

RUNNING HEAD: FOSTERING A DISCOURSE OF PROCESS

FOSTERING A DISCOURSE OF PROCESS: A QUALITATIVE STUDY OF
STUDENT PERSPECTIVES ON A DEVELOPMENTAL COLLEGE WRITING
COURSE

By

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Abstract

This qualitative research study drew from phenomenological, case study, and teacher-research traditions to examine the perceptions and experiences of eight students who completed a developmental writing course. The course was designed as a research based intervention aimed at helping students learn skills, habits, and tools that could assist them with navigating college writing. The study also examined what skills and habits participants believed they needed to succeed in writing for college and how this changed throughout the course of the study. Additionally, it investigated in what ways students connected their development of these skills and habits to class activities. Finally, it examined how participants described using their knowledge about writing for classes across the curriculum.

The study was conducted at a four-year college in New York City. Data was triangulated through the use of two interviews conducted with participants after they had completed the course, assignments they wrote while enrolled in the course, and the researcher's notes. Data was analyzed in relationship to Gee's (2008) theory of Discourse and Lea and Street's (1998/2006) academic literacies model. Using these theories, the study sought to consider the connections and tensions the participants experienced between what they learned in the developmental course and what they needed when they wrote for credit-bearing college classes.

The findings suggested that participants tended to develop more of a process-oriented disposition and approach to writing as they completed the course and wrote for classes across disciplinary contexts. They drew upon a variety of the skills and strategies learned in the developmental class. There was also evidence of challenges that arose

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when participants encountered a variety of writing conventions and research expectations across the curriculum. Implications for future research and instructional practices are addressed.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

In contemporary American society, a post-secondary education is continuously being emphasized as a means toward economic and social mobility (Auguste, Cota, Jayaram, & Laboissiere, 2010; Center for Community College Student Engagement, 2012; Cowan & Kessler, 2015; Obama, 2012). It is likely that this emphasis is connected to why more historically underrepresented populations of students have enrolled in higher education institutions (Cox, 2009; Rose, 2012). This population includes first-generation, low-income, returning adult, military veteran, racial minority, recent immigrant, and other characteristics of nontraditional students (Arendale, 2012; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rose, 2012). Unfortunately, such students often struggle to attain a degree. Research has found that at community colleges (a common starting point for nontraditional students), “Fewer than 46% of students who enter community college with the goal of earning a degree or certificate have met their goal six years later” (Achieving the Dream, 2010). Likewise, other higher education institutions that serve a large population of historically underrepresented populations have similar low levels of successful college completion (Lynch, M., Engle, J., & Cruz, J., 2010).

Low success rates seem to occur partly because many nontraditional students enter higher education underprepared for the literacy demands expected of them in college (Rose, 2005). This lack of access to effective academic preparation is due in many cases to students having “grown up in poverty or been exposed to poor elementary or secondary schools” (Boylan, 2003). Cox's (2009) research speaks to this inadequate academic preparation. Her findings have suggested that today many students enter college without the habits and skills necessary to succeed in college. Such students are

often in need of developmental education programs which are one way that colleges often try to help students who are academically underprepared (Boylan, 2003; Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). These programs often consist of coursework and supplemental services designed to help students develop college level reading, writing, and math skills as well as study skills.

Students who are academically underprepared often need to take some form of developmental coursework. According to research examined by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2008), in the state of California, for “incoming, first-time students...over 70 percent test below college level in reading and writing” (p. 5). Similarly, Foderaro (2011) has reported that roughly three-quarters of new community college students in the City University of New York need to take developmental courses in writing, reading, or math. Furthermore, the Community College Research Center (2014), has reported, “Federal data indicate that 68 percent of community college students and 40 percent of students at open-access four-year colleges take at least one remedial course” (p. 1). These numbers illustrate how central developmental education courses are in many institutions throughout the United States, yet until recently, limited attention has been paid to what actually occurs in such classes.

Statement of the Problem

Although students are often placed into developmental courses, many of them either do not successfully complete them or cannot effectively use what is taught in the courses to improve their overall academic performance (Community College Research Center, 2014; Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). Unfortunately, in many cases, the design and instruction of developmental courses might unintentionally amplify a disconnection

from a student's overall college experience (Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). Rose (2012) has asserted that part of the problem is "the deep-rooted erroneous beliefs about learning that shape most remedial programs" (p. 12). He explained that very often such courses emphasize a "skills-and-drills" approach (p. 126). Likewise, drawing upon research on developmental education programs in colleges in the United States, Lesley (2004) has noted, "the majority of remedial literacy programs in place across the nation tend to focus on the memorization of discreet rules devoid of a meaningful, social context" (p. 63). A central part of the problem is that there is often limited emphasis on connecting what is taught in such courses with what is needed for success in the college curriculum.

Grubb and Gabriner (2013) found that many developmental reading, writing, ESL, and math classrooms emphasize a "remedial pedagogy" approach in which the emphasis is on teaching isolated skills without much focus on how such skills are applicable to contexts outside the developmental courses (p. 52). The researchers attributed this emphasis to several factors, including limited training for developmental faculty in alternative pedagogies and heavy reliance on time-pressed adjunct faculty who are often provided with little more than a course outline and a textbook. Additionally, the researchers asserted that in many cases both syllabi and textbooks are likely to lead instructors towards adapting remedial pedagogical ideas. Such findings point to a need for developmental education faculty to learn to more explicitly and intentionally instruct students on how to take the knowledge, strategies, learning dispositions, and skills learned in a developmental course and apply them to the college curriculum.

In what is likely related to the remedial pedagogical approach to teaching developmental courses, students often feel such courses stigmatize them and are

disconnected from the rest of their college classes (Caverly, Nicholson, & Radcliffe, 2004). Additionally, Bailey, Jeong, and Cho (2008) concluded that students often experience their developmental courses as “confusing, intimidating, and boring” (p. 28). Other researchers have asserted that skill transfer from one learning context to others in general is a challenging and complex process (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010; Beaufort, 2007; Karp et al., 2012). It does not happen easily for most students. If academically underprepared students are unable to connect and use what they are taught in developmental courses to the rest of their coursework there is a serious problem. These issues could impede their ability to develop knowledge and skills that can help them successfully navigate the complex literacy demands of college. There is a gap in the research on how students enrolled in developmental writing courses understand the process of taking the information, abilities, and strategies they have acquired in the context of such courses and transferring this knowledge into other discipline-specific contexts.

Purpose of the Study

Similar to much of the available research on teaching and learning, in my experience as an instructor at various institutions, a coordinator for developmental reading and writing courses, and a tutor, I have observed that very often students compartmentalize their developmental courses. They often appear to perceive them as being isolated from the rest of the academic curriculum and from their overall learning and development. As a faculty member currently teaching developmental reading and writing courses at a four-year college serving a large population of nontraditional students in New York City, I have a professional stake in examining student perceptions

of taking a developmental course designed with the intention of fostering connections to college course writing expectations.

Prior to the current study, I published a research study examining the experiences of three students while they were enrolled in a developmental integrated reading and writing course that I team taught with another instructor (Pacello, 2014). Like in the current study, the previous study sought to understand how participants perceived connections between the reading and writing skills and strategies taught in the course in relationship to contexts independent of the course. There was some evidence that participants perceived the ways they were using what they learned in the developmental course in contexts independent of the course.

One limitation of that earlier study was that the single interview conducted focused on participant experiences while they were enrolled in the course. It did not incorporate a follow-up interview to examine how they might be experiencing the literacy demands of college after they had completed the course. Additionally, because my instructional role in the team taught integrated course was focusing more on the reading instruction aspect of the course and not as much on the writing instruction component of the class, I was not able to document in as much detail how the writing process and the skills associated with this process were taught. Because the focus of the current study was on a critical writing class, and I interviewed participants twice after they had completed the course, it allowed me to discuss in more detail writing process pedagogies. I was also able to take more of a longitudinal approach to examining the experiences and perceptions of students enrolled in the course.

My examination of student perspectives on taking this course can help

developmental education professionals gain insight into how students who are academically underprepared experience and describe a developmental writing class designed intentionally to help them make connections to different contexts. As Grubb and Cox (2005) have noted, there is limited research documenting student voices on the process of taking and completing developmental courses. Documenting such voices is intended to assist me and others in the field to find ways to better help students holistically think about and use what they learn in developmental writing courses in their academic development and in their ability to succeed in college. This type of study can help educators address the question of how such a developmental course might assist students in recognizing and using knowledge, qualities, habits, and skills that can help them to become competent college writers.

The purpose of this qualitative study was to extend on my prior research and examine the experiences of academically underprepared first-year students after they had taken and completed a developmental course. The class was designed as a research-based intervention aimed at explicitly supporting the transfer of knowledge, skills, and learning dispositions into college writing. This design emerged from what the literature has suggested are high quality practices in teaching writing and teaching for transfer. It incorporated elements of a “contextualized” approach by emphasizing the relationship between the knowledge and skills learned in the course and classes students encounter across the curriculum (Perin, 2011a, p. 271). I examined how such a design impacts student perceptions of the course. Additionally, I investigated how students discussed their own evolving approach to writing in relationship to class activities and assignments and college classes beyond the developmental course. This examination was conducted

through an analysis of the ways students discussed through their writing and through interviews, developing their college writing skills and dispositions and transferring (or not transferring) these qualities to other college classes. The data sources were analyzed in relationship to the ways students seemed to be acquiring (or failing to acquire) the skills, habits, values, behaviors, and dispositions associated with writing for college.

