

2020

College Student and Faculty Perceptions of Need for Remedial/ Writing Support

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Stacey McRae

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Walden University
2020

Abstract

College Student and Faculty Perceptions of Need for Remedial/Writing Support

Strategies

By

Stacey McRae

M.S., National University, 1992

B.S., California State University, Fullerton, 1989

Project Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

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Abstract

A public college in the Midwest experienced a significant increase of students enrolling in writing support classes, indicating a gap between the writing level students have leaving high school and the expected writing skills upon entering college. The local problem of inconsistencies in the writing skill level of students leaving high school and entering college on remedial status was addressed in this qualitative case study to better prepare them as competent students and eventual graduates. Perry's theory of intellectual development provided the framework for understanding the challenges facing first-year students in support writing classes. The research questions focused on college student and faculty perceptions regarding writing skill support needs related to high school and the first year of college as well as what strategies could help develop the writing skills needed for success in college. Participants were seven students who were enrolled in and seven faculty who taught a support writing class. All were selected through purposeful sampling, interviewed individually, and audio recorded through Zoom. Qualitative data analysis included a verbatim transcription that was used to identify categories and common themes from interview data. The emergent themes were (a) moving away from the five-paragraph essay format, (b) how to write a thesis, (c) relationship building with professors, (d) understanding writing is a process, and (e) more support from high school teachers. Based on study findings, a 3-day professional development workshop was developed to foster collaboration between high school teachers and college professors in teaching writing. Positive social change may occur for students by providing stronger writing support help from staff while students are still in high school and providing continued writing support while enrolled in college.

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Dedication

To my father, William (Mac) McRae. I made it! I would trade it all to have you back. I think of you every day, I miss you, and I love you. RIP – April 5, 2015.

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It has been a very long, difficult climb to reach the end of my doctoral journey. I would like to thank the following people who to different extents, have been walking beside me, sometimes holding my hand, other times providing a shoulder, but never letting me fall. Nora Segura, no matter where we are in our lives, for always finding time to keep in touch and offer words of encouragement. Carolyn McFarland, for helping me juggle work and school and always being up for the next adventure. Carrie Brown, we always have good conversation and laughter and I know we have more in store as you have always been a rock star in my life. Liane Monaco Christensen, we have big dreams, and as we make them come true, we will take others with us. You have stood by me through the happy, sad, crazy, times in my life, and yes, we do deserve the best! All of you are the sisters I never had but am glad you made your way into my life.

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Section 1: The Problem

Research shows a gap between the writing level students have after leaving high school and the level they are expected to have when entering college (Sablan & Tierney, 2014). Dropout rates often increase as students are not able to perform at the rigor of college-level writing and keep up with the heavy course load (Borland, 2016). The inconsistencies in the skill level of students leaving high school and entering college on remedial status need to be addressed to prepare them as competent students and eventual graduates (Relles & Tierney, 2013). The purpose of this exploratory case study was to understand the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college as well as what strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college (see Rodriguez & Tierney, 2014). The increasing number of students enrolling in remediation courses has demonstrated the need for an exploratory case study looking at why students are coming in underprepared for the rigor of writing at the college level (see Duncheon & Tierney, 2014). Evaluating the perceptions of students on remediation status for this qualitative case study addressed the local problem in colleges in Southern California of students not being fully prepared with the level of writing skills necessary to enter college (see Borland, 2016).

The Local Problem

When students lack the necessary writing skills needed to meet college expectations, there is concern that they will have a higher likelihood of not graduating from a 4-year college or not doing so within a 4 or 5-year time period (Bidwell,

2014; Jendian, 2012). In this study, I explored this problem at a 4-year university that has had a decade-long increase of students admitted who require remediation/support courses and may have been previously enrolled in an Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC; see Bettinger & Long, 2009). The writing remediation level of enrollment was 20% a decade ago, has reached 40%, and does not seem to be slowing (Dell'Angela, 2016). The focus of this study consisted of exploring student and faculty perceptions of the need for remedial/support writing skills. Understanding students' needs for remedial/support writing skills upon admission to college may help to improve the effectiveness of remediation courses as well as graduation rates and the length of time required to graduate.

Students are entering college without the higher-level writing skills needed to perform at the expected level of rigor that a 4-year university requires (Kurleander, 2014). This situation is a problem at a public college in Southern California, where 40% of entering freshman were enrolled on remediation status (Dell'Angela, 2016). Students have not scored high enough on the Early Assessment Program (EAP) to enter the university system in regular credit-bearing courses, and the projection is more freshman will need remediation writing courses (Taylor, 2017). Some of these students may have previously taken and passed an ERWC, which are designed as support-level courses to help struggling students develop the writing skills necessary for college readiness and regular admission (Jendian, 2012). There is a need, however, to identify whether this course is meeting students' needs and what other educational strategies are needed to

prepare students with writing skills needed to succeed in their college courses (Rodriguez & Tierney, 2014).

Jendian (2012) provided an examination of the ERWC in the California State University (CSU) system and how ERWC provides additional support to struggling students who need an additional level of support to raise their writing skill level high enough for college readiness. Although this program has shown a small amount of success in that students are passing the ERWC course, Kurleander (2014) noted that students often received inflated grades in this course, so the grades are not always reflective of actual college expectations for writing skills. According to Jendian, students are passing the ERWC course and are being allowed to enroll in college without being placed on remediation status. However, Lingwall (2010) suggested that these same students are still not prepared at the necessary level of writing ability to be successful in college courses.

Rationale

The purpose of this study was to explore student and faculty perceptions of needs related to the remediation/support of writing skills. This study addressed the local problem of students entering West Coast University (a pseudonym) without adequate writing skills for academic success. The findings of this study will help to increase the understanding for both educators and students of what is necessary to facilitate newly admitted students' preparation to succeed in college courses (see Boatman, Bettinger, & Long, 2013). Exploring college student and faculty perceptions regarding

remedial/support writing needs will also help to identify remedial/support strategies that may help develop those skills for success at the college level.

Definition of Terms

California State University (CSU) system: A public university system in California consisting of 23 campuses (Jendian, 2012).

Early Assessment Program (EAP): A placement test used by colleges in California, administered in 11th grade to measure college-level writing readiness (Taylor, 2017).

Educational strategies: Programs used to increase students' writing skills (Methvin & Markham, 2015).

Needs: Providing underprepared students with information to understand the importance of writing at the college level to avoid or become successful in remedial/support writing courses (Alford & Griffin, 2013).

Perceptions: Impressions of students enrolled in and faculty who teach remedial/support writing courses (Bachman, 2013).

Remedial writing strategies: Step-by-step approaches used by students to facilitate success in remedial writing courses (Bachman, 2013).

Student success: Fulfillment of requirements of remedial writing course allowing for matriculating into college course for which credit may be earned (Jones, Sugar, Baumgardner, & Raymond, 2012).

Writing remediation class: A course taken on a college campus that is below college level for which a student does not receive college credit (Jones et al., 2012).

Writing support: Strategies that include feedback from both peers and teacher to raise writing skill level (Sacher, 2016).

Significance of the Study

I selected this problem to study because there is lack of information regarding student perceptions of writing remediation/support courses and how those courses are affecting students graduating from college within a 4-year time period, an extended period of five to seven years, or failing to graduate at all. Bachman (2013) looked at student perceptions regarding their writing skill level as being a key factor in either the success or failure to graduate, and Jackson and Kurleander (2014) also suggested that these perceptions were a primary factor leading toward success in college. In this study, I had a specific focus on student and faculty perceptions of needs regarding remediation/support writing courses, which helped to identify educational strategies to improve students' writing skills so that they can succeed at the college level (see Methvin & Markham, 2015).

Stuart (2009) and Bidwell (2014) have suggested that remedial education, which would include the ERWC program, has failed to produce college graduates in a timely manner of 4 to 5 years overall or at all. Bernasconi (2008) and Scott-Clayton and Rodriguez (2014) have further stated that remedial instruction has been costly and largely ineffective, and educators should consider alternative strategies that would build writing skills and eliminate the need for remediation courses. Tierney and Garcia (2011) suggested that by more closely aligning high school graduation requirements to college entrance requirements, the need for enrollment in remediation classes at the college may

be lessened and eventually eliminated. The findings of this study will help enhance the understanding of college student and faculty perceptions about whether remedial/support writing strategies may need to start at a much earlier level than at the end of high school or the start of college (see Mann & Martin, 2016).

Student and faculty perceptions of remedial writing courses are essential to understanding why some students achieve success in their goal to graduate with a baccalaureate degree and others do not (Bachman, 2013). In order to contribute to positive social change, I focused on improving the efficacy of college readiness through a better understanding of student and faculty perceptions of how to ensure that students have the level of writing skills necessary for college in this project study. This enhanced understanding may not only help college educators to identify strategies to build students' writing skills but may also assist high school teachers in implementing these strategies before students enter college.

Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college?

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college?

Review of the Literature

This section of the study includes sources that were used to gather information regarding the relevant conceptual frameworks for this study and literature review. I used the Walden University Library to access the Education Research Complete database to search categories that included journals; articles; databases A–Z; and Web searches of databases that included educational journals, educational websites, peer-reviewed journal articles, and ERIC. The following keyword search terms and phrases were used *ACT (U.S. college admissions test), California University system, Early Assessment Program, educational strategies, remedial strategies, and writing remediation class.*

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was composed of Perry's (1970) theory of intellectual development that reflects numerous challenges existing for first-year college students regarding both intellectual and ethical development. Perry stated that cognitive development is essential for students to broaden their depth and scope of knowledge of how they view both the world and them. Because students need to adequately read, write, and comprehend increasingly difficult expository text, educators need to identify evidence-based strategies that would help to prepare struggling writers to move to a cognitive level needed for success in college (Bettinger & Long, 2009). Mastery of these skills may help students both facilitate the move from the simplicity of the adolescence viewpoint to the more complex views of college and the world (Perry, 1970). Mastering writing skills may increase the likelihood for students to achieve graduation with a baccalaureate degree.

Howell (2011) found that students who are unprepared for the rigors of college-level writing may struggle with having a lower academic ability and may have to put forth more effort when compared to students who are more academically prepared. Although considering this barrier secondary to previous influences of family, teachers, peers, and schools, Howell also stated that public schools may have not provided students with the skills necessary to perform successfully at the college level. In order to facilitate change in achieving higher-level writing skills and academic readiness for college students may need to be provided with writing support in high school. Porter and Polikoff (2012) concluded that a better way to measure the necessary level of writing may be to create a new method of assessment or make improvements to existing assessments. They suggested that these changes may lead to fewer students needing to enroll in remediation courses or students becoming more successful even if enrolled in remediation courses. Having a stronger writing foundation before entering college may also help students gain a level of security that could help students navigate the outside barriers that were identified by Howell (2011).

The selection of a conceptual framework establishes a connection between the problem that has been identified and the need for the problem to be studied. This framework served as a guide for data collection and analysis and for categorizing the various perspectives from both students and professors regarding enrollment in college remediation/support writing courses. Perry's (1970) theory of intellectual development related to the study regarding surveying students enrolled in remediation courses and faculty who teach remediation courses. Providing students who were enrolled in a

remedial writing course with a stronger support system and a mentor may allow more students to graduate with 4-year degrees (Boatman et al., 2013).

Writing Remediation at the National Level

The need for writing remediation/support for newly admitted college students has been a problem for decades. As tens of thousands of students across the country were graduating high school academically unprepared for college, Bettinger and Long (2009) focused on addressing the needs of these underprepared students and investigated whether college remediation writing courses were the answer to the increasing problem. Besides the enormous cost of over \$1 billion dollars to colleges nationwide, Bettinger and Long looked at the factors that determined which undergraduate students were being placed in remediation courses and the criteria being used for this placement. Their study also focused whether taking remediation courses had made them more likely to graduate than those who did not enroll in remediation courses. Their findings indicated that students enrolled in remediation courses were less likely to graduate than students who had not enrolled in these courses. Bettinger and Long determined that students enrolling in remediation courses often did not graduate due to several factors, including low-level ability, not moving forward from remediation courses to credit-bearing courses, and exhausting funds from multiple attempts at remediation courses.

In the current qualitative case study, I used evidence from Howell (2011) correlated with the previous findings of Bettinger and Long (2009) to evaluate the perceptions of students on remediation status to address the local problem in colleges in Southern California of students not being fully prepared with the level of writing skills

necessary to enter college (see Borland, 2016) and that outside factors that create a substantial barrier to the success of students enrolled in or possibly needing remedial writing courses. Bidwell (2014) found that almost 20% of students entering 4-year colleges were placed in a remediation writing course. Bell-Ellwanger, King, and McIntosh (2017) suggested that the standards between high school and college may be misaligned and further complicated by varying policies on placement. The findings of Howell and Boatman et al. (2013) indicated that the earlier alignment is made between skill level and placement, the more success students may achieve once enrolled in either grade-level or remediation writing college courses.

Hughes and Scott-Clayton (2011) showed that half of the undergraduates nationwide were enrolled in remediation courses and that as the number of students enrolling in remediation courses increased, the odds of these same students passing nonremedial courses and making it to graduation decreased. The cost for student tuition for enrollment in remediation courses was estimated at \$4 billion, which put a further strain on the resources of colleges (Hughes & Scott-Clayton, 2011). Hughes and Scott-Clayton noted that this is significant because remediation is a widespread and costly intervention that has the intent of increasing college graduation rates but is second in cost after financial aid. Scott-Clayton, Crosta, and Belfield (2014) found that a more accurate screening process prior to college enrollment may reduce or eliminate the need for enrollment in remediation courses. Scott-Clayton et al. further suggested that an improved screening process may also decrease the time needed to graduate and reduce tuition costs. Sparks (2013) determined that nearly half of incoming freshman enrolled in

a remediation course has a cost of nearly \$7 billion, while Cantor (2017) also found that undergraduates enrolled in remedial education had driven costs to \$7 billion and that they were still no more likely to achieve graduation status.

Hanford (2016) looked at data from Complete College America (2017) that was collected from 28 states and both full-time and part-time students and found that students who take remediation courses are incurring mounting debt, increasing time to graduate, and may not be doing better than if they had enrolled straight into credit-bearing courses. Alford and Griffin (2013) found that one of the biggest challenges was students not being prepared for the rigors of college and that a connection must be made to engage students with what they are learning in the present and how it will apply to the future. Alford and Griffin believed this would help students achieve greater success and move more students toward eventual graduation from a 4-year college. Relles (2016) expanded this to include remedial writing as a more practical model to instruction in place of basic-skill instruction.

Jimenez, Sargrad, Morales, and Thompson (2016) proposed that by ensuring high school teachers across the nation did a better job of preparing incoming college students, there may be a significant decrease, or even elimination, of the need for remedial writing courses. The authors suggested this could be done by fostering continuity between high schools and colleges; aligning requirements; and being transparent regarding the knowledge, skills, and coursework needed for success at the college level. Sacher (2016) further stated that 73% of 12th grade students were writing at the basic or below basic level and arriving at college unprepared to write at the college level because their test

performance demonstrated they did not possess college-level skills. This enrollment data (Sacher, 2016) may indicate that nationwide, high schools are not adequately preparing students for the rigor of college-level writing (Bettinger & Long, 2009; Butrymowicz, 2017; Howell, 2011).

Dell'Angela (2016) noted that nearly 40% of students enrolling in 4-year universities were taking remedial courses. While attending high school, these students not only received average grades in the classes they did take, half never enrolled in classes that would prepare them for the rigor of college-level writing (Dell'Angela, 2016). Barry and Dannenberg's (2016) findings indicated that underprepared students enrolled in remedial courses were more likely to postpone college completion or were 74% more likely to drop out of college compared to students who were not enrolled in remedial courses. They found that these students were also often taking two remedial courses, which then required additional tuition for content that should have been learned in high school. Students taking remedial courses are often students who did not take college prep or Advanced Placement classes while in high school, and the problem becomes compounded when they enroll in college remedial writing courses that are not preparing students to use critical-thinking skills (Crowe, 2016).

Mangan (2017) stated that remediation courses are not getting at the root of why students may not be successful at the college level and suggested shifting the focus from remediation to financial issues, hunger, and lack of child care that may be impeding the success of college students. Howell (2011) further focused on what influenced students' need for remediation in college and looked specifically at the large percentage of ethnic

minority and low-socioeconomic students who were enrolled in remedial courses in high school and if race played a factor in enrollment. Howell also looked at the possibility of a disconnect between high schools and colleges that may be considered a contributing factor to the high college remediation rate. Methvin and Markham (2015) expanded on the factors found by Howell and Boatman et al. (2013) and agreed that a closer alignment between high school and college standards may eliminate the need for writing remediation courses or provide students with a greater foundation for success should a writing remediation course still be necessary. Smith (2016) also indicated that a partnership between high schools that have a focus on more rigorous academic standards and colleges implementing closer monitoring of remediation students may lead to higher graduation rates from 4-year colleges

Fulton and Gianneschi (2014) looked at how low SAT or ACT scores were an indicator that students may not be academically prepared for college-level courses and showed that students with low scores would be flagged for enrollment in remediation courses. Butrymowicz (2017) found that more than half of incoming undergraduate students were placed in at least one remedial course, indicating that more than half a million students enrolled in college and were not prepared for the rigor of college-level writing. The author stated that simply procuring a high school diploma did not automatically mean that the graduate was prepared to write at the college level of rigor. Creech and Clouse (2013) had previously suggested that a partnership between high schools and colleges may reduce the need for remedial writing courses, while Scott-Clayton and Rodriguez (2014) found that remedial courses may actually be detrimental to

students in that students may have been improperly placed or may discourage persistence in students to move into college-level courses. Giordano and Hassel (n.d.) had a difference of opinion and argued that students who need remedial writing help should be placed in such courses so they may receive structured writing support and eventually be able to move to credit-bearing courses.

Writing Remediation at CSU

Bernasconi (2008) examined the effects on students who, upon taking ERWC in secondary school, would have exposure to a curriculum that might better prepare them for credit-bearing writing courses at CSU. Bernasconi used personal experiences as an ERWC teacher and data showing almost 30% of government and private sector employees required on-the-job-training in order to improve their writing skills

as the basis for the importance of college-bound students taking an intensive writing course. The author stated that the most important components that contributed to writing well included reading rhetorically, thinking critically, and writing authoritatively. In order to facilitate the success of the ERWC program, Bernasconi recommended that students be engaged in readings where the topics were relevant to them.

Street, Fletcher, Merrill, Katz, and Cline (2008) examined the result of the EAP exam given to incoming students at CSU schools across the state and found that close to half of the entering first-year students lacked critical skills, most notably in the rigor of writing, necessary to be successful at the college level. ERWC research-based practices showed that there was an increase in student motivation when there was an integration of both reading and writing (Jendian, 2012). Street et al. also noted that another critical

component of college readiness was critical thinking, which is incorporated into the ERWC course.

Further information regarding the ERWC and the use of research-based practices in the reading and writing components were analyzed by Jendian (2012). Jendian specified that while the ERWC was a voluntary program, the intent was to help high school students become college ready while still attending high school. Using evaluation studies to look at both qualitative and quantitative data with a focus on the increase in college readiness, Jendian concluded that enrollment in the ERWC program would allow students to increase their preparedness for the rigor of college-level writing and then possibly have the level of writing ability to enroll in credit-bearing writing courses.

Melzer (2015) found that students enrolling in CSU schools and placed in remediation writing courses were stalling there, as a deficiency in the framework aligning with basic skills assessment may be preventing students from achieving mastery of writing at the college level of rigor. Guzman-Lopez (2017) further found that requiring students to take remedial courses, known as Early Start, over the summer prior to enrollment in CSU schools had not resulted in a significant level of improvement in writing skills. Findings by both Melzer and Guzman-Lopez were strong indicators that students enrolled in the program could be more successful if the program was strengthened and focused on preparing students for the rigors of college-level writing. Research by Williams (2017) noted that placing students who would normally be enrolled in remediation writing courses in college-level writing courses with high levels of support has shown to increase student levels of improvement.

The importance of evidence-based instruction and how it is the cornerstone of the ERWC program was studied by Wexler, Reed, Mitchell, Doyle, and Clancy (2014). The researchers found that students struggled due to a lack of comprehending expository text and that numerous challenges existed in the preparation of junior students to achieve college admittance without incurring remedial status. They suggested that a higher level of focus be given to content knowledge through increasing alignment of high school graduation standards to those of college admittance standards which may eliminate the need for enrollment in remediation writing courses. Findings by Wexler et al. are in alignment of previous finding by McCormick, Hafner, and Saint Germain (2013) that show ERWC trained teachers were more likely to produce students who are better at not only comprehending but also writing expository text.

