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This dissertation argues that teaching ideology plays a vital but overlooked role in the success of Basic Writing students. Student engagement and retention research recognizes that faculty belief, attitude and approach to students and curricula affect students' willingness to engage with course material, and engagement is the primary factor in determining whether students persist in college. I argue that these beliefs, attitudes and approaches—ideologies—have been represented over time in Basic Writing research but have not been overtly examined and connected to student success in Basic Writing courses. I outline the patterns of representations of ideologies found in Basic Writing research and separate the patterns into four ideological categories. Each of the categories is described in detail and linked to its effectiveness in encouraging student engagement and success. To support these categories, I provide three case studies of currently teaching Basic Writing instructors. I then apply my taxonomy of teaching ideologies to the administrative processes Basic Writing programs engage in that are related to teaching: recruiting and hiring, training, evaluation, promotion and tenure. Each of these processes can be reexamined and adapted to include attention to teaching ideology. In this way, I fill in gaps about teaching in Basic Writing research while providing a structure by which to assess program effectiveness and development.

TEACHING MATTERS: PEDAGOGICAL IDEOLOGIES AND SUCCESS
IN THE BASIC WRITING CLASSROOM

by

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To Dr. Jon M. Young, whose dedication to first-year students is an inspiration.

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PREFACE

Fayetteville State University, the institution where I have worked for the past ten years, has a history and tradition similar to that of other historically black colleges and universities; it admits and educates students who are not courted by other institutions. FSU does not operate under a policy of Open Admissions; as a member of the University of North Carolina system, it cannot admit students who have not completed the required sequence of high school courses: four units of English, two of foreign language, four of math, three of science, two of social studies. In addition, admitted students must have a 2.0 high school grade point average and take the SAT or ACT, though no specific score on either is required (FSU Undergraduate Catalog 25-26). The average SAT score of the incoming freshmen between 1996 and 2006 give an idea of their academic preparation; scores ranged from 833 to 868 (Student Success and Retention). From these data and the prominent placement of institutional history, listed on page two of the undergraduate catalog and required learning for all incoming freshmen, one can infer that FSU's historical mission--to educate those who may not have a substantial academic background--is still proudly maintained at this institution.

This mission is carried out unevenly across the campus, however. In some units, supporting and teaching these largely underprepared students is a top priority, while in others, it takes second or tertiary rank to other concerns. For example, I work primarily for the first year program, University College, which houses academic advising, support services, the freshman seminar course, learning communities, and specialists in

developmental studies. The research that underlies student success is implemented in University College within the structure and mission of the unit: in unit meetings and professional literature, faculty and staff are constantly reminded of retention numbers and pedagogical methodology. Instructors are encouraged to improve their teaching, and they are on the forefront of any new teaching initiatives the university develops, like working with tablet computers and cell phones in the classroom. None holds a tenure track position, so these faculty do not face pressure to self-promote and to maintain ideological divisions within the department. Finally, all University College employees applied for and accepted their jobs with the knowledge that they are there specifically and only to assist students. From the first day of work, they are encompassed by a unit-wide awareness of student retention and progression. They are trained and evaluated based on their ability to predict difficulties and help students work through them so that the students will be able to stay in school. This is not to say that all students persist and graduate under the guidance of University College personnel, but it is to say that the ideological focus of the department is unified. The faculty and staff believe that all FSU students can graduate, and they believe that many students need this help and support to do so.

Across campus in the English department and in all the other academic departments, my colleagues have a very different set of agendas and motives guiding their mindsets. The department chair is desperate to find instructors to teach enough sections of all the composition courses, especially the developmental one, which faculty resist. Approximately one-third of each incoming freshman class places into

developmental writing, so there are a substantial number of sections offered, and they consume a great deal of time and energy of their instructors. Full-time faculty must balance their time between teaching, which brings few institutional rewards, and their research for publication, which can lead to tenure. Neither the chair nor the various faculty members are familiar with student success research but solely with the research of their academic specialty—and the majority of those teaching composition specialize in literature.

This demand to research and publish influences the focus not only of the faculty but of the department. English faculty meetings tend to address concerns like the travel budget, upper-division course scheduling, graduate studies, and reports from the search committee; retention and progression numbers are not a priority, nor is teaching methodology. Composition instructors are hired, retained, and promoted based upon publication in literature, not teaching or student performance. If students drop out of their classes, faculty have fewer papers to grade—in effect, rewarding them for getting rid of students. This set of departmental goals clearly pushes faculty in the direction of minimizing their teaching time and effort while maximizing their research time and effort. This undermines the success of all students, but especially those in the developmental writing program, because any effort to challenge, engage, and support students must be undertaken at the expense of research time and due purely to the goodwill of the instructor, who has no good reason to bother and plenty of reason not to.

As coordinator of the developmental writing program, I am positioned in the UC but working with instructors from the English department. I attempt to share the research

and encourage discussions of best pedagogical practices for student retention, but as a non-tenured colleague from a different department, I am more like an outside consultant than a coordinator. I have no authority over the instructors to provide external motivation, and the structure of the department's reward system guarantees that if they choose not to participate in the discussions, not to contribute meaningfully, or not to revise their teaching in accord with the research, they are personally no worse off than they were before. My colleagues already have so many pressures that asking them to take on even more research and responsibility has been difficult. However, in order for underprepared students to succeed, a certain mindset is necessary that is counter to the research paradigm: professors must believe that Basic Writers can improve, they must expect improvements to be gradual and uneven, and they must value persistence.

Because I am situated with one foot in English and one in University College, I have been exposed to the demands of both student success and faculty success and have been frustrated at how little they overlap. Student success at FSU—keeping students enrolled and progressing toward a degree—is not aligned with faculty success—achieving tenure and full faculty status, pay, and privilege. Since our university has a mission to admit underprepared students and to offer to provide them with a college education, we, our university's faculty, have a duty to assist in that mission as fully as possible. In return, the university's structure and reward system should be directly linked to our skill at promoting student success in our classrooms, with our students. All academic departments should be aware of retention and progression rates, and all teaching faculty should be using active learning techniques in their classrooms.

Currently, the structure of the institution and its faculty reward system undermines the ability to fulfill its own mission, educating its students.

I have learned many lessons while working in University College and teaching developmental writers, lessons that my colleagues across the university should also know. For instance, students may not have a great deal of academic preparation or experience before arriving at the university, but they do have motivation and desire. They want to earn a degree. Few spend all the time and money and energy putting themselves in this new and uncomfortable situation because they want to fail or expect to fail. However, many students do fail, at least in the sense that they do not complete a degree at the university. Nationally, less than half of first-time freshman, 46.9%, complete a degree within five years, according to the ACT (Stover 1). At FSU, the average one-year retention rate is 73.2%, and the six-year graduation rate is 40.4%. In other words, after one year, FSU loses over a quarter of its students, and after six years, fewer than half have attained a degree. In contrast, the one-year retention rate for the entire UNC system is around 80%, and the six-year graduation rate hovers around 60%. (Student Success and Retention). Faculty need to be reminded that students are motivated to succeed, but they often need assistance translating their motivation into specific actions; that is something faculty can easily help with.

First-year programs nationwide are familiar with retention numbers and with retention research by scholars like George Kuh and Jillian Kinzie, Ernie Pascarella, and John Gardner and Betsy Barefoot: most students who drop out of school make the decision to do so in the first-year, largely due to a feeling that they do not belong in

college; another substantial number leave school in the second year after failing to make adequate progress in earned hours and GPA, therefore, unable to declare an appropriate major. To combat these issues, first- and second-year programs across the country are tapping the enormous and growing body of recent research devoted to student success; it directs educators to challenge students and to engage them, to teach using active learning techniques, and to provide plenty of academic support that is directly linked to their coursework. First-year teachers and programs use this research as the daily mantra and guiding central purpose.

Not only does first-year and retention research speak directly to the teaching of Basic Writing, so does composition research. Another of the lessons I have learned from experience is backed by ethnographic research published by Marilyn Sternglass, Eleanor Kutz, Anne Herrington and Marcia Curtis: academic writing develops over time and with practice. What students write about is largely incidental; that they write and keep writing is the key, and they must keep writing for a sustained period of time to make real progress, to grow comfortable with their writing process, to learn how to formulate and organize arguments that are meaningful to them. This research and experience has guided my teaching of a number of Basic Writers who have arrived in my classes writing in convoluted sentences and using structures that do not exist in standard English grammar. Sometimes one semester makes a substantial difference. Other times two semesters' work is needed to realize significant growth in the texts students produce. Usually by the end of two semesters, both the students and I are confident that they can enroll in any course on campus, read the material, and form clear and coherent, organized

responses to the material. In order to reach that point, they must have time to write, to rewrite, to develop, and they have to be supported in that effort by their teachers and tutors.

Any Basic Writing student has the potential to grow and develop into a fully competent writer of academic texts, but it takes time and energy. I believe that the most important job for teachers is to provide the context and the support for students to keep at it. If students are enrolled in classes with professors who simply reflect their lack of competence without providing significant support and encouragement, the students flunk out or drop out of the university before they have time to develop. If they are writing, they will make progress, and if they are not, they will not. Composition research tells us to keep them going without expecting quick and radical change, and retention research tells us to keep them engaged and supported so that they will be willing to continue. This research must be applied to Basic Writing programs if students hope to graduate.

I have known hundreds of developmental writers over these years who have stayed at the university long enough to develop the ability to negotiate academic literacy, to break down difficult texts and understand them, to form opinions about them, to write and explain responses to them in language the university finds acceptable. Equally, I have seen hundreds of developmental writers give up, largely in the first year but some in the second year and beyond. All of these students could have succeeded, but they did not. Though some reasons are clearly beyond institutional control—financial and family issues, for example, can be overwhelming--often the reasons for student persistence are well within the domain of the instructors. The approach instructors take to their

developmental classes is almost indistinguishable from students' willingness to continue, to see themselves as belonging or potentially belonging in the world of academics, or to see themselves as hopelessly out of their league. I had a colleague whose frustration with the university's admission standards spilled into his classroom. He told his students that they should never have been admitted and that they did not belong there; he encouraged them to drop out and attend a community college instead. Another colleague was turned down for a promotion and spent a great deal of his class time complaining bitterly about his place in the university, not often getting around to teaching at all. Yet another colleague clings to the idea of good writing as it was defined by current-traditional research forty years ago. She all but ignores ideas and development in student writing, concentrating instead on the sentence-level error and covering student papers with red ink and impenetrable shorthand comments about grammatical errors, with references to page numbers in a grammar handbook. In all these ways and a myriad of others, teachers have dampened or even extinguished the hope and enthusiasm with which students enter college; they have reinforced the self-doubts developmental students almost always carry with them when embarking upon this new world. Most frustratingly to me, these attitudes and assumptions about developmental students are rarely so destructive in the first-year program, where our professional focus and motivation is on student success.

Talking with the students who drop out and the students who persist has been illuminating. Teaching really does matter. Instructors matter. Approach matters. As I approached this dissertation, I wondered how it is possible to remind Basic Writing programs of that. How could I remind Basic Writing instructors of the lessons shared by

the field's ideological parents, composition and retention studies, both of which are far more focused on student success than Basic Writing is? How could student success theory be integrated into the thoughts and expectations of the teachers? How can teachers' development be encouraged and supported by the institution? In short, how can faculty really understand how important their approach is to students, and how can the institution align its hopes for students with its rewards for faculty? This gap between the research expectations and ideological situation of the English Department and University College at Fayetteville State University is the intellectual space from which this dissertation has developed.

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CHAPTER I

INFUSING TEACHER IDEOLOGY INTO BASIC WRITING RESEARCH

A composition instructor at an online university, concerned about the high rates of withdrawal and failure in her developmental writing course, decided to try an experiment. Though she generally considered herself a strict teacher who valued discipline and rules, at the urging of a veteran colleague she altered her methods. Two components were involved. One, she was to assume that students were mature people with busy lives who did not need to be taught responsibility. Consequently, deadlines became suggestions to be worked out individually; no penalties were tied to the time a paper was turned in. Two, she was to assume that students were apprehensive about approaching her and it was her job to contact them rather than waiting for them to contact her. So, she and her colleague emailed students who missed classes to ask whether they could help rather than automatically dropping them from the courses. She required the same amount and quality of writing and revision she always had, but with these two changes in attitude and method, her students' failure rates in the first two terms were 20% lower than those in non-experimental sections; the average course grade was .22 grade points higher than in other sections, and there were fewer withdrawals. Students rated the course better than other sections, and in future semesters, these students had a higher rate of persistence and higher grades overall. Most importantly, seeing the direct effect of her teaching on student success prompted an evolution in the teacher's priorities and in her perceptions of

her students, her professional duties, and herself (Horninger and Van Dam). No longer did this teacher consider herself a defender of enormous rates of attrition as an inevitable consequence of high expectations; instead, she found that a significant number of students could be reached and retained, even while not lowering academic standards. The key change was only in teacher ideology, the set of assumptions and beliefs that guided her pedagogical actions.

This experiment dramatically demonstrates the link between teacher ideology and student performance in a course. However, this experiment and similar ones at other universities beg as many questions as they answer. How exactly do teacher attitudes and beliefs about their students, their programs, and their methods affect their students' success? What ideologies are most effective at assisting Basic Writing students? Why are these ideologies effective? How are these ideologies developed? Do ways exist for Basic Writing programs to promote the more successful ideologies in their faculty? And why, with forty years of research, has not the Basic Writing community explored this question before now?

Teacher ideology is the set of interconnected beliefs about the role of the university in society, the role of the teacher to the institution and to students, and the role of students to the university and to their own education. These beliefs are developed in all students, and their role models and experiences shape those beliefs as some students evolve into professional educators. Some teachers, for example, see academia as a selective place into which students must earn entry; thus, they probably will also see themselves as loyal more to the institution than to the students, and they will defend its

selectivity. Other teachers see academia as an opportunity that is available to anyone; those will probably see themselves as agents for access to that opportunity. Teacher ideology—that set of beliefs about the place of teachers and students in the construct of academia—guides and shapes all professional and pedagogical decisions.

Teacher ideology makes a clear and direct impact on students as they make the decisions, most often in their first year of college, whether they belong there or not, whether to stay or to drop out. It can promote or hinder the effectiveness of the institution, the program and the students who are enrolled. When a teacher's beliefs about him or herself, the institution, and the student prioritize outreach and student development over the perfunctory assertion of power, students respond in positive ways both academically and personally: they do higher quality academic work, are willing to sustain their efforts, feel that they belong in college, and are more likely to persist in school after the course is over. When a teacher's beliefs prioritize preserving the selectivity of the institution over the development of the students, most students respond in negative ways, disengaging from their studies, reducing effort put into their work, feeling alienated from college, and even dropping out (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, and Whitt; Upcraft, Gardener, and Barefoot). Ideology is even more critical to developmental students, who are less likely to arrive at college already engaged with their education and who are more likely to gauge their place in academia through their teachers' attitudes (Wasley).

Yet the field of Basic Writing has largely ignored teacher ideology's relationship to students' growth as academic writers, despite relatively thorough examinations of

ideology in the fields of retention and student success studies and in composition studies. Basic Writing is intrinsically connected to both these areas; Basic Writing instructors are teaching the same material as composition colleagues to students who have qualities linked to retention risk, yet they have not incorporated either field's information on the importance of ideology to students' willingness to persist. Basic Writing courses are on the front lines of the opportunity to retain students, but Basic Writing literature currently does not embrace that role as it should. If Basic Writing teachers wish to make a significant difference to their students, they must widen their vision in several important ways that will address these gaps. They must recognize the field's connections to the larger context of student success and retention and use the work of those fields to re-evaluate approaches to Basic Writing students and to definitions of their success. With that knowledge in hand, Basic Writing instructors will be able to recognize that their teaching ideologies are of critical importance to Basic Writing students' ability to meet their individual goals, and teachers will be able to encourage and support the most effective ideologies. The current isolation is undermining Basic Writing's development as a field and as institutional programs. At the same time, Basic Writing teachers are not fully serving the needs of their institutions, and most importantly, they are failing to assist students toward their larger goal, graduation from the university.

Teacher Ideology's Connection to Retention

Basic Writing researchers have spent many productive years debating how to identify Basic Writers, how to teach them, what to teach them, and why. But the Basic Writing research only implicitly shows what first-year researchers have found to be one

of the most important predictors of how well a student will do in college, instructor ideology. Interestingly, the very identifier of Basic Writers, lack of academic preparation, is *not* necessarily the factor that will be the most predictive of their persistence in college. According to first-year researcher Betsy Barefoot, most American students do not drop out of college due to academic problems; the rate of attrition is “more or less even across all levels of student academic performance” (12). More important than academic preparation to most students is their level of engagement, and that is intimately connected to what faculty think and believe about them.

The idea of engagement is not new in first-year research. It refers to “the time and energy students devote to educationally purposeful activities” and is the single best predictor of their learning and development (Kuh et al. 8). Factors involved in student engagement include amount and quality of student-faculty contact, active learning, high expectations, respect for diverse talents and ways of learning, “inclusive and affirming” environments, and prompt feedback (Kuh et al. 8-9). There are two sides to the student engagement coin; one is the students’ willingness and ability to dedicate time and effort to their experiences, and the other is the way that institutions go about allocating resources and setting priorities so that faculty and staff induce students to dedicate their time and effort to their own engagement. Obviously, Basic Writing programs ought to be aware of their role as entities that hire and train people whose ideologies can potentially strongly encourage or discourage student engagement. Faculty ideologies weigh heavily on students’ willingness to engage with their academic careers, and therefore should be at the top of the priority list for Basic Writing programs’ attention.

One of the most important tools in the study of effective practices in student engagement is the National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), a survey taken by thousands of first-year college students nationwide annually. The NSSE has rapidly become a cornerstone in the national study of student success, because it has provided an enormous body of data that establishes clear links between student success and engagement. The more engaged students are, the better their grades are and the more likely they will return to college for a second year (Wasley). For my purposes, one of the most important reasons to take engagement practices seriously is that they are especially helpful to high-risk students, those whose characteristics are often associated with Basic Writers. Remarkably, the NSSE has shown that although engagement is important to all students, it is especially important to underserved minority populations and students entering college with lower levels of academic achievement. In these students, engagement has been found to have a compensatory effect; in other words, if a student enters college with strikes against his potential success but identifies himself as being significantly engaged with his academic experience, he will succeed at a rate more like average students, outstripping his high-risk peers. For example, when African American students reach the average level of engagement, the odds that they will persist are better than those for their white counterparts, despite an overall gap between white and African American persistence (Wasley). Because of this data, it is especially important for Basic Writing programs to focus on the specific ideologies and practices associated with increasing student engagement.

At the top of the list of practices identified by students as being of highest importance to their engagement is faculty accessibility and responsiveness. Outside the classroom, this is manifested in behaviors including keeping office doors open, expecting students to visit office hours, returning emails and phone calls, listing home phone numbers on syllabi, and encouraging informal chats in the office. Students who recognize these behaviors in their instructors feel connected to them and respond by wanting to perform well in class to avoid letting them down (Kuh et al. 208-9). These behaviors in faculty are possible only if faculty see themselves as valuable participants in student persistence and are willing to dedicate their time to students. In other words, their ideology about self and student must be appropriate to make possible the behaviors that students report as the most effective.

Again according to the NSSE, practices within the classroom also matter to student persistence, and not surprisingly, students most prefer pedagogies that engage them. Active and collaborative learning techniques like group projects, reflection papers, class presentations, and participation in learning communities are among students' favorite reported methods (Kuh et al. 193-199). Other pedagogical methods found to engage students include small group discussions, writing-to-learn activities, problem-based learning, and experiential learning (Upcraft et al. 248-254). In addition, high expectations from faculty meet with student approval, as students prefer to be challenged rather than to feel they are wasting their time (Kuh et al. 177-9, Upcraft et al. 244). Activities need to be student-centered, inclusive, relevant, and allow for individual choice (Upcraft et al. 244). "Inclusive and affirming" environments also make a substantial

difference to students; they respond well when they are respected and receive positive reinforcement. Students respond best to activities with these characteristics; they feel personally interested in their studies and are more willing to devote time and energy to them. As my opening anecdote suggests, classroom practices and pedagogical choices such as these are shaped by teacher ideology. A teacher's values and beliefs are reflected in his or her choice of methods and assignments. Since students report that these choices are enormously important to them, Basic Writing programs must encourage those ideologies.

Lundquist, Spalding and Landrum's 2002 study takes the NSSE one step further, establishing even more direct links between student success, as reflected in persistence, and faculty attitude and behavior. The students surveyed agree that faculty interactions do play a significant role in their considerations about staying in school. In fact, 15.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I have thought about leaving the university because of faculty attitudes and behaviors" (31). Three factors that students identify as the most problematic are faculty who insult and humiliate students, those with excessive course demands, and those with negative attitudes. The authors urge faculty to focus on an area that affects retention and over which they have control: "*their own attitudes and behaviors* in the teaching environment" (emphasis in the original 132). In other words, this study too links faculty ideology to student success.

Basic Writing Literature Hints at Ideology

Looking back through the Basic Writing literature, I find little that addresses the question of teaching ideology or that focuses on teachers at all. An enormous amount of

attention has been devoted to student success in relation to pedagogy, which is of course a reflection of a teacher's ideology. However, assuming that a teacher already embodies an ideology that embraces a willingness to change pedagogy is idealistic. Teacher ideology, often unconscious, grows out of many areas aside from research, including personal background and experiences; in addition, many teachers who do not consider Basic Writing their area of expertise do not keep up with the field's research.

Scholarship on composition theory and pedagogy has been discussing this issue of ideology since James Berlin's 1988 *College English* article "Rhetoric and Ideology in the Writing Class," but Basic Writing has not entered that conversation. Even those few articles that do focus on the relationship of pedagogy and ideology have not provided any practical advice, such as how to recognize various ideologies and how to incorporate them into a program's long-term strategy. This dissertation addresses those gaps.

The first attempt to speak directly to teacher ideology is Mina Shaughnessy's 1976 article, "Diving In: An Introduction to Basic Writing." In this piece, she mocks cognitive theorists of the time by parodying the stages of cognitive awareness through which Basic Writers are supposed to develop. Using that same structure for a serious purpose, she outlines four stages that Basic Writing teachers progress through, from a reflex to fail all the students, through a belief that constant correction will fix them, to recognizing a need to change oneself, and finally to a willingness to look both inward at oneself and outward at the student in an ongoing process of growth while teaching.

Shaughnessy's article implies that Basic Writing teachers must undergo a process of ideological evolution in order to be successful; they must understand their students,

their pedagogical goals, and themselves in specific ways or student progress simply cannot occur. Though this article is more than thirty years old, I assert that the categories these ideologies represent have not fundamentally changed, and that the self-reflexive process of reaching a specific ideology is still an absolute necessity to increasing the likelihood of creating a successful pedagogical context, especially for this cohort. Shaughnessy's piece is a foundation, but she describes her categories in quick sketches rather than in detail, and she does not do anything with the categories she establishes. I am taking up this project where Shaughnessy left off because her categories are still represented by Basic Writing teachers, and knowledge of these categories will allow tremendous strides in the quality of teaching for Basic Writers and the persistence of students. The research needs to be updated and expanded.

To date, though, it has not been pursued in any meaningful way. In the past ten years of the *Journal of Basic Writing (JBW)*, only three articles have been printed that take up the questions raised by Shaughnessy; all three recognize the problems that can arise for students when teacher ideology is ignored or based upon false foundations, but still no one has offered solutions to these problems. The first, "Constructing Teacher Identity in the Basic Writing Classroom" is based on a workshop offered by Jacqueline Jones Royster and Rebecca Greenberg Taylor at the Conference on Basic Writing at 1997's CCCC. In this article, Royster and Taylor identify the problem I see: that teachers, not specifically addressed in Basic Writing research, tend to focus on student identity while ignoring how their own identity shapes their decisions and reactions. Their introduction illustrates their surprise to find almost nothing in contemporary scholarship

that spoke to their questions: “While the issue of *student* identity permeated every facet of the scholarship, explorations of *teacher* identity seemed almost absent,” (emphasis in the original 216). This focus on students rather than teachers, they argue, allows teacher attitudes to go unexamined, which means that “dysconscious (although well-intentioned) attitudes that reproduce the status-quo” are allowed to perpetuate (217). They call for more research into teacher identity, including perhaps the idea that teacher and student identities are “mutually constitutive” (226). Though their definition of identity is more directly tied to physical characteristics like age, gender, and ethnicity than to the ways those characteristics inform ideology, Royster and Taylor begin the research that I am adding to by suggesting that there is an important and undervalued connection between who a teacher is (including, I would add, her beliefs and values) and what quality of writing students will produce for her. Because their article began as a workshop, however, their main purpose is merely to raise questions in individual teachers, to encourage them to look at themselves as closely as they look at their students, and to recognize that their individual differences cannot and should not be overlooked.

Despite Royster and Taylor’s call to action, only two research articles even tangentially related to teacher ideology have appeared since in the *JBW*. Ann Del Principe’s “Paradigm Clashes Among Basic Writing Teachers” touches on the idea of teacher beliefs as she recognizes that many teachers of Basic Writing get their information as much or more from lore than from scholarship. She defines lore, following Stephen North, as “the informally shared beliefs about and practices of teaching writing that circulate among practitioners” (64). Though lore is not seen as

legitimate or valid as a basis for teacher ideology, Del Principe asserts not only that it is prevalent in individuals and departments, but also that it does a great deal of damage. One problem with learning from lore is that it can displace the need for attention to research, especially for those faculty who have not been trained in Basic Writing and who do not self-identify as Basic Writing teachers. Another problem is that significant reliance upon lore often creates ideologies in opposition to those created through training in the profession of Basic Writing:

The paradigm clashes emerge quite organically from the varying background experiences of faculty; but, rather than creating a richly diverse group of pedagogical approaches that enhance the quality of basic writing classes, paradigm clashes are often obstacles to building strong basic writing programs. (65)

Del Principe suggests that Basic Writing programs often ignore the problems caused by these paradigm clashes by privileging an individual's commitment to "the cause" over the creation of a research-based set of common goals and curricula (76). If a teacher seems to have a sense of mission to teach, initiate, inspire and defend Basic Writers, even if his or her ideas are founded upon the skills-based, cognitively-deficient models of lore, the program will often praise the teacher. Also contributing to this problem in programs is the extrinsic motivation simply to find enough instructors to cover all the necessary sections. Del Principe concludes by exhorting programs not to continue to do students a disservice by accepting these paradigm clashes, but instead to increase instructors' familiarity with research through regular, department-sponsored discussions that should focus on differences in philosophy and practice: "The goal of this

type of dialogue would not simply be to instruct or inform teachers about scholarship, but rather to encourage teachers to think of themselves as a group of learners who are learning together through discussions of readings and practices” (78). Because this article speaks to the way teachers really think rather than assuming they will accept the best practices as presented in the literature, it does a great service to the field of Basic Writing. Unfortunately, Del Principe recommends sponsoring discussions of the literature without examining another practical reality, the lack of motivation for many teachers to do this. Many Basic Writing teachers, especially those who are not aware of the research, are probably adjuncts or those under temporary assignment from other specialty areas. They are most likely already poorly paid with many drains on their time, and they are teaching other courses with high levels of outside reading and planning. These realities cannot be discounted if real change is to be accomplished.

Shari Stenberg adds to Del Principe’s main idea that untested, anecdotal evidence plays too prevalent a role in the development of teacher ideology, but she focuses on the metaphors that are often used to describe Basic Writing students. In her article, “Learning to Change: The Development of a (Basic) Writer and her Teacher,” Stenberg says that as long as teachers think of students as problems to solve, they will assume a dominant, one-way role. She contends that teachers would be better served “carefully examining how these assumptions result in limiting teacher identities, often in ways that foreclose possibilities not only for writing development, but also for teacher development” (38). Supporting her assertion with examples from her encounters with one student in particular, she explains that these encounters challenged her assumptions

and beliefs in ways that her training and research had not required. She concludes that teacher ideology is informed by “a two-way dynamic between teacher and student, whereby teachers and students together negotiate their identities, needs, and developmental goals” (37). Additionally, because “our metaphoric investments, always informed by dominant ideology, can never finally be unlearned,” this dynamic, mutually constructive education must be ongoing (38-9). While Stenberg is right to conclude that a two-way negotiation is necessary, she fails to explain the multiple other areas from which teacher ideology can grow, including teachers’ relationship to the academy, their levels of training, institutional motivators, and their previous experiences with teaching and with being students.

These three articles overlap in that they all recognize some of the key problems that exist in Basic Writing programs today. First, programs are structured in such a way that it is often necessary to hire and retain teachers who neither want to teach Basic Writers nor are trained to do so. Secondly, many Basic Writing teachers embody beliefs about their students and their own place in the institution that limit their growth as teachers and that are in direct conflict with their colleagues. Third, many programs overlook these structural and ideological conflicts, thereby accepting a conflicted department and less effective teaching. Despite these inclusions, these articles fail to comprehensively outline and explain where ideologies come from, what ideologies might commonly be found in teachers of Basic Writing, how ideology is connected to student retention and progression, and how ideology can be incorporated into many parts of a

Basic Writing program so that it is more effective at helping the students in reaching their long-term goals.