The study drew from phenomenological and case study traditions of qualitative research. As Creswell (2007) has explained, phenomenology is well suited to describing the “essence of a lived phenomenon,” and case study is useful in capturing an “in-depth understanding” of an event or process (p. 78). I aimed to describe and come to a detailed understanding about student perceptions of taking and completing a developmental writing course from the perspective of individual students (cases). To access the phenomenon of taking and completing the course, I interviewed students first shortly after they had completed the course and again in the second half of the quarter after they had finished the course. The findings of the study can help enrich the research in the field of developmental education by providing insight into how (if at all) students perceive that the skills, strategies, habits, and learning dispositions emphasized in a developmental writing course apply to other aspects of their education that include writing requirements.

Research Questions

In order to capture the perspectives of students enrolled in a developmental writing course, the following primary research question governed the study and its methodology: What are students’ perceptions of a developmental writing course designed explicitly to help them connect course activities and assignments with college course expectations? The following secondary questions were also addressed:

- 1) What writing skills and dispositions do students believe they need to be successful in college and in what ways does this change throughout the course of the study?
- 2) How do students describe the course activities as supporting their development of the habits, skills, values, and dispositions necessary for college writing?
- 3) How do students describe the developmental course activities in relationship to the skills they actually use in writing for college classes?

Theoretical Framework

According to a report by the Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching (2008), many students enrolled in developmental courses do not understand the conventions and expectations of higher education. The report also explained that students are “likely puzzled by the styles of writing, analysis, and argument required by various disciplines” (p. 5). Such findings suggest that students have not had opportunities to develop the academic writing abilities that could be crucial to their success in college. Similarly, Cox (2009) addressed the way that various scholars have described the academic world as one that “involves particular habits of thinking, acting, speaking, and writing that are often incomprehensible and alienating to people outside academia” (Chapter 7, *Academic Literacies*, para. 4). Such alienation from the practices of the academic world could prevent academically underprepared students from acquiring the habits, skills, and dispositions needed to succeed in writing for college. Developmental coursework can play an important part in helping students acquire these qualities and skills.

Speaking to this notion of particular dispositions, qualities, habits, and skills, Gee's (2008) theory of "Discourse" is used as a framework for this study. He defined Discourse:

a socially accepted association among ways of using language and other symbolic expressions, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting, as well as using various tools, technologies, or props that can be used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or 'social network,' to signal (that one is playing) a socially meaningful 'role,' or to signal that one is filling a social niche in a distinctively recognizable fashion. (p. 161)

When I teach developmental writing courses with the goal of transfer of knowledge, I assume that there are skills, habits, tools, and values of college writing across classroom contexts that are part of an overall Discourse as Gee defines it. I also assume that many students enrolled in these courses have had limited opportunities to become familiar and conversant with the norms of this Discourse. This assumption is supported by research (Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching, 2008; Conley, 2005; Cox, 2009). It seems unlikely that students can succeed in higher education contexts unless they gain a level of competence in the Discourse of writing for college. Failing to gain such competence could prevent them from becoming part of the "socially meaningful group" (Gee, 2008, p. 161) of being students who know how to write for college.

In my own experiences as a developmental writing and composition faculty member at various colleges in New York City, a reading/writing coordinator, and a tutor, I have seen many students who fail to recognize that the tools, skills, values, and dispositions they are developing in a writing course are applicable to their larger college experience and meeting their academic goals. Instead, they often seem to struggle to connect what they learn in a writing course with the types of writing they encounter across the curriculum. This sense of disconnection that I have observed in students is

what originally prompted me to more intentionally design and structure my developmental writing courses. My courses aim to help students understand connections between one academic context and another so that they may flexibly use skills and strategies across the curriculum.

One important dimension of the design of the course is the emphasis on the writing process approach in which students take their work through various stages (see Appendix A). Such an emphasis is aligned with an important value of the Discourse of college writing. For many pieces of college writing across disciplinary contexts, written work must go through various stages, including analyzing the assignment, generating ideas, researching, drafting, proofreading, and revising. This idea of the ways college writing is produced is an important aspect of what Conley (2005) has referred to as college knowledge. Other research has also suggested that the habits, skills, and actions associated with writing and learning as a process are key dimensions of the Discourse of college writing (Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Cox, 2009; Rose, 2012).

It might be easy for faculty members to assume that this kind of process-oriented way of thinking about and approaching writing is the “natural” or “obvious” way to compose writing assignments for college classes (Gee, 2008, p. 221). However, developmental writing faculty members cannot assume that students who are academically underprepared know that writing takes time and must be approached as a complex and recursive process involving multiple strategies, skills, and stages of development. This recursive and robust way of thinking about writing is a value associated with the Discourse of college writing. As Ambrose et al. (2010) have stressed,

very often college students do not approach writing systematically and instead rely on methods of writing that they have used in the past. For instance, student writers might not allot much time to their writing process due to a lack of knowledge about the complexity and the demands of college writing (Conley 2005). They also might not fully understand or value the role revision plays in effective writing (Grubb & Cox, 2005). If students do not think about, value, and treat writing as a complex and recursive process requiring time, dedication, drafting, revising, and proofreading, they might not be able to successfully navigate the Discourse of college writing.

Rose's (2012) description of his experiences teaching developmental writing courses vividly captures several of the values associated with college writing. It also emphasizes the ways students enrolled in such courses might not at first be acquainted with such values and need to unlearn what they previously thought about writing. He wrote,

When I was teaching remedial English, one of my primary goals was to change the model of writing my students carried in their heads. Over our time together I wanted them to begin to conceive of writing as a way to think something through and give order to those thoughts. I wanted them to understand writing as persuasion, to get the feel for writing to someone, a feel for audience. And I wanted them to revise their writing process, which for most of them was a one-draft affair typically done the night before or the morning an assignment was due. Though I paid a lot of attention to grammar and punctuation, I wanted them to see that good writing was more than correct writing. (p. 137-138)

His assertions are closely aligned with the theoretical frame of this study and with the design of the course. The rationale behind many of the teaching methods used in the class assumes that faculty members can help students do what Gee (2008) has referred to as "valuing" a Discourse and "acting" as a member of it (p. 161) by designing developmental writing classes around the recursive stages of the writing process. Such a

design can help students understand that process-oriented writing is an important dimension of college writing. It can also help them unlearn ideas about writing that might have been instilled in them from prior experiences with schooling (Rose, 2012).

Because successfully completing writing assignments is often how students show mastery of a course's content, developmental writing instructors can play a vital role in helping students develop the tools that can "signal" (Gee, 2008, p. 161) to their other instructors that they can participate in college writing Discourse. Based on an examination of the literature focusing on writing for college, I identified several key elements that make up much of the Discourse of college writing across disciplinary contexts. The central overarching quality of this Discourse is having a recursive, process-oriented disposition and approach towards writing. Additionally, my analysis of the research has suggested that the following make up key values, tools, and skills associated with this Discourse:

- Finding, critically analyzing, and using research and reading material effectively and appropriately in writing;
- Using evidence to support claims and ideas;
- Constructing an academic argument;
- Writing persuasively;
- Writing to learn, inquire, and/or construct knowledge as opposed to recycling information or ideas;
- Organizing written work effectively
- Using grammar and punctuation effectively

- Writing with a sense of audience, purpose, and awareness of context (Addison and McGee, 2010; Beaufort, 2007; Conley, 2005; Cooper, 2006; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Graff, 2003; Melzer, 2009; Rose, 2012; Shaughnessy, 1977; Sullivan, 2003; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006).

I used these elements of the Discourse of college writing to examine the ways students seemed to perceive (or fail to perceive) that the Foundations course was related to helping them develop these skills, values, and dispositions. I also examined in what ways (if any) students reported using them in their other courses that included writing.

Additionally, I used elements of Lea and Street's (1998/2006) conceptualization of "academic literacies" in conjunction with Gee's (2008) Discourse theory as another theoretical lens to frame this study. The academic literacies model emerged from the "New Literacy Studies", which is a field that views literacy from a sociocultural perspective (Gee, 2008, p. 67). As Lea (2004) has explained, work from this theoretical perspective begins with the idea that "reading and writing—literacies—are cultural and social practices" (p. 740). The academic literacies model helped me analyze some of the limitations of thinking about and teaching college writing as a unified Discourse. According to Lea and Street (1998), this model "sees the literacy demands of the curriculum as involving a variety of communicative practices, including genres, fields, and disciplines" (p. 159).

Lea and Street (2006) have contrasted the academic literacies model with two other models. The first of these is the "study skills" model, which assumes that literacy competence is comprised of a singular set of "atomised skills" that can be learned and transferred across contexts regardless of audience, purpose, or task (Lea & Street, 1998,

p. 158). It focuses on the “surface features of language form” such as mastering grammar, punctuation, and syntax (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368). It is connected to what Street (1984) previously referred to as an “autonomous” perspective of literacy (p. 19). This perspective assumes that literacy skills can be learned and easily transferred across contexts (Lea & Street, 2006). He contrasted this view of literacy with an “ideological” perspective, which assumes that literacy competence and needed skills are variable (p. 95)

The second model is called “academic socialization,” which views learning to write as a process of “acculturation” into the types of writing done for particular subjects and disciplines (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369). In its assumptions that literacy is context-specific and reading and writing skills are variable, it has characteristics similar to what Shanahan and Shanahan (2008) have referred to in research on primary and secondary education as “disciplinary literacy” (p. 44). This view of literacy focuses on “skills specialized to history, science, mathematics, literature, or other subject matter” (p. 44).

