THE WRRAC PROGRAM AT TCC:

WRITING, READING, AND RESEARCH ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

**WRRAC Workshops and Presentations**

Since 2011, the WRRAC Program has hosted 14 workshops on campus, two Professional Development Day breakout sessions, and a presentation at the Washington State Assessment, Teaching and Learning Conference. Over 120 different faculty members from 27 disciplines have attended the workshops and professional development sessions at TCC.

**Theme-Based Classes in Written Communications**

In the effort to address the writing demands in disciplines outside of English, Written Communications now offers multiple theme-based sections of English 101, 102 and 103 every quarter. These classes expose students to specific readings from disciplines outside of English and address reading and writing strategies, designs and expectations in these disciplines. The goal is to better prepare students for the writing demands in discipline courses at our college. Theme-based sections have focused in a variety of areas including business, environmental science, Native American studies, social justice, social media and culture, advertising and culture, family and social science, health and diet, law and social science, protest and culture, identity and the natural world, and journalism and news writing.

**Theme-Based Approach in Developmental Studies**

Developmental Studies is currently piloting a “bucket” course design that includes a theme-based approach to their writing classes. The two programs are working closely to coordinate thematic topics and scheduling to best suit student needs and to best facilitate the transition of students from developmental education to written communication classes.

**Theme-Based Writing Tutors**

The TCC Writing and Tutoring Center now offers tutoring support for students that focuses on discipline-specific writing. Cory Zimmerman, head tutor, has taken the lead in this area and is currently working with specific instructors who are teaching theme-based classes in Written Communications. The Writing and Tutoring Center hopes to extend this service to the rest of campus in fall of 2013.

**Embedded Writing Instructor Program**

The Written Communications Department is currently piloting an embedded writing instructor option for faculty in disciples that assign writing. Currently, Written Communications instructors are working in specific Human Services and Political Science classes to help students meet the writing expectations of faculty in these disciplines. Our hope is to be able to offer this option to a larger number of faculty in disciplines across campus that assign writing.

**APA in Written Communications Courses and Beyond**

More than two-thirds of all writing assignments at TCC after English 101, 102/103 require APA. The design and emphasis of these APA writing assignments at TCC suggest three areas of emphasis for students: APA reference style, APA essay structure and integration and critical reading skills.

All English 101, 102 and 103 sections now require both MLA and APA style essay assignments with attention to reference styles, essay design and structure, and integration and critical reading skills.

**The Annotated Bibliography in Written Communications Courses and Beyond**

Annotated bibliography assignments in Written Communications? Annotated bibliographies were the focus of a winter WRRAC workshop. A number of instructors in our Written Communications are already using this kind of essay assignment in their classes. The shape and design of these assignments, including the importance of summary skills, will be the subject of a winter 2014 workshop.

**Research-Related Goals and Objectives for Writing and Reading Courses**

Library faculty at TCC, working with faculty from Written and Oral Communications and Developmental Studies, developed a rubric of research-related outcomes for English 85, 95, 101, 102 and 103. This rubric identifies specific research goals for students in both developmental and college-level writing classes. We are working to identify CMST&101 in this rubric as well.

The rubric focuses on the role of research in creating an paper, speech or presentation; the types of resources that are most useful and evaluating appropriateness of resources; the use of research to narrow a topic, compose a question, develop and support a thesis; plagiarism, integrating research, and correctly citing research sources ; and the use of web search engines, research databases, print and electronic books in finding information.

**Library Science Research Courses**

Currently, our library faculty also offer specific courses designed to meet the research needs of our faculty in Written Communications. LS 101 is designed to “meet course-related research needs by learning to identify, find, evaluate, incorporate, and cite appropriate sources using a range of research tools.” LS 102 is designed to “meet course-related research needs by developing strategies to identify, find, evaluate, incorporate and cite appropriate sources using a broad range of research tools. Evaluation and use of sources for specific disciplines will be emphasized.”

**WRRAC and the Writing and Tutoring Center**

The WRRAC Program is working closely with the Writing and Tutoring Center and its director Heather Urschel-Speir in a number of areas including the Digital Learning Library, theme-based (discipline-specific) writing tutors, writing assignment design template, APA formatting and design in English courses, and annotated bibliographies.

