(Re)Building Connections and Collaborations Across High School and College Writing Contexts

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### 1. Title: (Re)Building Connections and Collaborations Across High School and College Writing Contexts

**Abstract:** Connections between high school and college writing are fraught for researchers, teachers, and students. The purpose of this project is to develop an edited collection featuring timely conversations about the ways to best serve writers within and across writing contexts.

Topics may include: increasing standardization of curricula; students developing different skills than they need (esp. underrepresented students in historically under-resourced schools); teacher development and training challenges in both English Ed and FYW contexts; dual credit and time to degree; effects of technological change on writing and writing expectations; public discourse (de)valuing school writing and literacy, in general.

We seek to include teacher voices from a range of institutional (secondary, community college, etc.), professional, and personal positionalities. By including a range of genres, voices, and pedagogical ideas, we hope this collection will find a broad audience among teachers and administrators across institutional contexts.

### 2. Facilitator information:

For each facilitator (your group needs at least two), include a paragraph with the following information:

* Name: Christina Saidy
* Pronouns: she/her/hers
* Affiliation: Arizona State University
* Email address: christina.saidy@asu.edu
* Bio statement/background (What expertise do you bring to this project?) Christina Saidy is a former middle school and high school language arts teacher and now an associate professor and director of the English Education program at Arizona State University. Christina’s work focuses on writing transitions for students entering college and teachers in professional development groups. In her work, Christina focuses on opening up access to college writing for traditionally underrepresented students and first-generation college students. Christina’s work straddles both rhetoric/composition and English Education and she regularly publishes in venues for audiences in both disciplines. Christina has provided extensive professional development on the teaching of writing for secondary teachers and for college writing teachers.
* Name: Brad Jacobson
* Pronouns: he/him/his
* Affiliation: University of Texas at El Paso
* Email address: bjacobson@utep.edu
* Bio statement/background (What expertise do you bring to this project?): Brad has been a teacher in a range of geographic and institutional settings for almost two decades, including the last ten years at HSIs in the U.S. southwest. Brad is currently an assistant professor at UTEP, where he teaches English education and writing studies courses to preservice teachers and graduate students. His publication record includes articles and chapters focusing on student writing development and discoursal identities, teacher development, and composition pedagogies. Brad has a demonstrated record of professional collaboration, and brings experience in all aspects of collaborative research, from research design to publication, as well as in creating and facilitating teacher partnerships between secondary and postsecondary institutions.
* Name: Jessica Rivera-Mueller
* Pronouns: she/her/hers
* Affiliation: Utah State University
* Email address: jessica.riveramueller@usu.edu
* Bio statement/background (What expertise do you bring to this project?): As a teacher educator, Jessica’s teaching and scholarship focus on facilitating teacher development for middle, high school, and college English teachers. Her publication record includes articles and book chapters that deepen educators’ understandings of teacher-learning and provide frameworks for facilitating teacher-learning. Her expertise in writing pedagogy education is informed by her work teaching undergraduate courses in English education and graduate courses in writing studies. Additionally, she directs the Department of English’s concurrent enrollment program at Utah State University. In this role, she draws from her experience as a former high school English teacher to create the professional partnerships that are necessary for meaningful professional development for teachers of writing at the secondary and postsecondary level.

### 3. Primary Contact:

Christina Saidy

### 4. Description (please include a Works Cited):

What are the purpose and goals of this collaboration? Who are the intended audiences? Why is this collaboration important to start? Why now?

Connections between high school and college writing are fraught for researchers, teachers, and, most importantly, for students who variably experience high school and college writing. While there have been previous book length efforts to place high school and college instructors and concerns in published conversation (Hansen & Farris, 2010; Sullivan & Tinberg, 2006; Sullivan et al., 2010; Thompson, 2002), these collections are now dated and tend to be limited in geographic, demographic, and institutional diversity. In general, teachers do not have enough opportunity to discuss and articulate values of high school and college writing in meaningful ways. Long-term, this collaboration intends to develop an edited collection featuring timely conversations about the ways to best serve writers within and across a range of writing contexts.