Finally, the academic literacies model encompasses the other two models. However, as Lea and Street (2006) have pointed out, in contrast to the other models, the academic literacies model “views the processes involved in acquiring appropriate and effective uses of literacy as more complex, dynamic, nuanced, situated, and involving both epistemological issues and social processes” (p. 369). For example, students’ ability to successfully navigate the writing demands of college is complicated by the variety of writing assignments they encounter in their courses and the various purposes, audiences, and ways of making meaning of such writing. As Lea and Street (2006) have found, the expectations of one faculty member might be different than the expectations of another,

even if both faculty members are in the same academic discipline. For example, “even within the same courses, individual [instructors] had different opinions about when or if” students should use the personal pronoun “I” in their writing (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 164). Because students are often asked to perform diverse writing tasks across and within disciplines, and they are required to write for different purposes and instructors with varying expectations, it is important to consider whether students understand the importance of and know how to make flexible use of strategies and skills they learn in a developmental writing course.

Students need to be attuned to when it is appropriate to use a certain kind of writing and when it is not appropriate. I have observed many instances of this need for flexibility in my experiences working as an academic support center reading/writing coordinator and tutor. For instance, for a course in the sciences, students might be asked to present information that aims for complete objectivity, with no integration of their own experiences and perspectives, whereas in an English course or a course in the Humanities, they might be encouraged to discuss their own perspectives and life experiences and inject more of their own voice into the writing. Complicating writing even more, for an English class in which students write about literary works, they might be asked to eliminate their own experiences and personal connections entirely, which contrasts with the kind of writing that occurs in other English courses such as composition, where they might be required to write a personal narrative. Furthermore, Madigan, Johnson, and Linton (1995) have addressed the differences in meaning making in discussing the ways the APA format represents a particular epistemology. They have explained that “It is not uncommon for psychology professors to encounter students who

are shocked when they receive a mediocre grade for a report they were proud of, a report that may well have received a good grade in a composition class or a journalism class” (p. 434). Writing in different disciplines and in different courses is often far more “nuanced” and “situated” than the study skills and academic socialization models would suggest (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369).

It seems likely that students taking a developmental course designed with a “study skills” (Lea & Street, 1998), or a “remedial pedagogy” (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 52), approach will not find the course helpful to them in acquiring the skills, qualities, values, and learning dispositions of the Discourse of college writing (Gee, 2008). Their perceptions might, in fact, be correct because such a model does not seem to be appropriate in helping students succeed within the complexities of college writing. Students might view taking the course as merely a hurdle to get over on the way to getting their degrees. If students go through developmental courses with such perceptions, they might take a passive approach to the courses (Grubb & Cox, 2005). Furthermore, if the courses are designed around a remedial approach, it seems unlikely that students will learn the crucial tools, strategies, habits, and values of the Discourse of college writing, which they will need to succeed as they move into their writing intensive college level courses (Conley, 2005).

Drawing from the work of Lea and Street (1998/2006) as part of my theoretical framework helped me address the complex nature of writing for college. It also helped me to analyze the experiences participants had with writing for college courses beyond the developmental course and how they perceived such writing compared to the writing stressed in the course. While Gee’s (2008) theory helped me to examine the aspects of

college writing that contain elements of a unified Discourse—process-oriented approaches, using evidence, building arguments, organizing ideas, writing to learn, using grammar and punctuation effectively—Lea and Street’s (1998/2006) model aided me in considering the complexities and nuances of college writing depending on the specific context in which such writing was assigned.

Using the lens of Gee's theory of Discourse along with elements of Lea and Street’s academic literacies model, this study sought to analyze and interpret the perceptions of students after they finished a developmental writing course designed explicitly to help them connect what they learned about writing in the class with college writing expectations. It aimed to understand in what ways students seemed to be aware of their development of the tools, skills, values, and dispositions described in the theoretical framework. Additionally, it sought to examine how they described applying what they learned in other courses that had writing requirements. Finally, it examined what difficulties they experienced when they encountered differences in expectations about writing.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This literature review first reviews research that has explored the similarities and differences in writing practices valued in the various academic disciplines of college. Discussing such research will help illuminate some of the reasons students might find the writing practices of college incomprehensible and how certain pedagogical approaches to developmental courses might help counter this problem. Second, the literature review focuses on how certain writing process pedagogies have been incorporated into developmental courses to avoid the problem of a class designed with an emphasis on “remedial pedagogy” (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 71). Third, because grammar and punctuation review make up a portion of the developmental course’s design, information on teaching grammar and punctuation will be reviewed. Fourth, research that has examined the role that metacognition plays in student learning and transference of skills is reviewed. Fifth, this review discusses some of the ways particular support and academic resources have been incorporated into developmental writing courses to help students access resources and develop skills needed to succeed in college writing across disciplinary contexts.

Finally, the review focuses on examining student perceptions of developmental courses and learning. How students perceive learning in developmental courses in relationship to what they need in college courses might play a large part in determining how well they are able to think about and transfer learning in such classes into what they are required to do in college courses. As Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have argued, when developmental courses are designed without an emphasis on how what is learned in the course can be applied in different contexts, students “have no coherent answer to the

enduring question of ‘Why do we have to learn this?’” (p. 55). If instructors do not help students recognize how learning in a developmental class can be applicable to other contexts, it seems unlikely students will be able to transfer what they learn about writing into other classes. As research has shown, in general, effective transfer of learning from one context to another often does not occur without explicit guidance (Ambrose, et al., 2010; Beaufort, 2007).

College Writing

As Lea and Street (2006) have argued, students entering college are often confronted with a wide range of writing expectations from various faculty members. Those starting developmental writing courses or programs have the challenge of focusing on improving both their basic skills such as grammar and punctuation as well as becoming aware of the need to adjust their writing to specific disciplines as needed. As research has indicated, very often, different fields of study emphasize different writing practices (Addison & McGee, 2010; Lea & Street, 1998). I have encountered such differences in my experience as a writing tutor and coordinator. For example, a first-year student might be taking a course in developmental writing alongside courses in psychology and business and may need to adjust their written work based on the context. Some professors in the sciences or other fields might instruct students to avoid using the “I” pronoun (Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006), while a course in Expository Writing might encourage students to incorporate personal narratives into their work using first person narration.

It must also be understood that some disciplines do similar things in different ways. For example, in an English course, a persuasive research essay might be written in

MLA format, while in a Sociology course, a similar essay might be written in APA format. In MLA format, the research source year is only listed at the end of the paper, whereas in an APA paper, it is emphasized within the body of the essay as well as on the References page.

However, although there are various conventions and formats of writing that students need to master depending on the context, there are some aspects of college writing that bear elements of a Discourse. Multiple researchers have stressed the importance of academic argumentation and persuasion in the Discourse of writing for college across contexts. For instance, Graff (2003) has asserted that a primary dimension of writing in college across disciplines is the ability to effectively make an argument. He called this skill “argument literacy” and explained that students “need to know that summarizing and making arguments is the name of the game in academia” (Graff, Introduction, para. 5-6, 2003). Similarly, in writing about his experiences teaching developmental writing, Rose (2012) emphasized how crucial it was for him to teach his students to recognize “writing as persuasion” (p. 137). Likewise, in his research analyzing the essential skills and knowledge students need in college, Conley (2005) has found that the ability to make a clear, persuasive, evidence-based argument is a crucial dimension of being prepared for college writing. Moreover, Thaiss and Zawacki’s (2006) research examining writing rubrics from across the curriculum at George Mason University showed that the term argument was used on more than 50 percent of the assignments and the term evidence was used on over 90 percent of the assignments. As they concluded, these findings suggest “that each program expects writing that makes and supports some sort of claim” (p. 87).

Furthermore, Addison and McGee (2010) surveyed educators from various disciplines and academic contexts, including both two-year and four-year colleges, to determine what was valued as effective writing in different contexts. The ability to organize information was ranked highest regardless of discipline. The next most highly valued skill was the ability to analyze information, ideas, and arguments. The third was the ability to appropriately use evidence to build on an idea. Additionally, the researchers noted that in the 2002-2003 National Curriculum survey conducted by Act, Inc., “Both high school and college faculty ranked skills classified as ‘writing as process’ as more than moderately important” (as cited in Addison & McGee, 2010, p. 153-155).

Similarly, Melzer (2009) analyzed more than 2000 assigned writing tasks from a variety of disciplines at different higher education institutions across the United States. He found that those courses which were linked to writing across the curriculum programs often embraced a "writing-to-learn" approach and used pedagogical methods emphasizing the writing process (p. W257). These findings have important implications for this study because such commonly valued habits, skills, and values might be more explicitly discussed in the context of developmental writing classes and other contexts beyond such courses. Connected to the “writing-to-learn” approach, based on recent research in the teaching of writing, a Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing was established in 2011 jointly by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, the National Council of Teachers of English and the National Writing Project. The framework stresses the need for students to learn multiple strategies for developing a process-oriented approach to researching and writing for college. It also stresses the need for students to develop

the ability to critically think about research so that they may make informed decisions about using evidence in their work.