Most of the research in Basic Writing has centered on pedagogical theory rather than on the teachers themselves. For instance, early approaches to Basic Writing advocated sentence-level drills; later, cognitive theory suggested that Basic Writers should stick to short pieces of simple narrative writing. More recently, scholars have recommended immersion techniques and self-reflexive study of power struggles inherent in language. The well-intentioned writers of these proposals—Mina Shaughnessy, Patricia Bizzell, David Batholomae and Anthony Petrosky, to name a few—largely omit discussion of the people who do the teaching. This exclusion implies that advancing a particular pedagogical theory is sufficient to ensure its spread and incorporation as an accepted best practice: people who teach are assumed automatically to have the time and motivation both to stay abreast of current research and to change their pedagogies by trying new methods.

However, in English departments and Basic Writing programs, teachers do make choices about what and how to teach based on multiple factors beyond the research articles they are reading, if indeed they are reading them. Many people who teach Basic Writing do not self-identify as Basic Writing teachers, and they do not participate in the ongoing discussion about Basic Writing. Even for those who do, the research is only one aspect in creating and maintaining a teaching ideology; other facets include their own history as a student, their relationships to their students and to the academy, their levels of training, and institutional motivators. These factors combine to create ideological

lenses through which teachers perceive every aspect of their jobs and which therefore are of inestimable importance to the quality of their work.

Teaching ideologies have long been assumed in Basic Writing research but, with the exception of Shaughnessy's article, not explicitly defined. In this dissertation, I outline four categories of teaching ideologies based on Shaughnessy's framework. Two ideologies, Gate-keeping and Bridge-building, represent opposite ends of the spectrum of overlapping ideologies possible in any given teacher, with Converting and Recognizing in the middle. Gate-keeping can often be found in teachers who do not self-identify as Basic Writing instructors, who were not trained for the job and are unsure how to approach it. They believe in an enforceable, unassailable standard in college students; they look for students' abilities to perform specific tasks displaying specific sets of sentence-level skills, and without those abilities, gate-keeping teachers would say that students do not belong in college. They have little faith in the students' abilities to achieve, in the program's value to the university, or in their own value as a teacher of these students. The next category, Converting, is similar to Gate-keeping but with slightly more optimism that a few students might someday achieve highly enough, with hard work, to earn a place at the university. These teachers work with the few who seem to have potential and write off the rest, blaming the university for admitting such clearly unteachable students, and their curriculum is usually based on sentence-skills, continuing the idea that following grammar rules is a sign of admission into the elite. Teachers whose beliefs align with Converting have little interest and faith in the Basic Writing program, because they see it as relevant to so few students.

The third category, Recognizing, is made up of a set of beliefs based upon the recognition that current-traditional teaching strategies do not seem to work, but a lack of willingness or ability to experiment with other pedagogies. Teachers who embrace the Recognizing category genuinely believe in their students' ability to achieve and take Basic Writing as a program seriously, but they generally preserve current-traditional classroom structures, pedagogy, and/or curricula. Finally, teachers who embrace the Bridge-building ideology believe that skills are only one part of the discourse standards students need to learn and practice to participate in the academic community; they see Basic Writing as a first step in an ongoing process. Though Bridge-builders' pedagogical practices vary widely, they share beliefs that students can be and will be successful at the university level and that the Basic Writing program is a key resource in each student's progression through his or her academic career.

These four ideological categories exist in Basic Writing programs nationwide, though retention research shows that those teachers who believe in Bridge-building are likely to make the most significant positive impact on Basic Writing students. The Gate-keeping ideology, in contrast, has dropped out of discussion as a possibility for a basis for best practices in teaching for many reasons, including bald practicality. Because Gate-keeping is about preserving the sanctity and standards of higher education, those teachers believe that remedial or developmental education should be done elsewhere--at community colleges, perhaps. Not only is this thinking harmful to student retention, but also it is impractical in contemporary academic life, when more developmental students are enrolling than ever before and failing to earn the degrees they set out for; this is an

enormous problem to the entire academic structure today, and Basic Writing is in the middle of it.

Basic Writing in The Perfect Storm

The field of Basic Writing and its institutional programs are more important than ever before to postsecondary institutions. Those students who are significantly under-prepared for academic work for a variety of reasons align with descriptors for the largest growing population of new students that universities are currently struggling to recruit and to serve effectively. At this particular moment in history, student populations are proportionally more likely to be labeled developmental than at any time in the past thirty years. Since universities and colleges depend on enrollment numbers for income through tuition dollars and state funding, they must work to raise enrollments. To raise enrollments, colleges compete for students, and the pool of applicants is made up of substantial numbers of students from economic and social classes who would not have entered college in previous generations.¹ To maintain economic viability, most universities are forced to court, admit, and serve students they could have ignored in previous generations. Many of these students are not receiving the assistance that they need to progress through the university and earn a degree, though; in this way, the university is failing them and must re-examine its priorities if it hopes to remain economically viable. Today more than any time in the previous thirty years, the university must reassess its approach to teaching at all undergraduate levels but especially

¹ Twice in the previous century a similar large influx of under-prepared students occurred: once after World War II as a result of the GI Bill and again in the late 1960s due to open admissions policies and affirmative action legislation. At neither time did universities address funding issues or their missions in the way that they are now, when retention issues are compounded by immigration and older first-time students being displaced from their jobs.

with the skills courses that are prerequisites to all other university courses. Basic Writing courses are fundamental to the university's total effort to keep these students in school.

The recent and ongoing shift in student population has occurred due to several forces that are coalescing in what Kirsch, Braun, Yamamoto, and Sum call a perfect storm shaping America: divergent skills distributions among US population groups, a changing economy, and demographic trends. First, enormous disparity exists in literary and numeracy skills in American adults. Around 70% of high school students graduate overall, but for "disadvantaged minorities," only 50% graduate. Reading scores of thirteen to seventeen year olds remain flat, and achievement gaps in reading between groups are unchanged. Mean scores in math have improved slightly, but again, the Black-White and Hispanic-White achievement gaps are large and stable (Kirsch et al. 3). An enormous number of American adults do not have the reading and math ability to compete in the workplace, and when they come to college, they struggle to learn those fundamental skills.

Shifts in the American economy propels these students to attend college when in the past they likely would not have needed to. In 1950, 33.1% of US employment was in manufacturing, but by 2003, that number dropped to 10.7%. Two-thirds of the job growth between 1984 and 2000 was in employment requiring a college degree, and 46% of the growth projected until 2014 will be in jobs needing a college degree. Most of the jobs that are left, those not requiring a degree, do not pay a living wage for families. In 1979, men with a bachelor's degree earned an average of 51% more money over their

lifetimes than those without, but in 2004, that difference had grown to 96% (Kirsch et al. 3-4). Financial stability now demands a college degree.

The final component of the perfect storm is demographic shifts. Between 2005 and 2030, the US population will grow by more than 60 million people, becoming older and more diverse. More than half of the population growth is expected to come from international migration. Hispanics made up 14% of the overall American population in 2005 but will be more than 20% by 2030. In 2004, nearly 57% of the adult Hispanic population in the US was foreign born, and of those, half lacked a high school diploma. Nearly 80% of those without a diploma report speaking English very poorly or not at all (Kirsch et al. 4). The gaps in skills levels are increasing as the American population increases, because so many of new workers and students have weak academic backgrounds.

This group of factors—disparity in job skills, economic shifts, and demographic trends--is working together to create a perfect storm of new difficulties that the university community must grapple with. Kirsch et al. sum up their findings in this way:

Put crudely, over the next 25 years or so, as better-educated individuals leave the workforce they will be replaced by those who, on average, have lower levels of education and skill. Over this same period, nearly half of the projected job growth will be concentrated in occupations associated with higher education and skills levels. This means that tens of millions more students and adults will be less able to qualify for higher-paying jobs. Instead, they will be competing not only with each other and millions of newly arrived immigrants but also with equally (or better) skilled workers in lower-wage economies around the world. (Kirsch et al. 4)

One result of this perfect storm in the makeup of the American workforce is that many more under-prepared students are applying for college. These students may have different needs than previous cohorts for a variety of reasons. For instance, students are older now than they have ever been before. Twenty-eight percent of new undergraduates in 2002-2003 were at least twenty-five years old (Ishler 17). In addition to age, ethnicity on college campuses is changing. According to census data, the group of Americans between eighteen and twenty-five will increase by 16% between 2001 and 2015, and 80% of that increase will be nonwhite (Ishler 18). Also, students are more likely than ever before to enroll in college part-time--29% in 2001--and part-time students tend to be older. Many students drop out and re-enroll later. Nearly one third of all undergraduates drop out in their first years, and of those, about half tend to go back later (Ishler 19). Many of these students are holding down fulltime jobs while enrolled, are single parents, or have other dependents. For those students, attending college fulltime is impractical; their time in school must happen before and after work and when others are available to provide child or parent care. Other growing nontraditional populations include foreign students and first-generation students, neither of whom is likely to have clear ideas of how to maneuver within the bureaucratic structure of the university since they are unfamiliar with its setup and have few local resources to turn to. Finally, many of today's students have substantial economic pressures; about 70% of all students receive some form of loan, scholarship, or financial aid to assist in their ability to pay for college (Ishler 25).

Almost none of these student populations would have entered higher education at all prior to World War II, and many of them would not have entered as recently as the open admissions period post-Vietnam when the American economy still offered a comfortable living through manufacturing jobs. However, these students who are new to postsecondary education are an increasing portion of the incoming first-year students that universities compete for today. To work effectively with these students, universities must recognize that they may have needs different from their more traditional counterparts. They may have language issues, scheduling issues with job and family pressures, and/or a lack of previous academic preparation, and all of them will be experiencing emotional pressures, with excitement, fear, and resentment mingling with their academics. These students rarely place only into developmental levels of writing. They often also place into developmental math and reading. This is a multi-disciplinary problem. For many colleges, “admitting only the most talented and well-prepared students is neither a solution nor an option” (Kuh et al. 8). The percentage of students who require remediation in writing, math, or reading as they enter college has risen from 30% in 1990 to 53% in 2005 (Tritelli); more than 75% of institutions of higher learning teach developmental courses (Bettinger and Long 19). In other words, this is no longer the problem for a minority of institutions. Simply, it is reality in nearly all institutions nationwide.

All of these issues must be absorbed in developmental classrooms; changes must occur. According to Jon Young, “‘Business as usual’ has not effectively served ethnic minority and low-income students” (1). This is verified by data from the eight-year study

conducted by the U.S. Department of Education and reported in *The Toolbox Revisited*, tracking first time freshmen over the eight years from 1992 to 2000. *The Toolbox* reports that in this time 67% of white students earned degrees, compared to 52% of African Americans and 45% of Hispanics. Of those in the highest socioeconomic quintile, 79% earned a degree, compared to 35% of those in the lowest socioeconomic quintile (196). Thus, entering populations are not equally well served by the programs already in place. Universities are replicating the achievement gaps that exist outside their walls, though they are meant to be the means of addressing and decreasing them. Although some students manage to graduate despite the lack of assistance of their institutions, according to Young, “Higher education continues to be one of the foundations of inequality in the United States” (1). If colleges and universities do not address the needs of the students they admit, many of which are different than they have been in the past, students—especially developmental ones--will continue to drop out, programs will founder, and universities will lose funding. There is no choice; universities must keep these students in school; they must help them be successful. Teaching in Basic Writing classes and in other developmental classes must improve.

The perfect storm of geopolitical circumstances is setting up an important opportunity for Basic Writing programs. Program administrators have the choice to embrace the new student populations and to serve them effectively, to continue with the relatively uninspired status quo, or to protect the sanctity of institutions by rejecting their presence. Since the students will come whether they are served or not, it seems that the debate over whether college is the place for these people is moot; only one responsible

option exists. Unfortunately, a number of people teaching Basic Writing still maintain Gate-keeping ideologies, which are in direct conflict with the trends occurring at most universities and definitely outside current research and theory in Basic Writing. To assist these students effectively, teachers cannot simply reject them; they must engage them. The most effective teachers, therefore, are those whose ideologies align with Bridge-building. Since Basic Writing students are admitted and enroll in most universities, and since universities have a vested interest in keeping students enrolled, Basic Writing programs, through their instructors, have a responsibility to help these students persist in school.

Broadening the Goals of Basic Writing Programs

One of the reasons Basic Writing has been able to sidestep the concept of teacher ideology for so long is because the field has not been asking the right questions about how to evaluate its work effectiveness. As long as student success is seen only in terms of course grade, ideological approach can be eluded except in terms of direct classroom methodology. This is simplistic. In terms of content knowledge to be gained from a Basic Writing course and the broader picture of Basic Writing's role in retention and progression numbers, Basic Writing teachers and administrators ought to be thinking of Basic Writing in much larger ways. The larger context, students' persistence in college, is the only way to accurately judge whether Basic Writing programs and the teachers in the programs have done their job effectively, that is, provided the context and background in academic literacy that will allow students to progress through higher level courses.

Any understanding of the work of Basic Writing programs ought to be informed by the longitudinal studies done by composition researchers Mike Rose, Marilyn Sternglass, Anne Herrington and Marcia Curtis, and Deborah Mutnik, among others. Their books have demonstrated that writing development takes place over time and is prompted by intrinsic motivation, which means that it is uneven, individual, and difficult to measure. Not all students proceed at the same rate; some might accomplish in one semester what others will in two or more. Students develop best when they are engaged with the material and feel an intrinsic desire to improve. Although Basic Writing students may take time to develop, they can and do, as long as they continue to write. It is unrealistic, therefore, to expect a class of Basic Writing students to all acquire fluency in academic writing in one semester, and this or any other course-based goal is not an appropriate measure on its own. Rather, Basic Writing classes are just one facet of an ongoing process of developing academic literacy that takes much longer than a semester. Students' success must be measured not only on their grades in Basic Writing courses but also on their willingness to stay in school and give themselves the time to develop. Retaining students, therefore, is a necessary goal for Basic Writing programs. If they do not stay in school, they will never become confident academic writers. When Basic Writing programs assess their effectiveness, they must take some responsibility for retention numbers as well as course grades.

Instead of looking at the bigger picture, Basic Writing program administrators and instructors tend to assess students' success in Basic Writing programs by measures that do not paint a complete picture. The most obvious and immediate ways to judge success

in a Basic Writing program are students' abilities to meet the stated goals of the program. Unfortunately, this concept becomes problematic immediately upon looking at exactly what those goals entail and considering how to judge whether students are meeting them. The first problem is that Basic Writing programs across the country are so different; their goals and standards are different, and so are their assessment procedures. William Lalicker describes five models that Basic Writing programs tend to follow, but he notes that no nationwide pattern emerges in his 1999 study that gives any sense of uniformity to a general set of goals. Instead, he says, individual institutional needs are the determinant for how programs are set up and what they are meant to accomplish. Of the models he identifies, the first, what he calls the baseline, identifies Basic Writing as a prerequisite course that prevents enrollment in regular, credit-bearing courses until it is completed. In this model, the students place into the program based on test scores; the course does not earn credit toward a degree, and it frequently focuses "more on grammatical conformity than on rhetorical sophistication." A second model substitutes a two-semester sequence for the regular one-semester composition course; a third model gives credit for the course but designs it in more intensive ways for Basic Writing students, perhaps with additional instructional time or smaller classes. These more intensive courses tend to focus more on rhetorical issues and writing workshops than the sentence-level skills seen in the baseline model. Other models include those with directed self-placement and those that mainstream Basic Writers, neither of which have distinctly different program goals from the first three, which by themselves represent the

spectrum of thinking about Basic Writing, current-traditional to the process method and likely containing post-process as well.

Clearly, these models will use different measures to assess success. Student success in meeting program goals for a current-traditional program might be measured with “Scantron-ready exit exams” or with short, timed essays—rarely with portfolios; courses are often credited on a pass/fail basis by the instructor (Lalicker). Though the meaning of the grade is questionable, current-traditional courses are simple to assess. Those programs following the second or third models identified by Lalicker, however, are more troublesome due to their more complicated sets of goals. They might list program goals similar to those published by The University of Minnesota (UM), and their assessment procedures as well are difficult to universalize. UM describes its overall aim as helping “students develop reading and writing practices that will serve their needs as they progress through the university” (Reynolds and Fillipi 19). To do that, they list seven specific desired outcomes. First, students practice invention, drafting, revising, editing and proofreading. Second, students develop confidence in their ability to produce a variety of texts in relation to audience and incorporating supporting evidence. Third, students study rhetorical context of their own texts and others. Fourth, students develop a strong sense of their own process. Fifth, students experience the ongoing and shared aspects of writing. Sixth, they learn to use and assess outside materials. Seventh, students use technologies that assist them in finding resources and in assembling their writing (20-21).

Attempts to quantify success in terms of students' achievement in these seven areas are frustrating at best and may even be impossible. How does one take accurate measure of ongoing processes without clear endpoints? Goals such as those stated above--practicing strategies for writing within a rhetorical context, knowing one's own individual writing processes, for example--are ongoing and imprecise to measure, and programs go about attempting to measure them in a number of ways that reflect conflicting values and ways of understanding writing. Many Basic Writing programs do not have consistent standards by which to judge student success at all but rely upon the evaluation of each instructor according to his or her individual priorities and methods (Lalicker). Some programs require portfolios that compile the semester's writings and that are judged based on an agreed-upon rubric of standards by an instructor or set of instructors, aside from the one teaching the student (Belanoff). Some employ end-of-semester timed writings. David Bartholomae describes a two-hour, in-class writing assignment that is judged on a pass/fail basis according to three criteria: being reasonably error-free, coherent, and developed based on evidence (174-5). The reality of widely diverging goals—including many that are impossible to quantify and that take far longer than a semester to develop significantly—combined with diverse methods of assessing whether program goals have been met undermines any universal means to judge student success. Institutions must provide data to their deans and provosts on these questions, and they must be accredited, so data is created. Its existence, though, does not justify the validity of the data in terms of its accurate reflection of student writing ability is questionable, as its unstable nature will attest.

A much broader and more meaningful way to judge student success is to look at how the Basic Writing program contributes to ability of the student to succeed in his or her future classes and overall college career. Many measures may be used to judge that kind of success, the most obvious being completion of courses and persistence into the next year. Again, due to differences in program goals, methods, and assessment measures, it is difficult to find data that verify a positive effect from taking Basic Writing classes. Bettinger and Long's study of thirteen thousand students over five years finds that though developmental math classes have a demonstrable positive impact on students' completion of credit hours and retention, no similar impact was found for developmental writing classes. They point out that these numbers are not precise, however, because it is impossible to control for variation in placement standards and procedures across campuses (24).

Even without reliable data that confirms enrollment in Basic Writing as a positive outcome on a student's persistence, a connection can be logically made. First-year researchers have linked persistence to several factors besides academics, including developing academic competence--critical thinking and reflective judgment as well as reading, writing, math, and technology, establishing interpersonal relationships, exploring identity development, and others (Upcraft et al. 8-9). Basic Writing, like any thoughtfully designed course, can provide opportunities not only for academic growth, but for growth in these other areas related to persistence. In fact, writing courses can be much more individually engaging than other courses precisely because topics can be chosen and explored according to student interest. In addition, many writing classes are

smaller than other introductory classes, and students are often asked to work with partners or in small groups, forcing interpersonal contact. Many instructors require individual conferences or at least exchange feedback on assignments. Many writing assignments also call for the use of several forms of technology. Certainly not every writing course will be constructed in an optimum fashion to encourage these elements to develop, but their course content and teaching style often sets them up to have that potential.

When I refer to student success, then, I recognize the difficulty in pinning down a precise definition, but I argue that any definition must include student retention and persistence, which are tied to students' goals for attending universities and to instructors' goals of giving students time to develop as academic writers. Certainly the easiest way to judge success is to quantify course grades within the Basic Writing program, grades which presumably have some relation to a student's ability to meet course goals. But because grades are not necessarily tied to goals, because goals are so divergent, and because methods of assessing them are not only variable but actually oppositional depending on the institutional context, they alone are not a viable measure of success. Further, it is entirely possible for students to earn high grades in a Basic Writing course while failing to engage with the material or college overall; if a student is no more likely to remain in school as a result of his or her experience in Basic Writing, the program is not successful in any meaningful way. On the other hand, if a student does not earn a satisfactory grade in a Basic Writing program but does feel engaged, challenged, and motivated to remain and continue, I would call that a success for the program. I do not

recommend eliminating course grades as a measure of success, but I argue that responsible Basic Writing administrators cannot overlook the larger picture either, and that is students' willingness and ability to remain in college.

Identifying and Applying Ideological Categories

Basic Writing programs are a key factor in students' abilities to succeed in their holistic college experience, and teacher ideology directly affects students' success in Basic Writing courses and in college engagement and retention, an element of which is student persistence. Though some factors related to persistence and retention are beyond faculty control—student finances, family problems, and the like—teachers do contribute to many factors, and those must be included in the way successful Basic Writing programs are judged: students feeling that they belong at the school, making connections, mattering. Persistence and retention research indicates that in order to substantially increase the likelihood that they will stay in school, students need to see direct links between college and achieving their goals, and they must learn the skills to troubleshoot academic discourse, community, and course and to develop the critical thinking to independently and appropriately apply those skills. Because faculty attitudes and behaviors affect these factors which play so heavily into student persistence, and thus retention, Basic Writing research must not continue to overlook them. Of the four ideologies I examine across this dissertation, only Bridge-building actively embraces these concepts for all incoming students; it requires that teachers engage and challenge students while supporting them and assuming they will succeed.

Despite substantial evidence to support these assertions, many Basic Writing programs are not currently addressing the need for attention to teacher ideology. Basic Writing program administrators are caught between universities' attempts to recruit more Basic Writing students than ever before and a pool of available instructors who often do not have the training nor motivation to focus on a Bridge-building ideology that promotes success in these students. At the same time, the Basic Writing students are caught between the economic reality that they are virtually unable to earn living wages without a college degree and the nearly insurmountable difficulties involved in achieving that degree, difficulties relating to a wealth of other responsibilities, financial strain, and a serious lack of academic preparation. The university admissions counselors admit students; retention specialists watch them drop out; instructors do not know how to help, and students bear the burden of not succeeding in college. A great deal of progress can be made toward decreasing the isolation and failure of each group when the groups work together, when Basic Writing and first-year and retention specialists work together, and when their research is combined to assist the faculty to develop and sustain the ideologies that are most beneficial to students.

I argue that teacher ideology is closely tied to student success, yet this has not been addressed or examined in Basic Writing. Moreover, I contend that Bridge-building ideologies are the most effective and need to be encouraged, supported, and valued by the institutions that have Basic Writing programs. Bridge-building ideologies operate on the assumption that students can and will be successful, and these ideologies assume the responsibility for student success is shared equally between the students and the

university. It is not just the students' job to learn, but the job of the university to design a program that is based on the most current research, that provides a pedagogically rich and stimulating atmosphere, that evaluates student progress on a variety of measures including longitudinal ones, and that employs the most engaged teachers. To ensure that the greatest numbers of students succeed, universities must do more than admit Basic Writers; they must also provide the structures and resources that will help them succeed: they must focus on teacher ideology in practices related to recruitment and hiring of instructors, development and training, evaluation, and promotion. Basic Writing programs must be self-consciously developed on a foundation of Bridge-building, as first-year programs and retention programs are, and as Basic Writing research implicitly recommends.

The intent of this dissertation is to bring forward ideology out of the ephemeral world of background assumptions tied to pedagogy and into the fore of Basic Writing discussions and practices. Programs need to be able to identify the four ideological categories I describe and seek out those that are most effective at increasing student success; they need to provide support for faculty training to assist in the development of these ideologies and to avoid ideologies based upon lore and overly simplistic metaphors. The project encompassed by this dissertation is intended to name and describe the ideologies, to rank them according to effectiveness in promoting student success, and to provide recommendations for Basic Writing programs to more effectively find and develop successful ideologies in their faculty.

In chapter 2, I provide a rhetorical analysis of teachers' ideologies as they are represented over time in Basic Writing literature. Though the research does not specifically address ideology, it does discuss aspects of it, including definitions of Basic Writing students and their abilities, goals of Basic Writing programs, and roles of teachers in the classroom. I outline the patterns found in presentations of these factors through the field's history to trace the development of research-sanctioned teacher ideology. I then separate the ideologies found in the literature into four categories, describing in detail what beliefs and behaviors each of the four categories represents. Finally, I relate the ideological categories to student success, which provides a means to rank them. The Bridge-building category is most directly tied to student success, and it is also the most directly tied to the aspects of ideology regularly discussed in Basic Writing literature. Together, these findings promote my argument that the Bridge-building ideological category should be encouraged and supported within Basic Writing programs.

In chapter 3, I provide case studies of three teachers of Basic Writing. I interview the teachers about four main topics: definition of Basic Writers, purpose of Basic Writing programs, methods of teaching Basic Writing, and the value teachers perceive the program to have. I uncover their ideologies, question how they came to their ideologies and practices, and then frame this information around the hierarchies I have previously established. In this way I clarify the ideological categories I have set forth and relate them to presently practicing instructors.

Chapter 4 applies my taxonomy of ideologies to rethinking the structure of Basic Writing programs. I review the most popular methods of hiring, training, evaluating, and

promoting teachers of Basic Writing, and I make recommendations regarding the infusion of the Bridge-building ideology into each of these processes. These recommendations include foregrounding ideology in the hiring process, in ongoing training, and in evaluation, promotion, and job security.

I conclude with a chapter that comes back to the importance of Basic Writing to universities and of teaching to Basic Writing and that provides possible avenues for further research. The categories of teaching ideologies are helpful constructs in filling in the gaps about teachers in Basic Writing research. Further, they provide a structure by which to assess program effectiveness and development.

To sum up, the ideology of Basic Writing teachers has not been extensively and productively examined, but it needs to be. As Basic Writing teachers can see from looking at the ideology of other teachers and their own classrooms, ideology is a critical factor in student success. Basic Writing programs must define it, seek it out, and promote it if they are serious about recognizing the changing needs of contemporary college goers and promoting their persistence in college.

CHAPTER II

IDENTIFYING IDEOLOGIES AND CONNECTING THEM TO SUCCESS

Basic Writing programs are a fundamental link to academic success in many students' overall college experience, and the ideologies of Basic Writing teachers are of equal importance to many students' willingness to persist in college. The factors students look for in teacher ideology, as identified by the NSSE and Gardener and Barefoot's first-year research, include a positive attitude about the program and students' abilities, high standards and challenging curricula, availability outside of class, and pedagogical techniques that encourage engagement with the material. I approach these kinds of issues by looking for four categories of ideology: beliefs about the purpose of Basic Writing programs, beliefs about students, beliefs about the role of the teacher, and beliefs about pedagogy, including curriculum and methodology. These categories have been represented in the research as the field of Basic Writing has developed over the past thirty years; the literature written by and for its practitioners has presented and promoted various ideologies as models while avoiding explicit discussion of them. While the accepted paradigms of the field have shifted, so have the teaching ideologies presented alongside and embedded within those paradigms. Despite the fact that teacher ideology has not been a topic in itself for Basic Writing, it has never been completely absent, intertwined as it is with areas that are regularly featured in Basic Writing discussions:

pedagogical techniques, program goals, and definition of students, for instance. Changes in those areas, all of which are key to student success, have resulted in changing implied ideologies about what makes effective teaching. Over time these topics have more and more come to align with the Bridge-building ideology--which is the most likely to include positive faculty attitudes about themselves, the students, and the programs, as well as curricula that are geared to students' interests and needs--as the most desirable for teaching Basic Writers, though the literature has not stated this outright.

