Burton, WIC Director

I begin by looking back at this year with gratitude for the work of Wendy Oleson, who has served as the WIC GTA this year. Wendy has not only helped me with the WIC seminars and the day-to-day program duties, she has also served as Assistant Editor of *Teaching with Writing* and co-developer of the new student website, the WIC Survival Guide. Wendy moves on to become a GTA in Writing 121 next fall. We will miss her good spirit and her way with words.

Looking back is a theme for this issue as we gather reports of the good work produced by OSU faculty who have received recent WIC grants. Loren Chavarria-Bechtel's lead article explains a cutting-edge program in the Department of Foreign Languages designed for heritage speakers of Spanish, an increasing demographic among OSU students. A 2004 WIC grant supported the development of a WIC course in Mexican Film.

cont'd on page 6

## Spanish for OSU Heritage Language Learners Program

by Loren Chavarria-Bechtel  
(Foreign Languages and Literatures)

*Loren Chavarria-Bechtel was awarded a WIC grant in 2004 to develop a new WIC course for Heritage Speakers of Spanish. SPAN 439 "Mexican Culture and Society as Evidenced by Contemporary Mexican Film" has been developed and approved by the Baccalaureate Core Committee.*

Within the foreign-language teaching profession in the United States, the term "heritage speaker" is used to refer to a student of language who is raised in a home where a non-English language is spoken, who

cont'd on page 2

## Fall 2005 WIC Faculty Seminar: Call for Participants

Faculty interested in the fall 2005 Introductory WIC Faculty Seminar should ask their department chair to send an email nomination to WIC Program Director Vicki Tolar Burton ([vicki.tolarburton@oregonstate.edu](mailto:vicki.tolarburton@oregonstate.edu)).

The seminar, designed both for faculty who plan to teach WIC courses and for those who want to learn to use writing in non-WIC courses, will meet five Wednesday afternoons from 3 to 5 pm: October 12, 19, and 26, and November 9 and 16. Faculty who complete the seminar receive a \$250 honorarium. The seminar generally fills quickly, so early nominations are advised.

*Spanish Cont'd*

speaks or merely understands the heritage language, and who is to some degree bilingual in English and the heritage language. The term "heritage speaker" is relatively new. The Spanish teaching profession, for example, has often referred to these students as "Spanish-speaking" students, "native-speaking" students or as "bilingual" students. More recently, the tendency has been to refer to these learners as "home background" speakers and as "heritage language" speakers.

For the most part, the experiences of these heritage speakers have been similar. They speak or hear the heritage language spoken at home, but they receive all of their education in the official or majority language of the countries in which they live. What this means is that, in general, such students receive no instruction in their heritage language and thus become literate only in the majority language.

For Spanish, in particular, the numbers of heritage speakers enrolling in Spanish language study have increased extraordinarily in recent years. Often the position of heritage language speakers is that they want to learn how to read and write their home language well. They want to be able to use the language they first learned in childhood academically as well as personally.

The increasing enrollment of Spanish-speaking minority students at state colleges and universities in the 70's and early 80's led to a clear realization that existing courses designed for language learners were inappropriate for students who had learned the language at home. The Spanish program for non-native speakers is designed for students who have no functional ability in the language. This curriculum begins by introducing students to basic linguistic skills and knowledge of the culture and, over time, develops a functional proficiency in Spanish. A specialized curriculum for heritage speakers does not begin with such basics as common greetings and expressions or names of objects and actions in the immediate environment since these students would already have a functional control of these language items. Neither does it require students to do grammatical analyses of items that they already use in their daily discourse. Rather, this curriculum assumes that all native-speaking

students already have some level of proficiency that is beyond that of students who are true beginners of Spanish. Thus, a curriculum for native Heritage speakers brings with them many strengths and many abilities. In preparing to teach them, we must see those strengths, we must value them, and take joy in them. We must value heritage languages and heritage speakers, and we must have a clear awareness about the fact that language maintenance efforts are as important a part of our profession as is the teaching of language to monolingual speakers of Spanish.