Finally, in order to examine the question of how to define college-level writing, Sullivan (2003) took part in a pilot study to explore the different types of college writing assignments given in English Composition classes throughout community colleges in Connecticut. As a result of the research findings, the researcher suggested that some of the key things college students should be able to exhibit in their written work include the following: carefully evaluating and analyzing concepts found in reading material, providing structure in their work, incorporating elements of reading material into their written work with a level of skill, and constructing grammatically sound essays.

It seems unlikely that students will be able to find effective evidence, build a coherent argument, and present a clear, grammatically sound essay unless they develop a recursive, process-oriented disposition and approach to writing. Understanding, valuing, and acting in ways in which writing is a process and having the skills to analyze, make academic arguments, and use evidence effectively connect with the aspect of Gee's (2008) Discourse theory involving particular ways "of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting" (p. 161). Because such skills, values, beliefs, and processes are common in much of academic writing, it might be easy for faculty members to assume that they are natural processes that do not need to be explicitly taught and instilled in students (Cox, 2009). However, researchers have found that for many students, such ideas about writing are not understood, valued, or used (Bain, 2004; Conley, 2005; Graff, 2003; Grubb & Cox, 2005; Rose, 2005). These findings point to a need for developmental writing instructors to intentionally build into their courses opportunities

for students to practice process-oriented skills and habits so that they can transfer them into writing across the curriculum.

Writing Process Pedagogies

In order for students to use the skills, tools, habits, and knowledge of the Discourse of college writing and develop flexible ways to adapt to the variety of writing expectations of college classes, they need to be taught to use a process-oriented approach when writing rather than one in which writing is completed quickly in one draft. Speaking to such a need, Grubb & Gabriner (2013) discussed a large-scale qualitative research study examining developmental education classrooms. Their research team conducted observations in 169 classes and conducted interviews with 325 faculty members and members of administrations at roughly 200 community colleges. Their findings suggested that a writing process pedagogy as opposed to a “remedial pedagogy” (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 52) approach is more effective in helping students to develop the recursive, process-oriented disposition so crucial to mastering the skills and habits of college writing. They have discussed this approach in detail:

The writing process approach stresses writing as a form of communication among people and as the expression of ideas, emphasizing the social dimension of writing from the outset. The writing process tends to break the process of writing into discrete steps that lead to a finished essay: first, brainstorming ideas, then writing freely without undue concern for correctness, and then a crucial revision and editing (sometimes by peers or peer groups, sometimes by instructors) and creating multiple drafts. (p. 96)

Such an approach could help students become more motivated and effective college writers (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). The researchers have clarified that this kind of approach does not mean that faculty should avoid teaching the specific skills that are part of the composing process such as formats for citing research sources, punctuation, and

grammar. Instead, these skills should be taught in relationship to students' actual writing rather than as isolated activities.

Likewise, Delpit (1988) has warned against mistaking process-oriented pedagogies for an approach to teaching that essentially eliminates explicit instruction of skills and/or writing conventions. Students need to begin "acting" (Gee, 2008, p. 161) in ways in which writing becomes a process that includes the active use of multiple strategies and skills. These include generating ideas, gathering information, collecting and critically evaluating evidence to help make their writing persuasive, and drafting, revising, and proofreading their work with a sense of structure, organization, clarity, cohesiveness, and grammatical correctness (Addison & McGee, 2010; Conley, 2005; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Sullivan, 2003;). If students are taught these skills and strategies, it seems more likely they will become competent in the overall Discourse of college writing.

Another aspect of college writing connected to the writing process disposition includes the ability of students to consider how their message will be received by an audience. In discussing the writing process, Rosenblatt (2004) has stated that when composing a text, a writer considers the audience and "tries to judge the meaning they would make in transaction with" the text (p. 1382). She has suggested that the writer also puts himself or herself in the shoes of the reader in an effort to gauge what his or her reader might get from reading the text. Such ideas have implications for developmental writing courses. It is likely that in many writing contexts, students are not fully attuned to the transaction that Rosenblatt (2004) has addressed in her work. As Shaughnessy has argued, students inexperienced with college writing often think that a reader "understands

what is going on in the writer's mind and needs therefore no introduction or transitions or explanations" (as cited in Graff, 2003, "Elaborated Codes," para. 1). Because of this lack of knowledge about the need to thoroughly develop ideas and explanations for a reader, students often turn in work that professors find disappointing, or unsatisfactory (Graff, 2003). Such inadequate results might be related to the ways students ineffectively navigate the time demands of working on writing assignments, thus giving them little time to consider their writing from the perspective of a reader (Rose, 2012). When students are neither considering how their audience will receive their message nor successfully navigating the time demands of assignments, it seems likely that it is at least partly because they have not internalized the ways of "valuing" and "acting" (Gee, 2008, p. 161) that are associated with the recursive, process-oriented qualities of the Discourse of college writing.

One way students might be able to become more attuned to writing for an audience during their writing process is through providing and receiving peer feedback (Shaw, 2002). Ambrose, et al. (2010) have explained that when students get feedback from multiple student readers they produce finished drafts that are more effective than ones that have only been reviewed and commented upon by their instructors.

Additionally, if a course is designed to include peers as readers, it can help students to write for an audience beyond what Melzer (2014) has called the "teacher-as-examiner" (p. 107).

When peer feedback is incorporated into a class as part of the writing process, there can be other benefits in addition to providing an audience for student writing beyond the instructor. As Mulder, Pearce, and Baik (2014) have asserted in their

summary of the literature on the topic, when students participate in peer feedback, they can develop multiple key skills and academic qualities, including critical thinking and reflection. The researchers have also identified what the literature has found to be benefits to both the receiver and the giver of feedback. For example when students receive feedback from their peers, it can help them determine whether they have provided support to make their points. Likewise, when students provide feedback to their peers, they can become more analytical, and they can recognize the need for clarity in written work because they must inform their peers how their work can improve. Additionally, as Liu and Carless (2006) have asserted about giving students opportunities to provide feedback to peers, “One important way we learn is through expressing and articulating to others what we know or understand. In this process of self-expression, we construct an evolving understanding of increasing complexity” (p. 281). If students have opportunities to provide constructive feedback on the work of their peers, they might develop a more complex understanding of the revision stage of the writing process. However, research has suggested that in order for peer feedback to be effective, instructors must provide ongoing support to students and teach them how to give useful feedback (Ertmer et al., 2010; Mulder, Pearce, & Baik, 2014). It is also helpful when instructors explicitly share their reasons for incorporating such activities into classrooms and emphasize the benefits of participating (Mulder, Pearce, & Baik, 2014).

Recent technological innovations can play a part in pedagogies that stress the writing process. In examining classrooms throughout the United States, Rose (2012) has argued that technology can play a vital role in rethinking developmental education. However, he has cautioned that “any technology is only as good as the thinking behind it

and the use made of it” (p. 187). Effectively implementing tools such as ePortfolios and wikis can be a powerful way to assist students with internalizing the idea of writing as a process (Klages & Clark, 2009; Pifarre & Fisher, 2011).

Research has suggested that having students produce an electronic portfolio can be an appropriate way to incorporate technology into a class aimed at fostering a process approach to writing because of its emphasis on revision. An ePortfolio is a digital collection of written work. In a study on the use of ePortfolios in composition courses at the University of Georgia, Desmet, Miller, Griffin, Balthazor, and Cummings (2008) have concluded that when students are required to revise their work for inclusion in an ePortfolio, their writing skills tend to improve. This finding can have implications for developmental writing classrooms that stress a writing process approach. Additionally, as part of what they include in an ePortfolio, students in college classes are sometimes required to reflect on their written work and on their own developing skills (Brammer, 2011; Worley, 2011). Such reflection could be useful to helping them become more aware of their own strengths and weaknesses (Ambrose, et al., 2010). Additionally, having students take their work through an additional revision for inclusion in their ePortfolio, after having gotten feedback, can help make revision a central component of the writing process in a developmental course.

Wikis are another technological resource that might play a role in helping students to develop their writing process. A wiki is a shared digital space in which writers can collaboratively write and edit a common online page of a website (Karasavvidis, 2010). Although there is limited research on the use of wikis in developmental writing courses, studies have been conducted in other academic contexts, which suggest that they can play

an effective role in helping students with the peer feedback dimension of the writing process. For instance, Su and Beaumont (2010) have discussed their use in a higher education setting as enhancing “effective collaborative learning and confidence in formative self and peer assessment by facilitating rapid feedback” (p. 417). However, based on a qualitative study with 38 college student participants enrolled in a course on the use of technology in learning, Karasavvidis (2010) has cautioned that for wikis to be an effective tool in college student writing and learning, the instructor must carefully scaffold the uses of the tool.

Such findings have implications for the use of wikis as a tool of peer feedback in developmental college classes. If students share their work in a common space online and have their peers review their work before submitting it to their professors, it seems likely they will become more attuned to looking at their work from the point of view of a reader so that they can design their written work with a better sense of audience awareness. Integrated effectively, wikis can play an important part in courses designed around writing process pedagogies.