This is not to say that at any given time in Basic Writing's history all or even most teachers have agreed on particular ideologies, nor that everyone's opinions evolved together over time. However, it does suggest that those who have been reading and writing Basic Writing literature will have a sense of the common goals and attributes that many practitioners agree on. I should also point out that the transformations in Basic Writing research do not automatically equal transformations in ideologies of actual teachers. There are many possible reasons why those who read the research may not accept it and adopt it into their ideologies, the focus of chapter 3. An equally significant issue, however, is that only those who are actively interested in the literature and who read it can possibly employ what it has to offer. Just as often, teachers of Basic Writing—perhaps more so than most college instructors--have backgrounds, experiences, and research interests that are not directly linked to this field. An enormous number of Basic Writing instructors are neither trained for the purpose for which they are employed nor are they subsequent participants in the research discussions. At many four-year institutions, a select few faculty are designated, sometimes without their consent and on

the basis of departmental rank, to teach Basic Writing. The rest of the teachers are usually graduate students or adjuncts, few of whom see Basic Writing as a field they would like to go into. At community colleges, the pattern is even more striking; a majority of instructors of developmental classes not only do not have specific training in Basic Writing instruction, but many do not even hold advanced degrees. In North Carolina, for instance, teachers at the college level must have a bare minimum of at least eighteen hours of graduate credit in their field; more frequently, community college instructors hold a master's degree and university instructors hold PhDs. A master's degree in English literature is qualification to teach classes in composition, literature, business writing, Basic Writing, and anything else a community college has to offer, with no specific training or background in any of the areas needed. However, there is no minimum requirement for teaching remedial courses, so those who teach Basic Writing may have only a bachelor's, probably in English literature. For the 2006-07 school year, 54.4% of North Carolina community college faculty held a master's degree, while 22.9% held a bachelor's and 16.1% did not even have a bachelor's (Statistical Reports). These numbers remain relatively stable over time, showing that a significant portion of teachers—usually those teaching developmental courses like Basic Writing—are not professionally trained to do so. Since these are not teachers whose intent and training was focused on teaching Basic Writers, they have little motivation to self-identify as Basic Writing teachers and take up the task of learning the profession. Tracing the ideological development of those teachers will be a harder task, as they will have less interaction with the models developed and supported by the research.

If a teacher is placed into a class of Basic Writers without proper training and understanding of what she is being called upon to do, her attitude is bound to be affected, through lack of commitment that any job assigned rather than chosen is likely to generate. This results in the teacher drawing either consciously or unconsciously on her preexisting teaching ideology. Many teachers who have successfully completed college and advanced degrees themselves and who perhaps have experience teaching other kinds of classes may be surprised by the students and the writing in a Basic Writing class, so beliefs about those areas will be challenged as well. Jacqueline Jones Royster remembers her first experience teaching Basic Writing in a way that is probably familiar to many other grudging Basic Writing teachers:

It strikes me now how desperately I seemed to want to define myself as a graduate student visiting the Basic Writing Program—not as a permanent resident. How many others find themselves, like me, expecting merely to ‘pass through’ their Basic Writing teaching appointments? At my own institution, questions concerning the professionalization, scholarly commitment, and even work ethics of our Basic Writing teachers seem to arise frequently. (Royster and Taylor 219)

A recurring theme in the scant articles that do specifically focus on teachers is the problem and reality of teachers who do not have formal training in the field. As I search out the teaching ideologies represented in Basic Writing research, then, I must acknowledge that a large number of teachers are unfamiliar with these models and instead construct their ideologies from other kinds of knowledge and experience, including lore, the models provided by their own teachers, their families’ beliefs about the role of higher education, and their experiences as students and as teachers (North).

Even acknowledging the problematic nature of mining Basic Writing research for clues to the ideologies of Basic Writing teachers is a starting point for constructing ideological models. The research may not directly reflect how actual teachers think and construct beliefs, but it does represent a set of common texts that many teachers will be familiar with and influenced by. By looking back through the major themes prevalent in Basic Writing, I extract the ideologies that are implied at various times, focusing particularly on four aspects critical to teachers' ability to affect student success that I established in chapter 1: teachers' attitudes about their students, about the goals of Basic Writing, about their roles in the classroom, and about pedagogy, including curricula and classroom techniques.

First, teachers' beliefs about their students are vital. Some instructors are appalled by students' deficiencies and see these students as basic thinkers as well as Basic Writers; some are confused by the apparent irregularities in students' work, and some see them as talented in other areas but needing practice in academic writing. These beliefs operate as the foundation from which pedagogical methods arise, the second important aspect of ideology. Teachers who believe students are cognitively remedial may focus on short, simple assignments, or perhaps they may spend disproportionate amount of time on grammar. Those who believe students are more capable may ask for more complicated assignments. A third important aspect of teacher ideology is the ways teachers perceive themselves. Believing themselves powerless against the enormity of the students' deficits, seeing themselves as doctors to student wounds, or recognizing themselves as people who change as a result of interactions with students influences their

approach. Finally, teachers' assumptions about the goals of the program are fundamental. Teachers may or may not believe in what they are doing, in their contribution to an overall goal, in their students' persistence rates: if they see their work as less than important or if they see it as weeding out unqualified students, then obviously that reflects on student success.

In this chapter, I search Basic Writing literature's thirty-year ideological history for models of these four aspects of teacher ideology: teachers' beliefs about students, teachers' beliefs about pedagogical methods, teachers' perceptions of their roles within the academy, and teachers' assumptions about the goals of Basic Writing programs. Though not directly addressed in the literature, the models are clear, shifting with the paradigm shifts in Basic Writing, from current-traditional to social construction to postmodern. Once the teaching ideologies tied to those paradigms are identified, I adapt and expand Mina Shaughnessy's four ideological stages of Basic Writing teachers to four broad categories that Basic Writing teachers today find a place within. Though the categories are fluid and overlapping and though teachers' ideologies may not fit neatly into any one category, these categories nonetheless provide enough definition to be linked to student success, retention, and persistence.

PART I: Basic Writing Literature Constructs Teacher Ideology

Ideology in the Current-Traditional Years

When Basic Writing as a subfield of composition began to emerge in the 1970s, its teaching ideologies were very much in the camp of current-traditional rhetoric. Two important sources of information about Basic Writing from its early days display this in

similar model teaching ideologies and in the ideologies they were responding to. *Errors and Expectations*, of course, is the first full-length study of what was happening in Basic Writing classrooms, and it appeared in 1977. Just three years later, the NCTE published a collection of essays called *Basic Writing: Essays for Teachers, Researchers, Administrators*. Both these books attempt to establish and professionalize a field; they are critical of their predecessors and set out the field's ideas about each of the four key aspects of ideology—teacher presence, attitude about programs and students, curricula and pedagogy. These texts implicate teacher ideology from the beginning of the field's research. Ideology is implicit in them, but it is not examined.

Though many areas of discussion in Basic Writing texts in the early years of the field are similar to those in the larger field of composition, the one facet that sets it apart is its approach to students. In the introduction to *Errors and Expectations*, Shaughnessy describes the attitude toward students that was prevalent during the open enrollment period at CUNY in the first half of the 1970s. Students were “true outsiders . . . strangers in academia, unacquainted with the rules and rituals of college life”; teachers are “stunned” by their writing.

“Nothing, it seemed, short of a miracle was going to turn such students into writers. Not uncommonly, teachers announced to their supervisors (or even their students) after only a week of class that everyone was probably going to fail. These were students, they insisted, whose problems at this stage were irremediable” (3).

The teachers that Shaughnessy is reacting to, then, believe that these students are not worthy of being in a college or university classroom; they are unteachable and are

offensive to those who see themselves as insiders, members of the academy. Those teachers' understanding of students, according to Shaughnessy, is that they should be prepared for college *before* entering it, and if they are not, it is the fault of the students and their responsibility, not the college's. The NCTE collection's introduction also identifies Basic Writing students in a particularly negative light, as low achievers, with poor study habits, inadequate mastery of basic skills, low IQ, and deprived family and school backgrounds. These students need help at school "to overcome the environmental and parental influences that inhibit their chances for success" (Kasden 3). They are repeatedly referred to as disadvantaged and, as the predecessors to Shaughnessy's book would have done, identified Basic Writers in terms of their deficits. In this collection Basic Writers are identified as members of particular social and ethnic groups who lack the appropriate communication skills and social graces necessary to join the ranks of the elite; the dividing line between those who belong and those who do not is clear.

Shaughnessy goes on in *Errors* to attempt to recast Basic Writers as complex thinkers who simply need practice learning the particular discourse conventions of academic writing. She repudiates the disdain and condescension of the original attitude, coming to the conclusion that "BW students write the way they do not because they are slow or non-verbal, indifferent to or incapable of academic excellence, but because they are beginners, and must, like all beginners, learn by making mistakes" (5). Some writers in the NCTE volume also occasionally attempt to rebut the deficit model of students, though by no means all, and it would be some time before this particular part of Shaughnessy's ideology really caught on. Still, her insistence on seeing students as

worthwhile human beings established the tone for the field of Basic Writing; in the thirty years of Basic Writing research that has been published since *Errors*, no writer has again made a conscious, serious argument for approaching students as less than full people.

Regarding the other facets of ideology linked to student success, program goals and curricula in particular, early Basic Writing teachers were still tied to the current-traditional outlooks of their parent field, composition. Pedagogically Basic Writing teachers initially seemed to agree on Shaughnessy's focus on the sentence-level error that directly influence attitudes about appropriate program goals, pedagogical methods, and the role of the teacher. Lawrence N. Kasden's introduction to the NCTE collection states that the goals of a Basic Writing program would be variable depending on the severity of the students' problems: "[S]tudents who have severe difficulties with standard dialect, usage, and sentencecraft may best learn by studying one element at a time, while basic writers who have fewer problems may better profit from a more organic approach" (Kasden 7). This focus on error and on the division of student deficit levels runs across the collections' essays. Four model programs are presented; their approaches are pedagogically divergent but are given equal credence by the editors, and they all focus on the sentence-level error as the goal of a Basic Writing program.

The first program is divided into four units: basic grammar, standard grammar and usage, sentence combining, and paragraph writing. The Basic Writing course is "primarily aimed at problems at or below the sentence level" (Dixon 36). The four units each have a textbook with exercises, and the teaching centers around the textbooks. The teacher's role is of supervisor and tutor. This is a skills-based course to be sure, with the

idea that writing can be divided into discrete parts to be learned individually and then assembled later. The second model program also focuses on paragraph development but in a more holistic manner, also giving attention to speaking, listening, and reading. Still, the focus is on grammar. Individual grammar concepts are presented to the student, who does practice drills to learn the skill and then writes a paragraph demonstrating mastery of that skill. The need to work on skills comes from the student's own writing, and students are encouraged to read their writing into a tape recorder and listen to it, but the underlying approach emphasizes a division of writing into discrete parts. Other versions of this program that are used by sister schools in a consortium rely more heavily on peer tutors for diagnosis and practice of skills (Spann and Foxx 45-62).

The description of the third model begins with this cheerful statement: “‘Well,’ the department head said, pushing the chair back from the desk and pausing for a moment, ‘nothing else seems to work; we might as well try a writing lab’” (Hartwell 63). This model operates under the relatively enlightened assumption that grammar drills are useless and possibly harmful and that students are verbally and logically competent adults, so it focuses on connecting reading and writing and on success and confidence (66). This model is not so much a course as a requirement to spend a certain number of hours in the writing lab, where students work with trained peer tutors who focus primarily on organization and development, and secondarily on grammar. Though the belief in individual work within the context of writing is ahead of its time, the displacement of Basic Writing outside of an academic course structure with a credentialed instructor and onto the shoulders of peer tutors in a lab environment

establishes once again that the responsibility for the student's readiness is the student's, not the college's, and teachers are absolved.

The fourth model bases itself in rhetoric rather than grammar; it is a writing course taught by writing teachers and often linked to other courses the students are taking. However, the priority of the course is still product:

we attach so much importance to legibility conventions and neatness that we will give them no less than a D on a paper if it fulfills the basic conventions and nothing more . . . the use of a traditional-conventional pattern is so valuable that if they produce a work with clear introduction, body, and conclusion, they are on the way up the grade ladder to a C. (Crosby 80-1)

Students lose a point per glaring grammar error and fractions of points for less glaring errors, and they write about topics like three myths about young people, three surprises, three qualities of urban university students (81). This pedagogical focus reinforces institutional hierarchies: there are a set number of ideas a person should have, a set way to express them, and there are absolute rights and wrongs in terms of expression.

In each of these models, the deficits in sentence-level skills determine the student population. The programs focus on drilling those deficient skills and conquering discrete elements that are assembled into small units, then larger units. These beliefs about the goals of the programs guide the role of the teachers, who act as doctors, diagnosticians, task-setters, and cheerleaders for the students. Teachers see themselves as essential, and they see optimism and energy as essential, but the role they place themselves in is one-sided. Students are to learn from them so that their students may become like them, thereby improving the students' academic lives. The change that Shaughnessy wrought

almost single-handedly with *Errors and Expectations* was not at the levels of program goals or of teacher role, but at the level of attitude toward students. In her new model of teaching Basic Writing, she famously focuses on the sentence-level and on error, but her call to teachers is striking: she challenges teachers to learn a new way to think and to see their students, and as a result of spending time with their students, they will change: “Those teachers who five years ago questioned the educability of these students now know of their capabilities and have themselves undergone shifts in attitude and methodology” (4). This view of students is a necessary element in the field’s development of a holistic teaching ideology that encourages student success.

The NCTE text does not ignore Shaughnessy’s call; rather, it embraces it within the context of developmental models of the time. These articles’ authors look to the fields of linguistics and developmental psychology for contributions to Basic Writing, and they see teachers as specialists who bring together all this knowledge. Constance J. Gefvert, for instance, in justifying a training course for teachers of Basic Writing, claims that teachers,

[r]ather than programs or textbooks, are the answers to the problems of Basic Writing students and that curricula and textbooks must be developed inductively. . .to make the necessary individual decisions about what is appropriate for certain students in certain situations. (122)

She goes on to give an example of this inductive reasoning she values in trained teachers—the ability to develop a list of thirteen sentence-level errors that students are most likely to have in their writing: “The deductive manner in which we, and, I would venture to say, most other departments, have designed Basic Writing curricula has resulted in

teaching concepts that our students do not need and ignoring those that they do” (123). Unfortunately, while Gefvert questions the teacher’s role, she does not question her focus on sentence-level error: “According to the above list, for example, we should be spending less time teaching students how to avoid fragments and more time on verb forms, commas, pronoun reference, and vocabulary” (123). She concludes that “we need to teach teachers how to diagnose their own students’ learning difficulties, how to design courses inductively, and how to work individually with students in a laboratory situation” (123). Shaughnessy’s legacy, this shift in attitude, slowly changed the field’s understanding of program goals and teacher roles.

The short-lived but ideologically important focus on cognitive studies that evolved out of Shaughnessy’s model inductively and, as it turns out, inaccurately continued to represent and promote the same kinds of teacher ideologies. Researchers such as Andrea Lunsford and Frank D’Angelo experimented with the idea that Basic Writers are at the beginning of their cognitive development according to models created by psychologists Jean Piaget and William Perry. If this is the case, the most appropriate curricula attempts to help students move from dualistic thinking to more complex thinking. Assignments are designed sequentially, asking students to figure out patterns and then apply them. With this type of model, the teacher’s role is that of therapist, “seeking ways to correct basic writers’ cognitive dysfunctions,” and the goal of the program is similar (Bizzell 17). However, Mike Rose’s 1988 article “Narrowing the Mind and the Page: Remedial Writers and Cognitive Reductionism” systematically challenges and complicates each piece of the argument connecting cognitive development

to Basic Writing, and the perceived connection has been largely discredited in the field since. Even with its rejection, the work on cognitive development still has influence on teacher ideology (Del Principe 70).

The teaching ideologies modeled in the first ten years of Basic Writing research, then, begin to move toward those that promote student success not in their curricular or program goals but in their shifting attitude toward students. The early models present teachers as believing their students are somehow deficient, whether in terms of basic skills or cognitive ability, but attempting to cast students as deserving respect and assistance. Basic Writing students are those who have not previously belonged in college, so they must be remediated to appropriate college-level entry standards. These texts show teachers who enjoy their students and want to help them; they see themselves as kindly therapeutic figures, correcting deficits that unfortunate students have embodied. Finally, these teachers are presented as seeing appropriate and useful curricula mostly focusing on sentence level, discrete skills sets. For the first decade or so of Basic Writing research, these were the generally agreed upon and represented ideologies connected with teachers of Basic Writing.

Teaching Ideology in Social Construction

The first ten years of Basic Writing research influence teacher attitude toward students without significantly questioning program goals or curricula; this is the first small step toward a Bridge-building ideology. As cognitive hierarchies are debunked and a truly new paradigm in Basic Writing emerges in the form of the social construction movement, some of the inconsistencies between Shaughnessy's call to teachers and her

program goals and pedagogies begin to align. The models of teaching ideology presented in the literature during the 1980s and 1990s modify previous beliefs in two important ways that move the field even closer to Bridge-building. First, definitions of Basic Writers become rooted in the social construction of language and of identity: students are no longer thought of as deficient but as members of different language communities. Those communities are not ranked—each is theoretically equal—but students are understood to need to take on the discourse conventions of the academic community in order to be successful. In this way, students are represented in the literature less as deficit models and more as different, separate-but-equal. Second, program goals and specific pedagogical techniques shift away from the individual and toward the communal, the socially created. Peer review and group work emphasize the social nature of writing, the audience portion of the rhetorical triangle. As a result of these pedagogical changes, the role of the teacher shifts from absolute enforcer to guide.

However, this shift toward social construction does not yet change the burden of responsibility or question the power relations of the instructional setting. By asking students to join the “conversation of mankind,” Basic Writing classrooms are reinforcing the hierarchies already in place. Kenneth Bruffee describes this idea of students as members of different discourse communities as he reflects upon teaching his first Basic Writers:

[O]ur students, however poorly prepared academically, did not come to us as blank slates. They arrived in our classes already deeply acculturated, already full-fledged, competent members (as we were too) of some community or other . . . The way they talked, wrote, and behaved was ‘incorrect’ and unacceptable, we

found ourselves saying, only in a community that they were not –or were not yet—members of. . .the ‘literate’ and ‘college educated’ (65).

Though the concept of students as members of specific discourse communities seems to raise students’ profiles, in fact, these other communities are seen as stepping stones toward the desired outcome of joining the “best” group, the college educated. Classism inherent in this philosophy blocks teachers from seeing themselves as full partners in the learning that occurs in a Basic Writing classroom. As long as Basic Writing teachers continued to understand their job as assisting students from a less desirable to a more desirable social class, teachers would be unable to find new approaches to the design of Basic Writing programs or to pedagogy.

The paradigm shift across this period centers on Basic Writing curriculum and the assumptions upon which it is built. The need for a shift in curricula is clear in Joseph Harris’s critique of Shaughnessy’s work—and by extension, that of Basic Writing teachers who follow her pedagogical techniques. He sees *Errors and Expectations* as a text of historical value but not of practical use today, because of Shaughnessy’s relentless focus on sentence-level error without attention to engaging the minds of the students.

What is the point of having students read boos (like *Black Boy*) that might speak to their situations and concerns if they are not then encouraged to draw on their life experiences in speaking back to it? . . . *Errors and Expectations* thus argues for a new sort of student but not a new sort of intellectual practice. It says that basic writers can also do the kind of work that mainstream students have been long expected to do; it doesn’t suggest this work be changed in any significant ways. (79)

Harris argues that Shaughnessy neglects to engage students in “the life of the mind” or offer “real experience” in writing their ideas and views; rather, she is only interested in training students in mechanics. She also neglects to assist instructors in responding to students’ written ideas in terms of clarity or development, only in terms of correctness (81). According to Harris and others, this kind of curriculum needed to change.

When David Bartholomae and Anthony Petroksy’s *Facts, Artifacts, Counterfacts* appeared in 1986, it brought to national prominence a new theory and method built from the same foundation of social construction that Bruffee discusses. The main goal of the courses outlined in this book is to immerse Basic Writers in the ways of the university by teaching students to read and write in an academic setting. Students read several themed texts, respond to them, and do their own research on the topic. Instead of simplifying assignments, this approach employs challenging assignments in order to teach students to think in critical ways. Speaking to this point, Mike Rose discusses the dilemma of curricular design in “Reclaiming the Classroom,” a chapter from his book *Lives on the Boundary*, by reflecting upon his first teaching job and his first students who were veterans of the Vietnam War: “I worried most about the curriculum,” he writes, because inventive curricula baffled the students and traditional ones seemed “as appropriate for the veterans as a hymn at a crapshoot” (12). The curriculum, Rose claims, needs to take into account the experiences these men had lived through, to acknowledge their reasons for being in college, and to treat them with respect. Rose decides that he needs to teach the students how to think in the ways the university requires:

[C]ould I perhaps orient them to some of the kinds of reading and writing and ways of thinking that seem essential to a liberal course of study? . . . I would be enhancing the veterans' chances of participating in the institutions they would soon be entering. (13)

Bruffee, Bartholomae and Petrosky, and Rose all focus on designing a curriculum that is relevant and useful, that speaks to the social identities of the students and that furthers the students' abilities to achieve their goals. The shift in curricular design marks another step in Basic Writing research toward embracing a Bridge-building ideology.

As a result of these changes in approach to the program and the student, the way teaching is represented also changes. For Bruffee, the teacher's job moves from correcting students to acculturating them. He argues that one way of acculturating students is to have them work together, collaboratively, and that their exchanges, the connections they make between their home communities and the communities of others, is a type of acculturation: it is learning. The role of the teacher in this exchange is to direct: "[E]ven in a collaborative classroom, authority does begin in most cases (as it should) with the institutional representative or agent, the professor" (79). The teacher is an authority figure, but a benevolent one, who energetically escorts students toward the knowledge they must acquire, such as summarizing, classifying, comparing, and analyzing. To facilitate the acquisition of this knowledge, the teacher is a leader: "[T]he teacher darts in and out of the conversation, clarifying, questioning, repeating, looping back to link one student's observation to another's. And so it is the students labeled 'remedial' read and talk and write their way toward understanding" (Rose 19).

Rose further claims that part of the teacher's job is to provide inspiration, as his previous teachers had given him. He also emulates his own memorable professors by inspiring the students, helping them to feel excited by the material and confident in their ability to tap it personally.

It seemed that, if anything, concentrating on the particulars of language—schoolbook grammar, mechanics, usage—would tremendously restrict the scope of what language use was all about. Such approaches would rob writing of its joy, and would, to boot, drag the veterans back through their dismal history of red-penciled failure. Furthermore, we would be aiming low, would be scaling down our expectations--as so many remedial programs do—training to do the minimum, the minimum here being a simple workbook sentence free of error. The men had bigger dreams, and I wanted to tap them. (16)

Rose creates a teaching model focused on tailoring the course to the needs of the students, with the larger intent of guiding them into the academic discourse community.

Rose and Bartholomae and Petrosky were instrumental in shifting the approach to Basic Writing students and Basic Writing curricula, and those shifts provided the foundation for changes in approach to the purpose of Basic Writing programs and the role of instructors within those programs. For social constructionists, the Basic Writing program was about helping students into “the academic club” (Rose 16); the pedagogy was challenging, and the teacher's job was inspiring students, helping them feel successful and gain confidence, teaching them the hidden rules, carefully sequencing assignments, using accessible readings, and getting everyone involved. The models of teaching ideologies introduced into the Basic Writing literature in the late 1980s and 1990s are inspiring and positive, especially in relation to those that had come before, and

they greatly enhance students' chances of retention and progression through the university. During this time period, approach to students, to program goals, and to curricula aligns much more closely with those of the Bridge-building ideology. Even these elements shift as social constructionism gives way to postmodernism, and most importantly for my purposes, so does the representation of the role of the teacher.

Postmodern Teaching Ideology

In the years since the shift to social construction, representations of pedagogies have become increasingly diverse, based on a wide array of strands of postmodernism, but all have marked a change in approach to the purposes of Basic Writing and especially to the roles of teachers, shifting finally and fully to the Bridge-building ideology. Models of teacher ideology presented in research over the past ten years or so are woven within liberatory pedagogies and postmodern pedagogies based on philosophies borrowed from other disciplines and adapted to composition: Mikhail Bakhtin, Paulo Freire, bell hooks, John Dewey, Jacques Derrida, Judith Butler. In various ways, these pedagogies tend to recognize the power relations that are overlooked in social construction in order to question the reasons that the academy is structured as it is and the forces that maintain its hierarchies. They tend to believe that liberal democracy and humanism, which paved the way for the empowering feelings of the social construction movement, obscure race and class conflict. Post-construction theorists tend to recast traits previously linked to cognitive deficiencies and developmental gaps in terms of social location, marginality, and difference. These approaches can be seen to undermine theorists who worked in previous time periods. Min-Zhan Lu, for example, critiques Shaughnessy's work, finding

its “essentialist view of language” problematic. Lu says that Shaughnessy’s goal for students—developing an ability to decide how, when, and where to use language—assumes that language has a fixed and essential meaning, suggesting that discourse differences do not alter meaning substantially. Lu disagrees, asserting that the meaning of any given language shifts across discourse communities and is constrained by gender, family, work, religion, and education, and that it is inextricable from power relations. Shaughnessy and other theorists of her time, according to Lu, are linguistically naïve (“Redefining”).

To postmodernists, Basic Writing students are those who, due to gender, race, socioeconomic or other factors, have not had access to the discourse methods of those in power and whose voices are different from the academy’s, often sparking a process of resistance and adaptation. Teachers are to make power relations visible and to recognize their own presences as shaping forces in the classroom. Curricula often concentrates on strategies and assignments that develop in students a meta-awareness of language and power issues. With this type of curriculum, the Basic Writing program itself becomes a site of resistance. Though this is a change from the social construction approaches to students and pedagogy, to be sure, the most important change for my purposes is the representation of teachers and their role in the academy and to students. No longer are teachers encouraged to see themselves as representatives of the positive or benign force of the institution; now they are presented as partners with the students as all question the power structures within which they write. This full partnership provides the distinguishing element in the Bridge-building ideology.

In many post-construction classrooms, students are seen as individuals tied to representation, power, and sociolinguistic and cultural identity within the academy. As Deborah Mutnick explains, earlier theorists like Bartholomae and Petrosky tend to “flatten or universalize the basic writing student” (*Writing* 179), making the student less important than the institution, which is presented as a neutral party. However, the knowledge that is produced, reproduced, sanctioned, and disseminated in the university is a process of interaction between social systems and individuals that is not at all neutral. All students, especially Basic Writers, exist and operate in relation to the larger power structures that govern universities and professional discourse.

One metaphor that has been widely circulated in reference to Basic Writing programs over the past fifteen years is that of the contact zone, as coined by Mary Louise Pratt. According to Pratt, a contact zone is a space where “cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other, often in contexts of highly asymmetrical relations of power” (4). Richard Miller adds to Pratt’s concept by bringing open conflict and hostility into the contact zone, suggesting that avoiding it is not only irresponsible but also undermines “almost all of the current major theories on the rise [that] celebrate partial readings, multiple subjectivities, marginalized positions, and subjugated knowledges” (“Fault Lines” 128).

The curricula for a postmodern contact-zone Basic Writing class centers on learning to analyze texts, both those that are published in various ways and those created by students, as made up of layers of meaning, layers of voices, “each of which is invented, learned, or parodistic” (Murray 147). Viewing writing in this way allows

students and teachers to recognize rhetorical and political devices for buying into or resisting the dominant cultures. Students are asked to identify and practice using these devices as part of the process of constructing an identity that accurately reflects what a student wishes to reflect. As Mutnick says, all writers must learn to express their meanings within the context of already existing language systems, but for Basic Writers especially, “it is imperative to root basic writing instruction in an understanding of language and other social systems as humanly produced and therefore subject to change” (180).

The key change in ideology is in the role of a teacher in a contact zone class, which is bound to be different in some ways from that of a social construction class, as the purpose of the course is to deconstruct invisible forms of authority. The teacher’s own authority is sure to be limited or shifted. To manage this, Bizzell suggests “a form of argumentation in which the teacher demonstrates links between his or her own historical circumstances and those of the students, to suggest that their joining together in a liberatory educational project will serve all of their best interests” (quoted in Murray 153). But this is an ideal situation. When race, gender, or sexual-orientation identity is involved, for instance, a teacher’s experience may not outweigh that of a student; there may be resistance. According to Miller and Murray, that is to be expected. “In the space between a student’s gaze at the teacher and the teacher’s gaze at the student, they translate and transform each other into something they probably are not” (162).

In the contact zone classroom, the teacher both represents the power of the institution and also deconstructs the power in the classroom. This allows teachers to see

themselves less as parrots of the institutional goals and more as advocates for themselves and their students, though they straddle an awkward line, as teachers cannot remove themselves entirely from the institutional requirement to evaluate and assess students' progress. Nonetheless, the ideological approach to teaching that is fore fronted in postmodern Basic Writing research frees teachers to share power much more widely with students, adapting curricula to students' interests and needs. No longer must teachers represent the discourse community of the academy as was the case during social constructionism; now teachers may choose which communities to read and interpret in class, and they are encouraged to bring in many voices from the contact zone. In this way, postmodernism has moved the ideological models presented in Basic Writing research firmly into the category of Bridge-building.