Lack of writing skills preparation in incoming college students. Bernasconi (2008) used documentation from the CSU English Placement Test to show the ever-increasing numbers of students entering college with the requirement of enrollment in a remediation writing course. Tierney and Garcia (2008, 2011) also identified that when students were two levels below first-year composition standards in regard to writing skills the rationale, the use of a program aimed at providing these students with intensive writing and reading courses in their first year of college may eliminate remedial instruction. The program was not only costly but saw the numbers of students rise to almost half of incoming freshman still needing remediation. Previous information was incorporated, which showed CSU following in the footsteps of City of New York University, which mandated that remediation rates be lowered, and instead saw the

numbers climbing. The recommendation was to remove remediation instruction and to remand remediation students to 2-year colleges.

In the first year of the plan, students were allowed a 1-year limit on remedial instruction and were disenrolled from the university if they failed to complete the course in 1 year. A further proposition was the utilization of an alternative program that integrated reading and writing to help students better master the subjects and eliminate the need for remediation writing courses at the college level (Bernasconi, 2008). Although students had completed required coursework to allow entry into a 4-year college, almost a decade later, 40 % of freshman entering CSU schools were still being admitted on remediation status (Taylor, 2017).

Knudson, Zitzer-Comfort, Quirk, and Alexander (2008) examined the benefits of having high school juniors take a college level placement test, which is part of the EAP throughout the CSU system. The EAP allowed high school juniors the opportunity to measure their English readiness level for college and is an early indicator to prospective CSU and University of California students in regard to the feedback that shows alignment of their writing skills and the writing skills expected for college Legislative Analyst's Office (2017).

Some of the benefits found in the program included: feedback to high school students showing their skill level and the alignment with college expectations, common indicators (courses, grades and test results), having extra support available for college-level courses taken while in high school, and having academic programs incorporate remedial skills Legislative Analyst's Office (2017). Knudson et al. (2008) used previous

information from a task force formed to prepare teachers and staff with the necessary training to prepare high school students for writing at the level of rigor expected of college level. Analysis of survey data demonstrated that teachers were able to incorporate the material so that it provided for scaffolding of instruction in substantial ways to improve student writing and the possible elimination of the need for future remedial writing courses.

Kurleander (2014) used a research design focused on individual-level administrative data matched with standardized test scores of college readiness that further discussed implications of the disparity between secondary and postsecondary education with the focus on the EAP. The study by Kurleander noted that remediation levels were on the rise across the state, and lack of preparation at the high school was a driving force. These findings by Kurleander were like those of Boatman et al. (2013) which also showed that writing grades students received in high school did not correlate to the expectations of college rigor.

Faculty perceptions and additional offering of writing support. An exploratory study by Lingwall (2010) was used to examine faculty perceptions regarding the writing proficiency level of students and whether remediation was working to improve those skills. Lingwall and Methvin and Markham (2015) noted that previous research, including that of Tierney and Garcia (2008), showed a several decade's long steady decline in the writing ability of students with over half of incoming college freshman not able to produce a paper that was well-written and error-free. Lingwall also

noted that high schools were producing relatively few students who had the skill level necessary to write an essay at the expected level of college rigor.

As faculty perceptions of writing remediation courses often have an influence on the level of student success or failure, Mendoza (2017) identified enrolling students in remediation courses coupled with high levels of faculty support, preferably working in groups, showed that more students were transitioning to regular credit-bearing courses, the dropout rate decreased, and the potential for more graduates increasing. Gordon (2017) further found positive results when students in need of remediation courses who are enrolling in CSU schools were offered placement in corequisite courses. These courses consisted of extra work, additional hours, and more involvement and input from faculty when compared to regular credit-bearing classes. While courses would still be remediation based, credit will be given if courses are passed. By utilizing this approach of more buy-in from faculty, CSU has identified a goal of increasing the 4-year graduation rate from the current 19% to 40%, and the current 6-year rate from 57% to 70% by 2025.

Student perceptions and additional offering support for preparation prior to college enrollment. As enrollment in college writing remediation courses continued to rise, Boatman et al. (2013) explored student attitudes of remediation through a qualitative study that examined the attitudes students had when placed in remediation courses, both at a large public research university and a small liberal art college. The study took a comparative approach, investigating negative and positive feelings regarding participating in remediation efforts. The study used open-ended interviews with undergraduate participants to understand a shift in viewpoints regarding remediation. The

most frequently occurring observation from students revolved around the severe lack of preparation they incurred as incoming students regarding competency at the college writing level. Students often had trouble with not only writing at the college level of rigor but also were lacking in many other writing aspects, particularly in the use of correct grammar and spelling.

Tierney and Garcia (2008) examined why students were more likely to do well in college by being academically prepared to the expected level of college writing prior to enrollment and how to help students achieve that level. The focus of the study was on the CSU system and how CSU had decided to enroll students into remediation courses when being admitted to college but not prepared to do college level work. The results revealed that public college had a higher percentage of students taking remediation classes when compared to private colleges and that these students were more likely to not achieve graduation status. The research by Dye, Schatz, Rosenberg, and Coleman (2000) was similar to the findings of Tierney and Garcia in that both results showed that lack of preparation in writing at the secondary level was a contributing factor to students failing to be prepared to do college work.

The results found by Stuart (2009) were similar to those of Tierney and Garcia (2008) as he further explored the problem of students being accepted to college but not being prepared for college-level work even though they had adequate grades for college admission. Stuart noted that students currently entering college are from a different demographic than in the past and are not showing an ability to do the writing at the level of college rigor. Using that information, Stuart incorporated a one-state study that

required students who were college eligible to take a placement test in English to determine college proficiency. Remedial education, as stated by Stuart, had failed to keep pace with the changing needs of students and had not produced the desired results that had been expected by colleges in order to avoid enrollment in remediation courses. Ostashevsky (2016) found, as Stuart had previously found, that merely passing state-required testing, having high grades, and achieving high school graduation status did not necessarily indicate that a student that is prepared for college.

Weissman (2012) examined the factors that caused college students to drop out in record numbers and found that although the demand for higher skills job level skills has driven up college enrollment, many students were not prepared at the college level of writing upon entering college. Unlike Bachman (2013), Weissman looked at writing remediation as not being the answer to unprepared students and instead suggested vocational opportunities as a way to make sure those who are not at the level to attend college would acquire skills that would make them employable. Weissman further argued that this would alleviate the large class sizes for those students who are college ready, as well as reduce the enormous costs associated with remediation.

The impact of high numbers of students taking remedial college courses was studied by Porter and Polikoff (2012) to observe whether students who took remediation courses were more likely to not achieve degree completion. Just as Howell (2011) had previously found, Porter and Polikoff had similar findings that students who did not take remedial course were just as likely to fail to achieve degree completion but often due to other factors. Both Porter and Polikoff and Howell agreed that courses students took

while in high school served as good indicators as to whether students would be successful in college, and ultimately graduate.

Tierney and Garcia (2011) had previously used a qualitative study to determine how the courses students took in high school and the information presented would allow students to apply that information into achieving college-level readiness. Tierney and Garcia stated that as the demand for more highly educated workers is increasing, the number of students prepared for college is decreasing. They further stated that high schools and colleges must more closely align high school graduation requirements to college entrance requirements, which may lessen the need for remedial classes at the college level.

Jackson and Kurleander (2014) expanded on research by Tierney and Garcia (2011) and cited that lack of overall college readiness and students having a limited use of academic content language were often significant factors as to why students needed remediation writing courses. Jackson and Kurleander stated that there were four components for college readiness that were looked at as “four keys”, with learning skills being at the forefront. A specific look at closing achievement gaps came from students having buy-in that they should learn what is taught by teachers. Jackson and Kurleander suggested the implementation of measurement technology to quantify ownership of learning. Further opportunities for students to investigate their own interests were also suggested as the ownership of learning can then be inferred instead of measured.

Implications

Findings from the project study may provide opportunities for social change through the insight of student and faculty perceptions of obstacles faced that are potentially hindering students in need of remedial/support writing skill from graduating from a 4-year university. One possible solution would be to work with high schools to create a foundational writing course in the first year of high school that will expand throughout the next three years with a specific focus on writing skills that will move the student forward to college-level writing expectations. Other project ideas may include a study-skills writing course and an intensive summer writing course. Potential college-bound students would be exposed to the rigors of writing at the college level while still in high school so that remedial/support writing courses at the college level may be eliminated. Based on findings from this study, a professional development workshop focused on collaboration between high school teachers and college faculty was created.

Summary

In Section 1, I offered a foundational background for the representation of the study and the problem of writing remediation/support at the college level. Students are entering college without higher level writing skills needed to perform at the expected level of rigor for a 4-year university. The inconsistencies in the skill level of students leaving high school level and entering college on remedial/support status need to be addressed to prepare them as competent students and eventual graduates.

Students may have been enrolled in ERWC; however, there is justification to identify whether this course is meeting students' needs. Other educational strategies may

also be needed to prepare students with writing skills necessary to succeed in their college courses. The concern is that these students taking remedial/support writing courses will have a higher likelihood of not graduating from a 4-year college or not doing so within a 4 time 5-year time period.

In this section, the following were covered: the problem, evidence from local and national levels, definitions, the significance of the problem, a review of the literature, definitions with a focus on guiding research questions, and implications. In Section 2, I will explain the methodology for the project study, including the research design and approach, the participants, both students and professors, the sample size, and the process for both data collection and analysis.

Section 2: The Methodology

Qualitative Research Design and Approach

I used a qualitative case study design to explore the problem of the need for writing support classes for students at a public, 4-year university in Southern California. This research design provided for collection of in-depth information about student and faculty perceptions of needs for remediation/support courses that could help develop writing skills needed for success in college. Focusing on how students make sense of their needs for development of writing skills is consistent with Perry's (1970) framework of cognitive development. This qualitative design was appropriate for understanding the perceptions of college students who have needed remediation, their approach in the development of writing skills, and why these skills were needed for successful progress in their college studies (see Bachman, 2013). Although a quantitative design was considered, this study did not have a focus on testing a hypothesis or checking variables that may or may not be present (see Creswell, 2012).

The focus of the project study was on faculty who teach remedial/support writing courses and first-year students who were enrolled in remedial/support writing courses in order to understand the problem from their experiences (see Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Focusing on these experiences of faculty who teach remedial/support writing courses and students in remedial/support writing courses allowed them to express why higher levels of writing skills are necessary for success at the college level. The insights of these individual experiences addressed the problem of students needing remediation/support courses at the college-level. The consequences of students leaving high school

underprepared for the rigor of college-level writing courses can have a significant effect on their ability to pass remediation/support writing courses (see Butrymowicz, 2017).

A case study was an appropriate design with which to show an interpretation of both the environment and meaning obtained through the description of the experiences of the faculty and first-year students enrolled in remedial/support courses (see Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). The study allowed for further thematic analysis of information gathered from students and faculty to understand writing remediation/support courses at high school and college and student and faculty perceptions of strategies that could help develop necessary skills for students' success in college. The potential risks to students and faculty were minimal and consisted mainly of embarrassment at their poor performance in high school or college classes or distressing activity regarding the need for enrollment in remediation courses.

According to Creswell and Poth (2017), qualitative research may be supported by five research designs: narrative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, and case study. Narrative research has a focus on the individuals and their story (Creswell & Poth, 2017), whereas the current study had a focus on a specific program: remedial/support writing courses. A narrative research design was not appropriate for this study because it requires large amounts of information to be collected, often collecting information from a person's entire life, with a focus on the individuals and their stories (see Creswell & Poth, 2017). First-year students and faculty who teach first-year students were used in the current study, in which I collected experiences in remedial/support writing courses. The phenomenological research design

involves studying the shared experience of individuals and requires long-term interaction with the participants (Creswell, 2012). Phenomenology was not an appropriate design for this study because I required a focus on a specific time period of a specific program (see Creswell & Poth, 2017). Grounded theory design focuses on the process or actions of people in order to develop a theory (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). The result of the grounded theory design is to utilize observations and discussions of participants and develop a theory from them (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). This design was not applicable to the current project study because I was not seeking to develop a theory or was the problem one that could be answered by observation of participants. Since this project study does not reflect one specific culture, an ethnography was also not an appropriate design because this design has a focus on a specific group that shares the same culture (see Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtler, 2010). The focus of the current study did not utilize culture but had a focus on an identified problem with specific participants and research questions (see Creswell & Poth, 2017).

Participants

The sample for the study was seven first-year students currently enrolled in a remedial/support writing class and seven faculty members who taught a remedial/support writing course at West Coast University, a 4-year school. The students and faculty provided rich, detailed responses documenting their experiences as students taking remedial/support classes and faculty who taught or are teaching students enrolled in remedial/support classes, including details of the course and how students advanced or did not advance to credit-bearing courses. Although a small group of participants were

interviewed, this qualitative study was focused on the mindset of each student and faculty member. According to Merriam (2009), the research questions may then be answered through a deeper exploration of the problem.

I adhered to research procedures for this study, starting with securing necessary Walden University Institutional Review Board approval (Approval No. 04-22-19-0455006), approval from the research site, and approval from the program director (PD) of First-Year Writing to recruit volunteers for the study. The names and contact information of students and faculty involved in aspects of remedial writing classes were requested from the PD. I sent a formal letter to the PD clarifying the following: the reason for the study, the schedule to execute the study, a timeframe for interviewing of participants, and aspect for maintaining the confidentiality of the participants (see Creswell & Poth, 2017). The letter also disclosed how the results of the data would provide an opportunity to show how remediation/support classes may or may not be beneficial to incoming students and how improvements may be necessary and implemented through future project development.

I used purposeful sampling to recruit current students in remediation/support courses and faculty teaching remediation/support courses at the university. Students and faculty were invited to volunteer for the case study with the goal of obtaining more in-depth information from these participants (see Lodico et al., 2010). Possible participants were sent a formal e-mail from my Walden University e-mail address that included an introduction of me along with my Walden e-mail address, cell phone number, an outline of the study, and request for volunteers for the study to establish a researcher-participant

working relationship. Volunteers for the study were asked their preferred method of contact and were given the choices of e-mail, letter mail, telephone, or text. This provided a level of confidentiality and allowed interviews to be scheduled more easily.

The e-mail also included a request for permission to send formal letters of invitation to the homes of the students and faculty. No faculty or students exercised this option, but the introduction of Walden University, the project study, and me as the researcher, was to be included in the formal letter. The study was defined in detail and the reason, purpose, importance of the project, and the possible length of the interviews were highlighted. The relationship between myself and the participants was established through the introduction of myself and an explanation for the basis of the study. Because I have been a teacher in a remedial subject area, I believe that this was an important factor in establishing a comfortable relationship between myself and the participants who were involved in the interview process. Students and faculty were also provided with an explanation of the study and offered the option of participating, with a focus on any concerns regarding confidentiality. A follow-up letter to the home addresses of potential volunteers was not necessary because all volunteers replied to e-mail requests. A consent form was provided to interested participants, and when signed and returned, was dated so that participants were contacted in the order of receipt until 14 participants (i.e., seven students and seven faculty members) were secured for the study.

My protection of participants in this study included determining and reducing any possible harm and risks that might develop from them providing me with information. In order to protect the participants from harm, I conducted interviews with them in a safe

environment (i.e., a secured interview using Zoom). There was a possibility that during the interview process, the participants' awareness of their experiences provided a level of uncomfortableness as students recalled feelings that ranged from embarrassment to inadequacy at having taken a remedial course (see Bachman, 2013). Identifying emotional distress and preparing enough support that was agreeable to the participants lessened risks associated with their sharing of information. All the participants reviewed a transcript of their interview to minimize the risk of any threat to confidentiality (see Boatman et al., 2013). Lodico et al. (2010) stated that prior to participants signing a consent agreement, they should have any concerns addressed by the researcher. Bogdan and Biklen (2007) suggested that participants regulate their engagement inside the study, that providing consent does not eliminate further concerns, and that participants will understand they have the right to withdraw from the study at any time. This information was explained to all participants before conducting interview. Having a positive and respectful relationship with participants and providing transparency concerning the project study ensured a collaborative working relationship between myself and participants.

Data Collection

Faculty and students who participated in the study returned a completed form that included the following demographic data: their role in the study as a participant, gender, and age. Faculty were asked to include their years in teaching as well as present position held. In order to ensure privacy and confidentiality, I conducted interviews through Zoom with seven faculty members and seven first-year students to acquire their perceptions of

remedial/support writing courses. The time and date for the interviews were arranged so that any prior commitments to work and family time allowed participants the needed flexibility to participate. Each interview lasted approximately 30 minutes with an additional 30 minutes allotted for any follow-up questions. Any additional follow-up questions taking place after initial data analysis would have indicated that additional clarification was needed (Schreler, 2013). Participants did not have any follow-up questions, and no additional clarification was needed.

Data collection continued until saturation was reached (see Creswell, 2012). Saturation was reached once there were no new perspectives coming from participants' interview responses. Utilizing a sample that contains enough participants was important to elicit thick and detailed data focused on the research questions.

I used open-ended, predetermined questions to obtain the perspective of each participant. One-on-one interviews through Zoom provided a comfortable atmosphere for participants and potentially lessened the level of apprehension they may have felt in speaking in a group setting or with other participants present (see Creswell, 2012). Participants engaged in the interview with a natural flow, which allowed for a rich level of responses. All interviews for the study consisted of the interviewee and me being present in a private setting. Upon completion of each interview, I gained the permission of each participant to return the transcribed interview to participant for any additional clarification needed relating to the problem.

As the interviewer, I remained unbiased and allowed the interviewee the ability to freely answer the focused set of questions without redirecting given answers toward a

deliberate and different path. Because the questions were open ended, participants had the option of making additional comments. Responses were audio recorded to ensure correct transcription and to follow up with participants for any further clarification that was needed regarding answers or necessary additional questions. Utilizing the open-ended, predetermined questions garnered productive responses that were rich in detail and allowed me to gather the perceptions of first-year students and faculty regarding remedial writing/support courses to address the research questions (see Creswell, 2012). I wrote in a reflective journal about the process of collecting data to record any thoughts, perspectives, and concerns.

Data Analysis

Coding and Analysis of Data

I transcribed interviews verbatim to begin data analysis. Data were coded and incorporated into categories and themes (see Appendices D and E). The transcriptions produced many pages that required time-consuming interpretation and analysis. The relevance of data revolved around the details of information and narratives in order to establish categories and common themes related to the research questions (see Creswell, 2012). I coded and labeled the individual interview transcripts with a pseudonym. I, as the interviewer, am the only one with access to anything personally identifiable. In order to make findings easier to view, I coded the key words and list into a table, utilizing the key terms under each coded theme. Themes were coded with an assigned letter for easier recognition (Creswell, 2012). Schreler (2013) stated that qualitative content analysis has

the researcher focus on selected aspects of meaning, more specifically, placing the focus on the overall research question(s).

Accuracy and Credibility

Member checking allowed participants to be given the opportunity, within 14 days upon completion of the interview, to review the transcripts and tentative findings for accuracy. According to Creswell and Miller (2010), participants may then look at themes and categories to ensure both make sense as well as if there is enough evidence and that the overall account is realistic and accurate. Member checking helps to ensure that interviewer and interviewee are each responsible for the accuracy and credibility of the data (Dye et al., 2000). Merriam (2009) advised that misunderstandings are less likely to occur when participants are involved in reviewing the data to provide validation of what they said and what they meant. Interviewees can also provide any necessary clarification regarding findings so that there is a match between the interpretation of the interviewer and the intent of the respondent (Merriam, 2009). Member checking resulted in all participants validating transcription of interview was what they stated in the interview.

Merriam (2009) stated that credibility will help to ensure trustworthiness and that findings are reflective of reality, specifically to the participants' viewpoints. I attempted to ensure credibility of participants' viewpoints by revisiting answers given by participants, rephrasing previously asked questions, and asking follow-up questions as needed. In order to avoid researcher bias, I reviewed field notes and included in data analysis. This allowed for the organization and archiving of the data into categories. This

also helped to ensure that specific data were easily located and traced back to the context of the interview (Elliott & Timulak, 2015).

Discrepant Cases

Relevant information continued to be identified, and the data analysis process continued until no additional information was found (Merriam, 2009). At this point, saturation occurred in that no new themes were produced from further data (Creswell, 2012). The possibility of contradictory evidence may be found when data are analyzed. Maxwell (2013) recommended that discrepant data should still be presented as part of the study as it relates to the experiences of the participants and that the findings may be used by the reader to make his or her own decisions regarding the discrepant data. No discrepant data were obtained from participants.

Data Analysis Results

Results of data analysis are presented here in relation to the demographic survey, interview data, and field notes. Themes that were identified through coding are described in relation to each research question. Finally, findings are discussed in relation to the literature and conceptual framework.

