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In the following few paragraphs, I will reflect on some of my experiences as a member of the team which first implemented a 'Writing Across the Community' program at College of San Mateo during the Spring of 2007.

My initial introduction to the WAC efforts was inspiring. I anticipated that my students, many of whom write well below their grade level, could improve their written communication skills. After participating in the program for a semester now, my experience has reminded me that planning a program and implementing a program do not always achieve the same desired outcome. Some of my students did show improvement in their writing skills after participating in the program. However, because I had not undertaken this program in the past and was not entirely familiar with the process for accessing the services of the Writing Center on campus, I was not able to fully incorporate the program into the coursework this semester. I now know how the program is 'supposed' to work, and I am confident that I will be able to include more students and more WAC activities next semester.

I initially incorporated 5 short essay assignments into my course-plan for the semester. I planned this over the summer and felt that, with constant access to the writing center for revising and reviewing their essays, my students would be able to practice and improve their writing skills. My first mistake, or misunderstanding, was that all of my students would have access to the writing center for assistance with each of their papers. As soon as I assigned the first paper, I learned that this would not be the case. I sent all of my students to the Writing Center and overwhelmed the staff. The Writing Center is not able to handle this many appointments. Because I am an adjunct Professor I also teach at San Francisco State. Unfortunately, I was unable to attend a lot of the planning meetings last semester, because they were held at times when I was at SF State. Thus, I did not consider the obvious fact that sending all of the students in WAC courses, upwards of 150-200 I think, to the Writing Center of a small Community College, was not feasible in the beginning of a program such as this. Alas, after apologizing to everyone, I hope that I am not still in hot water with them. I was wary of accessing the center after this, although now that I am more familiar with the program, I do plan to begin using it more regularly during the next semester. This first bump in the road kind of caught me off guard. I concluded that I would not ask my students to write as many papers, because I also assigned a book report and an essay exam that would allow me to track their writing improvement.

Our WAC team meets once a week to talk about our experiences, make suggestions and learn from one another. I brought a copy of sample midterm exam questions to one of the meetings so that the others, many of whom are English professors, could review the questions and help me pick the best one to use for an in-class writing workshop that I hoped to organize after the exam. I had recently attended a teaching workshop and told them about my desire to test less using the method of memorization and regurgitation of

information, and more by asking the students to analyze issues and policies based on the information that we discuss and learn about in class and in our readings. Well, my questions were still too geared towards memorization. I had already given my kids the test questions to study, so we had to use them this time. But it was a great wake up call. I had created questions the way many of my former professors had once done. I cancelled that workshop and rescheduled a later one.

I assigned a paper about Media Policy in the United States to use for my next attempt at a workshop. The students watched a film in class, and I created questions about the media and politics, that allowed the students to analyze policy and practice based on things that we had discussed and that they took from the film. The students had insightful responses and many came up with creative solutions to some of the behaviors and practice that our media undertake today. As well, as how we can become better consumers of the media. I told the students that the paper was due on a Wednesday. By Monday, I had selected a few examples of papers that I felt would be good learning guides. I retyped them and invited an English professor from the WAC team to lead a workshop in the class. The papers were shown on an overhead and the Professor reviewed some of the skills and made some suggestions to the students on how she may have approached the topic. By the end of the class, the students were interacting with her and learning new ways of thinking about writing a paper. Following the class, the students re-wrote the papers. I am grading them, and based on the ones I have read and compared to the original so far, they have improved.

In future semesters, I plan to hold more workshops like to one I discussed above. I would also like to design another workshop in which the students break into groups of three or four and critique one another's papers. Some of my colleagues on the WAC Team held workshops similar to this and invited a few English Professors to be available to work with the students. According to them, these workshops have been well received.