In the fall of 1996 the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Oregon State University offered its first three-credit course for Spanish heritage speakers. Today, the Department presents Latino students the possibility to complete a minor degree addressing the unique skills heritage language students must acquire in order to master formal and business Spanish while ensuring their cultural identity development, a vital objective of the SHLL program. The availability of a relevant minor in their native tongue puts Oregon State University at the forefront nationally in the teaching of Spanish to heritage language learners.

The heritage language speaker presents new challenges for our community. This identifier brings together newly arrived immigrant students who have had some schooling in their countries and who speak little English, newly arrived students who are illiterate in Spanish, and second- and third-generation students who are fluent English speakers but who wish to maintain and develop their Spanish. But there is much we can give them. Heritage speakers bring with them many strengths and many abilities. In preparing to teach them, we must see those strengths, we must value them, and take joy in them. We must value heritage languages and heritage speakers, and we must have a clear awareness about the fact that language maintenance efforts are as important a part of our profession as is the teaching of language to monolingual speakers of Spanish.

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**See the article on  
"Writing Across Borders"  
for information on teaching  
International student writers.**

### **WIC Online**

by William Petty  
(English and Extended Campus)

*William Petty received a 2004 WIC Grant to offer a seminar on designing WIC online courses.*

William Zinsser probably stated it best when he wrote: "Writing is a tool that enables people in every discipline to wrestle with facts and ideas. It's a physical activity, unlike reading. Writing requires us to operate some kind of mechanism—pencil, pen, typewriter, word processor—for getting our thoughts on paper. It compels us by the repeated effort of language to go after those thoughts and to organize them and present them clearly. It forces us to keep asking, 'Am I saying what I want to say?' Very often the answer is, 'No.' It's a useful peace of information" (49).

As a teacher I have tried to use as much writing as possible in the classes I teach. While other forms of assessment—quizzes, exams, and the like—give me one kind of criteria for grading, writing gives me a different kind of criteria. Writing allows me to see how students think and reason. And for students, writing gives them the space they need to explore their ideas—to "go after those thoughts . . . and present them clearly." Because writing provides students with the best possible way to "think [their] way into a subject and make it [their] own," Zinsser again; I believe that writing must be a core component of any course, any class, any department. This was my starting point when I began planning a workshop that would bring together "writing to learn" pedagogy and the "writing intensive curriculum program" as essential elements for teaching writing online through Extended Campus.

Early in the planning stages, Vicki Tolar Burton indicated that she was interested in working with me to present this material. What we wanted to accomplish was to suggest a number of ways in which, using Blackboard, a variety of writing situations could be included in online courses. Some of the methods for teaching writing are familiar to others who have taught WIC courses. We wanted our workshops to:

- encourage the use of a combination of low and high impact writing assignments
- demonstrate how critical thinking about a subject could be done through discussion boards and email and other technologies such as Blogs

- show how instructor feedback could easily be accomplished by using the "comment" feature on most word processing systems
- explain how revision and peer review—integral components to any writing situation—could be accomplished using the Group pages.

For a list of faculty who took the seminar during Winter term, see page six.

William Zinsser. *Writing to Learn: How to Write—and Think—Clearly About Any Subject At All.* New York: Harper and Row, 1988.

### **Materials for Francophone Studies**

by Nabil Boudraa  
(Foreign Languages and Literatures)

*Nabil Boudraa received a WIC department Development Grant to purchase materials related to the WIC course for French majors.*

The Stage One Grant-Development within a Department which I received from the WIC program last year allowed me to make some improvements in the French Upper-Division courses here in the Department of Foreign Languages and Literatures at Oregon State University.

First, by the purchase of books and software on writing (in French), I managed to update the textbook list for our fourth-year French courses. In the French 411 course, for example, I relied upon a new book on French composition (*Tâches d'encre*, 2<sup>nd</sup> edition, by Siskin, Krueger, and Fauvel, Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 2004), which helped the students immensely in intensive writing practice.

Most importantly, this grant proved to be helpful for our French WIC course, which we offer every year. The focus in this course is to use intensive writing in order to learn about francophone cultures, using different writing activities such as pastiches, cubing, mapping, compositions, micro-themes, journals, précis descriptions, translations, etc.