Demographic Survey

Descriptive demographic data provided extensive information that is essential to a study (Lodico et al., 2010). The data collected from faculty included: (a) age, (b) gender, (c) number of years as college faculty, (d) previous positions held, (e) highest level of education\type of degree, (f) year degree received, (g) prior teaching experiences, and (h) year first began teaching writing support course. Student data included: (a) age, (b)

gender, (c) current or expected major, (d) number of years as college student, (e) high school and colleges attended, (f) highest level of education/diploma, and (g) year diploma received.

The demographic form produced detailed data that correlated to faculty participants' education, years in teaching, and numbers of years teaching support courses. Table 1 indicates that as a group of seven faculty, the number of years teaching was either under 5 years or over 10 years, with two of the faculty having less than 1 year of teaching experience at the college level and currently teaching a support course. The age range of faculty participants was 29-62 with the average age of 41.5 years. The number of years faculty taught a support course had a wide range, from 1 participant in the first year of teaching a support course to another with 26 years teaching support courses. Two faculty participants had a bachelor's degree, four had a master's degree, and one had a Ph.D. Student participant data are included in Table 2. Student participants were 18 to 19 years of age and all were 1st-year college students. One student was a business major, five were science majors, and one was undecided. All students graduated from high school the year before the current year of college enrollment.

Table 1

Participant Demographics – Faculty

Code	Age	Gender	Years as college faculty	Previous positions held	Degree	Year	Prior teaching experience (# of years)	First year teaching support courses
F1	38	F	13	3	Ph.D.	2015	13	2008
F2	29	F	½	3	B.A.	2018	1	2019
F3	32	F	5 ½	4	M.A.	2014	10	2014
F4	38	F	1	1	B.A.	2016	14	2019
F5	49	F	15	4	M.A.	2005	0	2005
F6	62	F	24	4	M.F.A.	1996	3	1994
F7	43	F	2	0	M.A.	2020	0	2020

Table 2

Participant Demographics – Student

Code	Age	Gender	Current or expected major	Number of years as college student	Diploma	Year received
S1	18	F	Business accounting	1	Y	2019
S2	18	F	Political science	1	Y	2019
S3	18	F	Psychology	1	Y	2019
S4	18	F	Undecided	1	Y	2019
S5	18	F	Pre-biology	1	Y	2019
S6	19	M	Political science	1	Y	2019
S7	19	M	Biology	1	Y	2019

Interview Data

Faculty and student potential participants were sent an e-mail explaining the purpose of the study. Ten faculty and ten students were invited, with seven faculty and seven students accepting. After a reply was received accepting the invitation, participants were sent a demographic survey and consent form. Upon completion of the demographic survey and consent form, participants were provided with possible days and times for an interview. All interviews were conducted using Zoom, were audio recorded, and were

scheduled at the day and time requested by each participant. Fourteen interviews were conducted, lasting on average 30 minutes for faculty, and 20 minutes for students. All interviews were transcribed by me and I identified themes from reading the verbatim responses. All transcriptions were reviewed for accuracy by listening to the recording while following along with the transcription. Member checking was also used to ensure accuracy. Multiple and reoccurring themes were identified by responses given by faculty and students to specific research questions. Field notes were used to keep track of emerging themes as responses were given to help minimize multiple rereading of transcripts. All participants were coded in order of interview with faculty as F1-F7 and student as S1-S7.

Throughout multiple e-mails, all participants were friendly and eager to set up a day and time for the interview and said they were happy to volunteer for the study. All faculty appeared comfortable sharing some background information describing what they felt was the purpose of a support class and, more specifically, their role as facilitator. Students also conveyed a comfort level, although, they seemed to be a little more nervous than faculty did in answering questions. All faculty provided examples of where students were in the writing process. All faculty also made mention of where they saw students struggling, specifically mentioning the five-paragraph essay model, which they would like to see removed from being taught in high school. Faculty also noted areas where they saw students succeed, specifically taking more chances with their style of writing and breaking away from the five-paragraph essay. Six students acknowledged faculty as

caring, supportive, often going above and beyond their role in the classroom and were grateful for the writing help they received.

Faculty interviews. Faculty were very passionate about teaching a support writing class and gave much of their time to help students become more successful in their writing. Faculty also expressed that they noticed students became more confident in their writing abilities when there was an established relationship between faculty and student. Faculty addressed the enormous level of importance of becoming someone who writes well, and all gave examples of why students would need this skill not only in future classes, but in their future professions.

My identified themes were determined from the responses received from faculty participants and are shown at the end of this section in relation to the two guiding research questions: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college? What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support/basic writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college? Five major themes emerged from faculty interviews: (a) Moving away from a five-paragraph essay, (b) writing as a process, (c) understanding audience, (d) essay structure, and (e) confidence building.

Moving away from a five-paragraph essay. Faculty had multiple concerns regarding the less than college level of writing they were seeing with the students in their classes. Although all professors taught a support writing course, many were still very surprised that most of the students focused their writing style on the five-paragraph essay

format. The following responses from faculty illustrate their concerns related to this theme.

Participant F3 found that students were struggling in basic writing as their writing was being hindered by use of the five-paragraph essay.

So, for me, teaching the first-year writing students, what they really need help and because they are so used to it; it seems like there is a lot of fear for them to try something new, which makes sense because when you have been doing it for so long. What would be helpful for that, teaching in high school ideally would be moving away from that five-paragraph style but I can see how that would be hard because that is something that is so ingrained in teaching in high school, and it's also something that is easy to assess.

Participant F1 wanted high school teachers to take on a bigger role when it came to teaching students how to write an essay and move students away from the five-paragraph model.

Ok so for me, I think that helping students to understand how to develop more sophisticated arguments beyond the five-paragraph essay would be really helpful at the high school level. So often the students come into college and that's, you know, that's their strongest tool. They had been practicing this in their English classes for years, they understand how, you know, to come up with a traditional introduction and a thesis with three main points and then to develop those three main points in the five-paragraphs. But at the college level they're expected to do more, and a lot of instructors are frustrated when they see students unable to break

out of that five-paragraph essay. So again, for me, it's really, that would be one of the most valuable skill sets, I think, that high school teachers could work with their students on.

Further concern with emphasis on the five-paragraph essay model came from

Participant F2:

I would say the most detrimental would be the five-paragraph format, which does inhibit students being able to write and compact, I would say, three to four pages sometimes because they are so built and trained into thinking 'I can only write five-paragraphs that is all my essay will entail.'

Participant F4 provided an explanation of the importance of moving away from the five-paragraph essay stating:

I think one of the best reasons for, one of the most basic reasons is because you're transitioning from high school to college, and we're trying to learn how to go from being colloquial to academic voice. I think that's one of the best reasons and some of the students are learning how to actually break the five-paragraph essay format because some of them are still in that phase of five-paragraph essay, so it's like, 'No kiddos, this is college'. That's one of the best reasons, especially if they're going to go on to like a graduate program, and all of a sudden, they're like, "woah, I only have five-paragraphs to write it" and you're trying to write a five thousand word seminar paper doesn't fall in that category anymore. There's no way you're going to be able to have five-paragraphs.

Participant F6 provides an example of different writing strategies that might prove more beneficial to students:

Well, the first thing that comes to my mind is how they come in with that five-paragraph essay strategy, which is a great place to start, but of course we know that is so very much limiting. In fact, I do find so much of what we do as first-year writing instructors at the university is that we kind of explain to them, that it's, I like to say to it's a great arrow to have in your quiver, but at the same time there's many other ways to go about in terms of strategies and organization, that kind of thing. So, I think that just comes with the territory. So, I guess the idea is to let them know that there's so many ways and different kinds of writing. You know, we've got anything from creative to scholarly writing, to personal writing, to writing you would do for a particular audience, like, say, someone who goes into law, someone who's a medical person, whatever, there's all these different styles of writing and that needs to be opened up and I think that has a lot. A student that is going to be, you know, going into, say a history major versus a biology major the writing styles are going to be kind of different. So, to help kind of understand I think is really important. So, yeah, I think writing strategies, even though there are so many different kinds, they just need to know that right off the bat.

In summary, participants noted that the five-paragraph essay is learned in high school. College professors, however, spend quite a bit of time moving students away

from this and into other types of writing. Faculty participants perceived that a focus on the five-paragraph essay limited students' thoughts and their ideas.

Writing as a process. Faculty participants had a lot to say regarding why writing is a process. Almost all faculty participants mentioned at some point in the interview that students did not seem to grasp that writing was more than just putting some words on paper and expecting good grades. Participant F1 noted:

So, I did mention the idea of breaking down arguments and creating more sophisticated arguments. I think that would be helpful. I also think understanding writing as a process so it's not just something, students, you know, write a paper the night before and it's a great paper and they get a good grade on it, usually, more often than not, that's not how it works. Like, there's prewriting that goes into it, there's drafting, there's revision, there's peer review. That's sort of how writing is approached at the college level, and I think if students in high school could have more exposure to the idea of writing as a process and more scaffolded assignments, so if there is a paper due at the end of the semester, you know, an argumentative essay, how are students being prepared for that, like what sort of prewriting exercises are they doing in class, are they conferencing with their teacher about their ideas and about development of those ideas. Are they drafting and then doing some peer review in class and expected to revise and resubmit, because that's sort of the natural writing process.

Participant F7 found that it was very important for students to recognize that they needed additional support to understand that writing is a process:

They just haven't formulated the skill or built up the skill to express their ideas in an effective way. So, this remedial course gives students time to learn the questions that they need to ask themselves in order to get their thoughts out. What am I really trying to say here, how can I say this in different words that are more effective than what I've written down? So, it's really, really beneficial for students that just need help writing, just need help getting their thoughts out and sometimes that takes time because writing is such a messy process, and it's revision after revision after revision, until finally you come up with a product that's suitable for, I don't know, end product, something that you would turn in to your professor, or to a newspaper, or wherever you're submitting this work. Writing just takes time. So, I think it's beneficial in that way.

Using different writing strategies was something that Participant F4 found worked well to strengthen the writing process for students:

I did provide them with different writing strategies because everybody has a different process of writing. So, I did provide them with different ways to come up with their process, so we actually took a class and I asked them all 'What's your writing process like?' And for me that's important because I didn't even realize my own writing processes at some point until one of my grad professors asked us, "What is your writing process?" So, I feel as a freshman we should really be seeing what is your writing process, how do you do certain things, how is your thought process, because if we can break down the writing process and the thought process, most of my students are all science majors. They're not English

majors at all, so for them they need to actually break down their thought process and that's going to carry on into their science classes to work with that scientific process.

Participant F2 felt that students were fundamentally missing out on the enjoyment that writing may bring by thinking that writing was something that just happens quickly as opposed to a process:

I would say the ability to just sit down and write, so taking away the perceptions in which writing is an easy process that can be done overnight. Rather it is something that, one, can be fun, and two, can be enjoyable if they take the time and make time to just sit down and have a chance to explore what they are trying to say.

Preparation when starting to write was a key strategy that Participant F3 used to facilitate writing as a process:

What I present the students with is, we talk a lot about the rhetorical situation and with the writing process. So, the idea that for that writing process we prepare to write. We take part in an invention process where we brainstorm, we develop our working thesis, we outline what we want to say. Then we actually sit down and we draft using that and we write multiple drafts to get feedback and then when we're done we revise and we go through the revision process edit and proof-read until we come to that paper where we're happy with it.

Participant F5 had a viewpoint similar to Participant F2:

It's not just about a word count or filling up the page. It's about really doing something, and you need to pay attention to the genre of the writing or the specific writing task and you need to understand that there's no one size fits all. You're going to have to readjust this every time. And finally, you should revise. Writing is a process. Writing is not, you know, I think a lot of students think, 'Oh I work really well under pressure.' I don't think anyone works really well under pressure but even if you do you still should revise. Everything can be made better when you take the time to do that.

When teaching first-year students, Participant F3 explained writing as process, and utilized the benefits of a simplistic approach:

I start the course off where we have these, I have a wonderful, kind of introductory essay called 'Learn Like a Baby' where it talks about how we actually learn how to write. It's kind of we learn to write similarly how a baby acquires language. It's just a lovely little essay and it's a really great place to start speaking and so this idea that making language more part of your life verses something that you're struggling against, I think that is very helpful and they will take anything that you say, especially if you couch it in terms of what the university expects.

Faculty observed that prewriting activities were a way to support the start of a writing assignment. Overall, faculty noted that writing as a process should allow for students to freely write whatever comes to mind and then students should be aided in the

revision process. Revision was then viewed as a positive way to encourage students to just start writing to get thoughts down.

Understanding audience. Participant F7 saw writing as important across the board and how a writer gets their point across to their audience:

That's how we create change for the problems that we see in the world. So, if you can be effective in putting down into words your thoughts and your ideas and your concerns, that's going to help you across for success in college and beyond. And I just feel strongly about that. I use my classroom specifically, for an example, as I call it, 'it's a call for action,' and I assign very specific social related prompts and text writer gets the point across to the audience.

Participant F1 provided valuable insight into just how critical understanding audience is, especially as students look to their futures once they graduate:

I think that writing, is, well I guess is the ability to communicate ourselves clearly, right, in written form or in oral form. Those are skills that are valued by professors, skills valued by potential employers. When students go out into the job market and they are writing cover letters the employers are going to be looking at those cover letters for clarity and to be sure the students have composed, like a compelling argument for why they should be the candidate selected for the position and have provided evidence to support that argument. So, the writing skills that students learn in their first year writing courses and that they practice throughout their college career, those are really transferable to the professional world.

Writing across the curriculum is the approach that Participant F5 used as it could be applied to any audience, writing task and all majors:

So, I think that focusing on big, overarching skills like understanding concepts like audience, particularly the distinction between writing for a reader who's going to pay attention or just kind of writing for yourself. Big stuff like that I think is really important. I think that understanding how to respond to a variety of writing tasks, in other words not just always respond with the same kind of essay because the things you have to do in college are so different depending on your major.

Participant F2 did not want students to be limited by using only one writing strategy when addressing their audience:

“I would also say another thing they need to focus on more is understanding the correct audience and when they should use first person, third person, or second person, etc. in their writing”.

Peer editing was the way in which Participant F6 felt students could best understand their audience and open up their writing:

I think, I always go back to the editing thing. I do think the peer editing, being able to edit other people's work is really helpful, because of what it does, and all these things I'm saying I pretty much talk to my students about. I'm not giving away anything or trying to hide anything from them in terms of what we're trying to do, and I explain to them and I feel very strongly that peer editing is really great because it's not so much what the editors do for your work it's what you do

for others. And I think the reason why that's so important is that you get to stand back and look at other people's work because you're not, it's like when you read someone's language for the first time, you're coming at it as the quintessential reader obviously. But if you could somehow translate that into your own work, if you could stand back and take a second and look at your work through a reader's eyes, I think that is unbelievably beneficial because then you understand your audience and it can shape your ideas and then understand things like, why it's important to have proper grammar or to make sense and have things edited properly because then the transition of ideas can be received more clearly. So, if you can somehow get a distant that way and look at your own work that changes everything and I think that peer editing is actually a skill, editing someone else's work is going to help the student just in huge ways. So, I think that would be one particular skill that I think is really helpful. I also believe even though writing seems like a solitary task, you're still communicating in a very broad way so to understand the audience, and that you're part of a writing community. Ultimately, I think it makes a difference and peer editing is really great in that regard.

Faculty participants recognized understanding audience as a method to help students move into life after college and into the professional world. Writing effectively to a specific audience was viewed as not just a way of communicating while in college, but also necessary for success after college.

Writing structure. All participants had valuable input regarding writing structure, with several noting that they did not feel that students were either receiving enough

support in high school, or the right type of support, to write a paper at the college level of standards. This was leading students to continue their writing in college in the same way they did in high school, and faculty was having to spend a great deal of time and effort to, in their opinion, facilitate what should have been taught in high school.

Participant F6 had a very detailed response as to why writing structure was not only important, but should be taught before students enter college:

I would say that probably the idea of language editing, particularly just editing in general is something that I'm so surprised at times how little students either know about it or take it seriously. After the first paper I turn back and they find that their grades are not particularly great because I find that the quality of paper is diminished that all of the ideas might be quite good and the organization might be good, but students really, really, I spend so much time trying to explain to them the importance of that. And once they grasp that, especially at the university, apparently, it's not as critical in high school, but at the university when they understand that well enough they really do it in their papers and of course the grades improve dramatically because it allows meaning to be clearer. I would say that is probably one of the first things I talk about. Also, just in general what the expectations of the university are about. I spend a lot of time doing that because they don't really know what it is that is expected of them and it's kind of remarkable and often, they have the wrong information about what the university expects vs. high school. So, that's probably for number one, my main response.

Participant F5 had an equally in depth and informative answer and included revision as another important piece to essay structure:

One thing I would say would be revision, learning that writing is a process and that you need to revise would be the one thing I would pick. But again, I would go back to what I started with is just those big concepts. You're a writer, you're communicating to a reader, you need to be thinking about what that reader needs, you need to be aware of the context, what kind of writing in a sense. The biggest writing skill for me is revision, you know. Understanding the different parts of writing tasks, understanding you're communicating to an audience, being able to focus on saying something that you want to say. I think a lot of students think that if they just fill up the page with stuff that that'll work but in college that really isn't going to work very well. So, I mean, the only other thing I haven't talked about in here that I do with every class I teach, is I spend a lot of time on the difference between summarizing something, between reacting to something, and between analyzing something because these are 3 concepts that students don't understand as discrete concepts, and so, they often turn in in college, they turn in summaries when we want analysis because summary is emphasized in lower schools. Or they turn in reaction, like their feelings about something which is generally not acceptable in college writing, so I spend a lot of time trying to help students understand that these are discrete things and there's time and places for all of them but you have to understand what we're looking in high school:

I think they need a lot of basic help as far as essay structure and formulating their actual thoughts and actually being able to put it into words. I believe that they have a lot of great thoughts and ideas and claims and arguments, but somewhere it gets lost in translation from thinking it to putting it on paper. So, I think they need the most help with basic essay structure, like, here's my topic sentence, and this is what my paragraph is going to be about. And I think once they have that it's easier for them to get their thoughts out and I think a lot of that should come from high school as well. I think the assignments are so rigid in high school that students don't get an opportunity to express their full bank of knowledge that they have. So, I think just open conversations that would start in high school would be more beneficial for students.

In order to understand the essay structure as a whole, Participant F4 described the process of breaking down an essay:

So, one of the things that I actually did with them, last semester, and I just kind of briefly went over it at the beginning of this semester, was we actually broke down an essay. We broke it down; we saw what the important elements were in the essay. What belongs in the introductory paragraph, how do we write an introductory paragraph, because that's important to know how to do that. Then let's look at our transitions and seeing how much evidence we need to put in to support our thesis. Is our thesis supported or is our thesis supported by our topic sentences. Things like that. Going through that conclusion paragraph and telling them, 'Look, you don't add new information in your conclusion because some of

them were doing that. You don't add new information in the conclusion. You also do not start, I have a rule with them in that they're not allowed to start a concluding paragraph with 'in conclusion' because it's one of the most divisive things that they do. No, you can't do that. If you do that, I'm automatically going to take off points. So, they have to find other ways to transition into that conclusion.

Participant F1 further explained essay structure in terms of integrating prewriting activities:

I do scaffolded assignments, so if there is a research paper due at the end of the semester, we break this up into a research proposal. A research paper for instance in our stretch writing course, students submit a research proposal, they conference that proposal with me they create an annotated bibliography where they work with the library to locate sources for their paper, they have an engaged learning component where they go out and think about research as more than just the books and articles that they read. And then they, you know, draft the paper, they peer review it, so it's a step-by-step process right. So, I think that's important for students to understand that's an important skill set that I try to develop in my first-year writing courses. I also a lot of work with, like, academic writing, so one activity might be I'll cut, I will copy excerpts, like passages or quotes from students' papers that need a little bit of fixing up and then we'll focus on something like understanding prepositions, or subject verb agreement, right, and then students will, they are all anonymous, students will pull those excerpts, those

quotes from a bag, write them up on the board and then work in teams to edit the quotes for maximum clarity. So, they're kind of working with their own writing and with the writing of their peers. It's contextualized, we're talking about one type of writing skill.

The writing process regarding essay structure was something Participant F3 looked at as being dependent on the situation:

What I present the students with is, we talk a lot about the rhetorical situation and with the writing process. So, the idea that for that writing process we prepare to write. We take part in an invention process where we brainstorm, we develop our working thesis, we outline what we want to say. Then we actually sit down and we draft using that and we write multiple drafts to get feedback and then when we're done we revise and we go through the revision process edit and proof-read until we come to that paper where we're happy with it. So, I emphasize that a lot and then I also emphasize the rhetorical situation. So, emphasizing to them that the choices that you're making as an author are going to be dependent on the situation on which you're writing, so it's going to be dependent on you and what you want to say. It's going to be dependent on your audience and what they're expecting of you, which could include, will include, their knowledge of the genre and the purpose and the topic. Also, the genre, the topic, and the purpose that they have for themselves as well as the person who assigned it. So, basically taking all of that together. I present them with whatever is appropriate for that and I just try to get them to understand that idea. So, use whatever strategy that you need using

your writing process that works for you that's appropriate for the situation and the task that you're in. So, your writing should always be varied and should always include a section on the situation and what you're trying to accomplish.