This collaboration is important to start due to a range of timely concerns we intend to address, including: increasing standardization of curricula at the high school level that widens the gap between high school and college writing; students developing different skills than they need (esp. Underrepresented students in historically under-resourced schools); teacher development and training challenges in both English ed and FYW contexts; dual credit and time to degree; the effects of technological change on writing and writing expectations; public discourse (de)valuing school writing and literacy, in general. At the same time, we recognize that high school and college are constructs, not stable categories (Lueck, 2020); thus, the Watson Conference collaboration will benefit the project by having *teachers* from a range of contexts shape the focus of the intended collection. We imagine there may be broad topics like existing or budding collaborations between high school and college, articulation activities, teaching writing in hyper-restrictive environments, and what it means to be a teacher of writing in the current political and technological climate, but we expect topics to emerge in conversation.

This project is an ideal addition to this years’ unique Watson Conference because we are hoping to (re)build conversations across high school and college contexts. We expect the Zoom option to open an opportunity to feature teacher voices often excluded from these conversations, including from a range of institutional (secondary, community college, etc.), professional, and personal positionalities. The collaborative format will also open opportunities to explore and extend a range of genre possibilities, including but not limited to printed dialogues, personal narratives and testimonios, reciprocal interviews, and classroom examples. By including a range of genres, voices, and pedagogical ideas, we hope this collection will find a broad audience among teachers and administrators across institutional contexts.

Works Cited

Goldblatt, Eli. (2007). *Because We Live Here: Sponsoring Literacy beyond the College Curriculum.* Hampton Press.

Hansen, Kristine, & Christine R. Farris (2010). *College Credit for Writing in High School: The “Taking Care of” Business*. NCTE.

Lueck, Amy J. (2020). *A Shared History: Writing in the High School, College, and University, 1856-1886.* Southern Illinois University Press.

Sullivan, Patrick, & Howard Tinberg (Eds.). (2006). *What is "College-Level" Writing?* NCTE.

Sullivant, Patrick, Howard Tinberg, & Sheridan Blau (Eds.). (2010). *What is “College-Level” Writing? Volume 2: Assignments, Readings, and Student Writing Samples.* NCTE.

Thompson, Thomas. C. (Ed.) (2002). *Teaching writing in high school and college: Conversations and collaborations.* NCTE.

### 5. Annotated schedule:

What will you do when you are together? Please consult the [schedule](#_heading=h.z337ya) for the number of hours per day you have together. Zoom-only facilitators, make sure to build in lots of screen breaks. (Note that Zoom-only groups meet for slightly fewer hours than in-person groups because of the additional intensity of meeting on screen.)

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| Day 1: Wednesday, February 28, 2024 | |
| 12:00 p.m-12:30 p.m | Conference welcome |
| 12:30 p.m.-2:00 p.m | Keynote on a theme related to collaboration |
| 3:00 p.m.-6:00 p.m. | Work session   * Start by sharing reflection and mapping questions * Groups based on mapping activity to begin sketching out collection sections * Individual writing activity – outlining * Screen break each 60-75 minutes |
| 8:00 p.m. | Social Activity – Trivia night |
| Day 2: Thursday, February 29, 2024 | |
| 12:00 p.m.-1:00 p.m. | Reports from groups on day 1 work session.  Deep listening for commonalities, redundancies and spaces for change or movement. |
| 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. | Writing in small groups  15-20 minute break at a time(s) chosen by group |
| 3:00 p.m.-4:30 p.m. | Whole group activity on mapping theoretical frameworks for sections and individual contributions.  15 minute break during this block |
| 4:30 p.m.-5:00 pm | Individual work – shaping theoretical frameworks for individual proposals |
| 8:00 p.m. | Group dinner (A portion of the facilitation stipend will be used to distribute food delivery gift cards to facilitate a shared meal.) |
| Day 3: Friday, March 1, 2024 | |
| 12:00 p.m.-2:00 p.m. | Individual writing session to finish proposals  Screen breaks when needed |
| 2:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m. | Meet in small groups or whole group (group decides) to prepare for deliverables presentation |
| 3:00 p.m.-6:30 p.m. | Showcase of deliverables |

### 6. Modality:

Please indicate one preference.