There is limited research addressing the role of writing process pedagogy in the developmental classroom. Indeed, Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have discussed this shortage. They have explained that although the writing process approach is very much aligned with what the research suggests about high quality practices in teaching writing, there is a shortage of “direct evidence” of its success (p. 75) in the context of developmental classrooms. However, as the researchers have suggested, success in developmental courses is at such low levels that different pedagogical approaches need to be attempted.

Grammar and Punctuation Instruction

There is debate about what role grammar and punctuation instruction should play in the teaching of developmental writing. In their research examining community colleges, Grubb and Gabriner (2013) found that many developmental writing courses teach grammar and punctuation using a remedial pedagogy approach in which the grammar and punctuation rules are studied and practiced in a “part-to-whole” manner (p. 58), where the skills of grammar and punctuation are taught in isolation from the rest of writing. Rose (2012) has described such pedagogical approaches as an “atomistic skills orientation” to teaching and learning (p. 122). He has stated that when students are taught in such ways, they will “define ‘good writing’ as not making grammatical mistakes” (p. 126). Likewise, Lea and Street (2006) have called such approaches a “study skills model.” (p. 368). When this kind of model is used to teach writing, the focus tends to be on the “surface features of language” (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368).

However, such research should not be interpreted to mean that grammar and punctuation instruction should be completely eliminated from developmental writing classrooms. Regarding grammar and developmental writing instruction, Shaughnessy (2007) has warned about the dangers of “creating either an obsessive concern with correctness or a fatalistic indifference to it” (p. 10-11). Although there are pitfalls to teaching grammar and punctuation because of the tendency to teach the rules in isolation from the rest of writing, as Neuleib and Brosnahan (2007) have asserted, some instructors might be “too ready to assume they can omit grammar instruction because it will not help students to write better” (p. 149). The researchers argued, “When writers learn grammar,

as opposed to teachers merely ‘covering’ it, the newly acquired knowledge contributes to writing ability” (p. 146).

One important way students can be taught about using grammar and punctuation effectively is through a process that is rooted in Shaughnessy’s (1977) work. She has explained,

The grammar students study for the purpose of reducing error should accomplish two objectives: introduce them to several key grammatical concepts that underlie many of their difficulties with formal English and equip them with a number of practical strategies for checking on their own writing. (p. 130)

As she has advocated, the teaching of grammar should have direct, immediate application to the written work of students. Additionally, Neuleib and Brosnahan (2007) have written about Shaughnessy’s work: “she developed a form of grammar instruction that has since been called error analysis” (p. 147). With such instruction, the focus is on patterns of grammar error that are distinct to a student’s own writing rather than an emphasis on skills in isolation from student writing. As Bartholomae (1980) has asserted, “Studying their own writing puts students in a position to see themselves as language users, rather than as victims of a language that uses them” (p. 258). Such practices seem more likely to help students understand the role that grammar and punctuation can play in their process as opposed to something that simply is drilled and tested on worksheets and exams.

Metacognition, Transfer, and the Developmental Writing Class

It is important to examine the role that metacognition can play in developmental writing course instruction and how guiding students in developing it might help shape their approach to writing for college classes. When students have strong metacognitive abilities, they can become more attuned to their own strengths and weaknesses, and they

can become more conscious of how to use the skills and strategies they possess (Ambrose et al., 2010). Additionally, as the Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al. (2011) have defined it, metacognition is “the ability to reflect on one’s own thinking as well as on the individual and cultural processes and systems used to structure knowledge” (p. 5). This ability is an essential college skill because it can help students develop what Gee (2008) called “overt reflective insight” (p. 173). If students develop a thorough understanding of how what they learn in one context can be applicable to other contexts, it seems likely that they will learn how to appropriately transfer writing skills and dispositions into other classes.

Ambrose et al. (2010) have explained that one of the key phases of metacognition is when students assess and think about what is being asked of them in an assignment. They stressed the need for providing students with opportunities to practice assessing assignments with the assistance of feedback from their instructors. Doing so can provide students with an opportunity to share their thinking process about particular assignments. Creating opportunities for students to share their thought processes about assignments could be helpful to students because research suggests they often misperceive what they are being asked to do by their professors and why they are being asked to do so (Cox, 2009; Grubb and Cox, 2005). It seems appropriate for faculty members to build in opportunities to clarify misperceptions about a writing assignment during the early stages of working on the assignment.

One way this might occur is by having students raise questions about the assignment, which can then be the basis of class discussion. When faculty members aid students in becoming aware of the act of questioning as a learning strategy, they can help

students develop metacognition (Pintrich, 2012). The questions students pose might then be used as part of class discussion, thus helping students to recognize the role raising questions can play in their writing process. Doing so might help an instructor to more explicitly guide students so that they can then devise more effective approaches to thinking about the assignment and working on it. When developmental writing instructors use strategies to promote student ability to assess tasks and formulate questions about such tasks, they might be able to help students internalize a learning-as-process disposition in which students become more aware of strategies they can employ in the service of developing their writing skills.

Speaking to the need for instruction in metacognition, Caverly, Nicholson, and Radcliffe (2004) discussed research studies that explored the effects of instruction in strategic reading on college students in their first year attending college. Although their work was not focusing on a developmental writing class, it can have implications for developmental writing courses because students need to be strategic readers when they work on a research assignment and search for valid evidence to build an argument. The authors discussed metacognitive strategies as including the following: generating questions, monitoring comprehension, and summarizing. Using methods including before and after checklists on metacognitive development, the studies focused on developmental reading students at a state university over the course of four years beginning in the fall of 2000 and ending in the spring of 2004. After examining the results of the studies, the researchers concluded, “students not only were aware of strategic reading, but also knew what strategies were more effective, and they reported using them in these reading tasks” (p. 38). The comparison of the before and after

administering of the checklists showed an improvement in strategy use. Such findings suggest that it could be useful to incorporate metacognitive reading instruction into developmental writing courses, particularly in relationship to student ability to find, analyze, and summarize research for essays.

Similarly, El-Hindi (1997) examined students enrolled in a developmental reading and writing course. Prior to the start of the fall semester, the students took an accelerated course over the summer to prepare them for college level reading and writing. Metacognitive strategies were the basis for the course, and the students were taught how to apply such strategies to both reading and writing. The strategies included thinking about prior knowledge, establishing a purpose, self-questioning, and comprehension monitoring. Reading logs were used throughout the course, and questionnaires were used to measure the level of metacognitive awareness students exhibited. The questionnaires were used before and after the students were given instruction on strategy use. The results indicated that students showed more significant improvement of metacognitive awareness with reading than they did with writing. An examination of the student reading logs showed that the students became strategic in their approach to the reading process. The study reveals a need for more effective and explicit approaches to teaching students metacognitive skills as they apply to college writing.

Another important quality to consider about metacognition is the role it can play in helping students to apply the writing skills developed in one context into other contexts. Benander and Lightner (2005) argued for the need to develop metacognitive skills in students to promote transference of skills from one course into another, an important quality for them to possess as they seek to acquire the writing skills needed for

success in college. They reviewed the literature on metacognition and transfer and worked with a group of faculty members from various disciplinary backgrounds and discovered that students rarely transferred skills into different contexts. Skill transfer was more common when the courses were intentionally designed to encourage such transfer. They found that building into courses opportunities for students to “reflect on process and monitor their own progress will help them transfer processes and ideas learned in one class to another” (p. 206). Although the writers were not addressing developmental coursework, their findings are relevant since a developmental writing course can set the foundation for self-monitoring, reflection, and transference of skills.

Likewise, Beaufort (2007) explored the issue of transfer in her work on college writing instruction. In her longitudinal case study, she followed one student as he progressed from his freshman writing course to his coursework in both engineering and history and ultimately into the workplace. He was majoring in both subjects. Along the way she collected a variety of data sources. These included interviews with the student, faculty members, and the administrator of the first-year writing program, classroom observations, comments on the student’s written work from professors, and writing samples from his engineering, history, and writing courses. Based on her findings, one of her recommendations was for first-year college writing courses to be “taught with an eye toward transfer of learning” (The Question of University Instruction, para. 3). She asserted that teaching metacognition through reflection could aid in this process.

Likewise, in surveying the literature on the transfer of learning, Billing (2007) has argued that there is evidence that helping students develop strong metacognitive skills, including reflection, can help foster skill transfer across courses. Furthermore, Wardle (2007/2009)

has argued for the need to provide students opportunities to reflect on and write about their own writing. She explained that such opportunities can help students become more aware of their own evolving habits, skills, and strategies, which can help encourage transfer.

Consistent with much of the research (Ambrose, et al., 2010; Benander and Lightner, 2005), the framework developed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al. (2011) on success in college writing indicated that one of the important “habits of mind” students need to develop is metacognition (p. 4). However, a great deal of the research on metacognition in developmental programs has focused on developmental reading courses. There is a gap in the research on the role of metacognition in the writing process in developmental writing courses. This speaks to a need for further inquiry into how students think about their own evolving approaches to writing. Teaching students to monitor their own writing processes could help them to become more skilled at understanding and acquiring the writing skills and dispositions associated with the Discourse of college writing. Doing so may, in turn, help them adapt and apply what they have learned across contexts. As Billing (2007) has asserted, “Learning to use meta-cognitive strategies is especially important for transfer” (p. 483).