Participant F2 utilized different styles of writing to help students understand essay structure:

I would say the most effective writing strategy is one that I use myself, which is outlining, and because students were having trouble breaking away from the five-paragraph essay format, instead of following like one, two, three, four, five, it was simple thoughts, such as, what would your introduction be, what would your attention grabber be, did you have a thesis, where's your counter argument paragraph, what are some evidence you want to bring in, and how would you go back out. I found a lot of students were actually receptive to that, however, I did have a few who were more interested in the free writing style and did not like that structure. So, it really varied on whatever was the student's preference.

Overall, faculty participants stated they noticed students had not received adequate support in high school to write at the college level. Faculty had to expend both time and effort to teach writing structure, particularly breaking down an essay, which students should have learned how to do in high school.

Confidence building. Almost all participants described confidence building as an important component for students to have as a foundation to be able to write well, to utilize in other classes to continue have success in those classes, and in their future employment. This was particularly true for Participant F1:

Yeah, I think for me, confidence with writing, the writing task is probably one of the most important reasons to enroll in a basic writing course. So, many of my students in basic writing courses, they haven't had entirely positive experiences with English education. Sometimes it's not necessarily, you know, because the student lacks basic writing skills but because they have been expected to write to conform, to have writing conform to a certain teacher's standard and maybe those standards haven't been communicated to the student. Maybe they don't understand why they're being asked to write in this form. And so, I think that, you know, for me, having confidence, for when students have confidence in their writing abilities, they have confidence that they can understand writing as a process and break down the various steps of that process, you know, to create a polished product. That's a really valuable mentality to have. So, again, if the student lacks confidence, if they feel they haven't had entirely positive experiences with English education, if they feel they maybe just need some more time to write instead of one semester devoted to studying these big writing concepts, they want a whole year, right, to really dig into these concepts and practice writing. For me, that's the most important reason. Again, writing is a practice, it's a skill like any other, the more you do it, the better you get. So, students who don't feel strong in that practice and that art, I think, need a little bit more time.

Participant F6 further expanded on how building confidence will make a huge difference for students in understanding expectations with regard to writing at the college level:

But ultimately, philosophically, you know, writing is so fundamental to any kind of higher education, that certainly is a thing, but also, I think one of the great benefits of first year writing is that it will help instill confidence in people's writing abilities. So many students come from situations, especially in high school of course, where they have been told they're terrible writers, that they should think about doing something. It's really surprising to me how truly upset they are by, you know, and they're very nervous about everything, as well as often being a freshman and not knowing each step in general and then being told that writing's going to be this terrible thing you're going to have to do and you're not that great at it so be prepared, to you know, not do well. So, it just surprises me how many stories I hear that. So, I think as well as the actual skills and examples that they look at in terms of what writing is. The understanding what the university expectation is which is almost extremely different from what they come to the university with and then also that helps breed confidence. I think knowledge, knowing what to expect, where you're headed, that makes all the difference in the world for students.

Participant F3 looked to build confidence in writing by providing students with feedback at each step of the writing process:

I also try to provide positive feedback because they have had a lot of negative experiences in the past it seems with writing. So, I try to provide as much as I can and also positive and affirmative and constructive feedback. So, my students, I have them, we use the writing process, and I really try to emphasize it so when they turn in the paper, I have them not just turn in the paper itself but all their prewriting and all the stuff that lead up to it. So, I try, I don't get too in depth in the prewriting stuff, but I'll try to look it over and write them feedback on how that's going too. So, if they had a lot of brainstorming, I would be like, great job filling out the page and getting all these ideas. I'll try to write comments on the prewriting and then when it comes to the essay itself, I aim to write on the page. I might describe it more on the next question. I try to write feedback on all the prewriting and the essay itself and again, positive, affirmative, constructive feedback because they do have a lot of those negative experiences with writing. One more thing, I also have them do a reading journal. So, for the first semester they get to pick the book and so it's just to kind of a similar deal, to encourage them to build those reading strategies which is going to help them with writing but also to have a positive reading experience, which hopefully will benefit them when it comes to their writing. So, I write feedback on those but those tend to be pretty short comment, which again, are like, that sounds fun, that kind of thing. When it comes to the second semester, we read a book together and that's what they use for the essays, so I write comments on that one too. So, lots of comments.

Utilizing peer review was a strategy that Participant F4 found to be useful to help students gain confidence not only with their writing, but also in building confidence to speak with professors and ask for help:

I think one of the things that we had to do last semester was, and I liked doing this, and I kind of have this requirement in class again this semester, is they need to visit the writing center. So, whatever writing center is at their college, whether it's a community college, or a 4-year university, they all have writing centers, so be required to actually go see the writing center tutors prior to turning in a paper. I think that's one of the biggest things that we can do for our students because a lot of the times the students don't feel comfortable going to a professor to ask questions. And it doesn't matter how open or how cool you are with those students. They need to be able to have comfort level, so having that peer, you know, somebody who has kind of been through a similar class tends to help them is amazing. And then the peer reviews that they do with each other. That's one of the biggest tools that I've utilized is letting them do peer review so that way they, and they've actually started like it because like I said before, in their high school courses they had it but they really didn't like it all that much and it's just having more of a guidance for them to help them actually like their peer review.

Participant F2 also found that building confidence in students came from relationship building with other students and professor:

I will say the importance of taking a first-year college writing course, regardless of the level is the fact that they have the opportunity to build a community with

their cohorts in that class itself and, also begin to understand what college entails and build connections with the professor. And what I mean by that, is from my experience working with my students as of late, they all have their own personal lives going on, and some of the simplest questions of ‘how do I apply for financial aid’, they do not know how to reach out and are we creating that environment for them where they feel safe enough to ask those questions. I feel that comes along with teaching these basic writing courses because the gateway is not only their entrance into college and what college-level writing is like but in general how to adapt into the college environment and what resources are available for them.

Providing students with example from personal experiences and from other students was a way in which participant P5 helped build confidence in students:

So, I think my basic strategy here is I give them every single thing I know from my own experiences as a student and a writer. The students in my basic writing courses I have for an entire year, and if there’s any trick or any technique or any idea that has helped me or students I’ve had in the past, I’ll throw it out, and I always tell them, ‘Let’s just try this out, you don’t have to adopt this, it’s just trying this out.’ I try to make the classes more like a workshop. Like, I was an art major originally, so I try to think of the class as being like a studio class where we actually, instead of me lecturing we actually do stuff and share it and talk about it. I give them as much as everything that I know at some point or another about writing we play with in some form or another. I cannot imagine not trying to give

them all the tools possible. Some things work for some students and other things work for other students.

Confidence building was described by faculty participants as the basis for enabling students to have greater success in college courses. Building relationships with peers was noted as beneficial. Building relationships with professors was also considered to be important.

Student interviews. Six students stated that they had less than positive experiences in high school writing classes but really felt that their college writing professors were there to support them. Three students stated that their professor went out of their way to find time out of class or office hours to answer questions they had. Four students were a little timid at first to send e-mails to their professors and provided examples of how their professor encouraged them to do so. Students explained that for them it was a turning point where they could tell the professor really did care about them and wanted them to become better writers. Several students also expressed that they did not receive this level of support while in high school and perhaps if they had, they might not have needed to take a writing support class in college.

My identified themes were determined from the responses received from faculty participants and are shown in relation to the two guiding research questions: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college? What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support/basic writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college? There were

four major themes that emerged from student interviews: (a) Essay structure, (b) Feedback, (c) Lack of high school teacher support, and (d) Professor support.

Essay structure. Almost all participants struggled with writing essays and talked about where they had trouble during the writing process. Participant S7 stated:

Since in high school I did not know how to write essays, that is what I needed the most help with, basic structure, how to connect my paragraphs with one another so it would have a smoother flow between paragraphs so I could let the reader have a better understanding of what I'm basically writing. The structure of essays. I feel that's the one that helped me a lot. Since I'm in college I'm always going to be writing a lot of essays and at a different level, so that is the thing that is going to help me the most. Writing essays, reading some complex articles, I would say, so it can help my vocabulary to expand.

Participant S6 found it difficult to just start the writing process:

One of the main factors was I couldn't really get the thoughts from head into the actual paper. When I tried to write it, I'd stay confused and I needed help breaking down essays, how long stuff should be, how many examples I should use, and all that kind of stuff.

Participant S5 explained how the process of writing an essay was strengthened by being provided with examples and a writing strategy:

For me, I believe writing an essay was very difficult, because I understood why writing, but in other perspective I don't really believe they understood what I was talking about. I believe when I would get asked a question, I really wouldn't know

how to explain things. That's where I had the most difficult with. My professors have, they've given me examples of how I can write an essay, and like, answer questions. So, an example would be that, when I would get a question, I would just write random stuff that comes to my mind when I read that question, and at the end I would put those words in a sentence. So, I never thought that would help me, but now that I'm in college it really has helped me a lot. That overall, I believe that the writing support, or like, the writing course that supports the students has really helped me. Overall, if I had to take everything again, I believe I would, because instead of just going straight to advanced writing, I believe I would take this one again because I've taken it step by step, and it has really shown me what I could improve on.

Utilizing a slower-paced class helped Participant S1 with components of how to write an essay:

One of the experiences I had with writing, well I still have it, cuz I'm still learning more about it, is how to like, generate a thesis, and how to outline my essay and how to stop being a bit vague cuz I tend to second guess myself on my writing. And one of the factors that led me to remedial was seeing how I was not able to catch up or learn as fast as my classmates, so that's when I started asking around in high school if there was, like an easier class, or like a much more slower-paced class, which then they helped me with.

Outlining was a helpful strategy in structuring an essay as explained by Participant S3:

During high school, a skill that I adapted to was, I would say, outlining, and it was a key feature because not only did I use it, like senior year, with many of the EOP (Early Opportunity Program) and the PIQ (Personal Inquiry Questions), but I had this assignment which was worth half of my grade through all the classes I had. It was a research project and that really helped me and it was just continuously more effective every time I used it and it gravitated towards me and it just helped me develop it and connect my ideas key by key and then points, and it was just more of a reliable skill that I could just go ahead and follow through with it. My professor, she really stressed outlines, and since I was already, I wouldn't say an expert, but somehow, I knew how to maneuver the outlines and how I wanted them to come out to be in regard to my essay, and it was something I needed because I was taking plenty of English classes, but I was mostly writing, reading, connecting, and again writing, so that was really helpful.

Student participants noted that the overall writing process was difficult. They described the breakdown of how to write an essay as especially difficult. Participants stated that faculty was very helpful in providing examples of how to write an essay.

Feedback. All participants had quite a lot to say regarding feedback and how it was an integral part of being able to not only write an essay but write a well-written essay. Many also stated that often times feedback received in high school had been almost nonexistent, vague, and sometimes bordering on mean. Participants did have positive comments regarding feedback, particularly when they were speaking about the feedback they received on the papers they wrote in college.

Participant S3 gave examples of receiving both positive and negative feedback:

I did receive a lot of feedback and some professors, it came to times where like a presentation, and they vividly just pointed out the do's and don'ts of a presentation, and in that aspect, I was, like, embarrassed and then timid to even go ahead and do one of the presentations in that class because of what feedback I got. I would say it was kind of harsh. Then there was other times where it was a written note or e-mails regarding what can I improve, what was like, good, and if I would like to share with any other people my presentation or whatever it was and I liked that better just because also you can say critical critiques. I guess there's always a time and place where everything can be shared but I liked when the support is through the professor and the student where it's comfortable enough to say the cons of the student or what they can improve on rather than standing up there by yourself already shy enough to even present and then having the professor go ahead and throw you what you're doing wrong and, like what you need to work on then them just being really harsh about it.

Positive and negative feedback was something that Participant S5 also encountered:

There was a situation, in where my professors that, I would, we would turn in essays and then they would give us feedback but the feedback would be nice, and then when we would turn in the essay it looks like they wouldn't give us the full feedback, so everything would change in their perspective. They would, well that specific professor would, she would tell me one thing, and then when I would fix

that specific thing on the next essay, she would tell me, 'oh, no, you shouldn't have added that or something.' So, that was very difficult to understand because I didn't really understand what she wanted me to fix. My professor right now, she always tells me, she always has a due date for the feedback, but whenever we need more feedback she always tells us, oh, you could send us more, or you could send her more information in what else she could provide for you. And I believe that really helped me a lot because she was the one who actually helped me like English. So, her providing that feedback really made me like the class and especially how she explained things differently. The feedback that I received is that I've had so much improvement from the beginning. With my first professor, she would tell me that my essays were improving and with my professor right now I try my best because it's a different professor, I try my best to have her understand what I'm trying to talk about. I believe that professors, they're some professors, that think that it's about teaching when it's really about understanding the student and why they're having that problem. For me, the experience I have had, the professors have told me what I'm doing wrong and what I'm doing right, so instead of just giving me negative feedback, they've also given me positive feedback that I know will help me.

Positive feedback was received by the majority of participants and was well-received and welcomed as participants felt it was not only a way to help them improve their writing but to also have a more comfortable relationship with the professor.

Participant S4 stated:

Well, I had (omitting professors name for anonymity) in college for my first year, and she was very helpful. She sent me back a lot of feedback for everything that I did, including my grammar and what I need help on, and what needs improved. It was really helpful.

Positive feedback helped Participant S1 to be more confident in writing essay and see that improvement reflected in the eventual class grade:

The amount of feedback I got from my professors was enough for me to understand that it was ok to open up in my essay cuz, she told us in the beginning of the school year that English is a subjective course. Like, there is no right or wrong answers, only when it comes to, like, taking the test, like, oh what happens in a chapter, something in the book, and essays it would mostly be our opinion which would be ok because everyone has their point of view. Which tells me a lot because again, I tend to be vague. So, in my essays scared that I'm gonna get it wrong, and she helped me be more open about it, and she helped me generate a thesis by bringing worksheets and everything else The amount of feedback that they gave me was enough to see that I have gotten better from where I first started from high school to the first semester of college, and I feel it was helpful because I didn't know how much I have gotten better. I thought I was still in the same place, but my teacher showed me how further I've gotten through my essays from going from a C to a B-.

Positive feedback was something that Participant 5 expressed helped expand her level of writing:

The 2 professors that I had for the two past semesters, they have given me many feedback, and of course it helped me. My recent professor I have now, she, I like her support when she gives feedback because she, she tells me, 'oh, you should add this or you should maybe, did you mean it in this way.' And, like the questions that she give me has me thinking more of what else I could write about or also how I could change my words.

Participants S2 and S6 received substantial positive feedback and found it to be very helpful toward improvement of their essays with Participant S6 explaining where help was needed and how improvement occurred:

I would receive feedback on almost all my papers, like you know, like notes, and all those things. You know, what I could improve, what I did good, and honestly it was pretty helpful. they would always, the parts where I needed help, they would always try to at least focus on that more than other things in the class. That is kind of the reason why. I slowly learned how to make longer, better, and more well-informed essays. I got a lot of feedback on my essays, not as much on the other assignments but on the essay, there was a lot of feedback, and she would break down everything I need to improve on.

Participants S2 and Participant S7 expressed similar ways in which positive feedback played a role in supporting improved writing of essays with Participant S2 stating:

I did get a lot of feedback on all of my essays and writings and they were very helpful because the teacher didn't only look at the quantity of the work, but she

definitely looked at the quality and helped me discover what are my weaknesses and strengths. I would say the feedback was very helpful because the professor didn't just look at the quantity of the words, but she looked at the quality which allowed me to turn in professional and accurate work.

Participant S7 expressed how specific feedback regarding word usage helped prevent cheating and formatting errors, which would strengthen essay writing.

The feedback that my professor gave me was super helpful. She was always correcting me on what words should I use or how to quote essays correctly, so I won't be cheating for example or doing plagiarism. She was always helping me on how to do the MLA citation, how to do the basic MLA formats, always correcting me. This helped me in the future because some professors offer you to either do APA or choose your own format, so since my professor helped me with that format I always choose that one because I feel more confident about using it than APA or some other formats that I don't know about.

Receiving positive feedback was something that student participants stated they appreciated. The feedback allowed them to see where they were making growth in their writing. They also stated that sometimes feedback provided was vague, harsh, or in front of other students, which was embarrassing.

Lack of high school teacher support. Several participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of support from high school teachers and how that affected their level of writing:

Participant S2 wanted writing support but did not receive the help that was needed:

I would say I needed one-on-one support from my teachers. The high school I attended was always really packed and even when I took Honors English, I didn't get, like, full, in-depth support of my writing, which led me to take remedial class. Even though I did get feedback on my work in high school I was too scared to ask for explanations since we didn't have that type of connection with our high school teachers.

Participant S1 had a similar experience:

Like if my teachers did help me out and talk to me and pulled me aside and say that I did need a bit more help, but if some teachers didn't do that, I feel like it would go on our own way to figure out if we do need it.

Having basic writing taught in high school that was not aligned to the college level was something that Participant S7 experienced and explained:

The help that I needed the most in high school was basically the structure of essays, basically how to write since I was a student who came from another country and didn't know anything about writing, and basically in another language it was way different from me. So, I think instead of just teaching us basic words to learn, I feel like they would have helped us with some basic structure since we were going to move on to college, and that's what professors were going to ask us to do. So, I feel like some teachers in high school did not do that, and they basically just gave us worksheets to just learn English and not to

learn how to write. I feel like they could have done a better job teaching us how to write then just making us read something that is basically not going to help us in the future. I feel like this mostly applied to my high school because some teachers, they expect us to know how to write, they didn't teach us the basics, so we were always getting confused. So, in college, I personally struggled a lot with writing. But luckily for me I got my professor who started from the basic on how to structure our essays, and all those things, so I think they were more capable of teaching us the basics in college than in high school where it was supposed to be.

Overall, students stated that they did not receive the level or amount of writing support they wanted from high school teachers. They further stated lack of support did not prepare them adequately for what was expected of them at the college level. This lack of support resulted in enrollment in a writing support course.

Professor support. The majority of participants received high levels of support from professors and had numerous stories and examples of the positive experiences and types of writing support help they were given:

Participant S7 focused on utilizing help that was offered by professor:

I feel like my professor did understand on how to teach me. My professor basically started teaching me from all the basics and that has already helped me a lot. I think she was more helpful than some other professors and teachers. When I was in high school, since I was new in this country I never knew how to write e-mails and once, I basically got yelled at because I was being informal with e-mail and that's why I was scared of writing e-mails to professors or anyone in general.

My professor my first semester was always saying that we could ask for help if we need it so I decided to talk to her once and ask her how to write e-mails to professors or some other people in general so I wouldn't be because I was scared of writing. She helped me; she basically gave me the structure of how to start writing how to say hi, how to present yourself, and how to close the entire e-mail by saying thank you for your time, and all those things. That has helped me a lot because in college you're basically always writing to professors for help or for anything that you need about the class or course that you're taking.

Participants S1, S2, S3, S4, and S6 all spoke of being grateful to professors who not only provided a great deal of support during class, but also continued to offer help after class and in a variety of ways:

Participant S1 focused on the professor relating to also being a student and helping show that growth was made:

I feel like my professor did understand the procedures, by like, asking us, asking us as students what we needed help most in like, where, in like writing an essay. Like she made us write on the board what we didn't know how to do and she would help us out by giving us worksheets, like a workshop about it. We had a few days on how to work on it and she would make us do what everyone else needed help on so we can get better at it just in case we forgot how to do it. And I feel like it helped in a good way because I didn't know I needed more help than just thesis, and outlining, and being more open I feel like my teacher always understood how to because she isn't that far away from the same age group as us

when she helps us understand more on how she sees it too, like she's a student herself, so she understands where we're coming from, the struggles, how to be working and doing school, so she helps us know how to organize ourselves, and how to be better into our English course. That's probably why she said that we would be in remedial or a more basic course because we did need more help, like time arrangements, just knowing what to do. I feel like my professor went out of her way by providing all these worksheets, these programs, activities, and, like, mostly activities because, like again, she would help us see that we aren't the only ones that are going through the same thing, that she could be going through the same thing and showing us how from our progress at the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester. I mean I'm taking her again the second semester and she has shown me from the first semester to the second semester I have grown a lot.

Participant S2 is a native speaker of English and found support with foundational writing to be helpful as well as the professor making a special effort to notice particular style of writing:

I would say my professor definitely did understand the procedures and the requirements of enrolling in this class because she dedicated the majority of the class to teaching the students the foundation of writing styles, meaning how to improve transition, paragraphs, how to be a better writer and allow the reader to understand their work. Many of the writings that I wrote in this class involved analysis and reaction and reflection on the topics. I came from a different

background which I always reflected on my writing. I always talked about my background and my past and my professor went out of the way to be someone who understood my work and constantly praise for my writing even though, even further allow me to write a book.

