



**First Year Writing Program
Rhode Island College
Annual Report
2014-2015**

The 2013-2014 First Year Writing Program's Annual Report concluded with the following list of goals for the 2014-2015 academic year and beyond. Below, we articulate our progress in meeting those goals.

1. Continue to monitor and revise DSP pilot as needed

The Directed Self-Placement (DSP) pilot continues to evolve. The Writing Center Director and the Director of Writing met with members of the OASIS administration in spring 2015 to brainstorm changes to the DSP pilot in an effort to improve DSP at RIC. For 2014, students with SAT scores of 430 or below in either the Written or Verbal component of the test were still asked to sit for RIC's writing placement exam. Students received their scores as a "recommendation" and were directed to the FYW Program website for information on how to choose their FYW course. The Director of Writing had several concerns with this approach; she was uncertain that students consulted the website (Google analytics did not seem to indicate an overwhelming rush of students to the site) and was concerned that students would privilege the institutional voice instead of using that voice as one piece of evidence in their decision-making process.

During the meeting with FYW, the Writing Center, and members of OASIS, the group was unable to create a plan for piloting "full" DSP with a group of students at Orientation; it was difficult to create a control group given the mixed nature of Orientation cycles. After a series of emails, we reached agreement with members of upper administration to discontinue the writing placement exams (with some exceptions; see below) and to provide information to incoming first-year students during the June Orientation cycles. In these cycles, students completed self-efficacy questionnaires and received an informational handout; either the Director of Writing or the Writing Center Director highlighted details for students regarding the different courses available to them, including the challenges and sequencing of courses, when necessary. Before students left their DSP sessions at Orientation, they were invited to select a FYW course and bring their selection to their Orientation advising session the following day.

Students in the Preparatory Enrollment Program (PEP) sat for the Writing Placement Exam (as requested by the PEP coordinator), as did Performance-Based Admission (PBA) students, and the exam was offered as optional for any students at Orientation. Approximately 148 students sat for the Writing Placement Exam among these populations. Students in the Honors program were also exempt from the DSP process, since sections of FYW are set aside for the Honors program (the

Honors Director reports that approximately 60 Honors students were at Orientation and 22 enrolled in FYW; likely many Honors students transferred in credit from dual-enrollment courses or test scores). OASIS reports that 1025 students came through the June Orientation cycles; thus, roughly 80% of entering students, as of this writing, participated in DSP.

We are now in the process of planning our assessment of the 2015 DSP pilot, which will include surveys of FYW students *and* surveys of FYW instructors.

2. *Revise ENGL 010, our “Basic Writing” offering*

In May 2015, the RIC’s President approved changes to the course formerly known as “ENGL 010: Basic Writing Skills.” The course is now known as “FYW 010: College Writing Strategies” and is a four-credit course, though those credits do not “count” towards graduation or a student’s GPA. FYW 010 has been unyoked from COLL 101 (previously, students had to enroll in the courses simultaneously), and the required number of visits to the Writing Center has been reduced from four to three.

These changes have long been on the agenda of the FYW Program and the English department’s Composition Committee but were deferred until after the 100P pilot. With the curricular approval of FYW 100P, we feel that we now better meet the first-year writing needs of RIC’s diverse population and do not anticipate any additional curricular changes in the near future.

3. *Investigate ways in which we can better serve the needs of students who identify as ELL (English Language Learners)*

We were disappointed to hear about the failed search for the ESL faculty member in Educational Studies, as we were looking forward to the opportunity to collaborate with the faculty member in professional development offerings. Still, we continue to use the current FYW Program professional development events to discuss the diverse needs of our translingual students. Because our FYW 010 course tends to attract a significant number of ELL students, we have been working carefully to staff those sections with instructors with experience and expertise in teaching writing to ELL students. We look forward to more conversations on this topic, which may include collaboration with the newly-appointed ESL Program coordinator, Shélynn Riel-Osorio.

4. *Continue to offer professional development opportunities for instructors of FYW*

As in the past, our PD opportunities continue to be a source of community-building in the FYW Program. We offered our two summits (28 August 2014 and 15 January 2015) and sponsored five Instructor Invitationals. We also celebrated our fifth annual Writing Week, with Tom Deans of the University of Connecticut, Storrs, speaking on “Service-Learning and Writing: Options for Engaging Students and Meeting Your Course Goals” (22 October 2014; funded by the College Lecture Series). As in years past, at this event, we awarded our FYW Awards to outstanding student writers. We also worked closely with the Writing Board in their sponsorship of the “First Pages” event and display. We hope to continue many of these programs and collaborations in the coming academic year.