When students are equipped with the ability to consciously think about their own reading, writing, and learning processes through developing metacognitive skills, they can begin to develop what Gee (2008) referred to as “meta-knowledge” (p. 172). He has explained that meta-knowledge is the ability to recognize the ways that the Discourses individuals already have obtained are related to the ones they are striving to acquire. Assisting students to see both the similarities and the differences among writing in

diverse contexts can help them to acquire "overt reflective insight" (Gee, 2008, p. 173). Such insight might aid them in adapting to the complexities of academic forms of writing (Lea & Street, 1998). It also might help them to begin examining "processes they use to think and write in a variety of disciplines and contexts" (Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011, p. 5).

Student Support/Academic Resources and Developmental Writing Courses

Another crucial area of research in developmental education is the role that the larger college infrastructure can play in helping students to succeed. There are certain key services that can play a crucial role in helping academically underprepared students develop the writing process skills so crucial to success.

In his discussion of developmental programs, Boylan (2002) has indicated that an essential element of an effective program for students who are academically underprepared is the "integration of developmental courses and academic support services" (p. 11). His suggestion was the result of a study of developmental education conducted using data from 36 colleges. Data collection methods included surveys and discussions with important stakeholders at the colleges. He has suggested that integration can help align the services of the academic support resources with the goals of instructors of developmental education courses. He has also argued that when such integration does not occur, students in developmental courses might not get access to services that could help them to succeed. Writing tutoring services for developmental writing students seem like a key dimension of such an integration.

Speaking to this need for developmental education courses to provide students with access to tutoring services, Callahan and Chumney (2009) conducted a qualitative

comparative case study comparing developmental writing courses at a research university with those at a community college. The study included interviews with students, instructors, and a writing program administrator as well as classroom observations. Their research revealed that students can be helped toward perceiving developmental courses as a gateway to the rest of their college experience by providing them with access to various forms of social and academic capital. In particular, access to effective writing tutoring in which tutors understood the needs of students enrolled in developmental courses and the nature of the assignments in the class seemed to play an integral role in helping students succeed in college writing. The researchers referred to the “exchange value of tutoring” (p. 1646), suggesting that when students learned how to meaningfully use such services, they could improve their grades and their writing.

Similarly, after examining developmental programs in 14 community college contexts in California, Grubb and Gabriner (2013) found that common student support services pertinent to writing include tutoring and supplemental workshops on subjects such as grammar and punctuation. The researchers stressed that in order for such services to be effective in helping students in developmental classes, they should be a required part of such courses rather than voluntary. They also emphasized that the services should be “linked tightly to coursework” (p. 212). Such practices, they argued, can help assure that students who could benefit the most from the resources get access to them.

The integration of library services into developmental coursework is also an integral dimension to helping students with their writing process and with success in subsequent classes. Roselle (2008) conducted a qualitative study in which she

interviewed 27 college librarians throughout the United States about the integration of library services into developmental courses. The study's findings emphasized the important role that library services can play in assisting students in developmental courses to gain the confidence, knowledge, and skills to successfully navigate the research demands of college. The library is a crucial resource that students need to use throughout their writing process in any course that requires them to incorporate research, use evidence, or make an academic argument. It seems essential for the library to be carefully integrated into the design of developmental writing classes. Unfortunately, as Roselle (2009) has asserted, "developmental education literature portrays academic library contributions as practically nonexistent" (p. 154). More research analyzing the role that library services can play in the success of students in developmental education programs seems to be crucial.

As Callahan and Chumney (2009) have found, "institutional resources serve as critical capital to remedial students" (p. 1661). Helping students to make actual, concrete connections between their developmental courses and the role of supplemental services in their development as students should be an important part of the approach of the classes. Making such connections may help them internalize a process-oriented learning disposition in which multiple sources of assistance can be tapped into as they write for college classes. This process-oriented mindset is crucial when it comes to navigating the complex writing demands of college and strategically employing the necessary skills to write competently across contexts.

It seems clear from the research that a great deal is known about particular practices that could be beneficial to helping developmental writing students to effectively

navigate the Discourse of writing for college. It is evident that developmental writing courses should be designed around constructivist, writing-as process pedagogical approaches. To aid in such approaches, technological resources should be carefully integrated into the design of developmental writing classrooms. Also important is a course design in which students are given opportunities to think about and reflect upon their evolving writing processes, their approaches to particular assignments, and their awareness of their strengths and weaknesses. Students need to develop their metacognitive skills so that they may more strategically and flexibly meet the diverse writing demands of college. Furthermore, the research suggests that students need to be given opportunities to purposefully use support resources such as writing tutoring and library services in conjunction with their developmental coursework. Developing courses with services integrated into the instructional design can help students tap into crucial forms of academic capital that can assist them with writing and research subsequent to completing a developmental course.

Student Perceptions of Learning and Developmental Coursework

Researchers have asserted that students in developmental courses often perceive learning as something that occurs through memorizing and recycling information (Grubb & Cox, 2005). They often do not think of learning as an evolving process. Developmental courses should be designed to influence student perceptions of learning, of writing, and of taking such courses. This kind of approach might assist students in recognizing that their developmental writing courses can help them acquire the types of knowledge that can be used to succeed in college (Reynolds & Bruch, 2002).

Grubb and Gabriner's (2013) research exploring student experiences in community college contexts in California has important implications for this study. To examine student perceptions of developmental coursework, they interviewed 30 students in developmental courses and did an in-depth analysis of 22 of the interviews. To triangulate their data, they compared the student interviews with observations conducted in classrooms. Their findings suggested that students felt demoralized by having to take such courses. Additionally, the students seemed to perceive the courses as repeating some of the same things they had learned in their earlier educations such as in high school. Furthermore, students repeatedly articulated that their developmental courses were irrelevant to them and to the majors they were pursuing. The observations conducted as part of the study suggested that when students seemed to perceive their developmental courses so negatively, behaviors in the class such as cell phone use and other distractions signaled disengagement. Finally, students expressed dissatisfaction with the pedagogical approaches to developmental courses. Some common complaints regarding pedagogy included instructors relying too much on traditional methods such as PowerPoint presentations and working too much from a textbook. Other common complaints about developmental courses from students were either a lack of challenge or a lack of explicit support and guidance from instructors. The researchers concluded that students prefer approaches which are "student-centered and constructivist" (p. 40).

Similarly, in a qualitative research study, Vanora (2012) conducted interviews with 18 developmental community college students. The study was designed to examine student perceptions and experiences of being students. The findings suggested that students found writing in college to be extremely difficult. Participants also expressed

frustration with the pedagogical approaches used in both their credit-bearing courses and their developmental courses. One of the key complaints expressed by students about the teaching that occurred in their classes was that it provided “few opportunities to connect course material with their own lived experiences” (p. 27). The study was not focusing solely on student perceptions of a developmental writing course. However, it has important implications for how developmental writing instructors might purposefully make connections between student writing and the world independent of the developmental course. One important way this might occur is through incorporating elements of a “contextualized” approach in which the skills taught in the course “are presented in the context of content from current or future disciplinary courses” (Perin, 2011b).

In a smaller qualitative study employing interviews with three students enrolled in developmental courses in a Texas community college, Koch, Slate, and Moore (2012) sought to understand how students perceived such courses. Counter to much of Grubb and Gabriner’s (2013) research, some of the findings suggested that participants felt positively about the pedagogical approaches their developmental writing instructor employed in the class. These approaches included the use of peer feedback in their writing, and the use of feedback that pointed out the strengths of their writing as well as areas that needed improvement. The instructional move away from remedial pedagogical practices might have helped students believe that the course was useful to them. A limitation of the study was that it did not examine in detail the pedagogical approaches taken in the developmental courses, relying solely on the interviews with a limited number of student participants.

In addition to student perceptions about developmental coursework, it is also helpful to consider the ways students perceive writing courses in general. For instance, in her book about four large-scale qualitative studies conducted at thirty-four colleges, Cox (2009) concluded that students very often employed a “get it over strategy” to their composition courses with minimal commitment to their own development as writers. She also explained that they often perceived the course as not useful. These perceptions and attitudes toward the courses often lead students to become disengaged from the classes. Such views about writing and writing courses reduce the possibility of students learning to master the skills necessary for writing in college. Although her work was not focusing solely on developmental writing courses, it seems likely that if students in credit-bearing English Composition courses are experiencing such courses in these ways, developmental writing students often perceive a disconnect between their writing courses and the rest of their college courses, particularly if remedial pedagogical approaches are used.

College student perceptions about learning in general also need to be considered in relationship to developmental coursework. Hodges and Stanton’s (2007) research has implications for this study because it reported that some students do not fully recognize the dialogic aspects of learning. They asserted that many college students “believe that gaining knowledge is as simple as listening to and repeating the views of an authority figure” (p. 284). Such passive views of learning are an important idea to consider in the design of developmental writing courses. Pedagogical approaches that seek to change student perceptions of learning toward a more constructivist idea of learning should be used in the context of the developmental classroom. In many cases, it is important for students to unlearn some of the ideas about writing and learning that they might have

internalized due to prior schooling experiences (Rose, 2012). Very often, students view writing as something that happens in one draft rather than through a recursive process that involves receiving feedback from readers (Conley, 2005).