Basic Writing research has presented a number of models of teaching ideologies over the years; with each paradigm shift, the models move closer to the teacher ideology that is most closely linked to student success, Bridge-building. The first years were entrenched in current-traditional and cognitive research and approaches, which focused on a perception of the goals of the Basic Writing program as correcting deficits in students and a perception of curriculum and pedagogy directed to sentence-level error. During this time though, Mina Shaughnessy issued a call to teachers to see students as logical and whole human beings rather than flawed and deficient ones. Her call was unevenly answered in Basic Writing literature but eventually gained acceptance, especially as current-traditional and cognitive models were replaced by socially constructed models. During the late 1980s and 1990s, social constructionism revised

ideological models presented in Basic Writing research. Understandings of student needs, the goals of Basic Writing programs, and appropriate curricula changed as research focused on bringing students from their home discourse communities into the community of higher education. With this shift in approach, curricula became more relevant, holistic, and challenging, spending less time on sentence-level error and more on the conventions of the discourse community. Representations of teaching ideologies during this time moved almost entirely toward Bridge-building. Students are seen as fully capable people and curricula are meant to be relevant and engaging. The last decade or so of research in Basic Writing has presented models of teacher ideology that are firmly in the camp of Bridge-building, because they have shifted perceptions of the role of Basic Writing programs and the teachers within those programs. Though research has ranged in a variety of directions, validating a multiplicity of voices and deconstructing power structures inherent in language communities, in all of these, teachers are meant to see students in terms of their individual identity in relation to the academy. The goal of the program is to assist students in entering while at the same time questioning how the academy came to be framed as it is. Traditions and canons are no longer taken for granted, and many different voices are welcomed as boundaries are questioned and expanded. Though Basic Writing researchers may not have explicitly defined these ideologies until now, they have been present in the literature and have evolved over time to present a Bridge-building ideology as the most accepted.

PART II: Identifying Ideological Categories

Though I have presented the development of these teaching ideologies as a unified and linear progression, that is not in fact the case. Ideas about pedagogy and program goals shifted at different historical moments from when ideas shifted about identifying students and about the roles of the teacher. These changes occur in uneven staggers over time in the literature; in people, they are equally unpredictable. Teachers' ideology grows out of their experience as teachers and as students, their training, and their relationship to the academy, as well as their understandings of the literature if and when they have access to it. Because development of ideology in people is as irregular as in the literature, we cannot simply look to Shaughnessy to represent one ideology and time period, Bartholomae to represent another, and Pratt a third. Instead, models need to encompass the overall scope of ideologies represented in the history of Basic Writing literature. I combine the aspects laid out in the previous section into four categories based loosely upon those Shaughnessy describes in "Diving In." She describes each of her stages with a metaphor "intended to suggest what lies at the center of the teacher's emotional energy during that stage" and I do the same, modifying and expanding Shaughnessy's metaphors to suit the categories I present and describe (322). Though to some extent this method is as artificial as assigning one person to represent one time period, it does have the benefit of bringing together like ideas that may have occurred and developed at different times¹. Acknowledging that any attempt to chart ideologies into

¹ James Berlin's *Rhetoric and Reality* similarly negotiates the tensions between categorizing to create a taxonomy, in his case of epistemologies over the history of writing instruction in American postsecondary institutions, and the blurring of those categories because of the complexity of theory and practice in the teaching of writing.

categories necessarily imposes boundaries in areas that are overlapping, I do believe that identifying and describing these four sets of ideologies in some detail provides a set of common terms from which Basic Writing teachers can begin discussing what they think and why that matters to student success. The ideological models I present are as follows: Gate-keeping, which prioritizes preservation of high, rigid admissions standards of the college or university over the goals and interests of Basic Writing students; Converting, which also protects the university but sees some Basic Writing students as potentially able to attain these high external standards; Recognizing, which identifies the role of teacher and student in the current-traditional program as problematic but is unable to resolve the conflict; and Bridge-building, which prioritizes individual students' contexts over institutional ones and which continually adapts pedagogy around student interests.

Gate-keeping

The first ideological category, Gate-keeping, is based loosely upon the developmental category Shaughnessy calls "Guarding the Tower" ("Diving" 322). In chapter 1 I describe it as the extreme ideology marking the outer boundary of possibility for teachers of Basic Writing, because it assumes that Basic Writing students do not qualify for inclusion in university settings, thereby setting them up for failure. This ideology is often found in new and untrained teachers who may experience a range of negative thoughts and feelings as they first encounter Basic Writing students. However, the real definition of Gate-keeping lies less in a teacher's thoughts and feelings about writing than in thoughts and feelings about the university; these are the controlling beliefs that shape attitudes about students, programs, pedagogy, and the teacher's own role.

Teachers who embrace this ideology are most concerned with the sanctity of the university, with “protecting the academy from the outsiders, those who do not seem to belong in the community of learners” (“Diving” 322). They view the university community as made up of people who have been admitted by demonstrating their achievements; it is a place of and for learners and thinkers, those who have proven their worth. Teachers who embrace the Gate-keeping ideology would say that it is a privilege to join such a community, not a right; therefore not everyone is automatically to be embraced.

This controlling idea about the status of the academy means that teachers whose beliefs primarily center on Gate-keeping see Basic Writers as people who do not belong, due to their clear inability to demonstrate worthiness. Teachers who believe the academy should maintain high standards are often shocked the first time they encounter Basic Writers. They see students as “so alarmingly and incredibly behind . . . that the idea of their ever learning to write acceptably for college, let alone learning to do so in one or two semesters, seems utterly pretentious” (“Diving” 322). Feelings about Basic Writing students may range from fear to disgust to confusion; gatekeepers do not know what to do with them, how to approach them. They are mystified to find them in college and know only that they do not belong there. These students are often seen as unteachable: “I knew from the first week that I was going to fail them; in fact, I knew that I was going to preside over a curriculum that spent 14 weeks slowly and inevitably demonstrating their failures” (citation?).

The guiding beliefs about the role of the institution also shape beliefs about the teacher's role. Within the Gate-keeping ideology, the teachers' primary responsibility is protecting and maintaining the standards of higher education. They are defenders of principle. Their job is to keep the unqualified from sullyng the ranks of real students, so their impulse is to fail everyone who does not meet the qualifying standard. Teachers often do not interact with students much at all, because they may believe students are beyond their grasp; they feel simply helpless in the face of what they see as such enormous deficits. These teachers often view Basic Writing programs at best as absurd and ineffective, and at worst as betrayals of the system of higher education that they believe in.

If unable to avoid the "conscriptio" of teaching a Basic Writing class ("Diving" 322), the Gate-keeping curriculum emphasizes drills and skills, keeping it simple, with no higher order thinking skills required. This is due partially to the belief that this is all students are capable of accomplishing, and partially due to the desire to indoctrinate the students in skills that the teacher sees as basic and necessary to any levels of success in the academy. Teachers embracing the Gate-keeping ideology may send entire classes to the writing center for assistance in basic skills, and they stress grammar in short pieces of writing. They may look for reasons to fail students, and they hold them to a strict external standard. Shaughnessy describes a Gate-keeping teacher's approach to pedagogy as assuming "that he must not only hold out for the same product he held out for in the past but teach unflinchingly in the same way as before, as if any pedagogical adjustment to the needs to students were a kind of cheating" ("Diving" 322).

Though many more recently trained teachers may think that these beliefs are no longer likely in teachers of Basic Writing, it is important to keep in mind that ideologies are comprised of many factors, including what one hears outside of the institution.

[E]arly characterizations of basic writers as awkward, limited, and unteachable exist—if not in the scholarship appearing in the *Journal of Basic Writing*, *College English*, or *College Composition and Communication*, then in the public sphere. Not merely a matter of semantics, the notion of students as ‘unteachable’ continues to carry with it significant capital in the university and in a US consciousness (Halasek and Highberg xv).

If teachers are not trained in Basic Writing, if they do not have access to or interest in the research in Basic Writing, they are more likely to absorb ideas about the institution and students from the world outside the academy. It is not uncommon among Basic Writing teachers to hear complaints about the caliber of students in conversations with non-academics or with academic from other disciplines. These ideas are bound to influence teachers. In addition, the lore that Ann Del Principe refers to is another feeder of ideology, and often lore is out of date or based on stories passed around a department. Teachers whose ideologies are influenced by lore may also hold onto notions of students that reinforce the Gate-keeping ideology.

Obviously, enduring the educational experience of a Gate-keeping ideology may be torturous for both the teacher and the students, as both are doomed to failure from the beginning, and both know it. Student success and persistence is tied to personal connections to the course material, to the instructor, and to a sense of belonging. A Gate-keeping ideology is the least encouraging to new students in these areas, as it establishes a distance between teacher and student and constantly reinforces the pessimistic idea that

students do not belong in college. In addition, student success is tied to pedagogical method. Students like to be challenged, to have the material be relevant to them and to engage with the material. Teachers working from a Gate-keeping ideology have low opinions of what students are capable of, and they focus on the most tedious and least meaningful parts of the writing process, limiting idea expansion by limiting writing, and demoralizing students by focusing on grammar with a bleeding red pen. If writing is not taught in a student-centered way, if students are not encouraged to express themselves, and if they meet with constant failure, they are much more likely to assume they are not cut out for college, no matter what their grades are in the Basic Writing course. In this way, the Gate-keeping ideology does what it sets out to do: maintain the status quo. Neither the instructor nor the students leave the course with a changed opinion about the quality of writing the students produce. The tragedy is that so many students who have the potential to really compose excellent writing are stopped at this point in their academic careers, many never to set foot on campus again.

Converting

The second ideological category I have identified is based loosely upon what Shaughnessy calls “Converting the Natives,” (“Diving” 322-23) and it is much more prevalent than Gate-keeping. Based upon the same kinds of ideas but with slightly more optimism, there are teachers who embrace the Converting ideology in every department, and they can comfortably work in Basic Writing for years. Similar to those who embrace Gate-keeping, they believe that the academy is meant for those students who can prove themselves, and they focus heavily on the role of insider versus outsider; the main

difference setting them apart from those teachers who embrace Gate-keeping is that these teachers believe some few of their students can learn and can become worthy of a university education. As Shaughnessy puts it, these teachers recognize that “the class now appears to have at least some members in it who might, with hard work, eventually ‘catch up’” (322). This category is represented heavily in the early writings on Basic Writing and in the lore surrounding it, based on the idea that the university is a difficult and elite place and that students are far behind where they need to be to succeed there. Deborah Mutnick reminds us that these faculty are pulling their ideologies not from contemporary Basic Writing research but from the mindsets of the public and from lore:

[F]aculty across the disciplines reflect public concerns and often doubt or actively resist the goals and methods of recent trends in writing instruction, expecting Basic Writing students to accomplish in four years, if not fourteen weeks, what most middle class students start to learn as preverbal toddlers. (*Writing* xv)

Teachers whose beliefs center primarily on Converting view Basic Writing students according to their deficits; students are vessels requiring an enormous amount of knowledge to be poured into them before they can move forward. These teachers also may subscribe to the idea that some Basic Writing students are stuck in a lower developmental category than they ought to be. As Del Principe says, “Teachers routinely use expressions such as ‘can Suzie *handle* freshman English yet?’” (70). That kind of question implies that there is a level of background knowledge or cognitive ability that the students do not yet have, but that they can reach. This is certainly false and demeaning to the students, but it does provide for the glimmer of hope that the Gate-keeping ideology does not. And, as Del Principe points out, “Teachers’ presumptions

that the Basic Writing student cannot, in some sense, *handle* regular academic writing may sometimes find support in older research that suggested that basic writers were cognitively deficient or slow, as compared to their colleagues” (70).

In order to address the perceived deficits in the students, teachers who embrace the Converting ideology spend their pedagogical energy attempting to fill the voids. Some are well-meaning, and they think that students will benefit from lots of drilling and practice in the basic sentence-level skills that they lack; they assume that students are arriving at the university with weak backgrounds, and that they simply have not been taught these skills before or have not been taught them well. These teachers see their jobs as fixing and correcting students, putting ink on papers. They see learning as taking on fixed, true information; teachers are there to deliver that truth to the students, to feed them the information they have not had access to before, to “carry the technology of advanced literacy to the inhabitants of an underdeveloped country” (Shaughnessy “Diving” 323). This is a one-sided relationship. Teachers are guides to the world of the university; they are parental figures. They know the ways, and they show the ways to the students. They do not grow and change themselves, because they see the product they deliver as static and their roles as static. Students who learn enough of the ways of the university will succeed. There is no other way, to the mind of the teacher who embraces Converting. And it works for them, as Bartholomae contends:

Such pedagogy meets the immediate needs of teachers who are frustrated by an almost complete inability to understand what could be happening in the heads of students whose writing seems to be so radically different from their own, or from the writing they’ve learned to read. And it is the convenience of this pedagogy, which frees all parties, teachers and students, from ever having to talk about

writing, that leads teachers to hang on to it in the face of evidence that it produces limited returns. (Bartholomae “Teaching” 158-9)

This tough love approach shapes these teachers’ beliefs about the goals of their Basic Writing programs as well. They see the programs as doing work that is less rigorous and therefore less worthy than the work of regular composition classes, and they disdain it. They roll their eyes at those making admissions decisions and believe that Basic Writers should not be in college, but they are resigned to the necessity of teaching them; they are not actively fighting the right of the program to exist. Instead, they may work with the few students they see potential in and write off the rest.

If teachers whose ideologies center on Converting thought about it, they might be baffled that their logic does not hold true throughout the student’s learning; in other words, these teachers think their job is to show students the light. If that were the case, students should accept and know what the teachers lay out for them. However, mistakes keep happening, and students are not converted. The developmental theory upon which the Converting ideology is based assures teachers that students can be brought into the fold, but when they are not, these teachers tend to blame the students rather than the assumptions: “The skills curriculum is not founded on any investigation of the language that students produce, nor any systematic investigation into how writing skills are acquired” (Bartholomae “Teaching” 159).

Teachers whose beliefs align them with the Converting ideology are no more helpful to student success than those aligned with Gate-keeping, and for the same reasons. They do not design curricula that challenge the students in any meaningful way;

they do not create assignments that students want to do and feel a connection with. They do not take a personal interest in the majority of their students, and they allow their negative attitudes and those of the students to be reinforced in their classrooms. Neither the student nor the instructor is set up to expect success, and neither is set up to learn and grow as a result of the interactions of the semester. Any learning that does take place is almost coincidental, and most students leave the course feeling at best as if they have picked up an ability to reproduce a discrete skill and at worst demoralized and isolated from the process of higher education.

Recognizing

The third ideological category is Recognizing, and it is based upon Shaughnessy's category called Sounding the Depths ("Diving" 323). This category is made up of a set of inconsistent beliefs and practices based upon a recognition that current-traditional understandings of pedagogical approaches simply do not work combined with a lack of willingness to completely overhaul the power structures that are familiar and comfortable. Whether through reading research or through experience in teaching, teachers who embrace the Recognizing ideology have come to see that language acquisition is incredibly complex, that there is more involved than simply opening students to the set of rules comprising the truth. These teachers' views of students are positive; they see students as capable people, not trapped in a developmentally deficient stage, and they understand the job of Basic Writing programs to be important and relevant. However, these teachers address make only minor adjustments to current-

traditional classroom structures, pedagogy, and curricula, generally preserving the status quo.

Perhaps the most important shift in ideology embraced by Recognizers from the previous two ideologies is these teachers' beliefs about students. No longer are students seen in terms of their deficiencies; instead, they are assumed to be able to think in complex ways and in multiple literacies besides that of the university. These teachers approach students as people who need to learn the ways of an unfamiliar field, as equals who deserve respect, as people who are clever and competent but in an unfamiliar land, learning unfamiliar skills based on a set of rules that are not necessarily clear. Del Principe describes this idea as prevalent "especially but not exclusively among those with formal training in the field. . . the notion that basic writers, although clearly different from their mainstream counterparts in some ways, are not basic thinkers" (Del Principe 70). The idea of students as fully capable people paves the way for a change in other parts of a teaching ideology as well: it allows for shifts in appropriate pedagogical techniques, relevant curricula, and teachers' roles in the classroom.

Following this shift in belief about students, teachers whose ideologies center on Recognizing think of the role of the teacher as a guide, a more experienced person in this particular community but who is equally inexperienced at other equally important skills that the student might have. The teacher's job is to figure out how to help the students make connections between the worlds and contexts they come from and the academic world that they are moving into. The teacher is therefore at least as responsible for the students' education as the students themselves. The onus is no longer exclusively on the

students to “study hard” or to “practice enough” but on both teachers and students to find ways to make the process meaningful. These teachers will see not only the good they can do but also the damage, and they will be careful to keep their comments encouraging and positive, to develop and maintain relationships that students will be able to return to as they move through the academy. “Since our courses are designed to invite students to take risks, to try to do and say things they cannot immediately do and say, we are inviting them to make mistakes. To cover their papers with red circles would be a betrayal of this trust. . .” (Bartholomae 165). To those embracing Recognizing, trust is an important part of teaching; to those embracing Gate-keeping and Converting, it is less so.

However, these beliefs about the validity of students’ experiences and the importance of the teacher are not be carried to their logical ends in pedagogical terms. Though teachers whose ideologies center on Recognizing understand the complexity of the job of teaching writing to academic outsiders, they want or need to rely upon methods that are familiar and comfortable. For instance, these teachers often maintain a teacher-centered classroom. The atmosphere may be pleasant and positive, and the students may be engaged and active, but the teacher retains control at all times, providing the structure for the lessons, the topics to be discussed, and guiding the discussion so that it does not veer off course. Students may work together regularly, but the assignments they do in pairs or groups is turned in or otherwise validated by the instructor. The instructor loosens control as compared to the previous ideologies, but both the teacher and students know that ultimately, the design of the course is in the hands of the teacher.

In terms of curriculum too, teachers who believe in Recognizing are more effective for Basic Writing students than those who believe in Gate-keeping or Converting, but they are not quite as willing to experiment as those who believe in Bridge-building. These teachers understand and teach writing in terms of appropriateness rather than rightness, and they avoid undermining a student's confidence or home community. However, all written assignments are done in the language of academic discourse. Students are challenged to read and write about complex matters that are meaningful to them; they are not limited to short or simple answers. Despite that step forward, they are probably be restricted to the modes or using other models of writing for discrete purposes. It is likely that teachers who embrace Recognizing begin the semester with an assignment in narration not because they think the students are incapable of more "academic" forms of writing, but because they like narration and think the students do too. They want to encourage success and familiarity. There is some focus on grammar, but it is taught either in context or as a skills set as it arises over the course of the semester. It does not dominate the course.

Teachers who believe in Recognizing, unlike those who believe in Gate-keeping or Converting, are more likely to be proud of their profession, see their jobs as important, and believe in the Basic Writing program as an important and necessary part of the university. They see the goals of the program as intrinsic to the overall success of the students, whom they believe have as much right to be in college as anyone else. These teachers often self-identify as Basic Writing teachers, whether they came to the profession by choice or by accident, and they have some training, background, or interest

in Basic Writing research. In fact, Shaughnessy herself is an excellent example of this ideological category, as she was willing to ask questions and value her students as equals and their educations as a holistic journey, but was unable to see beyond the sentence-level error. In many ways, she was an innovator, but in a few ways, she was still trapped within the paradigm of her time.

Teachers who embrace Recognizing are undeniably good teachers in the sense that they recognize their connection to student success and go out of their way to promote it. They expect students to succeed and help them succeed by being available, by getting involved with their students, by encouraging them, and by helping them to connect to the material in a non-threatening manner. Students develop personal relationships with these teachers, and students will work hard for them; many students maintain those relationships after leaving the classroom. However, these teachers are still missing a key ideological factor that could increase their students' success even more.

Bridge-building

My final ideological category is an outgrowth of the Recognizing category, and it is based upon Shaughnessy's stage called "Diving In" ("Diving" 325). The defining characteristic of Bridge-building is the recognition of power relations as the foundation of all social structure and the willingness to question the structures in any way that might become necessary to best serve the needs of the students, including questioning one's power as teacher. Shaughnessy uses the category to refer to teachers who ask serious questions and make a personal commitment to change their own thinking in order to maximize pedagogical outcomes, "a decision that demands professional courage—the

decision to remediate [themselves], to become a student of new disciplines and of his students themselves in order to perceive both their difficulties and their incipient excellence. . .as we come to know these students better, we begin to see that the greatest barrier to our work with them is our ignorance of them and of the very subject we have contracted to teach” (325). Teachers who embrace the Bridge-building ideology maintain the expectation of student success that recognizers have, but they extend it by recognizing that in order to be most effective, teachers change and grow as much as students.

Teaching and learning are dialogic processes. Students learn best when they are able to follow the individual motivation that makes learning meaningful to them, and teachers help most when they allow that, even if it means they are no longer in strict control of the curriculum or power structure of the classroom.

The Bridge-building ideology shares its view of students with the Recognizing one; those teachers who embrace Bridge-building see Basic Writers as complex thinkers who need practice in academic writing. In terms of the way they see students, Basic Writing theorists like Bartholomae and Petrosky and Rose would fit this category, because they see their students as talented and smart, but misplaced. Postmodern and contact zone theorists like Pratt and Min-Zhan Lu are likely to believe in Bridge-building as well, since their foundational theory assumes dissenting voices and deconstruction of power structures. Students to them are players in the universally constructed power struggle, resisters to the authorial sovereignty.

Though their view of students is largely shared with teachers who espouse Recognizing, those who embrace Bridge-building see the role of the teacher very

differently. Bridge-building teachers see themselves as facilitators more than instructors; they encourage and guide, but they do not control students. Bridge-builders believe that they are in the classroom to learn just as fully as the students are, so they are open to learning both in terms of content students might explore in their writing and in terms of new pedagogical ideas and methods. Whereas those teachers who embrace Recognizing see the teacher as the guide and leader in the classroom, the person who establishes the tone and the methods and sees that they are followed through, those who embrace Bridge-building are willing to experiment according to the students' needs and interests.

These teachers' pedagogical strategies may vary widely; some may focus on group work, others on individual attention. Readings for the course may be familiar or far from a student's experience, may be fiction or nonfiction, may be short or long. The characteristic that these instructors share in their pedagogy is devotion to a dialogic learning process that is centered on the needs of the students. They use their training and experience as a guide, but ultimately their confidence in the quality of writing the students can compose wins out over doubts about pedagogy or curriculum change. The focus of the class is on the needs and interests of the students; projects are designed by and pursued by students, paper topics are selected by students, and students' ideas are a primary determining mechanism in the process of shaping and revising papers and projects.

The assumption behind such a pedagogy is that growth in writing ability is individual; that is, it will follow its own developmental logic, one that derives from a syllabus 'built into' the learner, and such growth takes place not through the acquisition of general rules but through the writer's learning to see his

language in relation to the languages around him, and though such perception, to test and experiment with that language. (Bartholomae “Teaching” page).

This is not to say that anarchy reigns in the classroom of a bridge builder, nor does it mean that all “loose” teaching develops stronger academic writers and promotes student success and retention. It simply means that to teachers who espouse Bridge-building, good teaching requires both knowing the students and challenging them, and that means allowing them a great deal of control over their own learning process.

These teachers, therefore, see the goals of the Basic Writing program as tied to the needs of the individual student to accomplish his or her personal and professional goals. As each student’s needs are different, so too are the goals appropriate for him or her. The Basic Writing program itself, to teachers who believe in Bridge-building, is one step in the overall holistic growth of the student, a process that takes place in irregular steps over the course of many years and with many different motivators and guides. The name *Bridge-building* arises from these teachers’ view of the profession as reaching out and encouraging students to see in practical terms what the academy has to offer them.

In chapter 1 I laid out the research in retention and first-year studies that connects student success to engagement and motivation, and those factors are inextricably tied to teachers’ positive attitudes and willingness to help students, and also to curricula that challenge students and lay out connections to perceived goals. Of the four ideological categories I describe, the teaching ideology most effective at promoting student success, unsurprisingly, is Bridge-building. Because students respond best to teachers who are positive, available, and believe in the value of their jobs, they prefer teachers who

espouse ideologies of Recognizing and Bridge-building far more than Gate-keeping and Converting. Because the categories of Recognizing and Bridge-building also lead to engaging curricula and pedagogical techniques, both sets of teachers are able to inspire students to perform well, and both can develop lasting relationships with individual students. The one difference that really sets Bridge-building apart from Recognizing though, making it even more effective, is the belief in the individual needs of the students over the comfort of tradition. In other words, those teachers who embrace Bridge-building encourage students to explore the material in whatever ways are most fruitful for the students, even if that means that the teachers will be less able to safely predict the results. Students who can tailor the curriculum to their own goals are more likely to find the connections they need to maintain motivation and to be willing to stay in school.

The four ideologies I present can be found in any Basic Writing program; with these names and descriptions, they should be easily recognizable. In the chart below I outline patterns and connections within these categories. It is important to note that each category will overlap somewhat with those around it, but one aspect defines it and sets it apart from the others. I have placed the defining characteristic for each in bold type.

The ideologies, once defined, are easily ranked in terms of connection to student success. Students look for faculty who are available to them and who have positive attitudes about themselves and their students. They prefer a curriculum that is challenging and relevant to their goals and interests, and they prefer pedagogical techniques that promote engagement with the material. Those factors can be tracked across this chart. Clearly those teachers who espouse Gate-keeping and Converting

ideologies are fairly pessimistic about Basic Writing students' place in postsecondary education, and their curricula and pedagogical methods are hard to engage with and to find success within. Those teachers who believe in the Recognizing and Bridge-building ideologies, on the other hand, are fairly optimistic about Basic Writing students' place in postsecondary education, and their curricula and pedagogical methods encourage students to incorporate their individual interests and backgrounds, allowing for greater engagement.

Table 1. Four Teaching Ideologies with Defining Characteristics

Ideologies	Curricula: What do they teach	Pedagogy: methods used to teach	Belief about students	Belief about teacher's role in Basic Writing	Program goals	Self-define as BW teacher
Gate-keeping	Grammar and paragraphs	Drills, worksheets, sentence-level	Unteachable; outsiders	Defend the academy	Strain out unworthy	No
Converting	Grammar and paragraphs	Drills, sentence combining	Cognitively or socially deficient	Dispenser of knowledge	Drill until they get it right	Probably not
Recognizing	Modes	Challenging curriculum of reading and writing	Members of different discourse communities	Guide to new discourse community	Teach rules of academic literacy	Probably
Bridge-building	Changeable according to student needs	Changeable according to student needs	Marginalized speakers	Equal partner in learning	Step one in a long holistic process	Definitely

Though teaching ideologies have not been specifically delineated in Basic Writing research, recognizable models have emerged and have evolved as approaches to the field

have evolved. I assert that these models are familiar to Basic Writing teachers who interacted with the research at these various times; these teachers as well as many who are unfamiliar with the research have developed ideologies based upon these models as well as their own experiences and relationships to the academy. The models that are presented in Basic Writing research have shifted over time away from the Gate-keeping and Converting ideologies, through Recognizing, and now are firmly tied to Bridge-building, the model that is most closely tied to student success.

In chapter 3, I provide data found in interviews with currently working Basic Writing teachers to support the categories I establish. Again seeking information about my four main topics—beliefs about students, teachers, programs, and pedagogy and curricula--I conduct interviews with teachers of Basic Writing to uncover their ideologies and pedagogical strategies. I question how they came to their current ideologies and practices and whether their ideologies have changed or are likely to. In this way I clarify the ideological categories I have set forth and relate them to presently practicing instructors.

CHAPTER III

CASE STUDIES ON TEACHER IDEOLOGY

As I have argued in the first two chapters, student success is inextricably tied to teacher ideology as a key component in student engagement, and student engagement can compensate for risk factors like race, income, first-generation status, and lack of academic preparation. If Basic Writing programs are to fully realize the potential of this information to increase student success, program directors must begin by recognizing the ideologies that already exist in their departments and therefore affect their students. Once program administrators know which categories exist, they can set up the training and support systems that promote the most effective ideologies and encourage shifts away from those that are less effective. The four categories of teacher ideology that I outlined in chapter 2—Gate-keeping, Converting, Recognizing, and Bridge-building--are recognizable to teachers and administrators of Basic Writing, both through their reading of Basic Writing literature and through their own experience, and the categories should become even more familiar to teachers and administrators as they self-assess their programs.

To support my assertion that Basic Writing teachers' belief systems represent elements of these four ideological categories, I have conducted interviews with four teachers with the intent of examining their ideologies, especially as they correspond to the category descriptors I identify as most directly linked to student engagement and

success: views of students, views of teachers' roles, views of the goals of the program, and pedagogical methods chosen to reach those goals. I asked all five of the instructors of the Basic Writing course at a regional state university to participate in the interviews, three who are full-time faculty and two who are adjuncts. Of those four who were willing, I have chosen to discuss three, two full-time and one adjunct. Their backgrounds are diverse in terms of age, gender, training and experience, and geography, and all three have very strong ideologies but with distinctly different paths of development. The fourth teacher, another adjunct, is similar to the first in terms of background and belief systems, and including her interview would not substantially add to the range of possibility represented by the first three. I believe the three individuals whom I discuss represent a fair cross-section of the teachers currently working in Basic Writing nationwide, and their ideologies will prove to be easily recognizable among the four categories I have identified.