1. **Zoom (Feb 28-Mar 1)**
2. In-person (Mar 7-9) [Note: [Question 15](#_heading=h.1ksv4uv) asks if you are interested in a hybrid option]

### 7. Number of participants:

Please estimate the minimum and maximum numbers of participants that would make sense for your group. (For budgeting purposes, we are estimating 20 people per group for a total of around 240 participants, but your project might require more or fewer people, which is perfectly fine.)

We estimate a productive session would include a minimum of 12 and maximum of 20 participants.

### 8. Participant background:

Are you looking for participants with certain kinds of skills (e.g., language, artistic, technical skills), roles, backgrounds, interests, or identities?

The project aims to center the voices of teachers–both high school and college–who may not be typically heard from in teaching, research, and articulation conversations to provide an “on the ground” focus. As noted above, prior book-length works on high school-college writing have been limited by geographic focus and the social and professional positions of authors. To address this unfortunate gap in the conversation, we seek teacher-writers who bring a range of identities and teach students from various positionalities to contribute to this collaborative. We seek to value the expertise of contributors from all levels of instruction and stages of career development–including pre-service and veteran teachers, graduate teaching assistants, and administrators–and from a range of geographic and institutional positions, including secondary schools, community colleges, minority-serving institutions, liberal arts colleges, and research universities.

### 9. Preparation:

Would participants need to read, do, and/or bring anything in advance? (As the [Timeline for Facilitators](#_heading=h.2jxsxqh) indicates, they would be informed of their group a little over a month in advance of the conference’s start.)

Participants will be asked to read two brief texts and complete a writing activity before the conference.

#### Readings:

Gallagher, Chris W., Peter M. Gray, and Shari Stenberg. "Teacher narratives as interruptive: Toward critical colleagueship." *symploke* 10.1 (2002): 32-51.

Alsup, Janet, et al. "Seeking connections, articulating commonalities: English education, composition studies, and writing teacher education." *College Composition and Communication* 62.4 (2011): 668-686.

#### Writing Activity:

Participants will engage in a writing activity prior to the conference. The writing activity will be used as an ice-breaker and community builder, as well as a way into discussion about the concerns, opportunities, theories, frameworks the collaborative might wish to pursue. The writing activity prompt is:

*We are inviting you to reflect on and write about your writing experiences. Below, we have provided you with a series of questions to guide your reflection. Your responses to the questions are to help you focus on your experiences as a writer and the way they shape your beliefs about and practices in teaching writing. To complete this reflection:*

* *Review the questions below. Choose 3-4 categories to respond to in-depth.*
* *Set a timer for one hour*
* *In that hour, respond to your chosen categories with in-depth reflections. In your reflections, give specific examples from your experiences as a writer.*
* *At the conclusion of the hour, spend a short time proofreading and cleaning up your document. You need not do more. This is a reflection.*

##### Category 1: Your history as a writer

* What are your earliest memories connected to writing?
* How have your writing practices changed since you were a child/adolescent?
* How have your feelings about writing changed over time?
* What do you remember about writing in school?
* What are your memories of sharing writing?
* What are your memories of writing to/with friends?
* What are your memories of writing in play?

##### Category 2: Teaching writing

* What is a positive memory of teaching writing?
* What are some of your favorite writing activities or assignments?
* How have your feelings about teaching writing changed over time? How have your practices changed?
* What is a challenge for you in teaching writing?
* Why do you teach writing?
* If your students had just one takeaway from your writing instruction, what would you want it to be?