Developmental writing faculty members who use process-oriented pedagogies and strategies might be able to help shape student perceptions about what learning is and that it is a dialogic process. Students need to be taught to recognize that “knowledge is constructed, not received” (Bain, 2004, p. 26). Remedial pedagogical approaches to teaching developmental writing courses in which skills are taught in isolated ways do not seem likely to help students understand this dialogic dimension of learning (Rose, 2012; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). The research points to a need for developmental education faculty to incorporate constructivist approaches to learning as an essential element of the Discourse of college writing so that students may learn to perform competently within it and rethink some of their prior ideas about learning. Additionally, in order to help shape student perceptions of learning, professors might explicitly share their rationale behind constructivist, process-oriented approaches to teaching (Hodges & Stanton, 2007).

Although much is known about high quality practices for teaching writing, there is a scarcity of research analyzing how students perceive, understand, and use what is taught in developmental writing courses in credit-bearing college courses that require students to write. This study will seek to help fill this gap in the research by examining the perceptions and experiences of students who have completed a developmental writing course that is designed around several high quality practices documented in the research.

Chapter 3: Methodology

This study design drew from both case study and phenomenological approaches to qualitative research. Conducting the study as a practitioner and a researcher, I used interviews, self-reflections on teaching and learning interactions with students, document analysis, and a researcher journal. The data sources were used to examine how students perceived, experienced, and described a developmental writing course designed to connect course activities and assignments with college writing expectations. Using various forms of data that emerged in part in the context of my own classrooms gave me the opportunity to get an “insider” (Anderson & Herr, 1999, p. 15) perspective as I worked as a “teacher-researcher” (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 15). Doing so allowed me to carefully examine the experiences of learners over an extended period of time as they completed my course and moved on to their other courses in the subsequent quarter (Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993).

Acting as a teacher-researcher gave me the opportunity to investigate a problem of practice focused “around the ideas and issues of teaching that are central” (Freeman, 1998, p. 13) to my own work and to those who are teaching developmental writing courses. As Goswami and Stillman have pointed out about teacher research, “Teachers know their classrooms and students in ways that outsiders can’t” (as cited in Cochran-Smith & Lytle, 1993, p. 19). Taking this notion into account, my role as an insider to the classroom experience can help me to make convincing recommendations to fellow faculty members about how certain approaches to teaching and learning might have a positive impact on student ability to write for college classes.

Research Site/Context

The study was conducted at a private four-year college in New York City of whose student body a large percentage is nontraditional. The institution operates on a quarter system. Each quarter is twelve weeks, with the exception of the summer quarter, which is eleven weeks. The focus of the study was on a non-credit developmental writing course known as Foundations of Critical Writing, which meets for four credit hours per week. The maximum number of students for all developmental courses is twenty. If it is a daytime class, it meets two days a week for one hour and forty-five minutes each day; if it is an evening class, it meets for three-and-a-half hours one day a week. For at least half of those hours, the class meets in a computer lab. Students are required to take this course based on the results of the ACCUPLACER exam, which determines whether they need developmental coursework in reading, writing, and/or math. Students must complete the course with the overall grade of C or above in order to move onto Expository Writing, the first required credit-bearing writing course. After completing Expository Writing, they are required to successfully complete the course, Writing through Literature. Students are expected to complete all developmental coursework during their first year at the college.

If students need both developmental reading and writing courses, they must first pass the reading class and then proceed into the writing course. Depending on their scores on the ACCUPLACER exam, some students are placed directly into the writing course. Many of the students in the writing course are first or second quarter students. Students may take some credit-bearing courses while enrolled in the developmental classes.

The developmental reading, writing, and math courses are scheduled and

coordinated through the college's developmental education program. The program contains five full-time reading and writing faculty members, each of whom teach four sections of reading and/or writing per quarter. Additional sections of the course are taught by adjunct faculty members. I am one of the full-time faculty members and have played a role in designing the learning goals for the developmental reading and writing courses along with other faculty members in the department.

The learning goals on the syllabus for the developmental writing course are standardized across sections, but the instructor has some flexibility in how to design the course to meet the goals. There are no designated texts for the course. Faculty members may assign reading tasks that they deem to be relevant to the course. Most of the readings faculty use are from online sources such as newspaper or magazine articles from digital versions of publications such as *The New York Times* or *Time Magazine*. Several recommended readings for the course are available as part of an online database available to faculty.

The major requirement for passing the course is that students successfully complete a multiple paragraph three-source research essay as a result of implementing the stages of the writing process. The paper should be about three pages plus a Works Cited page using MLA format, and a checklist is used to help determine the final grade for the paper (see Appendix B). Since the research paper requires outside sources, as part of the course, a librarian introduces the college's library databases and resources, and students find and read sources that are relevant to their research topic. The first half of the quarter focuses on developing individual paragraph assignments. Much of the second half of the quarter is dedicated to developing the research essay. The types of writing stressed in the

course include narrative, persuasive, and illustrative writing. Grammar and punctuation instruction are woven into the course throughout the quarter in the form of mini lessons, quizzes, and explanations of issues that emerge in the context of student writing.

Instructional Design

As much of the recent research has suggested, traditional approaches to teaching developmental courses have not been particularly effective (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). With such approaches, the emphasis is often on isolated skills separated from the social and cultural context in which literacy practices occur (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rose, 2012; Rutschow & Schneider, 2011;). Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have referred to such approaches as “remedial pedagogy” (p. 52). With this concept in mind, working from the standardized learning goals established by the developmental education program at the college, I designed the writing course under study with the intention of moving away from remedial pedagogy approaches and towards explicitly helping students to connect the course tasks and activities with college writing expectations. In order to design the course to better help students, I drew from what the literature has suggested are high quality practices in teaching writing and in developmental education. The class emphasized a recursive approach to writing instead of emphasizing a set of isolated skills to be practiced. Table 1 illustrates the goals of the course’s instructional design and key activities and strategies that were used to meet these goals. It is followed up by a more detailed discussion of each of these elements of the course design.

Table 1

Instructional Design

Instructional goal	Activities and strategies
Fostering the writing process	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sequencing all writing assignments over several weeks • Explicitly discussing each stage of the writing process • Incorporating a variety of feedback resources into the course • Requiring draft submissions of all major work prior to the submission of a final piece of writing • Critiquing mock student essays using a checklist • Using short conference sessions between instructor and student
Emphasizing metacognition and reflection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing reflective blogs • Creating ePortfolio with a welcome page reflecting on the learning process
Connecting writing knowledge across contexts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Contextualizing the instruction by linking writing topics to the curriculum • Brainstorming sessions about the purposes of different kinds of writing across contexts • Using examples of writing related to other courses • Providing topic options relevant to the college curriculum
Integrating support and academic resources into the course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Requiring student submission of draft of final paper to online Academic Support Service • Workshop with Academic Support Center and library
Improving critical reading	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teaching important active reading strategies
Teaching grammar and punctuation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focusing on issues emerging in students' own writing • Teaching mini grammar and punctuation lessons • Giving short quizzes on grammar and punctuation

The Writing Process

One integral way the course aimed to help students connect the content to college course expectations was to provide activities that foster the disposition and skill of thinking of and treating writing as a process. As Conley (2005) has asserted in his work exploring the kinds of knowledge college students need, process-oriented ways of approaching writing are an important dimension of student success. Additionally, the writing process approach to teaching is one that is advocated by a variety of researchers and educational organizations (Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). Designing the course to foster a writing process approach to completing assignments is done to help students internalize ways of “valuing” and “acting” (Gee, 2008, p. 161) so that writing for college becomes something that goes through stages and that it is not completed in one quick sitting.

The explicit emphasis on the writing process was an important dimension of the course because it was designed to help students unlearn or rethink their prior experiences with writing. It was aligned with what Rose (2012) asserted about his experience working with academically underprepared students. He explained, “one of my primary goals was to change the model of writing my students carried in their heads” (p. 137). He found that students often thought of writing as something that simply goes through one draft. Based on such research findings and my own experiences as an instructor, in my approach to teaching the course, I assumed that students were likely to have learned to think of writing as something that happens quickly in one draft. This way of thinking about writing seems likely to have been fostered in prior learning environments. For example, high school teachers often encounter considerable barriers, including class size

and standardized grading procedures, that can prevent them from providing the kinds of writing instruction that promotes a process-oriented disposition and approach to writing (Conley, 2005). Because I assumed that students likely came into the class with limited ideas of writing as process, I aimed to be as transparent as possible about why the major class activities were designed around the writing process and the benefits of taking this kind of approach. As Hodges and Stanton (2007) have argued, instructors can help students change their ideas about learning. This transparent approach was used to help challenge prior beliefs students might have brought into the course about writing.

When students worked on writing assignments in the developmental course using a process approach, they learned how to take their work through recursive steps including prewriting, researching, drafting, revising, and proofreading. Class activities were designed around the different stages of the writing process. For instance, after being introduced to the narrative paragraph assignment in class, students did freewriting for a few minutes to begin generating ideas during the prewriting stage (Rosenblatt, 2004). They then could use some of these ideas that they generated to help them begin drafting their work.