Participant S3 appreciated not only the extra push provided by professor but that professor meant what was said regarding actually offering to provide help:

I would say that the professor I am with right now, she had gone far and beyond of making sure if we needed that extra push into taking another writing course and that support. She was always there to guide us and make sure that this choice was for us and she went out of her way to provide any other courses that might be helpful for us as well which I really do appreciate because maybe we didn't just want to stick to this professor specifically and wanted to browse any others. So, I think that was really supportive and I give much thanks to her. She always went out of her way to provide any other extra resources that we needed to have in order for us to really understand the work that she was giving us and it was always like presentations, over presentations, her having a one-on-one. And, I think that was really huge of her because not all professors, they say they do offer help but they don't really, when you need them it's like, I know a lot of people have plenty of things to do.

Needing extra support with writing an essay, Participant S4 was appreciative of e-mail support provided by professor:

One time, when I need help on an essay, like, I was able to e-mail her back and forth just to ask her like if it was good enough to send out. She was very, like, nice with helping me with that. My professor was very good about e-mailing me back about my problems or if I needed help in my classes. So, they were very supportive. One time we were in class, she asked us each a question, what you think you need to improve on or what we should learn about in class, and to all give her topics, and she tried to answer everyone's topic to learn why we can or can't learn that in class. She tried to find ways to help us out. That's where she went out of the way.

Participant S6 was able receive extra support from professor offering help after class and in altering office hours:

I remember my first semester of college, my teacher, I think for 2 weeks was staying after office hours so that I could get some extra help because my schedule that semester was, wouldn't let me go during her regular office hours. I think the professor understood why we joined the class, and she understood that, like, she can easily teach us because I don't know about other classes, but we were ready to learn and she did the most to help us. This was actually for the whole class. She was letting us stay after. I had come before class for the people that were confused, and that was actually I think, half the class that was staying, and then in about a week or so we all got together and figured out how to finish these essays together.

Student participants noted that they received a great deal of support from college faculty and they were very appreciative. They stated that that faculty went out of their way to offer support in many different ways. This included support in class, extending office hours, and letting students know they could e-mail with any questions and if they wanted additional feedback on assignments.

Field Notes

The faculty and student participants in this study contributed a great deal of data that provided for a thorough and specific analysis regarding the difficulties that first-year college students face when having to enroll in a writing support course. Interpreted data from field notes helped to better understand the opinions and perceptions provided from the interviews and themes that were woven throughout the interview data. The clarity and excitement from faculty, and the candor from student participants assisted me in validating the statements they were providing and allowed me to describe how they answered each established theme. Interviews were conducted remotely with audio interviews so no observation, interpretation of facial expressions or description of body language were included in field notes.

Results of Data Analysis Related to Research Questions

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college?

Student and faculty participants described both positive experiences and difficulties. One area of struggle for faculty was students having only a fundamental

concept of the essay writing process and moving students away from the five-paragraph essay method. Students had challenges with connecting with high school teachers and obtaining help or clarification of writing assignments. Faculty found it challenging to continually provide feedback for students. They stated that student requested in-depth feedback and often it was for writing techniques that should have been addressed at the high school level. Faculty also noted that students were not coming into their first year of college with foundational writing skills, and often faculty had to teach or reteach basic writing. Students felt that they did not receive enough feedback and support from high school teachers. Students stated that even though they did receive a greater level of support during their first year of college then they received in high school, most felt that they should have received the same level of support in high school. Both students and faculty felt that high school teachers were not adequately preparing students for the level of writing that was needed for the first year of college.

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college?

Both students and faculty stated that they would like an alignment to be implemented between high school courses and college courses so that students are better prepared when they enter college. Faculty and students did not feel that students were receiving enough support in high school and that with a stronger support system in place throughout high school, students would possibly not have to enroll in support course in college. Strategies that were suggested by students were greater accessibility to their high

school teachers and building a relationship with them. Many students did not feel they could ask for help from their high school teachers. They also did not feel that they could ask questions or for clarification when they did not understand something that was taught or regarding feedback they may have received. Faculty stated that concepts that were being taught at the high school level were not particularly relevant to college-level writing. Several faculty specifically stated that they would like to have students move away from being taught the -paragraph essay format, as it was very limiting and did not provide the level of rigor that would be needed for college-level writing.

Discussion of Findings Related to Literature and Conceptual Framework

Collaboration between faculty and high school teachers may help to build a support system for foundational writing courses and possibly produce a higher writing level for students who are enrolling in college. When these courses are started in high school, students may be more prepared for the rigors of writing at the college level before entering college. This may also lessen or eliminate the need for enrolling in remediation/support writing courses. Adjustment of course structure and the addition of tutoring and summer school may be adapted into the 4-year high school time frame to further facilitate a stronger writing skill foundation for students before they enter college.

Multiple faculty addressed that students were coming to college unprepared to write at the college level and felt that not enough time was spent at the high school level in regard to writing structure. Themes identified in data analysis are discussed here as related to previous research on the lack of writing skills for first-year college students.

Writing as a Process

Faculty participants in my study expressed concerns that writing just for the sake of writing was not providing the foundational support needed by students. Relles (2016) found more benefit from remedial writing when used as a practical model to instruction in place of basic skill instruction. Faculty participants felt that students were not prepared for the writing expectation at the college level. Lingwall (2010) also noted that high schools were producing relatively few students who had the skill level necessary to write an essay at the expected level of college rigor, just as Howell (2011) cited that public schools may have not provided students with the skills necessary to perform successfully at the college level. Faculty participants elaborated that much of what they were seeing in the writing level of the students was based on techniques that had little to no bearing on the rigor of the courses they were teaching.

Understanding Audience

Faculty participants stated that students needed to understand why having a high level of writing was an important skill. Alford and Griffin (2013) found that one of the biggest challenges was students not being prepared for the rigors of college, and that a connection must be made to engage students with what they are learning in the present and how it will apply to the future. By providing support at the high school level, faculty stated that students would have a much stronger foundation in their writing level and will have an understanding that this stronger foundation may possibly eliminate the need for enrollment in a support writing course during their first year of college.

Essay Structure

Faculty interviews. Knudson et al. (2008) used previous information from a task force formed to prepare teachers and staff with the necessary training to prepare high school students for writing at the level of rigor expected of college level. Analysis of survey data demonstrated that teachers were able to incorporate the material so that it provided for scaffolding of instruction in substantial ways to improve student writing and the possible elimination of the need for future remedial writing courses. Faculty participants elaborated that much of what they were seeing in the writing level of the students was based on techniques that had little to no bearing on the rigor of the courses they were teaching.

According to Amos (2011), almost 1 out of 3 students across the nation were enrolled in college remedial courses because they were not coming academically prepared to do college-level work. This enrollment data may indicate that nationwide, high schools are not adequately preparing students for the rigor of college-level writing (Bettinger & Long, 2009; Butrymowicz, 2017; Howell, 2011). Faculty participants noted that they would like to see an alignment regarding some type of essay structure format so that what the high school teachers are teaching will correlate to the level of the essays students will be expected to write at the college level. They stated that much of what was being taught is either not relevant or is not going into enough depth to fully prepare student for the level of writing they will be expected to do.

Student interviews. The most frequently occurring observation from students revolved around the severe lack of preparation they incurred as incoming students

regarding competency at the college writing level. Students explained that they often had trouble with not only writing at the college level of rigor, but also were lacking in many other writing aspects regarding essay structure, particularly in the use of correct grammar and spelling.

Dell'Angela (2016) noted that nearly 40% of students enrolling in 4-year universities are taking remedial courses. While attending high school, these students not only received average grades in the classes they did take, half never enrolled in classes that would prepare them for the rigor of college-level writing. Student participants stated they would like high school teachers to provide students with higher levels of essay writing support before entering college. Jimenez et al. (2016) proposed that by ensuring high school teachers across the nation did a better job of preparing incoming college students, there may be a significant decrease, or even elimination, of the need for support writing courses. The authors suggested this could be done by fostering continuity between high school and colleges, aligning requirements, and being transparent regarding knowledge, skills, and coursework needed for success at the college level. Bell-Ellwanger et al. (2017) suggested that the standards between high school and college may be misaligned and further complicated by varying policies on placement.

Confidence Building

Howell (2011) found that students who are unprepared for the rigors of college-level writing may struggle with having a lower academic ability and may have to put forth more effort when compared to students who are more academically prepared. Aligning with interviews from faculty participants, faculty felt that building confidence in

students was essential to their overall success. Porter and Polikoff (2012) also found that having a stronger writing foundation level before entering college may also help students gain a level of security that could help students navigate the outside barriers that were identified by Howell. Eliminating these barriers was seen as a step toward preparing students to succeed in college courses (Boatman et al., 2013).

Faculty participants stated that writing that was being taught at the high school level was not aligning with the college level of expectations. Methvin and Markham (2015) expanded on factors stated by Howell (2011) and Boatman et al. (2013) and agreed that a closer alignment of high school and college standards may improve the confidence level in students as their writing improves. This in turn may eliminate the need for writing support courses or provide students with a greater foundation for success overall college should a writing support course still be necessary. Smith (2016) also indicated that a partnership of high schools that have a focus on more rigorous academic standards and colleges implementing closer monitoring of remediation students, builds confidence and may lead to higher graduation rates from 4-year colleges.

Feedback

Student participants wanted to see high school teachers work more closely with college faculty in writing standards so students could receive feedback that may help them to possibly eliminate the need for support courses at the college level. Findings by Howell (2011) and Boatman et al. (2013) indicated that the earlier alignment is made between skill level and placement, the more success students may achieve once enrolled in either grade level or remediation writing college courses. Tierney and Garcia's (2008)

research results were similar to the previous findings of Dye et al. (2000) in that both results showed that lack of preparation in writing at the secondary level was a contributing factor to students failing to be prepared to do college work. Tierney and Garcia (2011) had previously used a qualitative study to determine how the courses students took in high school and the information presented would allow students to apply that information into achieving college-level readiness. Creech and Clouse (2013) had previously suggested that a partnership between high schools and colleges may reduce the need for remedial writing courses.

Student participants felt that if they had received more feedback overall, and more in depth feedback, they may have been able to improve their writing enough so as not to have had to enroll in a college support wiring course. As pointed out by Scott-Clayton et al. (2014), a more accurate screening process prior to college enrollment may reduce or eliminate the need for enrollment in support courses. Including more in-depth feedback from high school teachers to high school juniors would start to solidify writing skills needed at the college level.

Lack of High School Teacher Support

Multiple student participants provided examples of lack of support in high school and how not receiving the support they needed and wanted led them to enroll in a support writing course in college. Student participants felt that if they had received more support in high school, there was the possibility that they would not have had to enroll in a support writing course. They stated that often times teachers were unavailable or unwilling to provide help to strengthen their writing. Bachman (2013) found the most

frequently occurring observation from students revolved around the severe lack of preparation they incurred as incoming students regarding competency at the college writing level. Stronger levels of support while in high school may reduce or eliminate the need for support courses at the college level.

Professor Support

Student participants also provided examples of high levels of faculty support in the writing support course which helped them to be successful in the course. Bernasconi (2008) stated that the most important components that contributed to writing well include reading rhetorically, thinking critically, and writing authoritatively. Providing students who were enrolled in a support writing course with a stronger support system and a mentor may allow more students to graduate with 4-year degrees (Boatman et al., 2013).

Mendoza (2017) identified enrolling students in support courses, coupled with high levels of faculty support, allowed more students to transition to regular credit-bearing courses, the dropout rate decreased, and the potential for more graduates increased. Throughout the interviews, student participants stated numerous times that the lack of support at the high school level was a direct correlation to students having to enroll in support courses the first year of college.

Project Deliverable

The data indicated a need for targeted individuals to provide support to a specific population in higher education. The faculty and undergraduates, based on the feedback obtained, showed a need for writing support strategies to be implemented at the high school level and continue at the college level. Based on findings from my study, I found

it pertinent to develop a Professional Development Program (PDP) focused on a partnership/ relationship between teachers at the high school level and college faculty at the research site. Perry (1970) stated that students need to adequately read, write, and comprehend increasingly difficult expository text. A lack of collaboration between high school teachers and college faculty can place a substantial burden on students entering their first year of college. Consequently, I designed a collaboration program to facilitate usage between high school teachers, college faculty, and students. This PDP will allow the interaction of both educators and students to implement writing support strategies to help students become stronger writers and increase their chances of graduating with a 4-year degree.

Summary and Conclusions

In Section 2, I described the research methodology, data collection, analysis process, and results of data analysis. Personal recorded interviews with seven faculty members and seven first-year college students were used to collect data. I used a coding process for collected data to determine definitive reoccurring themes. Specific thematic patterns were then looked at in relation to the overall study using the research questions as a guiding framework. The themes found in the interviews were correlated to the findings utilizing a comprehensive literature review. The descriptions and explanations from faculty and students' experiences provided evidence regarding the future intervention needed for writing courses and when and where these interventions may be implemented (see Merriam, 2009).

Several themes emerged from the data analysis. Faculty responses included: moving away from the five-paragraph essay, writing as a process, understanding audience, essay structure, and confidence building. Student responses included essay structure, feedback, lack of high school teacher support, and professor support. One overlapping theme from both faculty and students was essay structure, and that mechanics of how to write an essay were not being taught at the high school level or were not being taught in enough depth.

Perry (1970) stated that moving students from a simplistic view of knowledge to a complex view of the world may help students understand the complex views of the world and of themselves. This can be applied as to why it is important to have a support program for students who are coming in underprepared for the rigor of college-level writing and who need to be guided in a smoother transition from the simple to the complex as it pertains to writing. Students coming in underprepared for the rigor of college level writing may also have their success impeded in classes in which they are enrolled. Educators need to identify evidence-based strategies that would help prepare struggling writers for greater success at the college level (see Bettinger & Long, 2009). In my study, professors found it demanding to provide enough feedback to students to get them on a more solid foundation regarding improving writing level. Both students and faculty felt that some level of writing mastery should occur before entering college. This collaboration model will complement the project study by strengthening the perceptions of what level of writing is expected from incoming college students and allow for growth among and between high school teachers, faculty, and students. This program was

created to provide high school teachers and college faculty a way to unify and provide students with a stronger level of support while in high school to which contribute to their future success in college.

Section 3: The Project

Introduction

The findings from the data collected yielded evidence that a collaboration between high school teachers and college faculty was a vital component to strengthen the writing skills of students before they entered college. Using the conceptual framework of Perry (1970), preparing students with strong foundational writing skills while in high school may better prepare them for success in writing at the college level. Boatman et al.'s (2013) findings correlate to those of Perry in that providing students who were enrolled in a remedial writing course with a stronger support system while in high school and a mentor may allow more students to graduate with a 4-year degree.

Student participants in the study described how if they had received more writing support in high school, they very likely would not have had to enroll in a writing support course in college. Faculty participants stated that students were not coming to college prepared to write at the level of rigor that was expected. They further mentioned that writing that was being taught at the high school level was not sufficient to keep students from having to enroll in a college support writing course. This course is used to provide intensive writing support to first-year students who are not quite writing at the college level of rigor. In this section, using the findings from this, I explain the rationale for a PDP for writing support that is based on the California Writing Project model and the need for a collaboration between stakeholders. The PDP will focus on high school teachers who teach writing, college faculty who teach a writing support course, and students who are focused on higher education.

The goals of the project are to understand the writing needs of students, provide support for high school teachers, and establish a collaboration between high school teachers and college faculty. Promoting strategies to increase the writing levels of students prior to entering college is also part of the goal for collaboration between high school teachers and college faculty.

Rationale

I decided that a PDP using a collaborative model between high school teachers and college faculty to support writing skills would ultimately benefit students, not only while in high school, but as they transitioned to college students. I had originally chosen to write a policy paper but decided that a PDP could be more focused on the writing process and writing strategies, was more user friendly and hands on, and would allow for a high level of interaction and collaboration between staff and faculty. I also felt that it was beneficial for educators to sit together face-to-face and work to create new writing support strategies, improve upon existing strategies, and implement more support strategies.

The program will target providing high school staff and college faculty with areas of development for both the high school and college levels. By actualizing this partnership, mastery of these skills may help students move from the simplicity of the adolescence viewpoint to the more complex views of college and the world (see Perry, 1970). All responses by participants determined that executing this collaboration would help students have more writing success before entering college and potentially eliminate the need for writing support courses while in college.

The data analysis results in Section 2 guided the design of the 3-day PDP for training high school staff and college faculty with support writing strategies to improve student writing. I used the following emergent themes faculty and student responses to frame the content of the workshop, including moving away from the five-paragraph essay, writing as a process, understanding audience, essay structure, and confidence building. Student responses resulted in the themes of essay structure, feedback, lack of high school teacher support, and professor support. Both groups stated essay structure was an issue, and faculty specifically stated writing as a process and moving away from the five-paragraph essay were issues that needed to be addressed in high school, so these themes will be emphasized in the workshops.

Participating in this 3-day program may promote stronger relations between staff and faculty and possibly help achieve a higher level of writing support at the high school and college levels. The data analysis results shared in Section 2 also affirmed that many students regarded high school staff as not being as supportive as college faculty, which lead to enrollment in a writing support course. I also detected that faculty perceived staff as not providing enough writing support to students while they were in high school. I determined several places for subsequent attention, including more availability from staff, providing greater and more in-depth feedback, helping build confidence, and establishing stronger relationships with faculty. Students and faculty had similar concerns, with the focus on receiving more help, receiving it earlier than the last two years of high school, and making the help more in depth, rather than just basic comments in the way of feedback. This PDP will equip staff and faculty with a clearer vision and stronger

strategies to improve the writing of students at both the high school and college levels. The results may lead to students leaving high school better prepared for college and not needing to enroll in a support writing course.

Review of the Literature

Based on the data analysis results, my goal with this literature review was to examine articles that focused on scholarly sources and explanations and were significant to the creation of the collaboration plan to support the 3-day PDP. I searched for relevant literature using the ERIC and Sage databases accessed through the Walden University Library with keywords, that included, but were not limited to *college readiness, writing support, faculty/teacher perspectives, higher education, professional development, and professional workshops*.

Use of current articles published in the past five years demonstrated that collaboration between staff and faculty is needed to provide high school students with the necessary foundation of writing skills they will be expected to have once in college and that many seem to be lacking. The review of the literature also illustrated that college-level readiness needs to be implemented before the start of college and that students who receive strong support in writing while in high school will ultimately be more prepared to be successful writing at the college level.

Professional Development

Professional development workshops have long been a cornerstone in educational settings. Most staff and faculty are required to attend some type of workshop/training throughout a school year and are often required to attend several

different workshops (see Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017). A valuable component of attending a workshop is the opportunity to engage with peers, sometimes from the same site, often from multiple sites, and even from multiple districts. Olmstead and Turpen (2016) found most participants were supportive of workshops when faculty engaged with each other. Morale is often in short supply because teachers are tired of attending workshops in general, but especially when they are not engaged (Robinson, 2019). Having educators from different locations allows staff and faculty to connect with fresh, new colleagues. Boyce, Rattien, and Vildostegui-Cerra (2018) also found this a great way to bolster morale, which is often lacking whether at a site or in regard to attending workshops. Kearns and Mancilla (2017) reported that staff and faculty talking directly with colleagues from their site helped improve their own teaching. Staff and faculty working together at workshops helps utilize their talent and experience and even brings in fresh, new ideas from beginning educators. Boyce et al. and Robinson (2019) found that by bringing different levels of educators together, resources and strategies could then be shared.

Workshops can encompass a variety of topics but usually stay within the subject matter that is taught at the sites (e.g., writing workshops). As valuable as these workshops are, there are roadblocks to implementation. Finding staff and faculty willing, and sometimes able to create a workshop, is often laborious, as is the creation of the workshop itself (see Solis, 2020). All too often faculty are expected to volunteer to create these workshops on their own time, although depending on their level of persistence, funds may be allocated to compensate them for part of the hours spent creating the

workshop (Adams, 2017). Compensation plays a part in motivating individual staff and faculty members to take on all or part of the role in creation. Workshops may also be expensive or not cost effective to create or implement (Olmstead & Turpen, 2016). Creating a workshop that could be updated when needed or piloted with a group of volunteers may help to strengthen a workshop and provide viability.