First, I interview Ted, a full-time tenure-track assistant professor of literature whose appointment in the English Department has included teaching Basic Writing courses. Though he finished his PhD only two years ago, his experiences as a student and a high school teacher during the era of current-traditional rhetoric far outweigh his inclination to follow the advice of composition research. Ted's teaching ideology is most closely linked to Gate-keeping. Second, I interview Althea, an adjunct instructor who holds a master's degree in literature and whose full-time job is teaching third grade. She teaches Basic Writing courses in the evenings and during the summer. Though her lack of training for teaching writing at all, especially this cohort of students, limits her growth

in terms of curricula and pedagogy, she is relatively successful due to her very strong positive attitude and encouraging personality. Althea's teaching ideology is most closely linked to Recognizing. Finally, I interview Monica, a full-time tenure-track assistant professor of rhetoric and composition in the English Department. Like Ted, she was assigned to teach Basic Writing courses as part of her appointment, though Basic Writing is not her area of expertise. Unlike Ted, she has embraced the role, diving into the research of the field and continuously changing her course to improve student response to it. Monica's ideology is most closely linked to the category of Bridge-building.

All of these teachers are my colleagues in that we teach the same course in the same university. However, they are all appointed and evaluated by the English Department, while I am appointed and evaluated by University College. Though I act as coordinator of the Basic Writing program, I serve merely as a consultant: I call the biweekly meetings we engage in, suggest research articles to read and discuss during these meetings, write up and distribute minutes. My experience with the course allows me to act as resource for the new instructors, and I set up a clearinghouse website for our course. I also sit in on other teachers' classes from time to time. Often they request that I do one of their annual peer observations, but I try to visit each person's class at least once per year regardless; they are free to refuse this visit if they wish. I also work closely with these instructors in my role as Writing Center director, designing with their help the most effective tutoring structures for their students and reporting their students' visits and progress frequently.

It should be noted that as a non-tenure track colleague located in a different department, I have no authority over them, nor do I participate in their evaluation process unless they request I act as a peer observer. If any teacher of the Basic Writing course should choose not to participate in the discussions, not to contribute to the website, or not to allow me to visit their classes, they are in no danger of professional repercussions. Each of these teachers agreed to be interviewed due to their senses of collegiality; they stood to gain or lose nothing professionally from talking with me.

Ted

Ted is a stocky white man in his late fifties, bald with a silver beard and glasses. On the day that I interview him, he is dressed in a golf shirt, jeans, and tennis shoes, which is his usual look on campus. He moves quickly, with energy, and he speaks loudly with a noticeable New York accent. Ted is a forceful personality; he is assertive and has made his opinions about his university's low admissions standards and lack of sufficient student support services clear to his students, his colleagues, and his administrators, from department chair up through the chancellor. These opinions have not always been met with the welcome he initially hoped. As a result of his assumption that he will not be awarded tenure at this university, as well as his ongoing frustration with the perceived lack of interest in helping students, Ted has decided to resign at the end of this school year.

Our conversation takes place a few weeks after he has made his decision not to return. I meet him in his office for an hour between classes. He is eating a Pop Tart for lunch while we talk, surrounded by posters displaying the faces and words of literary

figures as well as advertising the books he has written. Books and papers are piled on his desk, bookshelves, and filing cabinets.

Teaching at the college level is a relatively new job for Ted, though it is the realization of his long-term goal. Previous to returning to school to pursue his PhD, he taught high school for fourteen years in Queens, NY; prior to that, he worked for thirteen years in advertising and public relations. He stresses that this background is important because it informs his perception of a competitive and unforgiving professional world that his students will enter upon graduation. Though he is new to teaching at this level, Ted has always been interested in writing and in teaching writing. He asserts that he was popular at the high school where he worked, and he was awarded a grant there to develop and implement a writing curriculum, a methodology that is now taught to teachers at CUNY. Immediately before taking his current job, Ted taught developmental writing at a federal corrections facility for juveniles under the aegis of a community college. In addition, he worked as a teaching assistant and writing tutor in a composition program at a large private university, and he taught at a different university whose main focus was international students. Ted wrote eleven books of literary criticism, biography, and fiction as he taught, and he returned to school to earn a PhD in literature because he wanted credentials to match his record of publications. No matter how good a teacher one is, he notes, no university is eager to hire someone who does not possess a terminal degree. The focus on credentialing and proving worth in a hierarchical world are prevalent and consistent themes throughout his remarks.

The key to understanding Ted's ideology regarding Basic Writing is his approach to writing itself. Like Shaughnessy and other early researchers, Ted believes that writing is a strictly linear process with clear rights and wrongs that are easily judged by an external standard and that have to be assembled in a student's brain from the simplest forms to the most complex. Ted explains his foundational principle:

My theory is, and this is for anything, is that you start with the most profound basics and build up. You also start teaching writing from the inside out, not the outside in. There is no point being overly concerned about the focus and structure of an essay if the component parts are a mess. Now, I do teach focus and structure, but that has to come *after* sentence basic sentence competency.

This concept of writing as a series of discrete building blocks shapes his approach to teaching and to his students as well as to the larger goals of his job and of the Basic Writing program.

Beliefs about curriculum and pedagogy

Ted's perception of writing began to form in his youth when he was placed into a pre-composition class upon entering college. Although he read "vociferously" as a child and always considered himself a writer, when he entered college in 1968, he was placed into a remedial composition class, which he believes was due entirely to grammar mistakes. "Let me tell you why I didn't make comp one: because I didn't always punctuate correctly," he says.

If I read the paper out loud, it was fabulous: good word choices, flowing sentences, but sometimes I would do a comma splice, and for that reason I didn't make [composition one]. If all our students were at that level here, we'd be thrilled. But it was different then. It was the CUNY before open admissions, and

I got in there on merit, and they were very strict. If you wrote a run-on sentence you couldn't be in comp [one].

Ted sees this selection process as reasonable, and he applies the same standards to his students today, almost forty years later.

Grammar is the deciding factor in a students' placement, according to Ted, because it must come first, before other parts of writing like development or organization. Those parts are moot without the basic grammatical structure from which they are assembled. Because of his extensive background in reading and writing, Ted entered his pre-composition program in 1968 with a strong sense of written language, and he was easily able to make sense of grammar rules. His lesson from this experience is that, "it's not like some people are born to write and others aren't. I learned how to be a very good writer over a long period of time, and I always tell my students that because I want them to understand you make the effort." Memorization and application of a complex and irregular system of rules worked for him, so he thinks they ought to work for his students as well.

When I asked Ted to explain his goals for his developmental writing students, he lists only grammar concerns at the sentence level.

I am hoping to get them to stop making some of the worst, most egregious, what I call hit-you-in-the-face errors. Like leaving the -s off of possession--instead of saying I am going to my mother's house, I'm going to mother house. Mixing up the three *theres*, using the wrong one, egregious spelling errors. But at the least to get some modicum of basic sentence structure, subject-verb agreement, and basic punctuation, particularly the use of apostrophes in the right place. And unfortunately in [Basic Writing] that's about as much as is going to get done in 15 weeks.

To address these errors, Ted asks his students to write many short papers, a page or less, with little discussion of development, organization, audience awareness, style, or other facets of rhetorical context. During class, one student at a time is called forward to sit with him individually and comb papers for grammar mistakes while the others sit silently at their desks, reading or writing. Ted's reasoning is that

whether the student is from China or from North Carolina, they are writing in a form of nonstandard English that needs to be put into standard English . . . there is a language of commerce and they must master that language in order to succeed in the world of commerce . . . no allowances will be made for dialect just because a certain person is writing that dialect, and what we do by graduating students who make egregious writing errors is we doom them from ever getting a college level job which ostensibly their bachelors degree claims that they can handle.

Ted sees his priorities as directly linked to student success, not in terms of the university but in terms of the work world, where he sees no tolerance for imperfection.

Because Ted's primary concern is teaching grammar at the sentence level, he structures his broader pedagogy around two components: a checklist of grammar errors and visits to the university's writing center. Ted says that in his 20 years of teaching, he has found that most students "make the same types of errors, and if you focus on a certain number of predictable errors, you may be covering 90% of the things wrong that they do." He repeatedly refers to the goals of the class as "learning the basics" and "fixing errors," which reinforces the idea of the linear, sentence-level of writing that many Basic Writers tend to bring with them to our classes. Ted tells his students that there are several hard and fast rules to learn, which he gives them in the form of a checklist. To him, once

the students have the checklist and know the fact of the rules, there is no reason a student would not apply that rule from that moment forward except for lack of effort.

The checklist includes such topics as “the five reasons why words end in s”-- third person singular, plural nouns, contractions, possession, words that happen to end in s,” pronoun referents, and homophones. Ted says:

And they get a checklist, meaning they get examples of these rules, and they are supposed to refer to the checklist when they write the essay, and they are supposed to proofread the essay. I tell them if you leave an apostrophe out where there should be one and it's on the checklist, I am not going to be happy. You are responsible for referring to the checklist and finding errors when you proofread . . . so if you see the word there, go to the checklist and make sure you used it correctly. That's not hard to do. Any student can do that.

Ted's belief system identifies students as empty vessels or blank slates who have not previously been made aware of their mistakes or who do not have the motivation to learn them. The mistakes themselves, to him, are straightforward and logical, and each can be broken into its simplest parts, easily assembled to a right-thinking student. For instance, to teach sentence structure, he puts examples of complete sentences on his checklist:

. . . examples of what makes a sentence a sentence, and I always start off with the most profoundly simple sentence, which is one word with an exclamation mark. Move on to the two word sentence, and then from the two word sentence, I go up to a quadruple compound sentence using *comma and* or *comma but*, *semicolon*, *period* and explain why each one is used.

Once they have been told what constitutes a sentence and given examples, they should know. The knowledge has been passed to them, and it is now their responsibility. As

Ted says, “. . . they have the checklist. They can't say they didn't know. And they are responsible for the checklist.”

Ted does not simply hand the students the checklist and expect them to know it. He also expects them to spend as much time as possible working with peer tutors in the university's writing center. The only way students will learn, Ted says, is by repetition, and he does not have time to teach them. So he sends all of his students to the writing center often in lieu of class, and in this way, he assumes that they are learning the basics he has established for them.

The writing center is the crucial absolute necessity to improve writing, period. It is the only place where students can if they wish, go on a regular basis to get one-on-one, sustained, extended, editorial help, which a teacher cannot do. A teacher cannot sit with a student for a half hour or more because if you have 46 students times a half hour that's 23 hours a week. You cannot possibly as a teacher write down every single thing that needs to be written on a paper if it has an enormous amount of incredibly fundamental mistakes that would take paragraphs to explain.

Because he sees teaching as finding and correcting each individual grammar error, he is overwhelmed by the enormity of the task, and he does not envision any way to accomplish it single-handedly.

Ted's students do not always immediately respond to the notion that they must visit the writing center so often, but he uses his authority to provide motivation in the form of a threat. He says,

You go. And you let them find things before I do . . . if I give you an F on a paper that means you need to go to the writing center. If you don't go and you continue handing me papers in this way, then you won't pass the class. So they resist at first but then they go . . . they really didn't want to go at first but they had no idea how many mistakes they made until someone sat down with them.

Ted assumes that he is doing the students a favor by helping them see just how “bad” they are and by using negative persuasion—the failing grade—to urge them to “work hard.” Student engagement practices have found that this negative motivation does not work with the vast majority of students, and Ted’s experience bears this out. However, his ideology prevents his recognizing that the most effective change would be in his methods rather than in the students. His perception is that

because other teachers don’t make the students go to the writing center, my students resent me for making them go to the writing center. I make them go. No, actually, I don’t make them go. I offer them the opportunity to go or fail. They can choose to fail. But if I mark up their papers and they get an F, well, students are supposed to choose the option of the better path. I did.

Ted’s ideology is quite naturally based upon his own experience. Since his teachers based their pedagogy on fear and failure and he made it, he figures that is the way to teach.

I asked Ted how he assesses his students’ progress, how he knows whether they are achieving the goals of his course. He said that he collects everything that the students write over the course of the semester in folders that he takes up at the end.

Their final grade is determined on the folder. Improvement counts. Frankly, it is almost like it is a visual thing: you take a paper from September and you take a paper from the end of November, and you hold them up, and you look at how many circles there are. If there are less circles in the later paper than in the earlier paper, that student has improved.

In addition to the number of circles on a paper, Ted looks at effort. “I rarely fail a student for level of ability. I fail students for lack of motivation, lack of attendance, lack of effort.”

Beliefs about institutional value of Basic Writing

A key component in Ted’s ideology is that the primary responsibility for teaching students is divided between the students themselves--who must put in the effort to visit the writing center and to learn the rules, to apply the checklist to their essays--and the university; faculty members bear almost no control over student success. The university’s job is to maintain standards by not admitting students who do not belong and to provide enough writing tutors and incentive to see the writing tutors. The first part of the university’s equation is establishing and maintaining admissions standards. There is simply no need for any university to admit students who are not fully prepared, Ted thinks, regardless of the mission of the school or of the caliber of the pool of applicants. Community colleges should bear the primary burden of dealing with developmental students, period:

A university is a university. A university cannot admit students that write at low elementary school level . . . I do object to admitting them, because this is a university and there should be a standard . . . You can’t admit students in a university that are not even up to 7th grade level.

The idea of an external standard to be maintained is vital, because it assumes that students are beginning college unworthy of their role, and that idea colors perception of the job. Ted feels that his teaching skills are wasted on students who ought not be there.

Because he believes the students do not belong in college, he has a sense of futility about their progress and extremely low expectations for their success. In addition, his perception of the senselessness of teaching Basic Writing is colored by his view of writing not as a long-term process of development but as a series of discrete, correctable tasks that Basic Writers are unable to perform. Rather than assuming students will continue to grow as writers throughout their years in college and their professional lives, he thinks that students reach a plateau of correctness during the time that teachers focus on grammar, and then they cease developing in any meaningful way.

It is impossible in only two or three semesters of writing, to get them, many of them, even to high school level. After they finish comp. two, that's it, their writing isn't going to get corrected anymore, so whatever level they are at, that's where they're at, and they're going to graduate at that level.

Obviously a belief like this would contribute to a sense of futility in teaching Basic Writing.

Ted blames the failings of his students largely on the university. If a university admits developmental students, then the university has a responsibility to provide the help for them—in Ted's mind, that help means plenty of peer tutors and a consistent authoritative mandate that students must work with the tutors or face suspension. He has seen this model work in a university devoted entirely to nonnative speakers, where the focus of the entire administration and every faculty member was on improving English skills. The institutional culture that university supported the focus on writing proficiency by requiring students to sign a contract before they entered, a contract stating that they would go to the writing center for all four of their years there. "By the second year if

they hadn't figured it out, they were told to leave. The school had a waiting list to get in so students could be replaced very easily, so there was no sense of 'we can't get rid of students because we won't have any.'" According to Ted, the institution must provide the resources and the external motivators to force students to perform. Without a large number of tutors or an institutional culture that reinforces the need for writing center visits, the university is failing its students.

It [the university] has as much power as it wants to have. If there is top down authority that says you *will* learn how to write, you *will* go to the writing center, you *will* meet a certain standard or you will not pass the class, that's the authority that can be given. It is given at other schools.

Ted's enormous frustration with his university's current administration stems from its unwillingness to pursue a similar model. Without the institution taking on this responsibility, he feels any efforts he and other faculty make will be almost entirely futile.

The other part of the equation for student success to Ted is the student. He assumes that the enormous number of withdrawals and failures from his Basic Writing classes are due to student laziness. He does not perceive himself as responsible even in part for student success. He approaches students as vessels who do or do not demonstrate grammatical competence; he is not interested in their individual engagement, and he holds them accountable for their own failures and lack of motivation to succeed. To him, students are more or less interchangeable, regardless of whether they are Italians from Queens, nonnative speakers from places as diverse as China or Guatemala, or first generation black students from the rural South. He does not have to change his methods

or take into consideration their individual histories; he simply expects each of them to step up and perform.

Though Ted is not close to his students, he feels “fond” of them. He simply separates himself from them as a matter of practicality.

One of the things that I understand, and my first teaching boss told me this, because I'd get frustrated that students were so unresponsive to reality: everybody grows up in their own time. . . No matter how much they like me personally because they find I'm funny or crazy or whatever, that doesn't mean that they are going to be motivated to do work for me. I would say that there is a slight bit more motivation. If the same student is totally unmotivated in Dr. A's class, he might improve 10% in my class, but if that's the student's outlook at that particular time, there is nothing I can do. My first teaching boss wanted me to know that because I used to take it very personally that I couldn't get them all. That ended after my first semester. I stopped thinking that way.

Assuming that there is little connection between a student's willingness to work and his own pedagogy absolved him of any responsibility to adapt his methods or to use his out-of-class time on their behalf.

Ted does not make a habit of seeing students during his office hours while he is teaching them. He feels that they want to see him in an effort to avoid visiting the writing center, so he just says no to them. However, once they are out of his office, he offers to see his students' work. For example, he says that one of his former students “would email me the paper and I would go over it in red ink and send it back to him.” Despite this lack of interaction during class or office hours with his students, despite his tremendously high failing rates, Ted perceives himself as an advocate for students. He believes that agitating the university to increase the number of tutors and to change its

admissions policy is the best use of his time, and that working with currently enrolled students is futile.

Discussion

Ted's teacher ideology clearly corresponds to the Gate-keeping category, and he is insistent that this is the best and only way to be. The understanding of writing that Ted absorbed as a youngster and college student almost forty years ago is current-traditional in terms of teaching, and pre-Shaughnessy in terms of student perception. That understanding combines with his work experience to create an unshakable belief that writing is linear, that students are separate from him, and that teaching writing is the responsibility of the peers who have time to sit down individually with the students. Teachers do not have the time nor the responsibility to teach basic writing students, and universities are not the places to educate these students. The fact that they are here is a big problem, but it is the problem of the students and the school, not the teacher. As do early current-traditional practitioners of Basic Writing repudiated by Shaughnessy, Ted sees the primary responsibility for student readiness as the students' responsibility. As a result, Ted is frustrated; his effectiveness has been limited, and his career at this particular school is almost over.

Meanwhile, his students have experienced only very limited engagement personally or intellectually; they are further confounded by the excess devotion to rules that make little sense to them, and their intellectual development is stagnated by his refusal to go into discussions of depth or interest because they will be moot without a solid grammatical foundation. His system of grading is very difficult for students to

understand and to participate in. They may not see the relevance of attending class, where they are not intellectually engaged and where they may or may not be chosen to comb through a paper on a given day. They are not clear on what they are being judged on, on what exactly “improvement” means, so they cannot participate easily in their own improvement. They simply go to the writing center and hope that when Ted holds up their papers at the end of the semester, he will find them worthy. These methods correspond to Freire’s banking method of education, in which the students passively receive deposits of knowledge from instructors; Freire resisted and revolutionized this idea of teaching, and student success literature demonstrates that it is ineffective. However, Ted believes in it because he thinks that it worked for him.

Students in his courses fail in droves. Then they are unable to proceed through their general education requirements with any measure of success because their writing skills have not improved; their confidence has not improved; their strategies for working within the academic environment have not improved. They are not engaged with him as an instructor nor with his class nor with the larger university through the experience of his class. Ted’s ideology fits the category of Gate-keeping, and though he clearly has good intentions, in fact, he does his students more harm than good.

Within his current job, this ideology has been challenged repeatedly. He has had the opportunity to read and discuss Basic Writing research with his colleagues who meet regularly to share ideas and recommend readings, but he was impatient with the other teachers whose goals were so different from his. He found the meetings unproductive

and ceased to participate. He also had training in teaching composition while in his PhD program, but that too he found to be unhelpful.

Being a high school teacher was ultimately how I learned how to teach writing. The pedagogy that I found at [his graduate school] was unrealistic, did not understand real students, did not understand real writing issues. It was all theoretical and there was never any hands on how do you teach subject-verb agreement, sentence structure . . . in terms of me learning, if I had taken the [pedagogy] class and not been a high school teacher, I would have learned extremely little about teaching writing.

Ted's teaching ideology at this point in his career is unshakable.

His ideologies come from his experience more than anything else, as a student and as a teacher during the period when the current-traditional paradigm was widely accepted. He is so convinced that he is right that he is not willing to participate in discussions or try new methods. For him and for other teachers who embrace the Gate-keeping ideology, student success is black and white: either students meet the standard or they do not. Because of this inability to adapt his understanding or change his ideology, he is taking the only path open to him, which is to leave the university. Though there is no doubt that he cares deeply about what he does, his methods simply do not work, and he accepts none of the responsibility for the student failure.

Althea

Althea is a slender black woman in her 40s who adjuncts teaching Basic Writing and first year composition courses in the evenings to supplement her income as a full-time third grade teacher. She is energetic and professional, dressed in a skirt and blouse and carrying a briefcase overflowing with papers and candy treats for her younger

students when I meet her at the break room of the university library. She is warm and open; she smiles constantly, gestures often with her hands, and laughs infectiously. Althea received an MA from the university where she teaches just three years ago, and she has been adjuncting since that time, having been recommended by her former professors. She sees teaching at this university as a great opportunity for her, something she would not have imagined she could do early in her life, and she loves being here.

As is the case with Ted, Althea's experiences prior to taking on the job of Basic Writing teacher are the primary shapers of her teaching ideology. She grew up in the inner city ghetto of a large Midwestern city, one of several children of a single mother working multiple jobs. She and her siblings were raised by the streets, she says, and attending college straight out of high school was not an option financially, nor was it a possibility considered by any of her siblings or other family members. Althea always wanted to be a teacher, but instead she joined the army, where she met her husband, was married, and had her children. She tells a story about another soldier who represents the reason she eventually left the armed forces to go to college. While she had made sergeant in a year and a half after enlisting, the other soldier hadn't made it after fourteen years, and she believes this was due to his nonstandard speech. "The reason I teach is because of people like him," she says.

I think that he already had a strike against him just being a black male and then the fact that he couldn't speak well, so I wanted to make sure that when words came out of our mouth, black people, that people would take us seriously. I teach all my children, but I know that those who are less fortunate, who don't get to hear good English, have a disadvantage, and I want to make sure that all my students have an advantage.

Her personal connection to people she sees as disadvantaged is the central theme of Althea's teaching ideology.

Beliefs about the teacher's role

Althea's ideology revolves around the idea that teachers have enormous power to affect their students in both negative and positive ways. This belief began to form in Althea when she was a young girl and had a teacher who made a very strong impression on her. When she was in fourth grade, she says,

I drew something on the board and all the kids laughed. I was drawing a ponytail, but they thought I was drawing a breast . . . I went in there and cried. [The teacher] came and she hugged me up, and she just chastised the whole class and told them that she would not have anyone being picked on, and it just made me feel like 'wow, she's on my side.'

This same teacher had all the girls in her class over to her house for a cookout, where she made a special sandwich for Althea, whose family did not eat meat. "If she made all these memories for me, can you imagine what she made for the others? I was nothing special, but she made me, everybody, feel like they were something special." Because Althea's own life was profoundly affected by a sense of caring from her teachers, she makes a point of showing her students that she cares about them, both in her elementary school and her college classes. "That's what it is all about, touching them," she says. "I don't want to be just a teacher. I want to be a damn good teacher, and it's because of her."

Although Althea has not studied student success, she acts on several key principles of student engagement, including getting individually involved with students

and structuring classroom time in a way that encourages participation and a perception of progress. “The teacher is the key to making the classroom work. If the students don’t like English but they love you, they’re going to write good papers just to please you,” she says. Developing a personal relationship with the students makes them feel noticed and important, and they then are more willing to work, even if they aren’t particularly inclined toward that subject or if they haven’t found success there in the past. Althea works hard to accommodate everyone’s feelings and to create a comfortable learning environment for all her students, because she remembers how important that was for her as a student. She does everything she can not to embarrass them, because she knows that can be the difference between success and failure in some students who doubt themselves already. She remembers a time when one of her students stumbled badly reading out loud on the first night of class. He was clearly embarrassed, she says, and then he didn’t come back. “He felt that he shouldn’t be there and then that was reinforced.” Althea sees her job as making sure no one ever feels they shouldn’t be in her classroom.

Althea’s perception of herself as a cheerleader for students is also how she approaches her non-teaching life, where she encourages her colleagues, the people in her family, and the people in her church.

I call myself a self-esteem booster; that’s what I am. I think that everyone has a gift, and I think that my gift is making people feel good about themselves, so that’s what I am. No matter what I’m doing, as a mom, as a church member, as a choir member, as a person, I’m a self-esteem booster. I’m the one that people call when they want to feel good, and I’m not just giving you fluff. I’m telling you something about you that you don’t even recognize.

This positive attitude infects her students, and they too begin to believe that they can succeed. They adore Althea and sign up for her classes repeatedly.

Whereas Ted assigns blame for student problems to the students' lack of motivation to learn, Althea blames the educational system in which students spend their first twelve years, the same system she is employed in and that largely disappointed her academically and emotionally as a child. In particular, she blames teachers who do not take on the needs of their students, especially the more difficult ones. "Somewhere we are missing our kids," she says.

If our college students don't get it, we are missing the mark somewhere. Teachers have to make students learn. A lot of teachers seem to cling onto the ones who know what they are doing. A teacher can make or break a child's attitude about English or any other subject.

When Althea says "make students learn," she means by cajoling them, by rewarding them, by telling them that they can do it. Positive reinforcement is the best tool, she says. When she was in school, a teacher told her that she could not write, and she "took that as fuel, motivation to prove her wrong. But a lot of people can't do that. They say ok, maybe I'll do something else." Althea does not want students to change a goal because she discouraged them; rather, she wants to be the teacher whom students remember years later as the one who encouraged them to keep going.

Beliefs about curriculum and pedagogy

Althea is an adjunct who works full time elsewhere and who has had no training in teaching Basic Writing or even general composition. As a result, she relies heavily on the generic sample syllabus given to her by the lead Basic Writing teacher and she uses

the textbook recommended by that syllabus. She does not have the time or the interest to redesign the course to better suit her, and she is unable to participate in meetings with textbook representatives or attend book fairs. However, the structure of her classroom time is her own, based on her primary aim to make her students feel confident and special.

Althea frames her teaching around improving fluency in reading and writing, and she sets up her classroom as a community rather than a hierarchy. “I make them feel like a human being,” she says. “I let them know that every opinion matters, every voice counts. We are a classroom community, and we are here to help. We are here to build on our strengths, all working together as a team.” She thinks that establishing this team atmosphere is the foundation of creating success in a group of students whose inclination is to think of themselves as failures. “The ones that got placed in [Basic Writing] felt like they were second class citizens, were not as motivated, saw themselves as dumb and acted like they were dumb, felt like they didn’t belong in there, had low self-esteem.” To counteract that negativity, she says, the teacher must establish a positive learning environment from the beginning.

To achieve her goals of increasing confidence and fluency, Althea follows the lead Basic Writing teacher’s recommendation that she have students do a lot of group work. In addition, she asks them to read out loud and to speak in front of the class, while she provides positive reinforcement. “Everybody, no matter if they can write a paragraph, if they have bad grammar, subject-verb agreement, there’s a positive in everybody’s paper and they need to address that first and then work on those other

things.” Her focus on positive thinking also extends to the way students work with their peers. When putting students in groups, she tries to make sure they get someone of a different gender and age group to work with so that they can get ideas and responses that might be different from their own, and she monitors the way they interact with one another. She also emphasizes increasing vocabulary, talking about words from the readings that students may not know or be comfortable with. “There is no sense to read an essay and stumble over the words. Words must have meaning so passages can have meaning,” she says. In trying to determine an author’s purpose, they discuss why writers use different types of language.

In direct contrast to Ted, Althea’s biggest goal for her Basic Writing students is to gain in confidence and be willing to keep working to develop their skills. She also wants them to be able to correct the grammatical errors they make often, and she wants them to see each paper as an improvement over the last one. Rather than focusing on a single external goal as Ted does, she sets personal goals for each student, looking at value-added. In other words, she wants to “raise their level over where they were when they came in.” She also wants her students to work well together and to think productively, so that as peer editors they are able to come up with constructive, useful comments. The bottom line, though, is that she wants students to stay in school so that they will keep learning.

Success would be a student who lacked confidence who all of a sudden wants to answer questions or wants to help somebody, or their paper’s just like, ‘Oh my goodness, I can’t believe this! Look at how your voice changed! Look at where you were and where you are now!’ That’s what success looks like: a student whose confidence is built up so much.

Though grammar is clearly one of her priorities, it is not the only one, and the standards she sets are individual, rather than external. This gives students a sense of personal accomplishment and a willingness to continue rather than a fear of inevitable failure.

I asked Althea what advice she would have for a new teacher of this cohort, and her answer again reflects the central emphasis of her ideology.

They [instructors] need to know that they have to be patient. I think that's the most important thing that they need to know. They have to be patient. They just can't assume that just because they [students] are nodding their heads that they know, and they can't talk down to them. They can't say well you should have learned this in high school, because if they'd learned it in high school, they wouldn't be in [Basic Writing] in the first place. These are things that they've already heard. They need to give them new things.

To Althea, students are not vessels waiting to be filled with knowledge; they already know the facts. They need practice in making the knowledge their own, a process that takes time and encouragement.