One new event in 2015 was the “Write-In,” co-sponsored by the FYW Program, OASIS, the Writing Board, and the Writing Center. OASIS generously volunteered their computer lab on the

first floor of Craig-Lee and, on April 23rd, from 10:00-4:00, we invited students to come write in this reserved space. The Writing Center provided a “floating tutor,” and the FYW Program provided some office supplies and candy. This was an experiment that attending students found helpful, and we hope to expand on the experience in coming semesters.

5. Continue the work begun by the FYW Program Assessment Task Force (ATF)

The ATF met in the 2013-2014 academic year and made some suggestions to the FYW Program on program-specific assessment. The August Summit (28 August 2014) focused on revising the program’s outcomes with an eye towards eventually creating a rubric for the assessment of student writing. At this session, FYW instructors were gathered in groups and reviewed relevant documents and made suggestions. The Composition Committee will act on this preliminary work to create a more comprehensive assessment plan for the 2015-2016 academic year.

Future Goals (2015-2016 and beyond)

- 1. Continue to monitor and revise DSP pilot as needed**
- 2. Work closely with the English Department to consider improvements to labor conditions in the FYW Program**
- 3. Collaborate with the Writing Board and the Writing Center to consider the ways in which the college can continue to offer quality writing instruction beyond the FYW Program.**
- 4. Continue the work begun by the FYW Program Assessment Task Force (ATF)**
- 5. Continue to offer professional development opportunities for instructors of FYW**

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First-Year Writing Statistics Fall 2014
 Reflects totals from the close of the add/drop period

Sections 010.....	03
Sections 100.....	28
Sections 100H.....	02
Sections 100Plus.....	03

Total Sections First Year Writing..... 36

Adjunct Faculty/Emeritus.....	22
Faculty.....	03
Staff.....	01

Total Instructors.....26

Sections

1. **8.3%** of all sections are taught by tenure-track faculty (3)
2. **2.8 %** of all sections are taught by staff (Writing Center Director) (1)
3. **88.9%** of all sections are taught by adjunct faculty/Emeritus (32)

Staffing

1. **11.5 %** of total instructors are tenure-track faculty (3)
2. **3.8%** of total instructors are staff (Writing Center Director)
3. **84.6%** of total instructors are adjunct faculty/Emeritus

English 010

Capacity is 10 students

# of sections below cap:	1 (1 section @ 7 students)
# of sections at cap:	2
# of sections over:	0

- ENGL 010 is at **90% capacity**.

First Year Writing 100

Capacity is 20 students

# of sections below cap:	2 (total of 3 open seats)
# of sections at capacity:	18
# of sections over capacity:	((@21): 7 (@22): 1

- FYW 100 is at **101.1% capacity** ($28 \times 20 = 560 - 3 \text{ seats} + 9 \text{ seats} = 566$)
- One section closed for Bridges students (enrollment at 18 students)

First Year Writing 100H

Capacity is 15

# of sections below cap:	1 (total of 5 open seats)
# of sections at capacity:	1
# of sections over capacity:	0

- FYW 100H is at 83.33% **capacity** ($15 \times 2 = 30 - 5 \text{ seat} = 25$)

First Year Writing 100Plus

Capacity is 15 students

of sections below cap: 0

of sections at capacity: 3

of sections over capacity: 0

- FYW 100P is at **100% capacity**

First Year Writing Statistics Spring 2015
 Reflects totals from the close of the add/drop period

Sections 010.....	0
Sections 100.....	25
Sections 100P.....	03
Sections 100H.....	01

Total Sections First-Year Writing..... 29

Adjunct Faculty/Emeritus.....	19
TT/FT Faculty.....	03
Staff.....	0

Total Instructors.....22

Sections

- 4. **10.34%** of all sections are taught by tenure-track faculty (3)
- 5. **89.66%** of all sections are taught by adjuncts/Emeritus (26)

Staffing

- 4. **13.64 %** of total instructors are tenure-track/full-time faculty (3)
- 5. **86.36%** of total instructors are adjunct faculty/Emeritus (19)

English 010

No sections of ENGL 010 spring 2015

First Year Writing 100

Capacity is 20 students

of sections below cap: 4 (total of 08 open seats)
 # of sections at capacity: 19
 # of sections over capacity: (@21): 1
 (@22): 1

➤ FYW 100 is at **99% capacity** (25 x 20 = 500 – 08 seats + 3 seats = 495)

First Year Writing 100PLUS

Capacity is 15 students

of sections below cap: 1 (total of 02 open seats)
 # of sections at capacity: 2
 # of sections over capacity: 0

➤ FYW 100Plus is at **95.6% capacity** (3 x 15 = 45 – 2 seats = 43)

First Year Writing 100Honors

Capacity is 15 students

of sections below cap: 1 (total of 7 open seats)

of sections at capacity: 0

of sections over capacity: 0

➤ FYW 100Plus is at **53.3% capacity** (1 x 15 = 15 – 7 seats = 8)