Last but not least, this grant has also contributed to the writing of my manuscript (in progress) on the teaching of French and Francophone Literature and Film. Writing techniques and stylistic tips are included in the different chapters. This grant has helped widen the scope of teaching interests and especially improve the quality of regular WIC course in our French section.

## A Study of OSU Student Research Practices

By Jeanne Davidson, Valley Library

*Jeanne Davidson was awarded a WIC Grant in 2003 to study OSU student research practices. This is an excerpt from her report.*

### Introduction

Anecdotal evidence suggests that student research practice is shifting away from traditional print resources toward an increasingly diverse array of digital information sources. A greater understanding of how students use electronic sources in their research is important for evaluating the usefulness of the resources the library provides as well as how we teach the research process. This study was conceived as one means to test the assumptions made about information sources students are citing within their research papers. The goals of the study were to:

- **Identify** the types of information sources students cite in their papers (articles, books, web sites);
- **Gauge** local availability of the sources used;
- **Compare** actual usage to students' stated preferences for types of resources; and
- **Assess** the accuracy of students' citation practices.

### Methodology

During the academic year 2002-2003, student papers and bibliographies were solicited from Writing Intensive Curriculum (WIC) courses in the College of Liberal Arts and the College of Science. Courses were randomly selected, then the instructor contacted to determine suitability of writing assignment projects for the project. In the nine classes included in the study, the principal investigator asked students to provide an anonymous second copy of their final paper along with a completed questionnaire. As an incentive, each student received a \$3 photocopy card. In most cases, papers were turned in to the instructor and then forwarded to the principal investigator.

Upon receipt of the papers, the bibliographies were checked against the OSU Libraries holdings to determine if we owned the item and to determine if journal articles were available electronically or in print. Items not owned by OSU were checked against the Orbis Cascades/Summit catalog to determine consortial availability. In addition, all citations were checked for accuracy and completeness, including URL's for all web sites.

### Summary of results

The project resulted in 76 analyzable papers obtained from nine WIC courses, four from the College of Science and five from the college of Liberal Arts. The students participating represent twenty majors and all but three are juniors or seniors. Total overall rate of participation is 42%

From the surveys distributed and returned, 66 (84%) of the students had received library instruction while at OSU. Of this percentage, 57 (62%) had received the instruction from a librarian, 17 (18%) had received research instruction from their instructor, nine (10%) had used web-based instruction and eight (9%) had received instruction at the Valley Library's reference desk.

Forty-four participants (56%) needed library materials unavailable to them at Valley Library. Twenty-four students indicated the materials they needed were already checked out. Twenty students used Orbis/Summit to get materials, fifteen used traditional interlibrary loan and eleven went to another library to get materials.

Eighty (99%) students own their own computers and of these 69 (86%) can access the web and the library from home. Students are nearly evenly split between the preference to work in the library (44 or 47%) or to work at home (42 or 45%). Eight students (9%) prefer to work in other computer labs around campus.

These students clearly prefer to read printed articles, but not necessarily the original printed version. Fifty-three students (43%) indicated a preference for printing electronically available journal articles, followed by 42 students (34%) who prefer to photocopy a print article. Only 22 students (18%) preferred to read articles online while seven (6%) prefer to read an original print copy.

### Analysis of Cited References

The References Cited lists from the 76 usable papers were examined for the following characteristics:

- Total number of references
- Book, Journal, or Web site
- Availability at OSU for books and journal articles
- Electronic access available for books or journals
- For books or journals not available at OSU, availability within the Summit consortium
- Accuracy of citations for all formats.

Elements required to be considered complete include:

**Book:** Author, title, date, publisher and place of publication. For essays or chapters in a longer work, required editor of the work, title of essay or chapter, essay/chapter author, inclusive pages.

**Articles:** author, title of article, full title of the journal, volume number, date, inclusive page numbers.

**Web sites:** Title of page (as given in metatags), author, publication" date, date of access, complete URL.

Overall, the 76 papers contained a total of 819 citations representing 794 unique items. Of the unique titles, five were conference proceedings or citations to Dissertation Abstracts and were excluded from further study. The following table shows the distribution of the types of sources (book, article, web site) and the relative accuracy of student citations in the remaining 789 citations. Materials from the OSU

Libraries were able to meet approximately 67% of the students' needs and web sites met another 14%, leaving approximately 19% to be met by other libraries' collections.

numbers are not available, although the beginning page number is always part of the citation provided in a database. This issue may need further investigation.