Although Althea works at a university that has regular meetings scheduled for Basic Writing instructors to share and discuss ideas and methods and research, she is unable to participate due to her adjunct status and full time job elsewhere. Her masters program focused on literature, not teaching, and she has never had any classes nor done any reading about teaching Basic Writing or composition. All her teaching methods stem from either the master syllabus for Basic Writing or from her training and experience as an elementary school teacher. There are methods that seem to work for both age groups, like reading out loud, setting up a positive learning environment, using engaging activities like games, and handing out small rewards. For example, when a college

student helped her in class, she gave him a Blow Pop. “He was so happy!” she says. “It was so funny! ‘She appreciates me, she cares,’ and I only gave him a sucker.” When she first began teaching college classes, she was worried about being unprepared for the job, but now she is confident. According to Althea, people respond to a positive message whether they are eight or eighteen years old.

I asked her whether she thinks it is problematic for this level of English to be taught in college. Predictably, she says that universities should do whatever they can to help students, especially those who have been failed by the system, who have been passed through with serious deficits or have been ignored by previous teachers. She says that she has a hard time understanding “why they got through high school making the mistakes that they made. Most of them didn’t know what a paragraph was or how to use transition words . . .” If students are able to graduate with these deficits in their education, it is up to the next level of educators to take on these issues and work through them.

I have a bunch of children that they threw away in my class, and I am not going to let anyone fall through the cracks. I don’t feel a problem with it at all. I actually think it’s a help because we want them to be in college, and if they need this, let’s go ahead and give them this boost and send them on their way.

Discussion

Althea’s ideology corresponds to the category of Recognizing. She is warm and responsive to her students, and she is very successful with many of them, unknowingly practicing the methods that have been defined by the NSSE as engaging to students. She has no training in teaching Basic Writing, but she has personal experience and a strong

personal commitment to her students, whom she sees as undervalued and ignored. Her positive attitude combines with her reliance on outside authority to establish basic methods, provide a syllabus, and recommend a textbook. She follows the recommendations of the lead teacher in matters of number and length of assignments, grading rubrics, and other details, but she establishes her own classroom environment based on a community of caring. She sees herself as extraordinarily important, with the power to do great good or great harm to students, so she is always careful to be positive. Althea can be compared to Shaughnessy in her warm approach to students and call to teachers to value them; she could be compared to Bartholomae in her recognition of the differences between the students' discourse communities and that of the university. But perhaps her closest alignment to a researcher in Basic Writing is to Mike Rose, whose background as a working-class student shapes his enthusiasm and personal connection to the students he teaches. Althea too draws a great deal of her motivation from her own experiences as an outsider to the academy.

Althea is an asset to the university and to her students, who re-enroll in her courses in great numbers. However, due to the structure of the institution and her role in it, she does not have the opportunity to grow. She says that for the first year she worked here, she did not know she had a box in the English department office. She did not know the academic calendar, where to meet her classes, or how to order textbooks. No one talked to her about these vital details to teaching, because she is an adjunct. She is not able to participate in group discussions about the course, and she does not have the time nor motivation to read research on her own, since this is a part-time gig accomplished at

the end of a long day of her regular job. The university was lucky to find Althea; many adjuncts are not as capable, and without institutional support, they do not have the ability to progress. Althea could adapt her ideology from Recognizing to Bridge-building if given the chance, but a system built upon a foundation of adjuncts has limited potential for growth.

Monica

Monica is an associate professor two years out of her PhD program. She is a Southern white woman in her early 30s, with her straight brown hair pulled back, wearing a bright green sweater and casual pants. Her office is decorated with art made by her four-year-old daughter as well as by her students, who have drawn scenes from their readings, and the office is lit by lamps she has brought from home, rather than the overhead fluorescent lights. Monica's background in teaching is limited to working as a teaching assistant in her PhD program at a large state university; she got into teaching Basic Writing not as a career choice but as a condition of her hire to teach upper level rhetoric and writing classes. Monica is the only Basic Writing instructor at this university who has followed the traditional career path, earning a bachelor's degree in English with graduate work leading to a PhD and then beginning this tenure-track job. This path has allowed her the opportunity to take classes in composition studies and writing pedagogy as well as Basic Writing, an advantage the other instructors have not had. This is reflected in her approach to the students and especially in her teaching methods, as we shall see shortly. Her background as a member of a working class family

has also strongly influenced her teaching ideology, which is very practical and focuses on the ability to apply skills to make decisions and accomplish tasks.

Monica grew up in a large extended working class family, and her ideology is strongly influenced by their experiences and hers. She is grounded in practicality rather than in philosophy, and she has no use for the kind of misguided elitism often associated with higher education. For instance, when she was in graduate school and was taught to read texts through a lens of Marxist philosophy, her response was,

I thought, “you people have never been working class because what working class people want is more money and more leisure and bigger and better things. They want to *be* bourgeois; they don’t want to *kill* the bourgeois.” So it made me resistant to that kind of theory and pushed me toward rhetoric and pedagogy rather than big theory and lit.

Instead of embracing literature and theory as a career, she moved toward the study of language, in order to de-mystify it for herself, her family, and her students. One memorable experience connecting writing to her family background involves her aunt’s attempt to deal with a health insurance company. Her aunt, whom she describes as

a very smart person” wrote letters that were “just atrocious, and I’m sure this insurance company was both frustrated by her and thought they could walk all over her because her letters were just incompetent. And when I started stepping in and saying ‘let’s write these together,’ she started getting results and they referred her to other doctors. So my sense that writing at a certain level is necessary for getting things that you need . . . it’s not just can you communicate, but can you communicate the way that people expect you to? Otherwise, you’re going to get stepped on.

Similarly, Monica describes her grandfather as “a brilliant man,” but he was limited by a second grade education that did not allow him to function in the literate world. Seeing

her intelligent but uneducated family members have difficulties accomplishing practical tasks has made clarity and practicality a focus for Monica, and it is the main theme of her teaching ideology.

. . . writing can be a very pragmatic business. It doesn't have to be, you know, you're Wordsworth, you've been touched by God and given a talent. I mean, it's not something that's innate. It's obviously something that you learn, and you don't only get that special touch if you come from a particular background . . .

De-mystifying the process, taking the elitism out of higher learning, making it real and useful for her students: these ideas act as the foundation for her teaching ideology.

In addition to her family background, Monica's ideology is influenced by her reading in Basic Writing literature, and she felt a particular affinity for two teachers whose attitudes aligned with hers, Paulo Freire and Mina Shaughnessy.

I just remember being struck by how much respect they had for their students and saying, 'These are very capable people,' and I think that that really spoke to me and my family background. I think there's a certain amount of snobbery in academia; I don't know that you can get away from it but . . . those two writers really seemed to write about that like what you are seeing is not somebody who is incompetent but somebody who has misread a rule, doesn't have a lot of experience in this rule but has a lot to offer, can master it, can get through it.

This approach to students as competent people deserving of respect who are simply inexperienced at the ways of the literate culture affects Monica's approach to setting up her classes and to her attitude about the role of Basic Writing at the university.

Beliefs about the institutional role of Basic Writing

Monica's goals for her students flow from her overall approach to writing: making it practical and helping students find a personal connection to it. Monica's

classes center specifically on reading and writing as new ways of learning that her students may not have come to the university with. She uses the oral and visual cultures they are familiar with to contrast to the literate culture they are attempting to join; by highlighting the differences and providing many models and opportunities to practice, she hopes to give her students the context she thinks they need to find motivation to learn.

In terms of reading, Monica sees the students at her current university having more difficulty than those at previous schools where she has worked. She says that learning to decode texts is not just about the words but also about the rhetorical situation, that students who are unfamiliar with this particular kind of text will have a harder time understanding it than those who are familiar with the genre of academic writing.

I see their work just understanding what instructor assignment sheets are asking them to do and textbooks, which can be, you know, the further up you go the less comprehensible they are because they think they are writing to more and more expert students . . . so I think reading is really important in the sense of figuring out what you need to do, getting the information that you need.

In a like manner, Monica describes her goals for her students' writing in terms of familiarizing them with the expectations and conventions of the genres of academic discourse.

[Students] are not familiar with producing them in part because they're not familiar with looking at them. I think most college freshmen have trouble shifting over to academic discourse. They tend to overwrite or they underwrite, because they've been encouraged to do one or the other in the past or they've had success with it in the past. You want to try to find for them a happy medium: don't sound like you're talking, but also, don't sound like you're speaking from a high pedestal and no one is supposed to understand you.

Monica thinks that all students have a hard time specifying differences between writing and speaking, and that Basic Writers have an especially hard time with that difference. They just are not sure what they are supposed to be producing, she says, and they also have to cope with previous teaching that sometimes gives them the idea she calls “write by numbers,” which is that there is a correct way of writing that can be memorized and applied to any situation. For example, she says that most Basic Writing students know the concept of a paragraph as five to seven sentences, rather than as a unit of text serving a purpose for a reader within a particular document.

What they’ve been expected to produce in the past has been given to them in a kind of formula, and maybe they’ve only partially gotten that formula in the first place. So when they come here, not only does that formula not really work for every assignment that they need to do so they need more patterns, but if they haven’t gotten that formula right in the first place then they may not understand the basic structure that academic writing wants.

The problems of the formulae and the lack of understanding of academic expectations can be addressed through trial and error, Monica says, and by looking at lots of models to increase familiarity.

If both of those things haven’t occurred, if they haven’t had a lot of trials and they haven’t had a lot of reading, and I see those things as really interconnected-- it’s kind of like a foreign language, the written form, and if you’ve never been immersed in it, it’s really hard to reproduce it by a set of rules.

Beliefs about pedagogy and curriculum

In order to get her students immersed in academic literacy, Monica begins by choosing a text that she hopes they will engage with. This semester, she is using a novel,

Haroun and the Sea of Stories by Salman Rushdie, because she did not find her students responding to the previous textbook, a collection of essays, “at any kind of gut level. It was very difficult to get them passionate, and I thought maybe if they were reading something that they were interested in, they would actually want to do it.” Her idea was that this text would work on a couple of levels, both providing reading that was a bit easier than a typical academic essay, to help them gain confidence in comprehension, and also by giving the students an opportunity to learn about other cultures and the greater world. Her students’ reaction to the text was mixed. Some students liked it quite a bit and wanted to read ahead of the class, and others did not read at all. She was able to have fun with the text, having them write in the style of various characters, draw scenes, do costume design, but overall, it was not the success she had hoped.

Next semester, Monica will try using a textbook that pairs visuals with several different kinds of readings, because she wants to test out ideas she found at recent conferences.

I still want them to read; I’m just not sure how to get them motivated to do that yet. It is difficult to understand how hard it is for them to read, how much energy and effort it takes for them to absorb the words on the page, so every time I change a textbook, I’m thinking how I am going to make this palatable enough to overcome that.

Students’ struggle with reading is personal to her, and she will not give up on it because she sees it as fundamental to their ability to succeed in college. Without it, the rest of their work will be stymied. “I think that might be one of the most frustrating experiences

they have is sitting there trying to read and getting stuck on two paragraphs and not being able to understand and not being able to move forward without understanding.”

Monica uses contrastive analysis as a model for how to approach the differences between casual spoken language and academic spoken or written language.

I’ve moved more to this idea that using what they know and contrasting it with what they are expected to perform is a better way to go, so I’ve been really influenced by the people who do contrastive analysis for grammar. That sense of what you speak, the way that you speak and the way that probably most of the people that you love speak is not wrong or lazy or improper; it’s actually perfect for what you are using it for, but that the written form is different and we have to buy into that written form so that we can communicate.

She talks to her students about dialect and about how language forms change even within individuals depending on the situation at hand. She follows up a discussion like this with an assignment to “listen to people talking and write down what they hear versus what the correct spelling of the word would be and then try to translate into how would this need to translate into writing.” As a group, they will then analyze what they find. For instance, they will see that speakers have a tendency to leave out *that* but to repeat other things. They will then notice that in speech people can be both too economical, because they are right there to answer questions, and also too wordy, because they correct as they go.

I hope that that helps them understand that their language is just fine, and they are learning a new form of it or a variation on it, and that it is possible to learn that variation by saying ‘Okay, here’s what you do in speech and here’s what you would do in the written form.’ It works for me a lot better than saying something like, ‘Just don’t put the word *well* in your paper.’ I really have been trying to work away from the ‘don’t do this’ to the ‘why should we do this differently’ kind of perspective. It feels a lot more friendly, like I’m welcoming you in by telling you how to do something, not all the things that you are doing wrong.

Monica uses the same kind of approach to teaching grammar and punctuation. Rather than focusing entirely upon rules that can be universally applied, as Ted does, she has students memorize a set few uses for punctuation marks and then stresses that most punctuation is an interpretive signal system to convey the writer's thoughts to the readers.

Like, here's an optional comma. Why is it optional? What does it mean to your reader if you put it in? What does it mean if you leave it out? And really giving them the sense that it's not a black/error or white/perfect, but that there's some gray area in the middle and that is personal. That is what *you* want to convey to your reader.

She does let students know that there are some definites, like avoiding comma splices, which people recognize as a pretty serious error. But overall, she wants to give the impression that grammar is a tool, not a weapon.

It's a big deal for me to try to move away from the 'it's got to be perfect' to 'actually nothing's perfect. It's got to be negotiated.' For them to understand that is an important first step because it is a lot less depressing to think that you could be in the middle and moving towards correct, and still everybody's always going to be in the grey area.

Monica judges student success by her students' willingness to find a real reason in their lives to continue their own learning process. She does not expect her students to master everything that she wants them to know. Instead, she wants to establish a pattern in their minds to take with them, a pattern of "I can do it. It takes work, and it takes effort but this is possible and it is desirable." She says that teachers cannot create those patterns in their students, but they can help them find the patterns and they can reinforce them so that they will remember for future classes.

Beliefs about Basic Writing students

Monica's practical, positive teaching ideology is evident in her attitude about her students and her role with them. The Basic Writing students are a favorite to teach for Monica because they are less resistant to her approach than the regular level freshman composition students and upperclassmen, who are much more set in their ways. She says of the regular freshman composition students, "They want to do the things that they've done before, and maybe it goes back to the sense of 'I've been successful with this in the past and now you are saying that's not good enough so therefore there must be problem with you because I'm fine.'" In contrast, Monica sees the Basic Writing students as wanting to do well and already feeling behind, so they are generally more open to learning whatever they need to learn to move forward.

I think if you are supportive of them at this time when they feel like 'I'm behind; I'm not as good as these other students; and tell them 'no, no, you're going to be fine, just work,' and reward them for that work . . . they are so overjoyed . . . It's fun, and they are willing to do things, and I just like them.

She says that many Basic Writing students do feel stigmatized by having to take the class or have been damaged by having previously taken it with one of the harsher instructors.

Some of my students who have failed their class and then taken mine have said 'I don't ever want to see that person again,' and I see that they are wounded by having to take what is a remedial course and having to pay more and spend more time to do it and then be told in that class that they are wholly inadequate.

Monica's approach to her students is the opposite of that. She says that although she gets some students who are not engaged, the number is not any higher than in any other class. With her Basic Writers, their overall enthusiasm makes them a pleasure to teach.

In order to feel enthusiastic about teaching Basic Writing, Monica has to maintain a positive attitude and pass that attitude along to her students. She takes responsibility for their learning and wants to change anything she is doing that does not work.

I think if you have the attitude that they are capable, and you see something that's going on in the classroom is not showing up in their work, if I'm trying to teach it but it's not happening, then I've got to fix something. So if your attitude is these people can do this, they need to be motivated, they need to be taught in a way that they can understand it and they can apply it, then you'll start to innovate.

Though she is willing to grant some individual exceptions, she believes that the success of her class overall is directly related to her willingness to pay attention to what her students respond to and what they do not. "If they are still in the black at the end of the semester, that's not just their fault. If the whole class is having a problem, you can't dismiss a whole group of people if you think they are capable and say well they were capable but they are just lousy students. That's wrong."

Monica's approach to teaching all her classes, including Basic Writing, is that the teacher needs to provide models to the students of the content material and also the attitude and the preparation that they would like to see emulated. For her, good teaching involves a combination of joy and creativity, but also organization. She believes that being organized and planning ahead sets a tone that students respect and respond to.

I think if students think you're coming in and you are sorting yourself out and you haven't put any effort into it in advance, then why should they? What I've seen in my teachers is always have a Plan B. Come in excited about what you've planned out carefully for them to do that day . . . there has to be some combination of energy and discipline.

Monica believes that student deficits in literacy stem from a combination of home culture, pop culture, and a lack of preparation by the public schools. She speaks very strongly against the schools' allowing students to pass through when they are not learning the necessary skills to succeed.

I think that the public school system's method for dealing with reading and problems with reading is wholly inadequate. I think that the curriculum is somehow they are able to do all of these reading projects without actually reading. That seems like a big problem, and I don't know enough about the day to day to understand how that could be possible.

In addition to problems with public education, Monica recognizes that there are home environments that do not encourage preparation in literacy either.

I feel like there are cultures within our country that don't either have the skill or the time or the desire to do that [read] with their children, so if children don't get those skills or encouragement toward those skills from home and don't really get it from the school system, or aren't required to do it from the school system, or worse, are required to do it from the school system but what they are reading is boring and unintelligible, then they won't have any motivation to do it. By the time they get to be grown ups, they think, 'Reading is hard and it's kind of unnecessary. I've been able to get this far without doing very much of it so I don't know why these people are jumping up and down saying it's so important.'

Monica is upset about the problems these students are wrapped up in, but she does not blame the students. She does not see them as lazy or unmotivated like Ted does; instead, she sees them as "having been kind of gypped by a system that didn't work for

them and having a culture that doesn't suggest that it's really going to matter." She thinks that the public school system should not be producing students who perform at such low levels most importantly because "those students are intelligent. They are capable of learning. It is very clear that they are, but when they get here and they are capable of doing amazing mental things, and they just need help with the form, you think, what is the deal there?" Monica clearly believes that either specific teachers or the public education system as a whole has failed at its job when it comes to developmental students.

Once those students who have been gypped arrive at the university level, however, Monica says that the university assumes the responsibility for educating them appropriately and effectively. She is not particularly accepting of the policy of admitting students whose skills are so far below a level that would allow them to succeed in their studies, but she understands the social and political and cultural forces at work that make the situation difficult to change, and she sees a great deal of benefit to making the programs successful and vibrant at this level.

I think to come to college is a big deal for people in those [working class] families. To come to a big four year school is a really big deal. It is different from going to junior college. It is different from going to a tech school. So I like having the programs here because it encourages social mobility . . . to encourage people to see it can be done no matter where you come from no matter what your family culture is like you can move between those two worlds . . .

Social mobility is important to Monica, having experienced it herself. She thinks the existence of a Basic Writing program at a four-year university encourages students to think that it is possible for them to succeed there, and that possibility then is able to

spread to other family members. “I don’t think we should have to have it [Basic Writing] here if they go through public education, but since it’s not working there and I don’t have any autonomy to fix that that or go there and say what is going on, I’m glad we have it here.”

Goals for the Basic Writing Program

One idea that Ted and Monica share is that the university ought to be doing more at the institutional level to help the students that it admits. Rather than focusing exclusively on hiring more writing tutors, though, Monica would like to see faculty encouraged to develop new ways to teach them based upon how developmental students learn and what they need to learn.

We have to pay a lot more attention to how the students that we have learn and find ways pedagogically to move them from one or two methods of learning to other methods of learning. If we want them to be people who learn from reading, then we have to figure out how to get them to the point where they learn from reading. Just asking them to read isn’t the ticket. It clearly is not or they would already be doing it.

At the institutional level, Monica would like to see faculty investing more time and energy into figuring out not how to get rid of the students who are “undesirable” but to recognize that this population of students is willing to try. The faculty must figure out ways to keep that desire alive from the moment that they come in to the moment that they end while shifting the ways that they know how to do things. For example, Monica does not believe that learning styles are exclusive.

I don’t believe in I’m a visual learner, I’m an auditory learner I’m a kinesthetic learner whatever that is I think those are patterns the brain can lay down new

patterns but it takes work and repetition and if you are only doing it for one class one hour a day three days a week that's not going to happen as successfully as if you were doing it in all your classes.

To make it work in all classes, the institution has to be involved. She says that simple support will not work; it has to be forced because faculty members' wrong-headed ideas about teaching have often become firmly entrenched and not easily recanted or altered.

There's a sense of 'this is how I learned; therefore, anyone who can't learn like this is beneath college level work,' and I think that's the hard-headed way of saying you don't belong here. We'll let you skate along doing horribly until you decide to withdraw or skate along until you figure it out for yourself and some of them do and some never had a problem to begin with but for students in [Basic Writing] what they need is someone to meet them where they are and say 'look, this is where we're going and here's how we're going to get there and you have to want to get there and see why it is valuable.

Faculty and students both need to understand learning as an ability to use and apply information, rather than an ability to regurgitate facts. If faculty believe this, they will have to change their teaching, and if they change their teaching, students will change their learning. But the only way to get faculty to change is to provide motivation at the institutional level.

Discussion

Monica's ideology aligns with the Bridge-building category. Like both Ted and Althea, her own experiences previous to becoming a teacher of Basic Writing have heavily influenced her ideology. Because she comes from a working class family without much postsecondary education, she has seen people she loves and admires falter when

dealing with tasks related to literacy. This has guided her approach to her students, whom she sees as capable and intelligent but lacking the familiarity and practice to master academic literacy. This approach to her students shapes her teaching methods, which are based upon very clear positive expectations. She shows her students what she wants from them, and she explains why they should find it important. In her view of students as disadvantaged by a power structure that excludes them and in her desire to make students aware of that structure, Monica's beliefs can be compared to those of Paulo Freire, one of her ideological models. Her sense of the power structure and desire to use curricular models to uncover it and clarify the often unspoken rules place her ideologically in the same camp with postmodern theorists like Louise Pratt and Min-zhan Lu.

Her teaching is organized, challenging, and engaging, and she tries new ideas in the hope that she can get students to respond. Unlike Althea, she has the opportunity to participate in discussions with colleagues, reading of the literature, and attending professional conferences. All of those sources as well as student response help her to adapt her curriculum often to best meet the needs and interests of her students. Getting students engaged is of absolute importance to her; she sees curricular and pedagogical adaptation not as a threat but as a necessity. In this way, she follows the recommendations of the NSSE, helping her students find personal connections between their goals and their college writing and increasing the chances that they will persist in school.

Monica is disappointed in the public schools for sending her students that are so clearly unprepared, but she sees herself as an important key to shaping their expectations for academic work, and she agitates her colleagues and her institution to do the same. Not until the entire institution takes these students seriously will Monica be satisfied that they are getting the education that they deserve. Because Monica moved from a working class to a professional class, she values upward mobility and sees the Basic Writing program as a key component in assisting these students and their families in that transition.

Monica's parting words in our interview are these:

You can't blame students for the fact that people who can't read are graduated from high schools . . . Anytime you base an education system on economic earning, then you are going to have that, and I think if we really do want to put our money where our mouths are, we'll do what we have to do, even if it is remedial at the very last moment that we could have done this and accept these students who at least are willing to come. That in itself is a good thing, their desire to be here is a good thing, and we shouldn't discourage it by telling them they don't belong here or by cutting programs.

Monica's Bridge-building ideology makes her an extremely successful teacher of Basic Writing students.

Applying Interviews to Program Improvement

The three Basic Writing teachers whose ideologies have just been examined represent a wide range of backgrounds and levels of training. All three consider themselves student advocates, and all three strongly believe in their individual methods. However, we can see from applying the student engagement model outlined in the NSSE that one of the three is far less effective at engaging his students and therefore promoting

their success than the other two. Ted, whose ideology fits my description of a Gate-keeping ideology, is inclined to set external standards that protect the quality of the university from those he does not consider ready for it. In addition, he does not assume personal responsibility for helping those students. He instead assumes that the only relevant factor in determining whether they succeed is their own willingness to work hard; ie, to see writing tutors for grammar help. This ideology discourages student engagement with him, with his curriculum, or with the larger university.

Althea's and Monica's ideologies, on the other hand, more closely align with the categories of Recognizing and Bridge-building. They both set goals that individual students can relate to and find value in, and therefore engage in. They both set a positive tone and attempt to be as clear as possible with their standards, so that students will be able to understand and work toward them. Perhaps most importantly, both feel a personal responsibility for the success of their students and believe that the methods and attitudes they model for the class will affect their students, so both are careful to emphasize the attainability of goals and to be encouraging. Althea and Monica are much more effective in promoting student retention and progression in the university for several reasons: they see the Basic Writing program as a positive and important force in the university, they believe that Basic Writing students can and should be successful, they are available to their students, and their curricula and pedagogical techniques adapt to the needs and interests of the students. Perhaps due to her substantial background and continuing interest in composition and Basic Writing theory and research, Monica is better able to create and tweak assignments and approaches than Althea is, but both women

unknowingly follow the guidelines for success established by the NSSE and first-year and retention research.

These interviews demonstrate that a wide range of ideologies is still in play in Basic Writing programs today. These interviews also show us the structure of the Basic Writing program is as important a factor in its success as the individual parts of it. Although it is possible for teacher ideology to develop and change as a result of engaging with new readings and experiences, these teachers' ideologies were substantially set before they were hired into this university's Basic Writing program; it is notable that whether they believe in and practice teaching toward student success is incidental to the practices of the Basic Writing program. These teachers were not questioned about their beliefs during initial recruitment and interviews for their jobs; their beliefs and methods play very little part in their continuing employment, promotion, or tenure. A faculty development program does exist at this university for Basic Writing teachers during which they gather to read and discuss research and to share ideas, but of these three teachers, only one actively participates in this program. There is no institutional motivation to do so. Since teaching ideologies are so closely linked to student success, Basic Writing programs are undermining their efforts if they ignore ideology in the structure of their programs.

Practices related to the hiring, training, and support of both full-time and part-time faculty can either encourage or undermine the overall potential of the program to find, encourage, and reward the ideologies that are most effective at increasing student success. In chapter 4, I review the existing hiring, training, and evaluating practices of

Basic Writing programs and make recommendations for improvement. These recommendations include foregrounding ideology in the hiring process, in ongoing training, and in evaluation, promotion, and job security. Teacher ideology's connections to student success are too close to leave to chance.

CHAPTER IV
APPLYING IDEOLOGIES TO THE STRUCTURE
OF BASIC WRITING PROGRAMS

In chapters 1 through 3, I argue that teacher ideology is an important factor in many students' ability and willingness to embrace postsecondary education as a route for achieving their personal goals; this is especially true for many Basic Writing students who begin college unsure whether they belong and seeking validation. Researchers such as Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, and Whitt have mined the data provided by the NSSE to advance assertions that students are favorably influenced to remain in college when they feel academically challenged and engaged, when their instructors are available to them, and when their instructors have positive attitudes about their own roles and about students' potential for success. Teachers who embrace the ideologies of Gate-keeping and Converting, which are focused primarily on protecting the historical sanctity of the university, tend to set external, immovable goals that are virtually impossible for Basic Writers to reach in one semester; they tend to use silencing rather than stimulating pedagogies, and they tend not to make themselves available to students outside of class or hold themselves responsible for student success. In these ways, they assist Basic Writing students in deciding that they do not belong in college; they restrict student engagement, and they prohibit students' progress in achieving learning strategies and outcomes and the grades that accompany them. Teachers who embrace ideologies of Recognizing and

Bridge-building, on the other hand, tend to focus more on students' individual progress and to structure their pedagogy to stimulate student participation. Teachers embracing these ideologies make themselves available to students, and they feel personally involved in students' willingness to keep working. By doing so, they assist Basic Writing students in finding their place within the structure of the university. They effectively promote engagement, and Basic Writers tend to respond more positively.

The administrators of Basic Writing programs must take this information into account, sharing it with the chairs, deans, and vice-chancellors who promote student success, and advocating the Recognizing and Bridge-building ideologies across university structures. They must take stock of all facets of their operations and search for ways to endorse and develop those ideologies in every aspect they can influence: as part of the recruitment and hiring process, in the creation or reassessment of initial and ongoing training, and by revising evaluation, promotion, and tenure guidelines. Though Basic Writing program administrators may not have full control over each of these processes, they can and should raise the issue of teacher ideology and its connection to student success with those bodies and administrators who govern these processes. The more often the connection can be asserted, the more likely real and productive change can occur in the direction of increasing attention to teaching ideology, which will promote student success. In this chapter, I review current practices for hiring, developing, evaluating, and promoting Basic Writing teachers and suggest adaptations that would increase awareness of effective teaching ideologies, thereby improving chances for Basic Writing students to succeed and to progress.