Staff and faculty often have extremely busy work loads and expecting them to create and sometimes even attend a workshop is often not realistic (see Yoo, 2016; Zarrow, 2020). Even the scheduling of workshops to attend can be challenging for them because they often have other responsibilities after the workday ends, from coaching to clubs to providing tutoring to students. Pete (2016) found that lack of time as well as the location of workshop were crucial factors in teachers deciding whether to attend a workshop. One of the ways to increase the attendance at these workshops is to make it on a nonwork day or pay the participants to attend (Solis, 2020). Another is to have veteran teachers create the workshop, which sends a strong message to other staff and faculty that the workshop will be worthwhile to attend (Olmstead & Turpen, 2016).

Workshops created by teachers with a focus on the needs of teachers can help insure a successful workshop (Mohammadi & Moradi, 2017). Olmstead and Turpen (2016) found that it was extremely important to create workshops that were relevant to concepts familiar to staff and faculty. Many times attendance is higher when staff and faculty know that they will be collaborating with a variety of educators from different cities, counties, etc., which helps to provide a broader experiential level of learning with so many insightful perspectives being brought to the table (Solis, 2020). Kohnen (2016)

and Adams (2017) stated that teachers and faculty also found it beneficial when different professionals were involved in workshop creation and that it allowed for more up-to-date and relevant information to be presented, which increased the likelihood of attendance. The Professional Development Writing Support Program I have created as the project deliverable, is an example of a relevant topic for the audience, presented in a casual setting, with an emphasis on educators helping educators support each other, while also including the students they teach.

Structure of a Writing Support Program

PDP's focused on writing are created to promote the improvement of writing skills for students and help teachers and faculty with devising and implementing methods to solidify those skills. High schools and colleges are incorporating the concept with high school students and incoming first-year students to provide a strong foundation of writing that can continuously be built upon as the student moves throughout each grade. Sablan and Tierney (2014) showed that college dropout rates often increase when students leave high school and enter college without the level of writing that is expected. Relles and Tierney (2013) stated that the skill level of high school students needs to be aligned with the eventually skill level they will need as college students.

Need for support courses is rising as more students are entering college unprepared to take on the challenges of higher education (see Duncheon & Munoz, 2019). Bettinger and Long (2009) examined this issue at a 4-year university where there was a decade-long increase of students enrolling into support courses. My objective with this study was to examine the perceptions of students and faculty of the need for support

writing skills because through understanding these needs, more effective strategies could be implemented by teachers, and reinforced by faculty once students enter college.

In order to establish and expand on a solid writing support program, certain guidelines should be created and implemented. One of the fundamental pieces in formulating a strong writing support program is gathering committed colleagues to enter into a collaborative effort to become guides for students in their classes (see Adams, 2017). When teachers and faculty create a learning environment where high expectations, integrity, and respect are the standard, it may yield a direct effect on improving writing skills in students (Smith, 2016). Bachman (2013) found that students' perceptions of their writing level was a key factor leading to graduation from college. The basis of a solid and successful writing support program is for teachers and faculty to determine not only the best educational strategies but to identify the best way to implement those strategies (Methvin & Markham, 2015). Teachers and faculty are in a position to act as mentors, help students identify where there are gaps and weaknesses in their writing, and work to align strategies to help students build a more solid writing foundation (see Jimenez et al. 2016). Boatman et al. (2013) suggested that a mentor, along with a strong support system, may produce a higher rate of graduation.

An important approach to building a strong writing support program incorporates elements from both high school teachers and college faculty. A positive relationship between high school teachers and college faculty promotes a warmer relationship with students struggling with writing. A writing support program becomes beneficial to students, as suggested by Jimenez et al. (2016), through promoting unity between high

schools and colleges, aligning requirements, and providing clarity of the necessary skill level. Smith (2016) determined that there should be closer monitoring of students needing support. Data from the interviews of 14 participants in the current study indicated the need for a writing support program to include students and staff and faculty. One such approach, “fail better,” allows for struggling students to channel those struggles into the writing process, which will in turn help students start to achieve success with their writing (French, 2016). Students can then be introduced to others who are struggling with writing and become part of a group that can further support each other to continue to improve writing skills. As students delve into their own writing, they must also be provided with opportunities that will allow them to grow as writers because being active participants in their own development is a crucial step towards becoming writers capable of writing at the college level (see Crank, Heaser, & Thoune, 2019).

Design of Writing Support Programs

Research by Boatman et al. (2013) indicated that students entering college were struggling with writing at the college level of rigor and needed a writing support course. Earlier research by Howell (2011) considered the possibility of a disconnect between high schools and colleges as a contributing factor for students needing writing support. Promoting a collaborative relationship between high schools and colleges will allow teachers and faculty to develop writing strategies to better support student in 11th and 12th grade. These strategies will also provide stronger writing support to first-year college students. Smith (2016) indicated that more rigorous focus on academic standards and more guidance of first-year students will be a start to achieving higher rates of

graduation. A writing support program with a focus on specific components (professional development/student support model, organization model, application model, exploration of success model) will help students develop necessary writing skills before they enter college. Epstein and Draxler (2020) found that use of a strong writing center was a crucial support component for first-year students, as well as having tutors available for additional support.

There are many ways to execute a writing support program. The California Writing Project (2004) created a series of professional learning programs that were aimed at supporting educators with the support needed to help improve the writing of students. This specific program, analytical writing, focused on preparing students to be college-ready writers. Program themes that were integrated were reinterpreting how to teach writing, using writing as an essential element of the curriculum with student improvement as the guide, advancing development for all students, and enabling a collaboration among educators directed at steering students along a route of better academic preparedness (see California Writing Project, 2004). In correlation to the program, teachers had the opportunity to have programs designed to meet the specific needs at their site. Assessment programs were tools that allowed teachers to monitor and document progress being made as students moved through different sections of writing. A combination of additional strategies were put in place to further support both teachers and students. These strategies included additional training in teaching writing, coaching, mentoring for teachers, and forums for students to receive support with refining writing.

Teachers and faculty working together bring different strengths and experiences into the relationship of a writing support program. They may need to make changes to the information in the program on an ongoing basis depending on the success of each theme based on the writing improvement of students. French (2016) incorporated additional strategies of professional development that can be applied to help teachers strengthen their teaching techniques of writing and in turn help students improve their writing. These additional strategies included prioritizing specific instructional practices, working with colleagues to define and refine these practices, and utilizing a support system of teachers helping teachers to lesson frustration if they are struggling with certain topics or themes. Teachers were also encouraged to document methods that appeared to be successful in raising the level of student writing and methods that were not working as well to raise the writing level.

Kempenaar and Murray (2018) found that when more opportunities were made available for those who need more support with writing, their performance increased as well as their confidence, as now they viewed themselves as “key players”. Providing a structured environment also helped with motivation and continued productivity. Lack of motivation and confidence was also noticed by Bodnar and Petrucelli (2016), and often became barriers to students increasing their writing level. Finding ways to promote student engagement allowed students to practice writing as well as ask questions, while students who utilized a writing center to obtain help showed improvement in their writing as well as with essay writing. First-year students who concurrently used a writing center as well the support of a tutor had more support and more success as they were able to

work one-on-one with the tutor, and more in depth with help at the writing center (Epstein & Draxler, 2020).

According to Sacher (2016), an ever-increasing number of students are enrolling in writing support courses at the college level due to lack of writing skill proficiency. This lack of proficiency to write at the college level of rigor may come from high school teachers not having adequate training to teach writing, which then does not allow for students to receive sufficient instruction (see Sacher, 2016). Providing students with writing support sooner rather than later is a solid step toward students not needing to enroll in support classes at the college level. Better academic preparation coupled with understanding college expectations may help students have more success in college courses. Kodama, Han, Moss, Myers, and Farruggia (2016) found that when first-year college students had these foundations in place, they were more likely to be on track for graduation. Antonetti (2017) stated a lack of alignment between writing standards between high schools and colleges may be a leading cause of why students are arriving to college so underprepared in writing. Students may have higher levels of success in writing if they receive more support while in high school, and that support correlates to college standards.

Duncheon (2015) described approaches to college readiness for writing support to include a process for prioritizing academic outcomes, looking at student motivation, and bridging expertise across different grade levels. Student performance in high school is a strong indicator of success at the college level. Providing additional support to students and teachers through a structured writing support program will help students achieve

writing skills needed to make a smoother transition into college and greater success once enrolled. Duncheon and Munoz (2019) further detailed support to include what methods faculty are using to ensure students are continuing to perform at college level, what methods could be enacted at earlier grade levels, and how to keep students advancing in skill level. Barshay (2018) also looked at strong support from educators as a cornerstone to providing students with guidance and the avoidance of needing future support courses. Patterson (2019) concluded that the earlier teachers and faculty have a working relationship, the more students will benefit when in college courses. This corresponds to a writing support program that starts with high school teachers and incorporates faculty in the design and implementation of program.

Resources

Bringing about the implementation of a new program involves staff, faculty, and students working cooperatively to examine the part each will contribute toward ensuring the success of the program. The California Writing Project (2004) provided numerous concepts of how to facilitate a writing support program. As with any program put into place, execution with fidelity will ensure that each part of the program is sufficiently developed. Support from all members is a vital part of making sure the program is both successful and beneficial. Providing students with ongoing and high levels of support both from teachers and faculty is another layer in the foundation of a successful support program. Mendoza (2017) stated that this direct level of support directly impacts the future success of students as they transition to college. Gordon (2017) further found positive results when students who needed support had faculty who were more involved

and offered more input. A writing support program that encompasses all participants, and all they have to offer, strengthens the program for everyone involved. Further changes may be made as teachers and faculty invest in program implementation and where students show more support is needed.

Kent, Berry, Budds, Skipper, and Williams (2017) found that when writing programs are structured and utilize support from experts, a stronger community of academic writers will be in place. They further stated that by peers working together and having “shared norms”, a higher level of learning may take place. As writing is a process that continues throughout life, building a strong writing foundation is preparing students not only for more success at the college level, but throughout adulthood. This is also illustrated by Deveci (2019) who stated that lifelong learning and writing are complimentary, and why understanding the background of students may help develop a program that is better suited to their writing levels and specific writing issues (Swofford, 2019).

The writing process requires a fundamental level of perception in not only how to teach it, but what to teach. Myhill and Jones (2018) have formulated a cycle that consists of “planning, drafting, revising and editing” (p. 147), and also allows writing for a specific audience. Students who have this solid road map to follow may have a way to avoid support courses in their future. Writing support at the college level should not be viewed as the safety net for students who are coming in unprepared (see Relles & Duncheon, 2018). Rather students who are struggling with writing should be identified early on in high school, and started on a path to writing support help, so that they may not

need additional support at the college level. Giordano and Hassel (n.d.) found that first-year students have more success when the type of support needed is identified and implemented. This then, could also be argued, would have the same or similar effect if implemented at the high school level. A higher level of writing instruction is also something looked at by (Quynn, 2020) to ensure that writers write regularly to improve their skill level as well as having writing goals. These goals could be modified at the high school level and eventually increased to include college level goals.

The overall findings from the literature review strongly suggest that there is a need for more in-depth writing support, and that the writing support must be implemented sooner than at the college level. Further findings suggest that students who received high levels of writing support before leaving high school were less likely to need writing support at the college level. This additional information solidifies the need for the implementation of a writing support PDP.

Project Description

Utilizing the review of literature helped to establish the collaboration design of the project by describing resources and relevant material. The (PDP) will help high school staff and college faculty implement a plan to provide writing support to students while in high school and as first-year college students. The target audience of the program is high school teachers and college faculty, as all will have a role understanding the history of the study and implementation of the program. It is important to include other participants, including high school students, college students, and tutors as each plays an additional part in the success of the program. The learning objective's for the project are: (a)

understand the writing needs of students, (b) learn ways to support high school teachers, and (c) learn ways for high school teachers to collaborate with college faculty to increase support of both high school teachers and students.

This project consists of a 3-day, 8 hour/day, PDP focusing on writing support. The first day of the training program will be an 11th grade facilitator led training structured to provide writing support strategies to 11th grade staff. The second day of the training program will be a 12th grade facilitator led training structured to provide writing support strategies to 12th grade staff. The participants in each day one and day two training will be working collaboratively within their grade-level network. The third day of the training program will be an 11th and 12th grade facilitator led training to promote writing support strategies across grade levels; 11th and 12th grade staff, and college faculty).

The resources needed to establish the training program include staff who are willing to reach out to faculty to facilitate a working relationship, and to create, present and implement the program. Counselors may prove to be a valuable resource as they have frequent contact with college personnel and may be willing to act as a go between with staff and faculty until a relationship has been established. Potential barriers may consist of staff and faculty unwilling to work together to create the PDP or either group not having enough interest in such a program. One simple but effective potential solution may include one staff member reaching out to one faculty member. Each would act at the point of contact at their site and would be responsible for inviting other members to participate in some capacity, in program creation, presentation, and subsequent

implementation. They would also be available to answer questions and provide any additional help.

These three days of training will help high school teachers and college faculty with the writing needs of college bound students. Once there is a specific plan in place that incorporates numerous strategies and guides to support faculty, students will have a much better roadmap to follow. Ultimately, they may have a greater level of opportunity in obtaining stronger writing skills needed to be successful at the college level and possibly eliminate the need for enrollment in support writing courses. The PDP will include different opportunities for faculty, teachers, and students to receive training and utilize services to improve writing skills. Staff and faculty need to collaborate on what students will need (the foundation), and then mentors may play an integral part of supporting these students. If struggling writers can receive support when they are juniors from staff and from strong senior high school students, then as seniors receive support from staff and college mentors, and lastly attend a summer intensive writing course, it is possible students may not need to enroll in a college support writing course.

The implementation of this PDP will require 4-6 months to establish. Two grade-level staff members and one faculty member will need to be the facilitators of the project. Designated staff will need to establish a positive working relationship with faculty. Each staff member will take the individual responsibility for their grade-level day of the project and work collaboratively with faculty for the remaining training day. Once the staff and faculty have been chosen for the project, writing support information will need to be located and the workload apportioned, along with any additional funds that may be

allocated for program preparation and approved compensation. The first 4-6 months will be the building of the foundation of the program and creating the process. Over the course of the next few months, the project may be piloted with staff at the school site, which will also allow for feedback toward the finalization of the program.

Project Evaluation Plan

This project will be assessed by a feedback questionnaire to be administered to participants at the end of each training day (see Appendix C). The assessment will be outcome-based and assist in determining if the participants felt the collaboration objectives were reached at the end of each training day. The assessment will also allow feedback to be provided on perceived strengths, and where improvements could be made. At the completion of each training day, the questionnaire would express: if the information presented provided enough level of writing support, suggestions as to where improvements could be made at each grade level, benefits of a writing support program, and what new information participants felt they had learned from the training.

The collaborators in this project will be teachers and faculty who teach writing in some form to high school and college students. These participants will gain better insight due to their time spent with and sincere connection with students. As staff and faculty work collaboratively, they will have a stronger awareness of where changes need to be made to offer further support. This is beneficial not only to the participants but will provide students with educators who have additional methods to provide writing support in various grade levels.

Project Implications

The professional development project will bring about potential social change by bringing high school teachers, college faculty, students, and tutors together to share their levels of expertise and first-hand experience with writing support. The collaboration will provide a valuable resource from each group to help with possible social change as each participant brings a unique perspective to the discussion. This project has the potential to affect high school and college students by starting a focus earlier in high school on needed writing skills. A strategic plan helps guide a support system between high school and college collaborators. Students will be provided with a foundational writing support program with assistance from teachers, faculty, and tutors that will help improve writing skills while in high school, and provide a smoother, stronger, and more successful transition into college. Local 4-year colleges will benefit as the need for enrollment in writing support courses may be lessened or eliminated.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

Project Strengths and Limitations

In this project study, I have shown strategies that may help support first-year students enrolled in a writing support class and professors who teach the course at a 4-year school. The strategies will help show professors and high school teachers where the educational environment can be modified to meet the needs of incoming first-year students who need more support with writing,

High school English teachers and college professors will be able to use this PDP to effectively communicate what writing skills would be beneficial for students to have before they leave high school in order to have more success at the college level. I developed this program to allow high school teachers and college professors to work collaboratively, and at their convenience, to utilize the time they have for training within their own groups and with college faculty. It will also give them the ability to discuss the issues students are facing with the students providing the challenges from their perspective. Both high school teachers and college professors may apply the information to the courses they teach and create and implement a standard writing skill level that is beneficial to both students and faculty.

The limitation of the project is more data are needed from students at earlier stages in their education to have earlier identifiers as to the struggles they are having with writing. The project recommendations may provide some observances of the issues students are having with writing, but it does not support a culmination of students and faculty in all school and colleges.

Additionally, this study was confined to Southern California. Despite this narrow radius, the relevance of this program may be used in schools and colleges across the country. Insight into writing instruction and how to deliver it more effectively to students at each level may lay a foundation starting in high school that can continued to be built upon and strengthened throughout college.

This program has another limitation related to the time and funds available at both the high school and college levels. The program cannot be regulated across the country because different institutions have their own standards in place for what constitutes writing proficiency. Resources are also finite, and each institution may need to apportion funding to what they deem may be more effective methods based on their student population.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

An alternative design to help incoming first-year college students possibly avoid enrollment in a writing support course is to target writing with foundational courses at the start of and throughout high school. Duncheon and Munoz (2019) stated that teachers raised concerns regarding a need to raise awareness about college and college preparation, which may also extend to deficits in writing levels. The focal point of preparing students for college readiness in regard to writing skills, is guiding students though high school to achieve and maintain grade-level writing skills. A partnership between high schools and 4-year colleges and universities would be further enhanced with collaboration starting prior to high school so that the alignment of standards and expectations would stretch across all grade levels (Crowe, 2016). This would further

strengthen the writing skill level students have prior to college admittance and help them possibly avoid having to enroll in a writing support course.

The project study themes revealed that students felt they were given little to no support in high school to improve their writing and that the lack of help resulted in enrollment in a support writing course at the college level. Professors also found it challenging that students not only arrived at college with less than the writing skill level necessary for success at the college level, but that almost all, if not all, students arrived with the same assembly-line foundation that was not suitable for writing at the college level. A collaboration between high school teachers and professors who teach writing courses is a key component to identifying the ways to help students be successful in high school and continue with that success in college.

Scholarship, Project Development and Evaluation, and Leadership and Change

Working on this project study and the project itself helped me build knowledge and skills in scholarship, project development and evaluation, and leadership and change. It has been a long journey, but through the process I was able to gain strength in each of these areas. I will be able to use these skills to benefit my future work as an educator.

Scholarship

As a teacher, I continually utilize information in the field of education. As a scholar, I was able to take it to a higher level by reading literature that had a focus on a specific problem. By analyzing this information, I was able to identify the problem, discover information to interpret the problem, examine why there was a problem, and how to begin to provide solutions to the problem. My project development expertise was

enhanced by working directly with the participants to provide a research project that will assist each member at vital steps in their education and respective teaching. These additional educational strategies may help prepare students with writing skills needed to succeed in their college courses (see Rodriguez & Tierney, 2014). This collaboration will also help me strengthen my skills in the field of education and leadership.

Project Development and Evaluation

The development of a research project was fundamental to providing students with a greater level of confidence in their writing ability while in high school, strengthening that level as they transition to college, and also supporting teachers and faculty who teach writing. As a teacher, I understood the problem that was happening with students while they were still in high school and that the problem continued to occur in college. After careful consideration and data analysis, I decided that a PDP was most applicable in addressing the themes that emerged. I desired to take my knowledge and understanding of what I learned through researching the problem and transfer that information to students, teachers, faculty, and tutors in a live training. Spending a great deal of time listening to participants was necessary to establish that each part of the project will be practical and useful. This project will have the possibility of showing stakeholders how their concerns may be addressed at each level.

Leadership and Change

As a leader at my own site and in my subject matter, going through the process of developing a project provided me with insight into becoming a leader in higher education. A leader identifies a problem and works toward creating a plan to help to start

to solve the problem. Involving others is a vital way to obtain valuable pieces of information that may be used to work toward the solving the identified problem. Often, leaders have to build a relationship with those who may benefit most from the solving of the problem in order for difficult, and sometimes uncomfortable, conversations to take place. It is in this way of questioning and listening that a good leader may then push for change.

Identifying educational strategies to help improve students' writing skills so that they can succeed at the college level is the start of change in education at an earlier level (see Methvin & Markham, 2015). Working on this project allowed me to identify and help provide solutions for change at the high school and college levels. The project is not an all-encompassing solution but will provide a guide to help with the growth and evolution that will happen as education changes. Each member of the collaboration has different needs and as these needs change, the solutions will also need to be modified to meet these changes. Change involves looking at each aspect of the problem and working through the process of creating a solution. I applied this process to the project, which helped me focus on the areas where change was needed and how to go about implementing that change. Researching these areas allowed me to align how I will help be an agent of change between high school and higher education as well as how the solutions provided will enrich current and future students in their educational endeavors.