**WRRAC and the Digital Learning Library**

The Digital Learning Library includes a variety of writing assignments from across campus and will continue to be a key landing place for WRRAC documents.

**WRRAC and a Writing Assignment Design**

Development Studies and Written Communications are working on an essay design template that can be shared with the rest of campus. Writing assignment design has been the focus for two WRRAC workshops over the last year as we look at the possibility of offering the rest of campus a standardized writing assignment template.

**WRRAC and a Grading Rubric for Writing**

Jacob Marten’s, instructor in Written Communications, has designed a Softchalk version of a grading rubric we hope to share with the rest of campus. Marten’s rubric is build on the English department rubric from a few years back, but it includes variations in the language and terms used across campus for terms like thesis, topic sentence, etc.

**WRRAC and Online Student Writing**

The online versions of English 101, 102 and 103 and CMST 101 offered by our department will serve as the models of online writing instruction that we take to the rest of campus. We will continue the discussion of the design of our online courses: some of instructors using Canvas are providing written and oral comments on student papers—this is impressive and we need to share these techniques; we now have shells for OER versions of English 101, 102 and 103; some reference materials and links to various writing support sites like Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) are also built into these shells.

**WRRAC and Open Educational Resources**

Open Educational Project director Quill West continues for work with faculty from across campus in the design and use of OER materials. Written Communications instructors have designed model 101, 102 and 103 courses using Open Educational Resources (OER). Multiple sections of English 101, 102 and 103--face-to-face, hybrid online, full online and theme-based—now use open educational resources. Open Educational Project director Quill West continues for work with faculty from across campus in the design and use of OER materials. Written Communications instructors have designed model 101, 102 and 103 courses using Open Educational Resources (OER). Multiple sections of English 101, 102 and 103--face-to-face, hybrid online, full online and theme-based—now use open educational resources. The project also created two videos where students talk about their writing process. Currently there are over nineteen classes using OER. Many times teachers have collaborated together with the library and include a research and writing component in the adoption of OER. The collaboration between faculty in the WRRAC Program has increased sharing of resources, which grows the use of OER at our institution.

**WRRAC and Curriculum and Learning Outcomes**

Our department assessment team has worked closely with Kim Rzeszewicz, Program Coordinator for Curriculum and Learning Outcomes, to coordinate our assessment projects with the broader campus assessment work. This includes working to integrate course assessment in Canvas classrooms using a uniform grading rubric as a means of collecting assessment data from disciplines across campus. The Written and Oral Communications department assessment team has worked closely with Kim Rzeszewicz, Program Coordinator for Curriculum and Learning Outcomes, to coordinate our assessment projects with the broader campus assessment work. This includes working to integrate course assessment in Canvas classrooms using a uniform grading rubric as a means of collecting assessment data from disciplines across campus. This will be used as a pilot project to determine if this method of data collection is feasible across campus for most programs.  Because English& 101 is the only course taken by all students earning an associates degree, it is critical that the work being done in this course is assuring the students have learned the course outcomes at a satisfactory level.  Assessment work is driving curriculum revision which is driving further assessments.  Using this cycle makes the curriculum stronger with each iteration.

**WRRAC Program Website**

We are currently working on a WRRAC link on the TCC website (under “English”). Alexis McMillan-Clifton, Written Communications instructor, is developing a WRRAC wiki which will serve to connect instructors and departments that teach writing in Developmental Studies and Written Communications with instructors and departments across campus that assign student writing. This wiki will also include a “Writing Tips” blog for TCC students which will offer advice on writing in specific classes from the instructors who teach those classes.

**WRRAC Program in the Community**

The TCC WRRAC Program is working to strengthen connections beyond the college. Two of these are closely tied to faculty in Developmental Studies, Written Communications, and the Writing and Tutoring Center: the annual High School workshop at TCC, which brings together writing teachers from local high schools with writing and reading instructors from TCC and other local colleges and universities; and Write@253, a local non-profit writing and tutoring center located in the Hilltop District of Tacoma.