Updating Recruiting and Hiring Practices

An important step to incorporating knowledge of effective teaching ideologies to the structure of Basic Writing programs is forefronting ideology in the process of recruiting and hiring Basic Writing teachers. It is impossible to overstate either the importance of the hiring process for Basic Writing courses or its nationwide need for overhaul. Teaching Basic Writing and other developmental courses is one of the most important jobs at the university. The students in these courses are often defined as high-risk in that they have inadequate academic preparation, are of an underrepresented minority, have language barriers, and/or are first-generation college students. In addition, Basic Writers are at risk simply by virtue of being in their first-year of study, when most students who drop out make the decision to do so. One would think, then, that a great deal of care would go into ensuring that those instructors who teach Basic Writing are among the strongest teachers, those whose ideologies are most likely to encourage student success, because there is so much to gain, or alternatively, to lose, by their efforts. On the contrary, most teachers of Basic Writing have historically been selected on the basis of availability rather than training or competence in the field. Richard Miller's experience in being offered a job teaching in the same department to which he was refused admission as a graduate student reinforces this hierarchy: those who are not qualified to study are nonetheless qualified to teach (*As If* i-ii). A distinct lack of concern for Basic Writing and other developmental courses is repeated throughout university circles as academic departments concentrate their money and efforts on upper-division

students, both undergraduate majors and graduate students, regardless of the increasing reality that universities are held to account for retention and progression rates. Without increased effort to support the changing student population when it begins college, few majors or graduate students will be available to support as upperclassmen. Therefore, departmental priorities must shift toward increasing the value of first-year teachers, especially those capable of working successfully with developmental students. As Deborah Mutnick argues, there can be no systematic success in serving the evolving student populations so long as hiring high quality teachers is not a priority:

To offer basic writing—or any writing—courses in sufficient quantity and quality to support open admissions and other nonexclusive policies would require major reform in higher education. Either universities will have to reallocate resources to support student need and hire more trained, full-time faculty, or discard the very concept of a liberal-arts curriculum. (*Writing xv*)

Keeping this in mind, administrators of Basic Writing programs should look toward revising the current hiring practices of their departments so that teachers with success-minded ideologies are hired as often as possible. Currently, colleges and universities across the country embrace a wide array of methods for seeking out and hiring Basic Writing teachers, almost all of which reflect its status as least valued course and almost all of which undermine potential student success in Basic Writing. The recruitment process is important, and it includes many facets: writing the position description, appointing a committee, screening applicants, selecting where and how position is advertised, interviewing, making an offer and assisting in the transition to the university (Miller, Finley, Vancko 93-4). Though Basic Writing program administrators

may not have direct control over all of these facets, they can influence them, advocating for increased attention to teaching ideology.

Faculty who will be teaching courses within the major are almost universally recruited with extreme care: they are screened carefully; they must prove credentials within the field, undergo a series of interviews, and offer a teaching demonstration. These candidates are then rated by a committee of peers within the department who discuss their potential effectiveness and compare their strengths to those of other candidates; their continued employment after hiring depends upon meeting a series of goals, including demonstrating teaching effectiveness and doing research in the field. By contrast, Basic Writing instructors rarely undergo even one of these hurdles. They do not need to show any proficiency in Basic Writing nor any desire to achieve proficiency. They are not asked to prove their teaching effectiveness, they are not screened by a committee, and they are often not judged on their effectiveness once they are in the classroom. Instead, most teachers of Basic Writing are graduate students and adjuncts; occasionally they are regular faculty who specialize in something else but are called upon to teach Basic Writing in addition to their regular work. Rarely are tenure-track jobs in Basic Writing--jobs that demand competence and offer support and promotion based upon it-- the norm. This situation developed as a byproduct of the structure of graduate education in English, which was largely focused on literature until the past thirty years or so. Few instructors with expertise or experience in composition, much less Basic Writing, would have been available at previous times in history. However, the context of the field has changed enormously, and there are now many more trained composition and

Basic Writing professionals available. Recruiting and hiring practicing must shift to reflect this encouraging development.

There are several common methods currently used that are far less effective at seeking out the best teachers than they could be. One popular route at larger universities with graduate programs is to staff their courses with Teaching Assistants. In fact, the use of teaching assistants (TA) is so widespread that Pytlik and Liggett's *Preparing College Teachers of Writing* uses the term *TA* nearly interchangeably with writing teachers. In the foreword to the collection, Richard Fulkerson never acknowledges other methods; in the preface, Liggett and Pytlik do so only perfunctorily, “. . . preparation of new teachers of college writing, most often TAs, involves . . .” (xv). The assumption that allows such sweeping generalizations is that becoming a writing instructor almost necessarily requires first serving as a TA. This assumption becomes less accurate yearly, as graduate students parse together coursework with other jobs, commuting, and online programs. However, the assumption is telling in that it validates the reliance upon teaching assistants that many large programs persist in to staff their first-year courses, including Basic Writing courses. Marc Bousquet asserts that only 7% of composition sections are taught by tenure-stream faculty, the other 93% by “graduate students and other ‘disposable’ teachers” (5).

Graduate students make wonderful teachers of course, but they are designated as teaching assistants not based upon their teaching ability but on their intellectual ability and on their financial package as part of admission. In addition, they usually have little experience, limited pedagogical support, and many demands upon their time and energy.

As Scarlett points out, teaching assistants' reasons for being at the university are "their own graduate programs, which they are pursuing concurrently with their teaching responsibilities. It's not surprising that emphasis on their studies would sometimes cause them to neglect their teaching responsibilities"—or at least siphon energy away from their teaching (24). Teaching assistants in English programs are usually used to teach composition, and they often receive some training in that in the form of a course introducing them to the history of composition studies and the preferred approach of that department. Though slowly seeping into some programs, it is still not common to devote specific attention to the needs of Basic Writing or to the Basic Writing literature in these courses. In addition, many teaching assistants for Basic Writing courses are actually literature majors who have little background or interest in Basic Writing. While employing these graduate students is cost-effective for universities, it shortchanges the undergraduate students who are enrolled semester after semester in courses taught by passers-through with little training or support.

Another common practice in staffing Basic Writing courses is hiring adjuncts. According to several studies cited by Levine-Brown, Green, Hess, and Cabral-Maly, more than 65% of faculty teaching developmental courses are part time, and that number jumps to 79% at community colleges (1). Though adjuncts too can be good teachers as in Althea's case, they are no more likely to be prepared for the task nor to be able to develop at it than graduate students. They too have other demands on their time, little in the way of institutional motivation to become better teachers, and likely do not self-identify as Basic Writing teachers. Preparation for the job demands only a masters

degree in English, which though more than a teaching assistant might have, still could be focused on anything from film studies to British Romanticism; specific preparation in composition pedagogy, much less Basic Writing studies, is not necessary.

This lack of preparation and splintering of time may be contributors to the findings that developmental programs with 70% or more of courses taught by adjunct faculty are more likely to have unacceptably low pass rates, and those with more full-time faculty are more successful (Boylan and Saxon in Levine-Brown et al 1). Roueche, Roueche, and Milliron outline the difficulty of the mission of adjunct instructors. They are placed

squarely in the face of the most challenging missions of the college—the instruction of under prepared and at risk students . . . Given these dynamics—the interplay between standard treatment, sheer numbers, important roles, and actual benefits to the institution—it is especially curious that part-time faculty can still be justifiably described as ‘strangers in their own land.’ (quoted in Miller, Finley and Vancko 95)

As Althea’s case reflects, adjuncts face a number of practical difficulties that can affect their ability to teach to their potential.

However, John E. Roueche and Suanne D. Roueche find that, “what matters in teaching developmental students is not whether faculty are full or part time but that they possess the right attitude and competence to help students be successful” (Levine-Brown et al 1). In other words, that economics dictates some degree of reliance on adjuncts does not inevitably lead to a drop in student success. It does mean, however, that programs must include adjuncts in their policies on hiring, development, and evaluation. The current strategy of hiring bodies to cover stray sections and then ignoring them until

time to hire for the following semester contributes little to potential for student success, as well as to potential for adjunct satisfaction.

A third common model in the assigning of Basic Writing instructors is assigning instructors from among full-time English faculty with other specialties. Though these teachers may have more degrees and teaching experience than teaching assistants or adjuncts, they need not be in Basic Writing, nor must they have any interest in developing as Basic Writing instructors. Indeed, Ted, the instructor with the Gate-keeping ideology, is a tenure-track full-time professor of literature with a great deal of teaching experience. Yet, he has no interest nor professional motivation to develop expertise in Basic Writing. His research is in literature, and that is where his possibilities for tenure are. That he has been asked to teach Basic Writing courses as well is incidental to his professional career. Often when professors with other specialties are asked to teach Basic Writing, it is with apologies from the chair and with the understanding that this distasteful task is part of paying their dues; tenured professors do not have to teach Basic Writers. Besides the obvious lack of preparation and support that these professors would have while teaching Basic Writers, a real danger exists in engendering a perfunctory or even dismissive attitude toward these classes. These professors likely would not bring with them interest in and enthusiasm for these students, and when programs treat their courses with apologies, professors may adopt that attitude.

In no way do I mean to suggest that graduate students, adjuncts, and even the occasional full-time professor from outside the field cannot be excellent teachers with training and ideologies that are well-suited to encouraging success in Basic Writing

students. There is every chance that these people will be inspired and inspiring teachers; however, there is an equal chance that they will not be. The Basic Writing cohort is too large and too vulnerable to continue to be left to chance. Basic Writing program administrators can easily and dramatically increase the odds that teachers will be highly effective if they encourage department chairs and faculty search committees to treat hiring Basic Writing instructors with the same care that they put into hiring literature instructors. The informal procedures that often involve nothing more than a department chair asking around, “do you know anyone who can teach?” should become formal procedures that seek skills, training, and ideology and that support new hires and encourage them to develop once they assume the role of instructor. It would be optimistic indeed to suggest that all instructors of Basic Writing henceforth should be well-trained full-time faculty; until programs are in an economic and political position to support that goal, they must work within the constraints of the current applicant pool and financial resources. Even within the current context, however, simple procedures could be introduced that would significantly improve the quality of teaching for Basic Writers by taking into account teaching ideologies.

First, Basic Writing program administrators seeking instructors must assume that the job is valuable, and the attitude accompanying the recruitment process must reflect that. These students are among the most fragile in academic terms, and they must therefore be treated with the greatest care. Program administrators can themselves presenting the job as selective and valuable, or they can use their influence to encourage the chair or search committee to do so during every aspect of recruitment, from the

writing of the job description through advertising and interviewing. Shifting the initial attitude of the department during the advertising stage can promote responsible teaching ideology in the people who seek the job.

Second, teaching ideology must be an important criterion in the recruitment and hiring process. Teaching ideology is not a secret; it is easily uncovered and discussed in interviews and in teaching demonstrations, both of which must be a regular part of the process of hiring Basic Writing faculty, just as it is with literature faculty. During teaching demonstrations, applicants can be asked why they choose specific methods, what they hope to accomplish, and what their goals are for the students in the course. During interviews, applicants should be asked why they got into teaching and how they see their role in the classroom. They should be given sample student papers and asked to verbally review them so that the hiring committee can judge the teacher's priorities, approach to text, and to the person writing the text. Attention to teacher ideology can be implemented in the hiring process in fairly simple ways.

Many Basic Writing programs have limited themselves to a haphazard selection of teachers due to their poorly developed recruiting and selecting processes; these processes reinforce the underdog status of Basic Writing in the overall English composition program. However, Basic Writing is not an underdog in terms of importance to the university. Its role is enormous and growing. Basic Writing program administrators must treat their programs and instructors with the respect and care that they wish the students to have. Whatever combination of teaching assistants, adjuncts, full-time instructors or tenure track/tenured professors a Basic Writing program employs,

its administrators must approach the recruitment and hiring process with an attitude of pride and selectivity, rather than apology and averted eyes. They must insist that job applicants discuss their teaching ideologies during the interview process, and they must demand teaching demonstrations during which applicants' priorities and approach are identified. As Roueche and Rouche point out, there are important factors that researchers know make a difference to teaching this cohort; it is a simple matter to seek those factors out as part of the hiring process.

[A] college's high expectations for remedial education [should be] reflected in its hiring practices. Instructors who thoroughly understand a college's goals and the complexity of the at-risk population, who have significant classroom experience and a broad repertoire of teaching techniques that lets them match learning needs to instruction, who want to work collaboratively with other faculty, who want to be involved in strong faculty development activities, who *want to teach remedial courses*, and who *believe that at-risk students can learn* and be successful—these are the right instructors for the job, whether they are full time or part time. Faculty attitude and competence are the keys to student success. (emphasis in the original, Roueche and Roueche 26)

In this way, Basic Writing program administrators can stack the odds in favor of successful teaching from the beginning rather than taking whatever they can get.

Creating Supportive Development

Although seeking out and hiring teachers with the most effective ideologies for Basic Writers is an enormously important step in reforming programs, the hiring process itself is not enough to ensure quality teaching and successful students. The next component necessary is to provide for all teachers of Basic Writing--no matter their ideologies or rank--institutionally supported training and ongoing development within their programs to encourage them to experiment with and potentially embrace the Bridge-

building ideology. Mary Kennedy's *Learning to Teach Writing* begins with the reminder that unlike in most professions, new teachers arrive in the classroom with a lifetime of impressions of the "right" way to teach. Ideas about what is reasonable, what is natural, and what is expected for teachers and students are built into teachers in layers beginning when they are very young, and those assumptions and attitudes are rarely brought to the fore of consciousness. Without being asked specifically to examine ideologies about teaching, teachers are probably not going to realize the subconscious wealth of belief and feeling they have about it. However, when they do examine those attitudes, they are sometimes able to change them. My opening anecdote about the teacher who increased student success in her class as a result of changes urged by a colleague shows that some teachers shift ideologies quickly when presented with a new context or set of data. If Basic Writing programs hope to maximize student success, they must provide instructors institutional support and motivation to participate in relevant, useful training that links Basic Writing research to perceptions of the role of instructor, of student, and of the course itself, so that teachers have the opportunity to explore their perhaps unexamined assumptions and question whether they wish to retain them.

An article written for the *Journal of Basic Writing* several years ago provides an example of why the embedded ideologies all teachers carry with them are so powerful and why they need to be identified and brought to consciousness. Lynne Briggs and Ann Watts Pailliotet write about responses to a grammar exam required for pre-service writing teachers. The exam includes both error identification and follow up essays describing the patterns of errors, prioritizing errors, and writing to students about the errors or giving

rationale for teaching conventional written English. The essays reflected hierarchical views of grammar: with no training except for their prior experience with grammar as students, they wrote as if they viewed errors as

deeply rooted in individuals, and as if they themselves were the ones with the answers the writers needed, but expressed few doubts about their own abilities or knowledge. They expressed many doubts about the abilities and knowledge of the writer. Sometimes this doubt bordered on scorn. (51)

The problems identified by the pre-service teachers were seen to be not in the text or the reader but in the writer. Their tones were personal, negative, even harsh, as if the writers were making mistakes on purpose: “Your paper’s main flaw was in the area of run-on sentences . . . it got very tiresome to read” (54).

Briggs and Pailliotet were surprised and unnerved to find the extent to which the pre-service teachers’ experience as students-to-be-corrected affected their attitudes about how to teach.

[T]he repeated words and images that we found in the texts did not seem to reflect the values of the new paradigm, with its emphasis on process, recursiveness, productive chaos, and cooperation. Our informants’ repeated words and phrases seemed instead to reflect the values of the current-traditional paradigm like product, linearity, and neatness. (55)

These students had all taken a two-semester composition sequence that taught a rhetoric of process and post-process, but their responses were at odds with these ways of understanding writing. As Briggs and Pailliotet point out, “The personalized, moralizing language used by our informants seemed bent on pointing out and focusing on enduring absences” rather than positive views and situatedness of each composition (56). With no

training to guide their responses, these pre-service teachers subconsciously acted as Gatekeepers, reinforcing traditional hierarchies and unproductive views of themselves, of writing, and of students.

Ann Del Principe recognizes this stubborn clinging to outdated methods in Basic Writing teachers, and she despairs that these methods can be dislodged.

[M]any teachers of basic writing use strictly current-traditional or grammar-based methods that basic writing scholarship challenged and revised years ago; however, the score of basic writing programs coupled with the vast numbers of contingent faculty who staff them make it almost impossible to manage this clash of paradigms effectively. (77)

However, training and supportive development can help shift these subconscious tendencies away from current-traditional rhetoric and authoritative teaching and toward the more productive postmodern rhetorics and supportive teaching strategies of the Bridge-building ideology. Kennedy's remarkable Teacher Education and Learning to Teach (TELT) study demonstrates that training can make a difference. She seeks to discover whether teachers, "who have been reared in traditional classrooms and who perceive prescriptions to be at the heart of school writing, can be persuaded to recognize other aspects of writing, and perhaps even to shift their sense of the relative importance of these different aspects of writing" (167). Her study follows a series of new writing teachers through their training programs, interviewing them along the way. The teachers were asked to interpret and respond to a series of hypothetical classroom situations that were designed to prompt their ideas about the teacher's role in the classroom, students as

learners, and the subject matter. For example, they might be asked what they would do if a student did not appear to be engaged in the class assignment.

In the responses, Kennedy found several overarching themes that are important to the discussion of teacher ideology. They include the lack of relationship between the ideals teachers espouse and their immediate concerns, an overemphasis on prescriptions, and a tendency to overlook students' points of view (176). Though most of the teachers espoused ideas that were nurturing to students' needs and attention to learning, when faced with the classroom situation, they acted on more traditional authoritarian prescriptions. Far from being consistent with the Bridge-building and Recognizing ideologies the teachers spoke of, their actions were in line with Gate-keeping and Converting. Though the teachers say they want to demonstrate understanding and sympathy and make sure students feel safe in school, in reality, they were concerned with students complying with lessons and behaving in a non-disruptive manner (Kennedy 18). In terms of writing as well, teachers say they are concerned with strategies and purposes; however, when faced with a student paper, they were much more concerned with how students comply with prescriptions (19).

To my mind, the most distressing part of this scenario that opens Kennedy's book is that the teachers do not believe in the prescriptions. They readily concede that the prescriptions give neither them nor the students any intellectual engagement or interest; the teachers themselves are bored by the lessons, but they associate the lessons with their persona and authority as aligned with what they imagine a class should be like. To them, authority depends on the teachers knowing prescriptions and showing students that they

know them. These incoming teachers believe that teachers sometimes do things that bore students, but the teacher's job is to set rules; these beliefs reinforce the resilience of traditional classroom management ideas (Kennedy 19). Maintaining their authority was perceived to be the most important aspect of the teachers' job, even though authority was not necessarily threatened in any of the interview situations. Teachers tended to approach each moment as if students might take over, and to therefore focus energy on tamping them down. Most teachers did not look at student's point of view even when situation or interviewer invited it. Kennedy comments that she did not know whether the teachers were unable to think from the students' point of view or were simply uninterested in it, but it was clear that maintaining authority was a far stronger impulse than focusing on student success (Kennedy 20).

Taken together, Kennedy's and Briggs and Pailliotet's texts paint a grim picture of the ideologies many untrained teachers arrive with in writing classrooms. Though many teachers espouse ideas resembling those of Bridge-building and Recognizing, their actions in terms of dealing with classroom structure and with student writing are much more likely to stray into the discouraging territory of Gate-keeping and Converting. Fortunately, the story does not end here. Kennedy goes on to describe the effects of teacher training on these incoming writing teachers. What, if anything, does it do to the ideology of a teacher to spend time with composition research, to discuss classroom matters with professors and other teachers, to engage in the intellectual opening of new possibilities for classroom management? Here, the grim picture brightens considerably. According to Kennedy, the influences on teacher ideology of their training programs are

not universal or dramatic but are “consistent and sizable enough to warrant attention” (21). Every group, says Kennedy, demonstrates some influence on teacher learning, and of those where changes occur, they were overwhelmingly consistent with the program’s orientation (180). She looks at two kinds of programs, those that are focused on traditional authoritarian modes and those that are focused on student strategies rather than prescriptions. Kennedy’s study found that teacher training programs that focus on traditional management-oriented topics create teachers who are more concerned about prescriptions than they had been in the beginning; their attention does sharpen on the areas the program stresses. Similarly, reform-oriented programs reduce teachers’ concerns about prescriptions and increase concerns about students’ strategies and purposes (182).

Training programs can change teachers’ responses to pedagogical situations, but in addition, they have the power to attract teachers who already believe in that kind of teaching, whose ideas are compatible with program’s orientation (Kennedy 21). Teachers in the TELT study who already had their credentials and degree but were returning to school for further certification or personal advancement tended to select the program “whose orientations matched their own” (180). In other words, if teachers were more comfortable with traditional stances on teacher authority and pedagogy, they would seek out those professional development programs with a similar ideological bent, whereas those teachers who were more comfortable with student-centered methods and approaches would seek out similar programs.

Applying this data to Basic Writing programs, it is clear that overlooking the ideology of a training program can influence Basic Writing teachers in the same two ways. If Basic Writing programs do not provide overt models for positive ideologies, they cannot hope to fight the years' of impressions, usually traditional in nature, that form ideology, and therefore cannot change teachers' responses to students. Second, if programs do not address ideology in their training, they will miss the opportunity to make public the beliefs of the program, which can attract teachers who also believe in Bridge-building and who want to work in programs with that ideological stance.

Knowing then that training does affect teacher response and can affect ideology, there is no question of whether it should be implemented; the only question is how to make it most effective. Models of faculty development abound, as interest in and emphasis on quality teaching in higher education have exploded in recent years. The most frequent references to faculty development in recent publications embrace a cross-disciplinary view; in contrast, references to faculty development that is housed within Basic Writing programs are few. As is the case with all elements of Basic Writing programs, development and support varies widely by institution; no set standard currently exists. Before looking at specific models within programs and across universities, I discuss general qualities that research has found to be effective in faculty development programs: that which is local, relevant, forward-thinking, and supported by institutional factors.

In a review of faculty development programs at community colleges, Richard I. Miller, Charles Finley, and Candace Shedd Vancko find that the more local the program,

the more effective it is. If, for instance, faculty are sent off campus to attend development workshops with faculty from other campuses or if “experts” are brought onto campus to speak to large groups of faculty, for instance at pre- and post-school year gatherings, the faculty retain and apply very little of the information. For development to be more effective, it needs to be directly related and applicable to the circumstances under which each instructor currently works; it needs to be relevant to that person’s institutional, departmental, and curricular goals. The closer to home the development, the more likely it is to be taken seriously (82). Professional growth should be individualized, and it should be used as a mean of increasing teaching performance (83).

In addition, faculty development that is meant to improve teaching and teacher ideology must provide concrete, workable ideas that can be undertaken in the classroom. On-the-job experience and one-day workshops do not provide the ongoing support to change a day of inspiration into sustained, systematic, strategic planning that will improve teaching and learning or that will revise or enhance the ideologies most instructors have been building since their experiences with teaching as children (Erlenz-Watts, Westbay, Lynd-Balta 275). Attempting simply to change the orientation of teacher rhetoric to increase reform without also translating rhetoric into practical situations, is unproductive because “[a]bsent the ability to draw on these new ideas to interpret classroom situations, teachers’ spontaneous responses will continue to reflect their childhood experiences” (Kennedy 186). Kennedy and Maryellen Weimer agree that to produce changes, development programs need to translate theory into concrete

instructional practices: what to do about attendance, assignments, tests, papers, lecturing, group work, classroom management, content and grades.

Furthermore, development programs need to do that in such a way that instructors are likely to listen. Faculty and staff development can be threatening and can seem negative or remedial if approached badly, evoking resistance: “[E]fforts to improve instruction cannot be based on premises of remediation and deficiency. If faculty must admit they have a problem before they get help, most never seek assistance” (Weimer xv). One way to finesse the idea of improving teaching ideology is to frame it in terms of how much and how well students learn, rather than how well faculty teach. The discussion clearly and easily links to teaching but the focus is on learning, which means that faculty can endorse it; it is “a positive and productive paradigm” (xv). Other approaches that faculty find welcoming include asking for volunteers to participate in faculty development projects and then report results back to the department, thereby acting as liaisons to those who are reluctant, or gathering those who are affected by a specific problem to work together toward a solution. Small bonuses, such as stipends or lunch, can also increase participation and openness to the process.

Finally, each school needs a model of faculty development that is institutional and clearly communicated, that is evaluated, and that allows comparisons over time so that assessment and improvement are incorporated into the process (Miller, Findley, Vancko 82-83). Opportunities for faculty development should be available to all faculty; they should be directly relevant to the goals of the involved parties, and they should be done in a positive and encouraging way.

Program Models

Following the advice of the research, then, Basic Writing administrators must assume that the most effective programs for faculty development for Basic Writing programs would be those that are offered within the structure of the program itself, as they are the most local and presumably most directly linked to the work at hand. The goal is to highlight ideology and incorporate it into the training program that is most effective, and it seems that many Basic Writing programs are in need of some assistance with their development. Fifteen participants in the CCCC's Basic Writing listserv responded to the question of what training was offered to Basic Writing teachers on their campuses. Of those, eight reported that no training was offered or required for their Basic Writing instructors; two said that new instructors are paired with mentors; two have a training session at the beginning for the year for new adjuncts; and three have departmental meetings. While this information is anecdotal, it is telling that such a large percentage of respondents report no form of training or development, and those who do offer it only in small doses rather than regularly and systematically. It is impossible to draw concrete conclusions from this evidence, but it does provide fodder for discussion, especially in light of the dearth of national data.

Perhaps the most common form of faculty development is mentoring. In many Basic Writing programs, new faculty are assigned a mentor, someone who has participated in the program who can offer guidance and advice. In many cases, this role is largely symbolic and very little interaction occurs between the two. In others, the role is defined and requires specific actions of both participants. The role of mentor usually

asks the senior faculty member to act as a source for information on areas as diverse as the mission and goals of the school to human resource issues, from assisting with specific skills and behaviors in the classroom, to giving feedback on observations, acting as confidante, or helping plot career path.

Any Basic Writing program that wishes to increase focus on the more successful teaching ideologies should provide a mentor for every new instructor in the program. Ideally, the mentor would be an experienced faculty member whose teaching ideology is that of Bridge-building, someone who believes in the inevitability of student success for properly supported students, who is open to new ideas, and who has concrete, workable recommendations for applying these beliefs in the classroom. To be most effective, the mentor should have clear and specifically defined duties. For example, the mentor would walk the new instructor through the process of selecting and ordering textbooks, designing a syllabus, setting up course assignments, and he or she should sit in on classes. The mentor would also serve as the contact person for the new instructor, answering questions that arise throughout the first term or year. Mentors and protégés should meet at agreed upon times for feedback and planning, usually more often at the beginning of the school year and decreasing in frequency as the year progresses. In turn, the protégé should assume a willingness to take on responsibility for his/her own growth and development, as well as assessing his/her potential and being receptive to feedback and coaching (Miller, Findley, Vancko 37-8). This mentor/protégé role is only as effective as the people participating in it, and many programs encourage participation by setting specific goals and tasks for the two to work out together.

In addition, the Basic Writing program should have a regular schedule of meetings for all faculty involved in the program. As per Del Principe's suggestion, the focus of these meetings would be to increase teachers' familiarity with professional scholarship in Basic Writing and to apply that scholarship to the day-to-day routines of teachers, and that focus should also encompass ideology. While discussing what to do in the classroom, the conversations should also include why some approaches work better than others, which gets at underlying assumptions about course content, students' abilities, and instructors' relationships to the academic institution. Also in these meetings, instructors should be encouraged to role-play the part of the student, perhaps being asked to take on a task completely unfamiliar or daunting and then explain what responses they have to various teaching approaches. Putting themselves in the place of the student can be an effective way for teachers to rethink the sometimes subconscious strategies they have adopted, allowing for some shift in ideology.

As I stated earlier, the content of the meetings should be grounded in research, but it should remain relevant to the work of the department and of the faculty. For example, if the department is undertaking a review of pre- and post-course assessment or wondering whether to use a rhetoric or reader as a textbook, meetings would do well to focus on those areas. On the other hand, topics may evolve out of classroom experience: how to approach teaching reading or teaching grammar, how to handle absenteeism. The key is to ground each topic in a relevant reading from the research so as to not devolve into discussions based entirely upon lore or personal preference and comfort. If the institution uses the FSSE, these meetings would be an appropriate place to discuss the

results, especially when compared with the results of the NSSE (Kuh and McClenney). In this way, the professors' perceptions of student engagement can be compared with the students' perceptions, bringing to light any discrepancies and providing a space to work toward solutions. All Basic Writing faculty should participate in these ongoing, regularly scheduled discussions, not just the new faculty, though the new faculty might have an additional orientation at the beginning of the term or year.

Another means of encouraging personal development and reflection about ideological issues is to keep a teaching journal (Royster). This journal could be shared with the mentor or with the instructors' group, or it could serve as the foundation for a discussion about teaching effectiveness that should be a regular part of annual evaluations. As with mentoring and meeting, a teaching journal will only be as effective as its ability to facilitate honest reflection upon the teaching ideology; a journal that is only seen as a hoop to jump through will not provide meaningful feedback to its author. For this reason, just as when assigning journaling for students, the most effective way to do it is to incorporate uses for it into the larger program, whether as the basis of a self-assessment, as part of a pre-discussion meeting exercise, or in other ways.