Table 2

	No. Cited	Inaccurate Citations	No.	%
Books	347	62	18	18
Articles	332	59	18	18
Web sites	110	83	78	78
Totals	789	204	26	26

From the 789 citations to unique items, 204 included one or more errors in the citation, a 74% accuracy rate. However, only 18% of the papers were entirely accurate for all citations included. Students clearly seem to have difficulty providing a complete citation for web sites. The lack of page numbers in article citations may be due to increased availability of article text online in HTML format. In these cases, page

**Common Errors in Citations**

<b>Book Errors</b>	
Lack/incomplete publisher info	31
Missing/Inaccurate Author/Editor	10
Missing/Inaccurate Title	12
<b>Article Errors</b>	
No page numbers	22
Missing/Inaccurate Author	15
<b>Web Site Errors</b>	
Inaccurate/Incomplete URL	28
Missing/Inaccurate Title	48
Missing/Inaccurate Publish Date	25
No Retrieval/Access Date	46
<b>Total Errors in 204 citations</b>	<b>237</b>

**Comparison of Colleges**  
The College of Liberal Arts (CLA) is repre-

### What does this study mean for WIC teachers and students?

One assumption behind Jeanne Davidson's article on student research and citation practices is that good citation practices matter for writers and for readers. Why? Three important reasons are:

- Complete, accurate citations enable readers to locate information being cited.
- Complete, accurate citations acknowledge the intellectual property of other writers.
- Complete, accurate citations contribute to the *ethos* of the writer as a person of care, a trustworthy source.

Yet Davidson's study revealed that only 18% of WIC papers examined cited all sources correctly, with online sources being those most frequently cited inaccurately. The study invites WIC faculty to reflect on the research and citation practices we are teaching and evaluating.

Some aspects of sources in WIC papers that faculty might consider are:

- Quality of sources: How can we entice students away from the easy Google search and into search indexes for our field? Are students reading and learning about journals in the field? What skills do our students have for evaluating the quality of information they find online?
- Completeness of citations: What are we teaching students about the correct citation format for online sources? For other sources? Do we ask students to submit with the final paper a photocopy of the first page of any website they cite?

Davidson recommends the following format for citing online sources:

Author's name (if available), title of document (may be from the metatag at the top of the page) and other identifying information, retrieval date statement, url.

Example:

Faith, Daniel P., "Biodiversity", *The Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy (Summer 2003 Edition)*, Edward N. Zalta (ed.), retrieved May 27, 2005, URL = <<http://plato.stanford.edu/archives/sum2003/entries/biodiversity/>>.

A discussion of Davidson's study at a recent WIC Advisory Board meeting highlighted a conflict between citations of electronic sources that are full enough to enable a reader to locate a source vs. official citation styles, especially in science, that require only url and date of viewing. Each WIC teacher will need to decide on a citation format for online sources and share this information with students as they prepare their papers.

-Vicki Tolar Burton (WIC)

**Research, Continued**

sented by five courses and the College of Science (COS) is represented by four courses. The number of papers analyzed is nearly the same - CLA included thirty-nine papers and COS included thirty-seven papers. Student participation was slightly better in the COS with a 41% participation rate compared to CLA's rate of 37%.

The following table shows a comparison of students' usage of types of information sources. Clearly, CLA students cited more sources in their papers and wrote longer papers. COS students used a higher proportion of web sites in their research while, not unexpectedly, CLA used a higher proportion of books. OSU Libraries were able to supply approximately the same proportion of materials for both groups.

