

**Project Name**

SUNY Writing Across the Curriculum Online Resource Center

**Principal Investigator** Rachel Rigolino

**Campus** New Paltz, State University College at

**Year of Project** 2013

**Tier** Tier Two

**Project Team**

- Matt Newcomb, SUNY New Paltz
- Mary Fakler, SUNY New Paltz
- Joan Perisse, SUNY New Paltz
- Lynne Crockett, SUNY Sullivan
- Linda Smith, SUNY New Paltz
- Kathryn Hurd, SUNY New Paltz

**Overview Summary**

Development of an online repository containing open educational resources focused on writing across the curriculum available both to SUNY and non-SUNY faculty.

**Outcomes Summary**

Project website contains writing resources <https://sites.newpaltz.edu/owrc/> to assist both students and faculty with improving writing skills.

**Project Abstract**

The 21st-century vision of Systemness across SUNY is predicated upon remaining student-centered, ready to anticipate and then to meet our students' needs. Chancellor Nancy Zimpher reiterated this commitment to student success in her recent State of the University address in which she called on SUNY to "put more

well-educated graduates into the world to create and innovate our way into the new economy.”

Teaching students how to write effectively is critical to achieving this goal. As the National Commission on Writing has noted, “Writing is a ‘threshold skill’ for both employment and promotion,” an observation that holds true across industries and occupations. Time and again, research has demonstrated that businesses are clamoring for employees who, in the words of one corporate executive, can “investigate, analyze and report their findings in a professional manner.” Because writing skills are so crucial to student success both inside and outside of academia, Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) initiatives have become central components of higher education curricula. Whether physics, sociology, or business majors, undergraduate students are increasingly expected to complete an array of both low-stakes writing assignments as well as formal essays and reports.

However, while most faculty would agree that teaching students how to write is an essential part of SUNY’s mission, not all faculty possess the confidence to do so nor do most faculty have the time and background to create writing lessons to go along with their current areas of special expertise. This is especially true in STEM disciplines where faculty are often under pressure to deliver a high volume of content knowledge within a 15-week semester.

We are seeking grant money to design and pilot an online site where instructors from across the disciplines can access resources for teaching writing. A survey of existing repositories such as OER Commons and MERLOT reveals a need for an online site containing instructional material of consistent quality that is dedicated to WAC assignments/goals.

If successful, this pilot program would be the first step in developing a robust site housed on the SUNY Learning Commons. This online repository would contain open educational resources focused on writing across the curriculum that would be available both to SUNY and non-SUNY faculty. With this long-range vision in mind, we have given our pilot project the working title: The SUNY Writing Across the Curriculum Online Resource Center.

In this pilot phase, we will house the site locally at SUNY New Paltz. Using The SUNY Consortium Global Workforce Project (GWP) as a model, we intend to create modules that will contain learning objectives, lesson plans, and other resources in the four following areas:

1. Understanding the Rhetorical Situation
2. Technology and Writing
3. Research Strategies
4. Argument

Resources for each of these modules will be designed by veteran Composition faculty from SUNY New Paltz and Sullivan Community College, all of whom have experience with developing and delivering courses online. In addition, our principal investigators have in the past or currently serve on New Paltz’s University Writing Board and the campus’ Teaching and Learning Center. All have organized workshops for faculty seeking to incorporate writing assignments in both their online and face-to-face courses.

Aims of this year-long pilot initiative include:

1. developing at least 3, 20-40 minute mini-lessons with supplemental resources (PowerPoints, Slideshares, videos, etc.); and pre- and post- assessment tools (ex. online quizzes and short writing assignments) for each of the 4 modules;
2. recruiting faculty—especially those teaching in areas outside of the liberal arts such as STEM and business courses—who will agree to pilot the educational resources we develop in their Spring 2014 courses;
3. deploying the modules across 10-12 courses;
4. collecting and analyzing the assessment data, from both students and faculty;

5. sharing our findings via slideshares/screencasts/videos on the SUNY Learning Commons and at the 2014 SUNY CIT.

We recognize that should this initiative show promise, the project would require additional support both to disseminate as well as to maintain the teaching resources we develop. If the pilot is successful, the SUNY Learning Commons would be the logical choice for housing and maintaining a mature version of the SUNY WAC Online Resource Center.

### **Reports and Resources**

- [CIT 2014 brochure](#)
- [SUNY New Paltz Campus Article](#)
- [Project website](#)
- [Mid-project report](#)
- [Project outcomes report](#)

### **Faculty Development**

- Organizational Models of Faculty Support

### **Instructional Design**

- Online Education
- Student Learning Support