The final component of successful training to improve teaching ideology is institutional support. The department and university must recognize the need and the promise of these sessions and must provide some kind of recognition, whether in the form of points toward evaluation, separate pay for the training hours, or other methods that fit within the structure of the particular program. Instructors' time is full and they do

not seek extra tasks, so they must be supported in their efforts and must feel that their discussions are of direct benefit to their work.

Research shows us that the most effective faculty development efforts are those that are closest to home; Basic Writing programs then must develop and maintain their own faculty development programs, focusing specifically on the various aspects making up teaching ideology, if they hope to improve and support the ideologies within their teachers. These development programs should include a positive mentor for each new faculty member, regardless of institutional rank, and should incorporate regular meetings during which faculty read and discuss current research in Basic Writing to help find research-driven solutions to local issues like textbook selection, grading policies, and the like. In this way, the unit can work together as a group to support and develop the Recognizing and Bridge-building ideologies that are most effective at promoting student success.

Teaching and Learning Center Models

In addition to the faculty development offered by the Basic Writing program, many extra-departmental models are available to be mined and adapted for the purposes of increasing effective teaching ideologies in Basic Writing instructors. Recent publications in the literature of higher education administration discuss two different types of faculty development that are currently in vogue: first, the highly structured and institutionally supported programs offered by Teaching and Learning Centers (TLC), and second, the grassroots efforts known as teaching circles or learning circles. Both these models are worth discussing and applying to Basic Writing programs; the principles that

under gird them are universal and can be extrapolated to develop the most effective training and support for Basic Writing programs.

One increasingly popular way to address these needs on many higher education campuses is through use of a Teaching and Learning Center (TLC). TLCs are local, centralized resources whose primary responsibilities include new faculty and TA orientation and providing workshops and other aids to enhance teaching skills (Bakutes). Faculty from across the disciplines may possess content knowledge but need to learn effective teaching practices, such as organizing classes, encouraging active learning, giving prompt feedback, displaying enthusiasm and demonstrating that they care about students. Unfortunately, “[q]uality teaching does not result from good intentions”; TLCs can help shape those intentions into results (Miller, Findley, and Vancko 68). Workshops are often offered by professors on campus who are recognized as effective teachers, and topics may be chosen from those suggested by other faculty. In this way, “the faculty development center hopes to bring about an awareness that teaching by communicating the material effectively should be an integral focus in the classroom – not just merely covering course content” (Bakutes 169). TLCs can also assist instructors in other ways, like distributing a newsletter with teaching tips, working with departments to specialize teaching for content and course, working with a specific professor as a teaching consultant, collecting data from students taking the classes, setting up strategies to improve, implementing them, and evaluating how they are working (Picket 170).

Several varying models of TLC programs have been offered in recent publication. The University of Minnesota’s TLC, for example, offers a specific program of

development and support for mid-career professors who may not have had the opportunities to study teaching enrichment recently or whose training was more relevant to an earlier version of the student body. The Mid-Career Teaching program's goals include introducing new pedagogical methods to faculty and offering support while they try out these methods and providing a forum for faculty to discuss pedagogy with colleagues. A small stipend is offered. Faculty decide whether they consider themselves "mid-career"; many participants have been in the field for at least fifteen years, but not all. Some might be recommended by chairs or deans, while others decide to participate for their own reasons, perhaps to bring up teaching evaluation numbers. In six two-hour sessions per semester, faculty meet in groups of six to 15, led by facilitators from the Center for Teaching and Learning Services, for a mix of presentation and discussion supported with email and discussion boards. One of the benefits to this program is avoiding departmental politics and providing a safe space to explore teaching issues with like-minded colleagues ("Focus").

Other TLC programs focus on support for adjuncts. The Florida Community College's TLC program is for adjuncts teaching developmental courses. Its discussions evolve out of a case study based on a realistic classroom situation, and it focuses on classroom management and motivation (Levine-Brown et al 3). At FCC and other campuses, information pertaining to teaching is made available electronically through a website, a share drive, or a Blackboard "course." In this way resources can be added to and made available to the entire community of instructors in a convenient way. At FCC, the website housed the orientation materials for training and a clearinghouse of material

including instructional strategies, tips, articles, books, references, and bibliographical information (Levine-Brown et al 3).

The Adjunct Institute at Burlington County Community College in Pemberton, NJ also works with adjuncts. Their program runs twice a year, the first three Saturdays of October and February, and they talk about the college catalog and grading policies, placement, registration, and counseling, art of teaching, and teaching minority students (Miller, Findley, Vancko 35-36). Both of these programs attempt to alleviate the ongoing problem of adjuncts not receiving the opportunities for professional development that are sometimes necessary just to maintain currency in the system, not to mention expanding their teaching ideologies.

Another model, The Virginia Tidewater Consortium for Higher Education, acts very much like a TLC except that it brings together faculty from institutions of different kinds, including community colleges, HBCUs, liberal arts colleges, a medical school, universities, and a military school (Dotolo 54). Its primary focus is a summer institute, but it also offers workshops and seminars during the academic year, focused on practical skills teachers can use immediately in their classrooms (52). In this case, programs take place on Saturdays; faculty go voluntarily, and they receive no external motivators--no stipend, and they have to buy their own lunch (53).

In each of these models, faculty from across the campus(es) are brought into a safe and nonpolitical environment where they are presented with research about pedagogy, encouraged and assisted in making connections to their own work, and supported in the long term as they attempt to make changes in their classes. These

models do not specify ideology as the topics of their discussions, but ideology is exactly what is being challenged and shaped here. The faculty are discussing their relationship to the student and the course content, and they are revising that relationship to make it more palatable for students, based upon research. As this occurs, ideologies shift.

The other model of faculty development that has received a great deal of interest in recent publication is the teaching circle, or learning circle. The goals for teaching circles are similar to those of a TLC, but the effort arises from the faculty themselves and is less structured than that of a program put on by a TLC. One article defines its teaching circles as “faculty interested in discussing teaching at regular intervals, ideally over food” (Mezeske 8). The circles developed from one faculty member who read a book about teaching sending out an email asking whether others would be interested in talking about it. Those who responded met over lunch every three or four weeks initially, and the program has continued for three years so far, with more participation each year. The faculty share stories and strategies and assist each other, and very little institutional support is needed. The only organizing tool necessary is someone to act as leader to set dates and sent email reminders (Mezeske 8).

At another school, learning circles developed as an alternative to annual one day brown-bag type events. A call was issued via email for participants, and of those who responded, each was asked to facilitate a future discussion in an area he/she felt comfortable with. Each day’s presenter shared his or her expertise, exploring pedagogical approaches and theoretical underpinnings, and then participants worked together to revise areas of their courses, applying the new pedagogy to their own

teaching. Also each participant agreed for another participant to observe his or her teaching at a time when a new technique would be implemented (Erlenz-Watts, Westbay, Lynd-Balta 276).

Although arguably less immediately effective than development offered within the Basic Writing program, programs sponsored by Teaching and Learning Centers and learning circles have a place in the ongoing support and development of effective teaching ideologies. Though the relationship of instructor to course content may differ across the university's disciplines, the relationship between professor and student and between professor and institution is the same campus-wide; therefore, the ideologies that may have become entrenched within the familiarity of the course or buoyed by department politics may in fact find a more productive outlet among faculty from other areas. This does not let programs off the hook; rather, it provides a separate but parallel avenue that some instructors may respond well to. All forms of professional development that focus on topics relating to teaching ideology are helpful, regardless of their origin.

Realigning Evaluation, Promotion, and Tenure Procedures

Seeking out the most effective ideological categories when hiring teachers of Basic Writing and providing ongoing supportive development to encourage these ideologies are key steps in aligning Basic Writing programs with student success. In addition, Basic Writing programs should consider encouraging the restructure of evaluation and tenure systems to recognize and reward successful teaching ideologies as one key element in the institutional value of Basic Writing instructors. As Burton Clark

said, “The greatest paradox of academic work in modern America is that most professors teach most of the time, and large proportions of them teach all the time, but teaching is not the activity most rewarded by the academic profession nor most valued by the system at large” (quoted in Glassick et al, viii). As a matter of fact, the promotion and tenure system most widely used values the quality and quantity of research above all other activities. “Consequently,” says Mel Scarlett, “faculty are likely to give major emphasis and most of their time to their research—to the detriment of their teaching of undergraduates” (24). In the nine years since the Boyer Commission report damned the quality of undergraduate teaching at research universities, a national shift toward accountability in pre-college education has seeped into higher education as well. As part of the recent focus on accountability and quality teaching, evaluation and tenure processes have been revisited at many institutions and in the literature of higher education, and Basic Writing programs should borrow from these developments as they coordinate tenure and promotion guidelines to promote successful teaching ideologies. If Basic Writing programs are increasingly asked to account for their student outcomes, they must shift the values guiding promotion and tenure decisions to reflect these priorities; this will encourage their instructors to spend time on what is most important.

The most fundamental questions of any workable system of tenure and promotion are often overlooked, and these questions must be answered for Basic Writing programs at the outset of any revision process. What is the purpose of the tenure system? What does it value? Are the values rewarded by the tenure and promotion system aligned with the values of the department and/or institution that award promotions and tenure? If, for

instance, a university wishes to increase retention and progression rates and to increase student success, one goal would be to prioritize student learning as an organizational goal; the codifying of the goal would then demand accountability for teaching in continuing appointments, promotion, or tenure decisions. Whatever the institution's goals, they should be clarified, defined, and reflected in these kinds of decisions. Defining institutional and departmental goals can be a difficult task, as the goals must balance departmental instructional needs and individual academic interests, as well as encompass institutional and departmental expectations. In addition, policies and guidelines should be written and clear, should be applied consistently and fairly, and should include a grievance procedure (Miller, Finley, Vancko 100-106).

Generally speaking, the tenure and promotion system is based upon publication of research, supported by teaching responsibilities and evaluations, committee work, and other duties. Progress toward tenure is measured in an annual performance review, usually using a standardized form that applies to each member of the department. To best promote effective teaching ideologies, Basic Writing programs should consider alternatives to the one-size-fits-all program of promotion and tenure for tenure-track employees, and they should institute a regular evaluation of non-tenure-track employees to ensure that every member of the instructional team is working within the ideologies that promote student success.

First, the tenure system itself needs to be revisited in order to assure its priorities remain aligned with the needs and goals of the university. After considering this alignment, for example, George Mason University revised its tenure system to better suit

its institutional needs and priorities. GMU now has four different paths to tenure: one is for research, one for excellence in teaching, one for equal parts research, teaching, administration (for positions like the writing center director and director of composition), and one for faculty who split their time between their discipline and university service: faculty development, grant writing, other activities that benefit the institution as a whole (Fathe 4). About 20% pursue tenure for excellence in teaching, which has the same kinds of standards as the research-based tenure. The faculty member must produce a portfolio demonstrating his or her work, and the teaching excellence must be shared in publications and conferences and have broader impact that others can benefit from (Fathe 5).

This system allows for the possibility that teaching can be institutionally rewarded and that a faculty member can be valued specifically for teaching. While not all teachers would need or want to pursue this path, it validates the reality that a variety of roles exist within the institutional structure, and they are not all equally served by one evaluation instrument. Other benefits include a presumed future improvement in student learning, since teachers will be allowed to focus on their teaching, and allowing departments to hire people who can contribute to the area of teaching as well as those who can contribute to the area of research (Fathe 5). The changes at George Mason came from a provost initiating a discussion about what the campus was trying to accomplish and what was valued. Because it was implemented at the institutional level rather than departmental, the perception of a privileged class was avoided, and broad participation and support were encouraged.

Second, whether an instructor is applying for a new contract, progressing through the tenure process, or undergoing post-tenure review, his or her performance should be evaluated and discussed during an annual performance review, and teaching ideology should be one of the measures assessed. If linked to tenure, the evaluation assessment should be aligned with the requirements for tenure; regardless, they should be aligned with the goals and ideology of the program. Since half the teaching performed at four-year institutions is not done by tenure-track faculty, focusing only on tenure-track faculty in reviews for promotion and tenure is not likely to substantially increase teaching effectiveness (Fairweather 98). Paulsen's overview of studies related to evaluating teaching in higher education identifies three principles that promote effective evaluation procedures: "clarifying expectations of and by faculty, identifying the nature and sources of data to be used for evaluation, and clarifying the purposes and uses of evaluation data" (5). The annual review should look at activities such as classroom teaching, chair evaluation, service, committees, classroom visits, professional growth, advising, and personal attributes including ideology, and it should be comprised of information from several sources, including student evaluations, peer and chair evaluations, and a portfolio that reflects teaching practices and philosophies. Though it is more time consuming, each plan should be individualized, so that some instructors might be judged on more teaching and less advising, some on more advising and workshops and fewer courses. Individualization is time consuming and complex for administrators but more accurate and of far greater use to the instructor (Miller, Finley, Vancko 108-111).

Some faculty are uncomfortable including student evaluations in an annual review because of suspicions that they may not be a valid reflection of faculty performance. According to Marsh and Bailey's 1993 study on student evaluations of teaching effectiveness, those worries are unfounded. Student evaluations of teaching effectiveness are multidimensional, reliable and stable; they reflect teachers rather than courses being taught, and they hold relatively valid against a variety of indicators of effective teaching. (Miller, Findley, Vancko 47). Though student evaluations may not be perfect, Kulik's survey of studies on the validity of student ratings agrees that they are no more imperfect than ratings done by peer observation and by alumni. Also, they do correlate highly with student learning, with observer ratings, and with alumni ratings. In other words, teachers who get high ratings from students also tend to get high ratings from other kinds of evaluators. Kulik also cites two studies that suggest that teachers can make good use of student ratings, given the opportunity. These studies are designed with two groups: one group of teachers does not receive student ratings until after the semester, the other receives them midway and again at the end. Those who were rated midway tended to get higher evaluations at the end, and their students performed better on end-of-course exams. This suggests that many teachers are willing to adapt pedagogical approaches in response to timely feedback (15-16). Alone, student ratings may be liable to individual biases, but that is true of other kinds of feedback as well and is not enough to dismiss student opinions entirely. Instead, student opinions must be included as one of the more accurate assessments of what happens in a classroom; students are, after all, the only

other people participating in the classroom experience daily, so they are the only ones aside from the instructor who have the ability to judge what occurs there.

Many Basic Writing programs also include peer reviews of teaching in the annual evaluation, because “only peers have the substantive expertise required for meaningful evaluation” (Paulsen 10). The idea is that just as in peer-reviewed research, teaching is better when judged by peers. This too can be a problematic situation because of the change of dynamic when an outsider is in the classroom, not to mention the politics involved when ratings are not anonymous and issues of reciprocity or power inequity are involved. As well, it may be questionable how much can be extrapolated from a once per semester or once per year visit to a classroom. However, taken together with other ratings, they can be useful; correlations with student ratings range from .62 to .87 (Paulsen 10). Probably more worthwhile than the numerical rating system, though, is the narrative of observation, which should be written by a peer with experience in Basic Writing and which should note what the day’s lesson was, how it was carried out, addressing ideological issues evident in the day’s lesson, and then giving recommendations. That kind of evaluation is less likely to succumb to the politics and is more likely to provide feedback a teacher can implement.

Finally, the annual evaluation should include a self-evaluation, in the form of a portfolio showing reflection upon the work the instructor has done. The portfolio would differ from person to person depending on his or her goals in the evaluation process, but it would certainly always include evidence of teaching ideology, including syllabi, assignments, graded work, and a philosophy of teaching. The instructor’s pedagogical

effectiveness should be displayed in this portfolio, and he or she should have the opportunity to discuss strengths and areas needing improvement with the chair or program director, with the understanding that those who need support and assistance will receive it, as long as there is evidence of improvement and willingness to grow.

However, the annual evaluations, taken as part of the larger process of promotion and tenure, are not solely a means to reward growth and success. They are also the means to discover intransigent ideologies and stop them before they become a permanent part of the structure of a program. As convenient as it would be to think that all Basic Writing instructors would come to embrace Bridge-Building and Recognizing ideologies given enough supportive development opportunities, that is a fiction. Some, like Ted, are satisfied to believe in Gate-keeping, and they do not have any desire to adapt their ideologies, no matter how many ways they are encouraged to do so. In that case, the evaluation process is the mechanism by which to block reappointments and promotions. Equally as important as encouraging strong, effective teaching for Basic Writing is discouraging the kind of teaching that reinforces students' already negative self-identification.

The current haphazard structure of many of the processes linked to teaching in Basic Writing programs reinforces their status as the lowest valued part of the university, along with other developmental coursework. With changes in key areas of the program, though, teaching effectiveness could be dramatically increased, which would have the effect of dramatically increasing students' chances at finding success in their Basic Writing classes and holistic college experience. The selection and hiring of Basic

Writing instructors should be as rigorous and formal a process as it is for the selection of other faculty, and ideology should be one of the criteria sought out. Once faculty are hired, they should become part of a formalized program of development that is supported by the institution, certainly within the program but also through teaching circles or workshops offered by Teaching and Learning Centers. In order to maintain employment, seek promotion or tenure, or undergo post-tenure review, teaching effectiveness and ideology must be taken into account. Without following these steps, programs will continue to serve students in the hit-or-miss fashion they do now. Since Basic Writing program administrators and teachers now have the knowledge that these students are so abundant and teachers' ideologies are so important to their success, program administrators must use their influence to increase attention to ideology in all institutional structures related to teaching.

CHAPTER V

WHAT NEXT?

In this dissertation I have argued that Basic Writing programs are increasingly important to the overall missions of America's postsecondary institutions, and the approach to teaching in Basic Writing programs is of fundamental importance to its students' ability to succeed. Basic Writing programs could dramatically increase levels of student success if they were to attend to teaching ideology within their structures.

Unfortunately, in many schools, specialists in first-year studies, retention, and progression are separated from academic programs like Basic Writing, and the teaching faculty are unaware of retention and student success research, leaving them unable to take full advantage of its insights. Betsy Barefoot laments this situation and its predictable result: "[M]any, if not most, US higher education instructors in traditional academic disciplines are themselves essentially unaware of retention research and believe that the current emphasis on student retention is just one more nail in the coffin of 'academic standards'" ("Higher Education's Revolving Door" 16). As long as teaching faculty, especially those teaching developmental students, are unacquainted with the research regarding student success and engagement, they cannot understand its purpose, nor can they apply it to their approaches to teaching.

In addition, Basic Writing programs should be learning from and applying the research of composition specialists such as Marilyn Sternglass, Anne Herrington and

Marcia Curtis, Mike Rose, and Deborah Mutnik for reminders that success for Basic Writing students lies less in the course grade than in the willingness to persist and develop skills. Academic writing abilities develop unevenly over time as prompted by intrinsic motivators, so to best serve the new and growing cohort of Basic Writing students, program administrators must take a longitudinal view of student progress, encouraging students to stay in school. Together, the lessons of retention and composition specialists combine to redirect attention in Basic Writing programs from short-term, course-related goals toward long-term, individually-related perceptions of student writing development.

The most direct way Basic Writing programs can address these issues of student engagement and retention is by addressing teaching ideology, which is the set of interconnected assumptions and beliefs that guide teachers' pedagogical actions. These beliefs, related to the role of the university in society and the role of the teacher to the institution and to students, are developed in all students as they participate in educational activities as young people, and they are usually ingrained and unconscious. Mary M. Kennedy states:

[T]eachers' deepest and most fundamental ideas about teaching are learned not from their liberal arts courses, not from their formal study of teaching, and not from their experience teaching but rather from their experience as elementary and secondary students. There they learn what is supposed to happen in classroom—what should be taught, how students should act, and how teachers should act. Unless they are challenged, these ideas are likely to be retained throughout teachers' lives and to continue to influence their interpretations of classroom situations and their ideas about how to respond to them. (184)

These unconscious beliefs reflect the pedagogical relationships and ideologies that were practiced around students when they were in school. As demonstrated in Kennedy's

TELT study, for example, students who were taught that the role of the teacher is to maintain classroom order are likely to grow into teachers whose attention is devoted to maintaining quiet and order in the classroom, even if they learn different priorities during teacher training. These ideologies must be made conscious if they are to be put to best use in assisting the design of Basic Writing classes that foster student success.

Awareness of various ideologies is paramount in discussions of improving Basic Writing students' success, because not all ideologies are equally helpful to students. The ways that writers are viewed by their instructors and the methods employed by those instructors make an impact upon the students as writers and as students becoming engaged with their holistic college experiences. Lynne Briggs and Ann Watts Pailliotet address this connection between teacher ideology and student performance: "[W]riters who are conditioned to believe that they are people with problems, needs, and tendencies become less powerful writers. Writers who are taught that they have deficits are unlikely to take risks in their writing. Writers who do not take risks are less likely to challenge the status quo in print. Convincing writers of their enduring inadequacies can silence them" (56). Basic Writers may already feel silenced by virtue of their lack of comfort and fluency with academic literacy. If teachers' ideologies reinforce that silencing, Basic Writers are less likely to feel engaged and motivated to continue. In this dissertation, I draw the connections between Basic Writing and retention and success studies to show the critical significance of teacher ideology to student success in our classrooms. I establish models of ideologies, extracted from Basic Writing research, and group them into four categories that are named and described in detail to make each relatively easy to

recognize and talk about. The four ideologies—Gate-keeping, Converting, Recognizing, and Bridge-building—are ranked in relation to their ties to student engagement and success. The guiding beliefs of Gate-keeping and Converting center on protecting the university from students who are not qualified to study there; students are seen as outsiders who are cognitively or socially deficient, and teachers embracing these ideologies expect students to fail. These teachers tend to think of writing as a linear process, so their curricula usually stress out-of-context, sentence-level drills. These two ideological categories are not effective at inspiring student engagement and persistence. The guiding beliefs of the other two ideologies, Recognizing and Bridge-building, are more effective. Teachers who embrace these categories see the university as an equal space to those the students come from but with different discourse rules, and the job of the teacher is to work with students to uncover those rules. The curricula usually involve challenging reading and writing tasks, and students and teachers assume that students will succeed. Recognizing and Bridge-building ideologies advance student success by engaging students in their studies and assisting in their progress. These categories are overlapping and fluid, not absolute, but they do provide a means for discussing how teachers approach students, curricula, and institutions and how those approaches affect students; therefore, they are an important addition to the Basic Writing research.

By advancing the necessity for instructors to become aware of and develop positive teaching ideologies, I do not wish to imply that teacher ideologies are the only factor involved in student success. Student ideologies are equally as important, and as is the case for instructors, student ideologies are usually unconscious. Students arrive in

Basic Writing classrooms with deeply rooted beliefs about what roles are appropriate for instructors and students to play, about what curricula is most useful, and about their own relationships to the academy. Basic Writing students are likely to have absorbed the same lessons from their years of schooling as did the new teachers in Kennedy's TELT study, skewing their ideologies toward a belief in Gatekeeping. Many students entering Basic Writing classrooms are likely to have spent a great deal of time in previous educational contexts absorbing the message, intentional or not, that the academy is an elite and exclusive place to which they may not entirely deserve entry, that the appropriate way for them to behave is to be quiet and passive, and the appropriate lessons in regards to writing are focused on sentence-level error. If this is the case, the ideologies that I argue are the most beneficial to students, Bridge-building and Recognizing, will be in competition with students'.

Fortunately, this competition can be a productive place in pedagogical terms. Unlike instructors, whose ideologies have been in place for many years and who believe in their own authority, students' ideologies may not yet be so firmly entrenched, and they are generally deferential to authority. This means that they listen to instructors and attempt to follow their lead, at least as long as the lead appears to be heading in some useful direction. Instructors can and should engage the students' ideologies, asking why students believe what they do and explaining the reasoning behind instructional methods. This can engage students' logic and curiosity while stimulating metacognition. Additionally, students report in the NSSE and other instruments that their learning preference overall involves intellectual challenge and individual activity, so when granted

permission and encouraged to engage, especially when their understanding of the reasoning increases, most students follow that inclination.

Occasionally, this clash of student and teacher ideologies is not productive but may result in a student's alienation from an instructor, reducing engagement in the course material and in the holistic academic experience. Most instructors have taught students who, despite the instructors' every effort, appear not to want to engage. Instructors cannot blame themselves for this, because education is not entirely in their hands; rather, it is a dialogue that students must participate in. Though I stress and believe in the fundamental necessity of an encouraging teaching ideology in instructors, they cannot create a learning environment single-handedly, and they cannot reach every single student. Students must partner with instructors to create their own success.

Because appropriate teaching ideologies are essential to student success, each phase of the process of employing Basic Writing teachers should be reevaluated to include teaching ideology in as much of the process as possible. New teachers should discuss their ideologies before being hired, for example, and a program should provide meaningful, research-based support and development for all teachers to encourage the development of appropriate ideologies. Ideologies should be incorporated into evaluation, promotion, and tenure guidelines meaningfully, perhaps following the example of George Mason University, which has four paths to tenure with varying requirements based upon the type of position held and the goals of that position. Rewarding teaching as well as research in tenure and promotion procedures aligns institutional practices with desired outcomes: “[R]esearch-based reputations most often

are built by intensive work in a very narrow specialty. . . This is not the kind of knowledge contained in the average research-journal article, which is why a life spent writing such articles is not a particularly good foundation for excellent teaching” (Boyan Barnett, *Chronicle*, quoted in Scarlett 102). Though Basic Writing program administrators themselves may not control each of these processes, they can certainly influence the discussions in their departments and governing bodies, raising the connection between ideology and student success as often as possible. As Ann Del Principe contends, leaving teaching ideologies untouched perpetuates a less than productive status quo: “We do our basic writing students a disservice by accepting paradigm clashes among faculty and not actively trying to break down, or at least scale, the walls between different belief systems” (78).

By drawing attention to the connections between teacher ideology and student success and by creating a taxonomy of teaching ideologies, I bring the discussion of the importance of teaching to the fore of Basic Writing research, where it can be applied to programs and help students. This dissertation is a continuation of the work begun long ago by Mina Shaughnessy, and it is also a new call to Basic Writing practitioners to look to their teaching and the extraordinary effects it can have upon the students they purport to assist. For instance, Basic Writing programs could implement the suggestions I have made that would be workable in their programs and could further the research in the area of teaching ideology. One of the most important needs in Basic Writing research is to quantify the connection between ideology and student success. Basic Writing programs can track the retention and progression numbers of each section of Basic Writing, data

that are likely already available at most institutions, and connect them to the ideology of the instructor. This could be a powerful persuader to administrators in providing the time and funding to initiate the processes outlined in chapter 4, and it would require only the application of my taxonomy to existing data.

A second valuable avenue for furthering research related to teaching ideology is to track the effectiveness of faculty development efforts. Because most of the new experimentation in faculty development and student success is taking place at the university level, Basic Writing programs can implement their information into departmental training and share their findings with national Basic Writing researchers. Currently Basic Writing programs operate in widely varying institutions, with different goals and approaches. Without a consistent national standard, each program appears to be working on its own, but the programs could be better connected to one another, learning from each other's efforts. The practical application of working faculty development programs is clear: many Basic Writing teachers either already embrace or could embrace the positive ideologies. The opening anecdote of this dissertation notes that some ideologies are capable of changing fairly rapidly when presented with new circumstances. However, a few teachers are unlikely to adapt and embrace more student-centered beliefs, remaining entrenched in the institution-centered beliefs established in childhood. Thorough studies of training and development programs might provide some insight into how and when instructors can embrace ideologies that promote student success.

A third possibility for productive continued research is a thorough investigation into student ideologies and their connection to student success. Since engagement and persistence are the twin goals of any classroom, especially a developmental one, teachers would benefit from knowing more about what students want and how they think of their roles in the classroom and in the institution. The information available from the NSSE is extraordinarily rich, but it is a compilation, and there are students whose views are not represented in its reports. For those few students in every cohort who resist engagement, it would be helpful to know what they believe that might help their instructors reach them and increase their chances at success. A significant study on student ideologies in Basic Writing would contribute to instructors' abilities to meaningfully engage a larger proportion of students than they are now reaching.

Mina Shaughnessy's article "Diving In" prompted my interest in teacher ideology, and it is appropriate to end this dissertation with her words. If Basic Writing programs' effectiveness in teaching is to keep up with the swelling numbers and changing identities of the new cohort of students, they must recognize that teacher ideology is paramount. Teachers' ideologies cannot be separated from students'. If we want students to believe in themselves and feel they can and should continue at the university, we must look to our own beliefs, rather than treating students' attitudes as if they operate in a void. As Shaughnessy asserts, "[W]e are much more likely in talking about teaching to talk about students, to theorize about *their* needs and attitudes or to chart *their* development and ignore the possibility that teachers also change in response to students, that there may in fact be important connections between the changes teachers

undergo and the progress of their students” (321). Basic Writing programs need to address those connections.

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