	CLA		COS	
	Averages per paper	% of citations	Averages per paper	% of citations
No. of Citations	16		5	
Cites to Books	7.3	46%	1.7	32%
Cites to Articles	6.3	40%	2.3	43%
Cites to Web Sites	1.6	10%	1.3	24%
At OSU	9.6	61%	3.5	64%
Electronic Access	1.5	9%	0.8	14%

**Pre/Views Cont'd**

Jeanne Davidson's article, "OSU Student Research Practices," reports on the results of a WIC grant-funded analysis of 76 WIC research papers from the Colleges of Science and Liberal Arts. Her article tells us what student writers are citing, where they get their sources, and how accurately they cite them.

Don't miss the last page of this issue where you can find Recommended Writing Outcomes for Writing Intensive Courses at Oregon State. We encourage you to adapt them to your own courses.

Finally, I would like to encourage each WIC instructor to put a link on their WIC course Blackboard site to the WIC Survival Guide, a great source of information for students about good writing. <http://wic.oregonstate.edu/survivalguide/>. Additional information for students and faculty are on the main WIC website:

<http://wic.oregonstate.edu>

**Congratulations to WIC's  
2005 Development Grant Recipients**

**Valley Library**

**Anne-Marie Deitering, Proposer**

**Goal:** A group of OSU librarians is interested in learning about the graduating seniors' knowledge, experiences and attitudes about research and writing. On behalf of the project group, Anne-Marie Deitering has been awarded a WIC grant (matching Library funds) to conduct the study, which has received IRB approval. Grant funding will provide incentives for graduating seniors to complete an online survey and participate in a focus group. Additionally, the grant will support the equipment necessary to collect and analyze the data. sented by five courses and the College of Scienced (COS) is represented by four courses. The number of papers analyzed is nearly the same - CLA included thirty-nine papers and COS included thirty-seven papers.

**Food Science and Technology**

**Dan Smith, Proposer**

**Goal:** Dan Smith (FST) has been awarded travel funding to present the results of a WIC-related research project at the North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture Conference (NACTA) in Wooster, Ohio this June. Smith's poster presentation, "A Laboratory and Writing Intensive Course in Food Analysis," is about FST's experience developing and executing a course that integrates laboratory work with intensive writing.

**School of Education**

**Michael Dalton, Proposer**

The School of Education will initiate two new double degree programs in the fall of 2005 (Workforce Settings and Community Settings) which will qualify graduates to teach in a variety of workplace and community environments. Dr. Michael Dalton and Dr. Darlene Russ-Eft have received funding from WIC to develop the three-credit WIC course (ED 417) for the students working towards a degree in Workforce Settings and Community Settings.

**College of Business**

**Keven Malkewitz, Proposer**

Keven Malkewitz has been awarded WIC funding for a Phase II Grant (COB matching) supporting research on Visual Fluency in Writing. Based on the knowledge that the visual characteristics of written texts influence the ease, speed, and accuracy with which readers comprehend texts (documents, PowerPoint, tables, graphs, etc.), Malkewitz will conduct research on the topic and create guidelines for writers wishing to achieve visual fluency. He will disseminate information he's collected to WIC faculty and the broader OSU community.

## Teaching Across Borders: World Premier

by Wayne Robertson and Wendy Oleson

On Friday, April 29, the WIC program hosted the premier of Wayne Robertson's documentary, *Writing Across Borders*. Professors across the disciplines, students and staff attended the screening and participated in a lively discussion afterward.

Wayne Robertson began his documentary project three years ago with a grant from WIC. His idea was to record interviews with international students in order to explore composition pedagogy in their home countries in contrast to the expectations the OSU faculty had about writing. What the students reported was fascinating, and it became clear to Robertson that he wanted to take the project further. Robertson then received a second grant from WIC. The film that emerged has three parts: Culture and Writing, Writing and Accent, and Challenges International Students Face in the Classroom.

Culture and Writing addresses Robertson's initial questions about differences in writing across cultures. Writing and Accent asks viewers to think about what instructors can do when they have native and non-native speakers in the same classroom. Tony Silva, co-founder and editor of *The Journal of Second Language Writing*, talks about fair assessment of international student writing. He discusses the role of grammar in grading and encourages faculty to accept a certain amount of accent in written assignments. This section shows that unrealistic expectations will negatively impact students. A PhD student from Malawi talks about the different perceptions of politics in the final section, Challenges International Students Face in the Classroom, and Deborah Healy, Director of the English Language Institute at Oregon State University, discusses how often international students miss meaning because of contextual information American instructors take for granted. Timed-writing examinations also pose a significant challenge to a non-native writer; a Japanese student speaks about problems of immediate thoughtful response in another language and about the reasons she writes more slowly in English.