Reflection on Importance of the Work

As high school students transition into a 4-year college or university, achieving a certain level of writing competency at the college level prior to enrolling in college

becomes the cornerstone for executing a PDP. Throughout researching this project, I learned not only about the struggles that students face but that faculty were also struggling. As a researcher, I was able to connect with students and faculty to understand what their needs were. In this way, I will help to provide a starting point for students to have support with obtaining a stronger writing foundation prior to enrolling in college and allow faculty to move past teaching basic writing. I learned that having high school teachers and faculty work together can help students improve their writing skills to have greater success at the college level and allow change to be created both at the high school and college levels. I have also grown as an educator in becoming an agent of change within the field of education.

Toward the end this journey, I had an interesting night one evening. I basically just zoned myself out each night trying to stay focused and motivated enough to keep pushing forward and write. It is even odder that with the COVID pandemic, my state was back to basically lockdown again. It was not as difficult for me because during this time, as I have stayed at home to focus on completion of doctorate. I look forward to when I am done and my life/time is not centered around looking up information; typing a million words; keeping dozens of names, dates, and pieces of information in my head; and if I never see another draft again it will be too soon. Just as the students in this study were struggling with writing, I was able to empathize with them on some level because it has been a real struggle to get to this far with this project. I definitely know that when I am done, I will pass on to others the things I would highly recommend they do and highly

recommend they do not. My struggle was my own, but the process has made me a stronger person.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The findings of this study suggest that the implementation of a strategic plan to help with writing support for high school students would be beneficial for students entering college and for faculty teaching writing courses.

4-year colleges across the country have an incoming first-year class each year, and the adaption of this study could be used at all 4-year schools of higher education. Having first-year students start with stronger writing skills may help encourage more students to possibly enroll in a 4-year school and also to help more students graduate from a 4-year school.

As suggested by Creech and Clouse (2013), a partnership between high schools and colleges may reduce the need for support writing courses. This collaboration may create positive social change because the focus of implementing training will include the voices of students and faculty. Students will have opportunities to improve their writing skills and will, in turn, also have the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the models to help guide what is working and what needs to be improved. Faculty will also have the opportunity to provide similar feedback regarding models once students enroll in 4-year schools.

This project will, in turn, create a continual dialogue and ongoing discussions between students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college as well as what new strategies could help develop

writing skills needed for success in college (see Rodriguez & Tierney, 2014). Models have the potential to be implemented at earlier grade levels, and future research will allow students and faculty the opportunity to analyze the potential benefits of starting the implementation at earlier grade levels. Qualitative research with samples from other parts of the country may also provide insight into the more specific needs of students and faculty.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the outcome of this study is the groundwork for higher education faculty to form a partnership with high school educators to help incoming students to a 4-year school have a more successful start to their college experience. It is essential that higher education faculty and high school teachers identify areas of writing need and adapt accordingly to ensure the success of students as they make their way into college. A well-thought out, evidence-based approach to program implementation may offset any additional perceived costs and provide students with the opportunity to be supported with their writing both before and during their college years.

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Appendix A: The Project

College Student and Faculty Perceptions of Need for Remedial/Writing Support

Strategies

A Three-Day Professional Development Program



Support Program for Teachers, Faculty, and
Students

Stacey McRae

December 2020

Introduction

This study was focused on gaining an understanding of faculty and first-year college students' experiences in remediation/support courses and was based on two research questions. First, what are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college?

Second, what are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support/basic writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college? The goal was to use this data to guide teachers, faculty, and students to work collaboratively with outcomes that are mutually beneficial.

This program, based on findings from the research, is designed to advise, improve, and reinforce partnership of all academic stakeholders dealing with writing support programs. These stakeholders comprise:

- high school teachers (staff) who teach writing
- college (faculty) who teach support writing to freshman
- high school students focusing on higher education and college students

The program will utilize four components in the collaborative effort: (professional development/student support model, organization model, application model, exploration of success model) The first model will allow 11th grade high school teachers to analyze data of students writing level and use findings to drive instruction throughout the semester. Strategies will be incorporated with colleagues to use to raise the writing level of students and will be implemented in structured writing assignments. Tutors and 12th

grade students who have demonstrated meeting or exceeding grade-level writing standards will be included in a portion of the program. The second model will allow 12th grade high school teachers to use the same format as 11th grade teachers but incorporate additional strategies aligned for 12th grade students. The third model will focus on 11th and 12th grade staff and college faculty building a collaborative and collegiate relationship. The 4th model will allow faculty to provide recommendations to high school teachers using The California Writing Project to help prepare future college students for the rigors of college-level writing.

This project will be assessed by using a feedback questionnaire. At the end of each training day, the feedback questionnaire will be administered to all participants (see Appendix C). The assessment will be mastery-based and assist in measuring if the collaboration objectives were reached at the end of each training day. Participants will have the opportunity to answer anonymously through an online survey to provide honest observations of what insights they acquired from the presented information. At the completion of each training day, the questionnaire would allow participants to give their honest feedback. Participants would be asked if the information presented provided enough level of writing support, to provide suggestions as to where improvements could be made at each grade level, what they viewed as benefits of a writing support program, and what new information they felt they had learned from the training. The collaborators and facilitators in this project will be staff and faculty who teach writing in some form to high school and college students. These participants will gain more in depth insight due to their time spent with and sincere connection with students. As staff and faculty work

collaboratively, they will have a better understanding of where changes need to be made to offer further writing support. This is beneficial not only to the participants but will provide students with educators who have additional methods to provide writing support in various grade levels.

Purpose

The purpose of the writing support PDP is to help high school teachers work with college faculty to promote strategies to increase the writing level of students before they enter college and lessen or eliminate the need as freshman to enroll in a support writing course. This collaboration between colleagues to improve writing instruction may also help students leave high school better prepared once enrolled in college and have more success in college courses. The support program is structured to start in 11th grade with and continue until the end of 12th grade, to allow staff to provide writing support to students while in high school. Incorporating feedback from college faculty will strengthen strategies used by staff and also help better align writing skills being taught in high school to eventual college level standards.

Educational Outcomes

There are three educational outcomes from the writing support program. They are:

- Understand the writing needs of students
- Learn ways to support high school teachers
- Learn ways for high school teachers to collaborate with college faculty to increase support of both high school teachers and students

Intended Audience

The writing support program has 3 main audiences. The first audience is 11th and 12th grade students. Selected volunteers will be invited to participate in a portion of the training days one and two. The second audience is high school teachers, “staff”. This includes 11th and 12th grade staff who teach writing to high school students. The third audience is college faculty who teach support writing courses. These are faculty who teach first-year college students who need writing support and are required to enroll in a writing support course during their first year of college.

Research and Findings

The descriptions and explanations from faculty and students’ experiences provided evidence regarding the future intervention needed for writing courses and when and where these interventions may be implemented (Merriam, 2009).

All faculty provided examples of where students were in the writing process. All faculty also made mention of where they saw students struggling, specifically mentioning the five-paragraph essay model, which they would like to see removed from being taught in high school. Faculty also noted areas where they saw them succeed, specifically taking more chances with their style of writing and breaking away from the five-paragraph essay. Six students acknowledged faculty as caring, supportive, often times going above and beyond their role in the classroom and were grateful for the writing help they received.

Looking at the pattern of responses, faculty were very passionate about teaching a support writing class and gave much of their time to help students become more

successful in their writing. Faculty also expressed that they noticed students became more confident in their writing abilities when there was an established relationship between faculty and student. Faculty addressed the enormous level of importance of becoming someone who writes well and all gave examples of why students would need this skill not only in future classes, but in their future professions. Six students stated that they had less than positive experiences in high school writing classes but really felt that their college writing professors were there to support them. Three students stated that their professor went out of their way to find time out of class or office hours to answer questions they had. Four students were a little timid at first to send e-mails to their professors and provided examples of how their professor encouraged them to do so. Students explained that for them it was a turning point where they could tell the professor really did care about them and wanted them to become better writers. Several students also expressed that they did not receive this level of support while in high school and perhaps if they had, they might not have needed to take a writing support class in college.

Collaborative Writing Support Program

Three-Day Professional Development Program

Program Overview

This PDP, based on findings from the researcher, is designed to advise, improve, and reinforce partnership of all academic stakeholders involved with writing support programs. The purpose of the writing support PDP is to help high school teachers work with college faculty to promote strategies to increase the writing level of students before they enter college and lesson or eliminate the need as freshman to enroll in a support

writing course. This collaboration between colleagues to improve writing instruction may also help students leave high school better prepared once enrolled in college and have more success in college courses.

Program Day 1: (11th grade staff)

8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Program Focus: Creating an Informational Network

Goal: To familiarize 11th grade staff with writing support strategies within a grade-level network

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Utilize data to understand student writing level
- Regulate staff experience to help fill in gaps in student writing level
- Build on and expand current teaching methods of writing
- Incorporate strategies to help improve writing level
- Create writing center if not already established on campus
- Collaborate with grade-level peers to modify/simplify writing strategies and assignments

Materials:

iPads/Tablets

Desks

Chairs

Index Cards

Assignment: Coordinator will:

1. Greet Participants. Provide continental breakfast of coffee/tea and pastries

8:00 am – 8:30 am

2. Coordinator will start with introduction of self, school site, years in education, and years teaching writing and proceed to round robin for staff to follow

8:30 am – 8:45 am

Activity: *“Plugging into the Network – Making Connections”*

3. Have index cards with writing terms/concepts and hand out to staff. Staff will find other staff who has the same term who will then be their partner.

8:45 am - 9:00 am

4. Introduce examples of writing strategies and provide website for interactive activity with staff (using iPad/tablets)

9:00 am - 10:45 am

- a. Connecting with peers
- b. Sharing ideas
- c. Collaborative brainstorming
- d. Kahoot – compete against each other using iPads/tablets to identify writing concepts and strategies

(Break)

10:45 am – 11:00 am

5. Discussion of how creating informational networks would complement and provide support for writing instruction across sites

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

(Lunch)

12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Program Focus: Assessing and Designing Writing Lessons

Goal: To discuss lessons that build on and enhance student’s writing skill level

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Explore supplemental writing material to be used in conjunction with required curriculum
- Design lessons that build on and enhance student's writing skill level
- Engage students using frequent current topics as mini-writing assignments
- Seek out writing strategies to support students struggling in writing

Materials:

iPad/tablet

Hand-outs (examples of supplemental writing support material to be used in lesson design)

Assignment: Coordinator will:

1. Support staff, working with partners, in reviewing supplemental writing support material (hand-outs)
 - a. Research and Exploration – Department of Education
 - b. Collaborative Tasks – Microsoft Microtasks
 - c. Practice and Review – Prodigy - Formulating ideas + organizing ideas + drafting ideas = creating mini-lesson
 - d. Reflection – Best Practices – writing strategies used in conjunction with required curriculum 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

(Break) 2:15 pm - 2:30 pm
2. Guide staff to enhance site-based writing center. Writing tutors, And selected volunteer and 11th grade students will join for this session and activity.

e. Building connections – “I do”

f. Spontaneous conversation - “You do”

g. Unpacking content – “We do” 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Activity: “*Write the Right Way*” – Writing Activity - Preparing 11th grade students to have strong writing skills not only for high school but the real world

a. Develop own identity (You know you)

b. How writing both fascinates and terrifies (Love it, hate it, but rigor is your friend)

c. Benefits of writing well and challenges getting there (Practice, practice, and practice some more) 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

3. Debrief – Instruct each participant to type in iPad (iPads may will be synced so all in attendance may see responses)

a. 1 new strategy learned and how it will be incorporated into writing assignments

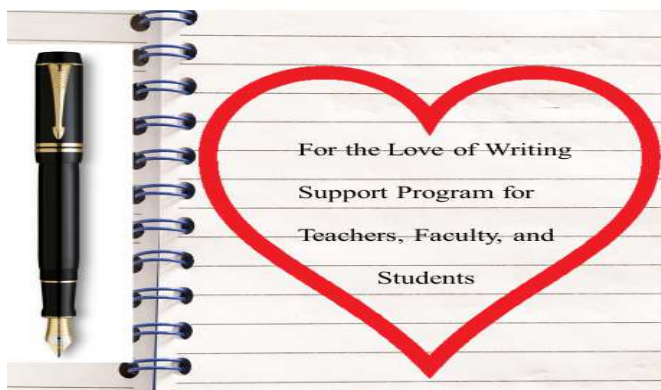
b. 1 thing you worked on with your partner

c. 1 strategy where more support is needed

4. Exit Ticket: Feedback/Q & A

a. Staff will provide one positive comment and one constructive comment related to PDP

b. Additional Questions or clarification 3:30 pm – 4:00 pm



The facilitator will start the training program with an introduction of herself, the purpose of the 3-day PD, and the materials provided. Each participant will have an iPad and a copy of the PowerPoint slides used in the presentation.

Participants will be instructed to use the iPad to take notes, write questions, and for all written activities.

DAY 1



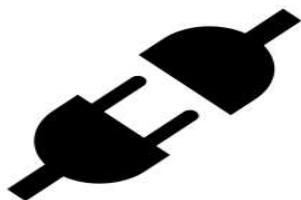
Explanation of goals will be given by facilitator

- Build on and expand current teaching methods
- Utilize data to understand student writing level
- Incorporate strategies to help improve writing level

Day 1



Day 1 will allow participants to become familiar with writing support strategies within their grade level (informational networks). Participants will work with partners and peers in a variety of activities. Based on study findings from the research, activities are designed to reinforce partnership of all academic stakeholders. Activities will also help drive future instruction.



Teaching/Learning

Facilitator will provide examples and explanation of writing concepts and writing strategies. Participants will connect with partner through finding person with same index card. Partners will then continue to discuss writing strategies through sharing of ideas and collaborative brainstorming. iPads will be used to share information with partner and eventually with peers.

Activity

Using iPads, participants will compete against each other playing a few rounds of Kahoot, with each session previously created by facilitator. Participants will try to pick the correct answer from the given choices, which will include information previously provided by facilitator.

Participants, with facilitator monitoring, to discuss the benefits of creating informational networks to provide writing support within (individual) sites.

Participants and facilitator join as active participants to discuss the benefits of providing writing support across (multiple) sites.

Participants, as partners, will be provided with handouts of writing support material they will be asked to assess. Partners will use iPads to look up and review information on various websites. Partners will use Prodigy website to create a mini-lesson that demonstrates understanding of writing support strategies.

Partners will share mini-lesson with group and receive positive and constructive feedback from group and facilitator.



Facilitator will work with staff, writing tutors, and 12th grade students to enhance writing support service at campus writing center. Facilitator will present suggestions to upgrade services provided at writing center. Participants will improve upon suggestions and produce their own suggestions. Facilitator and participants will collaborate on ways to implement produced suggestions.



Writing Activity

Facilitator will present multiple strategies regarding writing skills, each having a specific focus on a support writing strategy. Participants will break down strategies to help support 11th writing grade standards as well as college level of rigor. Focus will be on benefit of writing well and challenges getting there.



Using iPads, participants will document one new strategy learned and how they will incorporate it into writing assignments. Participants will type in one thing they worked on with their partner. Participants will state a strategy where they made need more support.

Participants will share information with group.



Participants will provide one positive comment and one constructive piece of feedback regarding anything from the training.

Facilitator will answer or provide clarification for any additional questions.

*Optional - Additional questions may be used at the end of the semester

Program Day 2 - (12th grade staff)

8:00 am - 4:00 pm

Program Focus: Creating an Informational Network

Goal: To familiarize 12th grade staff with writing support strategies within a grade-level network

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Incorporate supplemental writing assignments to strengthen writing level
- Facilitate the use of multiple writing strategies
- Enhance writing lessons to continue to build up current writing level
- Align writing assignments to transition students into college

Materials:

iPads/Tablets

Desks

Chairs

Index Cards

Assignment: Coordinator will:

1. Greet Participants. Provide continental breakfast of coffee/tea and pastries
8:00 am - 8:30 am
2. Coordinator will start with introduction of self, school site, years in education, and years teaching writing and proceed to round robin for staff to follow
8:30 am – 8:45 am
Activity: *“Plugging into the Network – Making Connections”*
3. Have index cards with writing terms/concepts and hand out to staff. Staff will find other staff who has the same term who will then be their partner.
8:45 am - 9:00 am
4. Introduce examples of writing strategies and provide website for interactive activity with staff (using iPad/tablets) 9:00 am - 10:45 am
 - e. Connecting with peers
 - f. Sharing ideas
 - g. Collaborative brainstorming
 - h. Kahoot – compete against each other using iPads/tablets to identify writing concepts and strategies
- (Break)** 10:45 am – 11:00 am
5. Discussion of how creating informational networks would complement and provide support for writing instruction across sites 11:00 am - 12:00 pm
(Lunch) 12:00 pm – 1:00 pm

Program Focus: Assessing and Designing Writing Lessons

Goal: To discuss lessons that build on and enhance student’s writing skill level

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Explore supplemental writing material to be used in conjunction with required curriculum
- Design lessons that build on and enhance student’s writing skill level
- Engage students using frequent current topics as mini-writing assignments
- Seek out specific writing strategies to support students struggling in writing

Materials:

iPad/tablet

Hand-outs (examples of supplemental writing support material to be used in lesson design)

Assignment: Coordinator will:

6. Support staff, working with partners, in reviewing supplemental writing support material (hand-outs)
 - e. Research and Exploration – Department of Education
 - f. Collaborative Tasks – Microsoft Microtasks
 - g. Practice and Review – Prodigy - Formulating ideas + organizing ideas
+ drafting ideas = creating mini-lesson
 - h. Reflection – Best Practices – writing strategies used in conjunction
with required curriculum
- 1:00 pm - 2:15 pm
- (Break)** 2:15 pm - 2:30 pm

7. Guide teachers to enhance site-based writing center. Writing tutors and selected volunteer 12th grade students will join for this session and activity.

e. Building connections – “I do”

f. Spontaneous conversation - “You do”

g. Unpacking content – “We do” 2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Activity: “*Write the Right Way*” – Writing Activity - Preparing 12th grade students to have strong writing skills not only for high school but the real world

a. Develop own identity (You know you)

b. How writing both fascinates and terrifies (Love it or hate it but rigor is your friend)

c. Benefits of writing well and challenges in getting there (Practice, practice, and practice some more) 3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

8. Debrief – Instruct each participant to type in iPad (iPads may will be synced so all in attendance may see responses)

d. 1 new strategy learned and how it will be incorporated into writing assignments

e. 1 thing you worked on with your partner

f. 1 strategy where more support is needed

9. Exit Ticket: Q & A– Feedback: 1 Positive/1 Constructive

a. Staff will provide one positive comment and one constructive comment related to PDP

b. Additional Questions or clarification

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

* Follow-up Questions after 1st Semester

What is the teacher/tutor ratio to students?

What is the availability per week of teachers/tutors?

Is 1 to 1 assistance provided?

Is small group assistance provided?

What other assistance is offered to students who need additional support?

How are college tutors utilized differently from 12th grade tutors?

DAY 2

Goals



Explanation of goals will be given by facilitator.

- Incorporate supplemental writing assignments to strengthen writing level
- Design lessons that build on and enhance student's writing skill level
- Seek out specific writing strategies that support students struggling in writing



Day 2 will allow participants to become familiar with writing support strategies within their grade level (informational networks). Participants will work with partners and peers in a variety of activities. Based on study findings from the research, activities are designed to reinforce partnership of all academic stakeholders. Activities will also help drive future instruction.



Teaching/Learning

Facilitator will provide examples and explanation of writing concepts and writing strategies. Participants will connect with partner through finding person with same index card. Partners will then continue to discuss writing strategies through sharing of ideas and collaborative brainstorming. iPads will be used to share information with partner and eventually with peers.

Activity

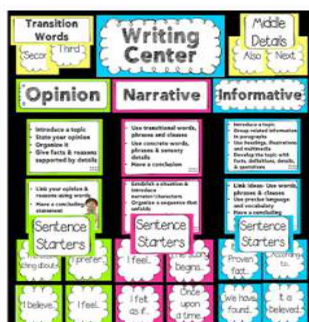
Using iPads, participants will compete against each other playing a few rounds of Kahoot, with each session previously created by facilitator. Participants will try to pick the correct answer from the given choices, which will include information previously provided by facilitator.

Participants, with facilitator monitoring, to discuss the benefits of creating informational networks to provide writing support within (individual) sites.

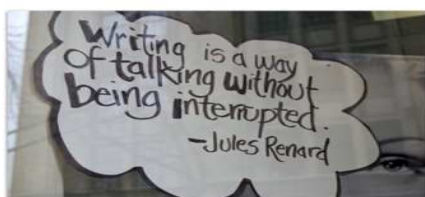
Participants and facilitator join as active participants to discuss the benefits of providing writing support across (multiple) sites.

Participants, as partners, will be provided with handouts of writing support material they will be asked to assess. Partners will use iPads to look up and review information on various websites. Partners will use Prodigy website to create a mini-lesson that demonstrates understanding of writing support strategies.