##### Category 3: Writing in public life

* How do you write as an educator?
* How is writing valued (or not) in your professional role(s)?
* How do you engage in writing to solve problems?
* How do you engage in writing in your community?
* Do you keep a diary? Lists? Social media profile? Etc.

##### Category 4: Your questions about writing

* What is a fundamental question you have about writing instruction?
* What do you want to ask someone who teaches writing at a different level than you (i.e. college teachers, what would you want to ask high school teachers?)
* What questions do you have about teaching writing that could unravel your own or others’ beliefs?
* What questions might you ask based on an article or book you’ve read about teaching writing?

##### Category 5: Writing struggles and successes

* Write about a time when writing or teaching writing was hard for you.
* Write about a big win as a writer or writing teacher.
* What is something you have learned from something you perceived as a writing failure?
* What are you currently working through as a writer, or writing teacher, and what are the sticky points?

##### Category 6: Envisioning writing

* What hopes do you have for the future of teaching writing?
* Who do you imagine yourself collaborating with to build this future of teaching writing?
* What principles or values are important to you as you imagine the future of teaching writing?
* What is a contribution to understanding writing that you’d like to make to bring about change?

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### 10. Final-day deliverable:

What deliverable would your group share with the whole conference on the last day? It can be very rough—we recognize that these collaborations are only just beginning—but there should be at least something that your group could present.

We intend to present a general outline or framework for the future edited collection, including main topics and associated theoretical frameworks. Each participant will compose (or begin) a proposal for the collection. We will have a general timeline of the work needed to produce and where we hope to end up.

### 11. How will participants get credit?

Will participants be coauthors who could list a publication on their CV? Will they be credited in some other way? Please explain their role in the project and how credit will work.

Participants will be invited to contribute to the collection as authors. The facilitators will be authors and co-editors.

### 12. What happens after the conference?

How will the project develop after the conference? What opportunities for further collaboration will participants have?

After the conference, participants will leave with a clear idea of how to move their chapter forward. Some participants will contact other potential collaborators. Once all participants have completed chapters, the group (and additional collaborators) will come back together on Zoom to provide feedback via a workshop approach. We anticipate this happening the fall after the conference.

The facilitators regularly attend CCCC and NCTE. If participants are interested, the facilitators will organize a social gathering at each conference.

### 13. Working and learning environment:

What strategies might you use to foster an inclusive, accessible, “post-White” (Croom, 2022) environment founded in collective accountability and radical care (Johnston et al., 2022)? Feel free to make use of the [2021 Watson Conference Commitments](https://louisville.edu/conference/watson/history-and-conference-archive/conference-archive/past-conferences/2021-watson-conference/2021-watson-conference-commitments) in your planning. (We will revise them slightly for 2024.)

As facilitators, we believe the Watson Conference is an ideal place to launch an edited collection because we are committed to building the collection with the voices of educators who care about and are positioned to examine the connections between writing in the high school classroom and writing in the college classroom. Our workshop process is designed to center diverse perspectives that can enhance the ideas and practices that are ultimately forwarded in the collection. We are proposing a virtual experience to make the workshop accessible for participants who may not have resources to travel to an in-person experience. In proposing a virtual experience, we are designing our workshop with the 2021 Watson Conference Commitments in mind. We will encourage participants to take additional breaks when needed, and we will use technology during our evening gatherings to connect through games and shared meals. Throughout the workshop, we will promote care and accountability through our discussion structures and leadership strategies. For example, we will create discussion guides for small group and large group discussions that will state our expectations for participants to be mindful of their participation in those conversations. Through our leadership, we will model critical generosity (Bartlett, 2018) and respond firmly to any microaggressions. We agree that participation is a privilege, not a right. The success of our collection depends upon our ability to interrogate the teaching of writing from diverse perspectives; we are committed to creating an inclusive environment that allows participants and facilitators to approach the workshop as a space for learning and growth.

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