The discussion that followed the screening suggested that the video affected many viewers personally. A WR121 instructor announced that after being presented with this material he felt as though he needed to write all of his International students an apology. Had he been informed his teaching and assessment would have been more responsive in light of the challenges non-native writers face. Whether an instructor or student, everyone agreed that they learned something from the video that will make their experiences in the classroom more successful. Fortunately, Robertson's video will make that possible; it will be distributed nationally beginning in August.

## ART469: Methods and Theory of Art History Students' Colloquium Unites Writing and Speaking Objectives

by Wendy Oleson, WIC TA

In March, Professor Kirsi Peltomaki's ART 469 students ended the term by presenting and discussing their research papers in a public Research Colloquium. Research topics included: *Revisiting Futurism: Analyzing Style in a Social Context, Iconography and Formalism: Reconciling Difference in Gerhard Richter's Paintings, and Frank Lloyd Wright's Fallingwater House in Terms of Vasari and Panofsky*.

After a writing intensive term, the ten students had the opportunity to acquire a new set of skills through performance. They took their seven-page papers and revised them into three pages, which they presented along with corresponding slides to professors, students, and members of the community. Students reported that the biggest challenges were having to condense their information so dramatically and remembering to read slowly and breathe.

### About Teaching With Writing

**Editor:** Vicki Tolar Burton

**Assistant Editor:** Wendy Oleson

**Technology Advisor:** Kaitlin Rupert

*Teaching With Writing* is the newsletter of the Oregon State University Writing Intensive Curriculum Program. As part of the Baccalaureate Core, all OSU students are required to take an upper-division writing-intensive course in their major.

The content of WIC courses ranges from radiation safety (for Nuclear Engineering majors) to golf courses design (a Horticulture option). While subject matter differs by department, all WIC courses share certain commonalities defined by the Faculty Senate:

- Informal, ungraded or minimally graded writing is used as a mode of learning the content material.
- Students are introduced to conventions and practices of writing in their discipline and use of borrowed information.
- Students complete at least 5000 words of writing, of which at least 2000 words are in polished, formal assignments.
- Students are guided through the whole writing process, receive feedback on drafts, and have opportunities to revise.

For complete information on WIC guidelines, contact Vicki Tolar Burton by email at [vicki.tolarburton@oregonstate.edu](mailto:vicki.tolarburton@oregonstate.edu), visit the WIC web site at <http://wic.oregonstate.edu>, or consult the OSU Curricular Procedures Handbook.

## **Recommended Writing Outcomes for Writing Intensive Courses at Oregon State University**

*These outcomes are adapted from the Writing Outcomes Statement of the National Writing Program Administrators Council. <<http://www.english.ilstu.edu/hesse/outcoms.html>> Faculty are encouraged to adapt these outcomes to their own courses as appropriate.*

### **Rhetorical Knowledge**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of:

- The main features of writing in their field
- The main uses of writing in their field
- The expectations of readers in their field

### **Critical Thinking, Reading, and Writing**

Students will demonstrate knowledge of:

- The uses of writing as a critical-thinking tool in their field
- The interactions among critical thinking, critical reading, and writing in their field

### **Processes**

Students will demonstrate competence in/knowledge of writing processes by:

- Building written documents in stages
- Reviewing work-in-progress in collaborative peer groups for purposes other than editing
- Editing and polishing in the later parts of the writing process
- Applying technologies commonly used to research and communicate within their field

### **Knowledge of Conventions**

Students will demonstrate the knowledge and use of:

- The conventions of usage, specialized vocabulary, format, and documentation in their field
- Strategies through which they can achieve better control of field-specific conventions and conventions of Standard Written English

### **Teaching Tip**

Create a link on your course's Blackboard site to

<http://wic.oregonstate.edu/survivalguide/>

The information is relevant to all courses with a writing component.