Partners will share mini-lesson with group and receive positive and constructive feedback from group and facilitator.



Facilitator will work with staff, writing tutors, and 12th grade students to enhance writing support service at campus writing center. Facilitator will present suggestions to upgrade services provided at writing center. Participants will improve upon suggestions and produce their own suggestions. Facilitator and participants will collaborate on ways to implement produced suggestions.

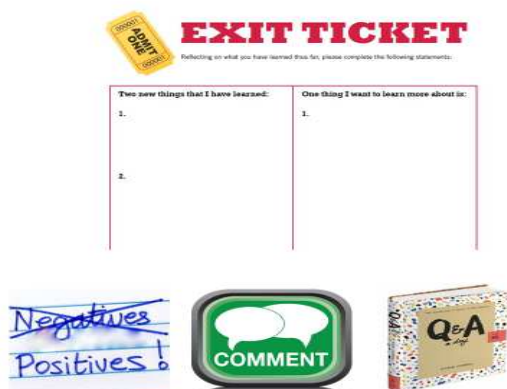


Writing Activity
Facilitator will present multiple strategies regarding writing skills, each having a specific focus on a support writing strategy. Participants will break down strategies to help support 11th writing grade standards as well as college level of rigor. Focus will be on benefit of writing well and challenges getting there.



Using iPads, participants will document one new strategy learned and how they will incorporate it into writing assignments. Participants will type in one thing they worked on with their partner. Participants will state a strategy where they made need more support.

Participants will share information with group.



Participants will provide one positive comment and one constructive piece of feedback regarding anything from the training.

Facilitator will answer or provide clarification for any additional questions.

*Optional - Additional questions may be used at the end of the semester

Program Day 3: (11th and 12th grade staff and college faculty) 8:00 am – 4:00 pm

Program Focus: California Writing Project

Goal: Collaboration of staff and faculty to promote writing support strategies across grade levels

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Assess college-level writing needs by collaborating with college faculty
- Implement additional recommendations from faculty to solidify writing skill level of 11th and 12th grade students
- Utilize college students as mentors for writing support
- Encourage student peer assistance for additional support
- Continue to promote writing center
- Provide students with feedback form

Materials:

iPads/Tablets

Desks

Chairs

Assignment: Coordinator will:

1. Provide continental breakfast of coffee/tea and pastries 8:00 am - 8:30 am
2. Coordinator will start with introduction of self, school site, years in education, and years teaching writing and proceed to round robin for staff to follow

8:30 am – 8:44 am

Activity: *“Plugging into the Network – Making Connections”*

3. Have index cards with writing terms/concepts and hand out to staff. Staff will find other staff who has the same term who will then be their partner.

8:45 am - 9:00 am

4. Introduce examples of writing strategies and provide website for interactive activity with staff (using iPad/tablets) 9:00 am - 10:45 am
 - a. Connecting with peers
 - b. Sharing ideas
 - c. Collaborative brainstorming
 - d. Kahoot– compete against each other using iPads/tablets to identify writing concepts and strategies

(Break) 10:45 am - 11:00 am

- e. Voice and Choice – Empower Yourself and Each Other

Group Discussion – student success stories – growth and guidance

11:00 am - 12:00 pm

(Lunch) 12:00 pm - 1:00 pm**Program Focus:** Writing (Well) Matters

Goal: To discuss lessons that build on and enhance student's writing skill level

Objectives: Participants will be able to:

- Engage students in summer intensive writing program
- Focus on college readiness - writing at college level of rigor
- Interventions as needed/additional feedback/availability to meet with students
- Determine if students have meet writing level proficiency
- Provide student with feedback form

Materials:

iPad/tablet

Hand-outs (examples of supplemental writing support material to be used in lesson design)

Assignment: Coordinator will:

Provide overview of California Writing Project

Activity: Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JPUh9mfSqWU> – How to Teach the Writing Process – Stages of Writing in a Nutshell (9 minutes)

- a. Research and Exploration – California Writing Project
- b. Collaborative Tasks – Improving Students Analytical Writing
- c. Practice and Review – I Write the Future – classroom-tested ideas
- d. Reflection – Research Framework – writing strategies to enhance required curriculum

1:00 pm - 2:15 pm

(Break)

2:15 pm - 2:30 pm

5. Explore college writing center – one stop writing support

e. Planning - “I do”

f. Development - “You do”

g. Adaption - “We do”

2:30 pm – 3:00 pm

Activity: “2 Steps Forward and No Step Back” – Writing Activity –

Preparing in-coming freshman to have strong writing skills for success at the college level

a. Choose your genre

b. Target your audience

c. Explore the issue

d. Be active participant

3:00 pm – 3:30 pm

Debrief – Instruct each participant to type in iPad (iPads may will be synced so all in attendance may see responses)

a. 1 new strategy learned and how it will be incorporated into writing assignments

b. 1 thing new thing/strategy you learned

c. 1 strategy where more support is needed

6. Exit Ticket: Feedback/Q & A

d. Staff will provide one positive comment and one constructive comment related to PDP

e. Additional Questions or clarification

3:30 pm – 4:00 pm

DAY 3



California Writing Project

- Assess college level writing needs by collaborating with college faculty
- Implement additional recommendations from faculty
- Promote writing center

Explanation of goals will be given by facilitator



Teaching/Learning

Facilitator will provide examples and explanation of writing concepts and writing strategies. Participants will connect with partner through finding person with same index card. Partners will then continue to discuss writing strategies through sharing of ideas and collaborative brainstorming. iPads will be used to share information with partner and eventually with peers.

Activity

Using iPads, participants will compete against each other playing a few rounds of Kahoot, with h each session previously created by facilitator. Participants will try to pick the correct answer form the given choices, which will include information previously provided by facilitator



Facilitator will lead discussion on sharing student success stories and how they supported students struggling with writing. Staff and faculty will contribute their success stories. Discussion will expand to how to further strengthen writing support for struggling students.



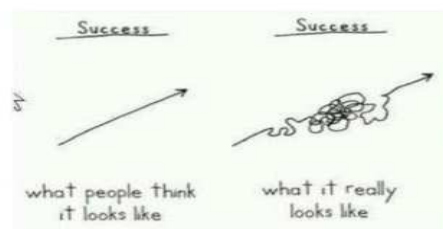
Participants will watch video and take notes on how to teach the writing process. Facilitator will present writing strategies taken from the California Writing Project. Participants will discuss writing strategies and how to implement in required curriculum.



you do



Facilitator will work with staff and faculty to enhance writing support service at campus writing center. Facilitator will present suggestions to upgrade services provided at writing center. Participants will improve upon suggestions and produce their own suggestions. Facilitator and participants will collaborate on ways to implement produced suggestions.



Activity

Participants will work with partner to create an easy way to engage students by modeling one writing strategy of their choice. Participants will use iPad to document lesson which will be shared with facilitator. Facilitator will share with participants.

Debrief

1. What went well?
2. What didn't go well?
3. What new knowledge or skills do you need to develop?



Using iPads, participants will document one new strategy learned and how they will incorporate it into writing assignments. Participants will type in one thing they worked on with their partner. Participants will state a strategy where they made need more support.

Participants will share information with group.

EXIT TICKET	How do you feel about today's lesson?
	 <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>

Participants will provide one positive comment and one constructive piece of feedback regarding anything from the training.



Facilitator will answer or provide clarification for any additional questions.

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- Butrymowicz, S. (2017, January 30th). Most colleges enroll many students who aren't prepared for higher education. *The Hechinger Report*. Retrieved from <http://hechingerreport.org/colleges-enroll-students-arent-prepared-higher-education>
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Appendix B: Interview Protocol & Interview Questions

Project: College Student and Faculty Perceptions of Need for Remedial/Support Writing

Strategies

Interviewee:

Date/Time/Location:

Process: Seven faculty members and seven first-year students will be interviewed individually and in person or through Skype. Each interview will be audio-recorded for future transcription. Each interviewee will have the option of evaluating the transcript for accuracy, and upon approval, the researcher will evaluate transcripts for common trends and additional findings.

Research Question 1: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college?

The following interview questions will be used for college students:

1. Describe from your own experience what type of writing skill help you needed most in high school and what factors led you to take a remedial/support/basic writing course.
2. During your first year of college what writing skill help did you need most?
3. Describe the amount and type of feedback you received from teachers and professors when deciding to take a remedial/support/basic writing course and whether the feedback was helpful.
4. Explain how teachers and professors did or did not understand the procedures and requirements for enrollment in remedial/support/basic writing courses. Can you provide an example of why you feel that way?
5. Describe an incident where you feel your teacher or professor went out of the way to provide enough information to help you make an informed decision regarding enrolling in a remediation/support/basic writing course.
6. What are the most important reasons for enrolling in a remediation/support/basic writing course? Can you give an example of why you feel that way?

The following interview questions will be used for faculty:

1. Describe from your own experience what type of writing skill help first-year college students needed most and what writing skill help in high school would have been beneficial.
2. Describe the amount and type of feedback you provided to first-year college students deciding to take remedial/support/basic writing courses.
3. Explain how first-year college students did or did not understand the procedures and requirements for enrollment in remedial/support/basic writing courses. Can you provide an example of why you feel that way?
4. As a professor who teaches first-year college students, what are the most important reasons for enrolling in a remediation/support/basic writing course? Can you give an example of why you feel that way?

Research Question 2: What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support/basic writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college?

The following interview questions will be used for college students:

1. During your first year of college what writing skill help do you feel would have allowed you to have more success in future college courses?
2. Describe the amount and type of feedback you received from professors when taking a remedial/support/basic writing course and whether the feedback was helpful.
3. Explain how professors did or did not understand the benefits of a remedial/support/basic writing course. Can you provide an example of why you feel that way?
4. Describe an incident where you feel your professor went out of the way to provide additional writing strategies to ensure your success in future classes.

The following interview questions will be used for faculty:

1. Describe from your own experience what type of writing skill help do you feel would allow students to have a greater level of success in future courses.

2. Describe the amount and type of feedback you provided to first-year college students to help with writing skill strategies and development of writing skills needed for future courses.
3. Did you present students with additional writing strategies? If so, did you find that students were receptive to additional strategies that might help ensure success in future courses. If no additional writing strategies were presented, can you explain why not?
4. What are the most important reasons for students to learn additional writing strategies to further develop writing skills for success in college? Can you give an example of why you feel that way?

Appendix C: Professional Development Program Feedback Form

Thank you for attending the writing support training. Please take a few minutes to provide valuable feedback, which will be used to improve future trainings. All responses are confidential.

Please place a check next to which applies to you:

high school teacher college faculty student

1. Comparing what you knew about writing support prior to attending this professional development training and what you have now learned, explain one writing strategy you feel will better help support students struggling with writing.
2. Please explain how the strategy you chose could be incorporated into a specific grade level (for staff and faculty, the grade(s) you teach; for students, the grade you attend or will be attending).
3. Please explain if you feel that supplemental writing assignments are or are not beneficial to strengthening writing level.
4. Is the use of tutors something that you think should be more widely promoted to help with writing support? Please explain.
5. What additional resources are you aware of or should be made available for staff, faculty, and students to help provide writing support?
6. Please explain how current writing center instruction could be better aligned to support students with writing.

7. Do you feel the information presented in the training made the training a good investment of your time? If yes, please explain. If not, please provide suggestions for improvement.

Appendix D: Coding Matrix

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Examples from faculty transcripts</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Themes</i>
RQ1: writing skill remediation/support needs	“students were struggling in basic writing” (F3)	Not beneficial	1. Moving away from five-paragraph essay
	“writing was being hindered by use of the five-paragraph essay” (F3)		
	“some students are learning how to actually break the five-paragraph essay format” (F4)		
	“I think as well as the actual skills and examples that they look at in terms of what writing is” (F6)	Roadmap	2. Writing as a process
	“understanding the importance of things like peer review, or even more direct kind of writing skills, understanding having a thesis and communicating it” (F5)		
	“understanding the correct audience and when they should use first person, third person, or second person” (F2)	Play to the house	3. Understanding audience
	“understanding you’re communicating to an audience, being able to focus on saying something that you want to say” (F5)		
	“It’s going to be dependent on your audience and what they’re expecting of you” (F53)		
	“they need a lot of basic help as far as essay structure and formulating their actual thoughts and actually being able to put it into words” (F7)	Put it in words	4. Essay structure
	“they need the most help with basic essay structure, like here’s my topic sentence and this is what my paragraph is going to be about” (F7)		
	“when you’re examining the text or an essay or something like that then you need to be able to write about it academically” (F4)		
	“I think one of the great benefits of first year writing is that it will help instill confidence in people’s writing abilities” (F6)	Handholding	5. Confidence building
	“it’s giving them the time and the support that they need to build that confidence to be effective writers” (F3)		
“when students have confidence in their writing abilities, they have confidence that they can understand writing as a process and break down the various steps of that process” (F1)			

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Examples from faculty transcripts</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Themes</i>
RQ2: remedial/support/ basic writing skills strategies	“let them know that there’s so many ways and different kinds of writing” (F1)	Explanation	1.Moving away from five-paragraph essay
	“making language more part of your life verses something that you’re struggling against” (F6)		
	“breaking down an essay to see the important elements (F4)		
	“breaking down arguments and creating more sophisticated arguments” (F1)		
	“making language more part of your life versus something that you’re struggling against” (F6)	Reasons and details	2.Writing as a process
	“take part in an intervention, brainstorm, develop a working thesis, outline” (F3)		
	“providing different writing strategies to find ways that work best” (F2)		
	“communicating to audience and focusing on what you want to say” (F5)	The who and you	3.Understanding audience
	“audience knowledge of genre and topic” (F3)		
	“when to use first, second, or third person” (F2)		
	“go back to that particular essay and build off of it again” (F7)	Revise and revise again	4.Essay structure
	“what belongs in introductory paragraph, how to write an introductory paragraph, transitions, evidence” (F4)		
	“multiple drafts, feedback, revise, proof-read” (F3)		
	“having confidence allows for understanding writing as a process, break down steps of process, create a polished product” (F1)	Yes, you can	5.Confidence building
	“need time to build confidence and build those skills that are not easy” (F3)		
	“Kept coming back until about second year and then start to gain the confidence needed” (F5)		

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Examples from student transcripts</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Themes</i>
RQ1: writing skill remediation/support needs	“when I tried to write I’d stay confused and I needed help breaking down essays” (S6)	Writing struggle	1.Essay structure
	“writing an essay was very difficult” (S5)		
	“how to generate a thesis and how to outline my essay” (S1)		
	“I did not know how to write essays” (S7)		
	“I personally struggled a lot with writing, but luckily for me I got my professor who started from the basic on how to structure our essays” (S7)	Time invested	2.Feedback
	“it was ok to open up in my essay, it would mostly be our opinion” (S1)		
	“helped me discover weaknesses and strengths” (S2)		
	“didn’t just look at quantity of word, but looked at quality, which allowed me to turn in more accurate work” (S2)		
	‘written note or e-mail regarding what can I improve’ (S3)		
	“she sent me back a lot of feedback including what I needed help on and what needs improved” (S4)		
“what I could improve, what I did good, and honestly, it was pretty helpful” (S6)	On my own	3.Lack of high school teacher support	
“If my teachers pulled me aside and say that I did need a bit more help, but if some teachers didn’t do that, I feel that it would go on our own” (S1)			
“I needed one-on-one support from my teachers. I didn’t get, like, full, in-depth support of my writing, which led me to take remedial class” (S2)			
“I feel like they could have done a better job teaching us how to write then just making us read something that is basically not going to help us in the future” (S7)			
“They didn’t teach us the basics, so we were always getting confused” (S7)			
“I don’t really believe they understood what I was talking about” (S5)			

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Examples from student transcripts</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Themes</i>
	<p>“I felt like my teacher always understood where we’re coming from, the struggles” (S1)</p> <p>“showing us how from our progress at the beginning of the semester to the end of the semester” (S1)</p> <p>“understood my work and constantly praise me for my writing” (S2)</p> <p>“she always went out of her way to provide extra resources” (S3)</p> <p>“making sure if we needed that extra push” (S3)</p> <p>“very supportive if I needed help in my classes” (S4)</p> <p>“she tried to find ways to help us out” (S4)</p> <p>“really made me like the class and especially how she explained things differently” (S5)</p> <p>“we were ready to learn and she did the most to help us” (S6)</p>	Warm hug	4.Professor support
RQ2: remedial/support/ basic writing skills strategies	<p>“slower-paced class to help with writing” (S1)</p> <p>“students write on board what help needed” (S1)</p> <p>“provide worksheets” (S1)</p> <p>“workshop environment/helping each other” (S1)</p> <p>“foundation of writing styles, improve transitions, paragraphs, how to be a better writer and allow reader to understand their work” (S2)</p> <p>“extra resource provided to really understand work” (S3)</p> <p>“self -reflection/room for improvement” (S4)</p> <p>“examples of how to write an essay” (S5)</p> <p>“feedback on every essay” (S3)</p> <p>“ongoing e-mail support” (S4)</p> <p>“additional feedback upon request” (S5)</p> <p>“breakdown of feedback/show where improvement needed” (S6)</p> <p>“specific feedback/ language improvement” (S7)</p> <p>“frequently ask if extra support is needed” (S4)</p>	Lead by example Speak up	1.Essay structure 2.Feedback

<i>Research Questions</i>	<i>Examples from student transcripts</i>	<i>Codes</i>	<i>Themes</i>
	<p>“stronger support in developing writing skills” (S3)</p> <p>“ongoing help with writing throughout high school” (S4)</p> <p>“examples of breaking down essays” (S6)</p> <p>“not using worksheets as a substitute for teaching how to write” (S7)</p>	<p>Writing is key</p>	<p>3.Lack of high school teacher support</p>
	<p>“empathetic to students/understanding where students are coming from” (S1)</p> <p>“personal style applauded/encouraged to use own voice in writing” (S2)</p> <p>“help with improving writing/literacy” (S3)</p> <p>“support with other courses” (S3)</p> <p>“one-on-one support” (S3)</p> <p>“before/after class support” (S6)</p>	<p>In your shoes</p>	<p>4.Professor support</p>

Appendix E: Sample Transcript – Student

1. What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding writing skill remediation/support needs related to high school and the first year of college?

Quote	Location	Category	Tentative Theme
The help I needed most in high school was basically the structure of essays.	7, p. 1	Writing struggle	Writing support
Basically they just gave us worksheets just to learn English and not learn how to write.	7, p. 1	Writing struggle	Writing support
I did not know how to write essays, that is what I needed the most help with, basic structure, how to connect my paragraphs with one_another.	7, p. 2	Writing struggle	Writing support
I personally struggled a_lot with writing.	7, p. 4	Writing struggle	Writing support
My professor was always giving me some feedback in how to not confuse some things in the format and I think that was super helpful.	7, p. 3	Helpful advice	Guidance
My teacher from high school said I needed to know more about how to_write an essay.	7, p. 5	Helpful advice	Guidance
They expect us to know how to write, they didn't teach us the basic, so we were always getting confused.	7, p. 4	Not feeling supported	Dropping ball
I think instead of just teaching us basic words to learn, I feel like they would have helped us with some basic structure since we were going to move on to college and that's what professors were going to ask us to do.	7, p. 1	Not feeling supported	Dropping ball
I feel like they could have done a better job teaching us how to write.	7, p. 1	Not feeling supported	Dropping ball
My English professor just focused on that one (MLA format) and it was super helpful.	7, p. 3	Feeling good	Positivity
Luckily for me I got my professor who started from the basic on how to structure our essays, and all those things, so I think they were more capable of teaching us the basics in college than in high school where it was supposed to be.	7, p. 4	Feeling good	Positivity

2. What are the perceptions of college students and faculty regarding what remedial/support/basic writing skills strategies could help develop writing skills needed for success in college?

Quote	Location	Category	Tentative Theme
Writing a lot of essays and at a different level.	7, p. 1	Mix it up	Practice
Writing essays, reading some complex articles, so it can help my vocabulary to expand.	7, p. 1	Mix it up	Practice
The structure of essays. I feel that's the one that helped me a lot,	7, p. 1	Mix it up	Practice
The feedback that my professor gave me was super helpful. She was always correcting me on what words should I use or how to quote essays correctly.	7, p. 2	Not just one way	Concrete support
My teacher from high school was the one who recommended to enroll in a basic English class when I moved on to college.	7, p. 5	Not just one way	Concrete support
I was a student who came from another country and didn't know anything about writing and basically in another language it was way different for me. So, I think instead of just teaching us basic words to learn, I feel like they would have helped us with some basic structure.	7, p. 1	Lack of relevance	Not caring
My professor my first semester was always saying we could ask for help if we need it.	7, p. 4	Going out of way	Caring