As part of the revision stage of the process for some of the assignments, prior to submitting their work to me for a grade, students were required to receive feedback from their peers and provide feedback. As Shaw (2002) has found, such a strategy can help students to become more attuned to writing for an audience. It was incorporated into the course so that students had opportunities to write for other readers. This can help reduce the perception of the composition process as being only about writing for the “teacher-as-examiner” (Melzer, 2014, p. 29). Additionally, peer feedback was incorporated in the

class to help students develop the ability to think analytically about writing and to articulate to each other some of the key writing concepts we discussed in the class (Liu & Carless, 2006). To help students understand their role in the writing process, I carefully scaffolded the peer feedback sessions. First, I shared my rationale for incorporating them into the class and emphasized the benefits of both receiving and giving feedback on written work (see Appendix J). Next, I asked students to practice providing feedback on a fake student draft. Then, students provided feedback to each other in small groups of three to four. As researchers have explained, instructors must provide ongoing support to students and teach them how to give useful feedback (Ertmer et al., 2010; Mulder, Pearce, & Baik, 2014).

Technology was used to aid in peer feedback. While in a computer lab, the students provided input on each other's drafts in small groups assigned by me by using wiki pages through the Blackboard online learning management system. Using wikis for feedback can help students to become more effective collaborators and assessors of their own work and the work of their classmates (Su and Beaumont, 2010). On the wiki pages students provided help to improve their classmates' first drafts by inserting their feedback into a common online space shared by other members of their group. For each student draft, a separate wiki page was created. Two or three of their peers provided them with feedback there, which the writers later used to revise their own work. In addition to helping students improve their finished assignments, this approach to writing and using feedback was aimed at helping student writers learn to consider their audience when writing and understand the "transactional" (Rosenblatt, 2004, p. 1363) process that occurs between the writer of a text and the reader of the text.

Additionally, in order to help students better understand the idea of writing as a recursive process in which taking writing through the stages of revision and proofreading can help make an essay more persuasive, coherent, and effective, during class students analyzed and critiqued an early draft of a mock student essay. To assist them, they were given a checklist of things to look for when they critiqued the sample essay. The checklist contained questions that prompted students to analyze the essay by looking for some of the concepts taught in the course: thesis statements, MLA format, topic sentences, supporting evidence, methods of persuasion, organization, and unified writing. Students participated in this activity in pairs so that they could have a dialogue about the essay. Then, the class had a whole group discussion about it. After we had discussed some of the problems with the sample student essay, students were given a revised version of it with major improvements. The activity was designed to help them see the ways a piece of writing can and should move from a draft to a more polished piece of writing. Such an approach that makes the writing process central to assignments is consistent with Grubb and Gabriner's (2013) findings, which suggested that writing process pedagogies are more effective than "remedial pedagogy" approaches (p. 52).

Metacognition and Reflection

An additional strategy designed to move the course beyond the remedial pedagogy approach was an explicit emphasis on reflective tasks aimed at promoting student metacognition about their evolving writing process. As Ambrose et al. (2010) have found, two crucial dimensions of metacognition are the ability to monitor one's learning and the ability to reflect on and evaluate one's learning. Consistent with this notion of metacognition and reflection, students engaged in several reflective writings via

course blogs in which they wrote about their own process as they worked on written assignments for the class (see Appendix F). In the blogs, they discussed the challenges they were encountering in working on the assignments, the steps they took as they approached the assignments, and what they believed they had learned about their own evolving approaches to writing. They also assessed what they believed they still needed to work on as writers.

To further emphasize the pedagogical approach that promotes metacognition through reflection, a requirement of the course was for students to produce an ePortfolio in which they monitored and evaluated their own learning. As the literature has found, an ePortfolio can help students reflect on their own development and to become more effective at revision (Brammer, 2011; Desmet, et al., 2008; Worley, 2011). The portfolio is a collection of work from the quarter after it has gone through multiple stages of development and revision. On the welcome page of the portfolio, students introduced the written work completed in the course (see Appendix H). The page included a discussion about their own thoughts about what they had learned through the production of such written artifacts. Students used the learning goals written in the syllabus for the course to help them craft this portion of their portfolio and build “I can” statements in which they self-assessed their skill development in the course (Au, Raphael, & Mooney, 2008, p. 80). This assessment was designed to help foster a metacognitive approach to learning in which students think about and reflect upon their own process of taking the course and developing their writing skills. Importantly, the welcome page was completed at the end of the quarter. It was done so that students could think about what they had learned in the course and transfer it to their later courses. As researchers have shown, student

development of metacognition is an important aspect of transfer of knowledge (Beaufort, 2007; Benander & Lightner, 2005; Billing, 2007; Wardle, 2007/2009).

Writing Skills Across Contexts

The course also used elements of what Perin (2011a) has called “contextualized basic skills instruction” (p. 271). One method used to help students connect the learning in the class to contexts across the curriculum was to engage students in whole group brainstorming discussions designed to help them think about the role different kinds of writing might play in a variety of situations. This method was used to help students think about the ways they were acquiring the tools and habits of college Discourse (Gee, 2008) that can be adapted into contexts separate from the course. During such activities, students came up with examples in which strategies associated with persuasion, narration, and illustration writing could be used in contexts other than the developmental course, since those were the types of writing stressed in the major writing assignments in the class. They were encouraged to think about the role of such writing as it applies to other contexts, including the major they were either pursuing or thinking about pursuing. Student responses were put up on the whiteboard to act as a visual reinforcement of the ideas they shared with the class. To contribute to this discussion, I also discussed some examples of the types of writing that I have seen used in different disciplines in the college based on my experiences as a tutor, a reading/writing coordinator, and an English Department faculty member.

An additional method used to help students think about the ways the course was connected to the rest of the curriculum was through providing assignment options that were relevant to the curriculum of the college. In the case of the illustration paragraph,

participants needed to read articles in *The New York Times*' online "Room for Debate" section. In this section, multiple writers make a short argument on a current topic relevant to a variety of issues affecting society. Aligned with the college's curriculum, topic options students were given to choose from included issues that related to business, management, personal finance, and criminal justice. Students had to read each of the short perspectives on their selected topic. They then needed to decide which of the writers made the most persuasive case on the topic. Finally, students needed to write a paragraph explaining why they believed this particular writer made the most persuasive case on the topic. Their paragraph needed to summarize a few specific ideas from the short essay to provide examples for their reasons for asserting that this particular writer was most persuasive. Because they needed to summarize ideas from the reading, the assignment also helped them practice this important skill.

This assignment was designed to align with Graff's (2003) notion that college students need to develop a sense of understanding about how to read and write arguments because argumentation is the most dominant form of writing across disciplinary contexts in college. It was also designed to help students get ready for the final essay in the Foundations course, which was a persuasive research essay. The final essay required that they write using some of the methods for persuading an audience we discussed in class. These included integrating information from trustworthy published sources, responding to the opposing viewpoint on the issue, using evidence derived from research, and using examples (Conley, 2005; Graff, 2003). The assignment required them to use a balance of their own ideas, summaries, paraphrases, and direct quotations to help back up their perspective on the topic.

Similar to the earlier illustration paragraph assignment, for the final persuasive research essay, topic options were connected to issues that were related to various courses students take at the college. For instance, one option that students could choose to write about for the paper was the debate about the stop and frisk policing method. This topic is pertinent to the field of Criminal Justice, one of the most popular majors at the college. Another topic option was for students to make a case for how small business owners could best use social media to market their business. Once again, this topic is aligned with the college's curriculum. All students at the college take some form of business class, and many of the students major in the field. Other students take marketing courses. Providing students with opportunities to write about subjects that are related to the college curriculum was intended to help the course move away from "decontextualized" writing instruction, which Grubb and Gabriner (2013) found to be so dominant in developmental classrooms (p. 60).

Additionally, as part of the instructional design, several short readings were assigned to help students better understand the types of writing stressed in the course as well as to act as models for student writing. They were also used to help students compare and contrast the various purposes of writing, depending on the context. When possible, model paragraphs and readings were selected that connected to the college's professional/academic disciplines. Since I have worked at the college as a tutor and a reading/writing coordinator designing writing workshops for a variety of faculty members in diverse disciplines, I have become familiar with much of the college's curriculum. This experience helped me to select readings and models for writing that were connected to some of the course content in the college.

One example of choosing models that were designed to help students connect the class content to other courses occurred in the discussion of narrative writing and the development of students' own narrative writing paragraph assignment. When helping students to understand this type of writing and its various uses, one example paragraph I showed them was a short narrative history of the uses of denim in the United States. This type of example could help fashion-marketing students (one of the college's most popular majors) to see the role narrative might play in their major courses. It could also help students interested in any of the fields that include marketing because some assignments might ask them to trace the history of a product or service and/or how it was marketed over time.

Another sample narrative paragraph showed to students was a short incident memo detailing a work related issue. Since students at the college all pursue professionally oriented degrees, such an example can help them to understand the relevance of skills and strategies associated with narrative writing within various professional fields that they might be studying. For example, Criminal Justice has become the college's most popular major. Based on some of the experiences I have had as a writing tutor and with having trained professors in the department on how to design effective writing assignments, I have observed that Criminal Justice students at the college are often asked to use narrative forms to practice writing police incident reports and criminal investigation reports that detail the unfolding of events. The discussion of the incident report structured in the form of a narrative was connected to various workplace correspondences that are stressed in a variety of disciplines.

Both the narrative paragraph about denim and the narrative paragraph incident report were contrasted with a short personal narrative paragraph example. This type of writing is aligned with the type of writing that often happens in other courses such as the credit-bearing Expository Writing course, where faculty members sometimes ask students to narrate their own personal experiences. Similar to the discussion about the other narrative paragraph examples, I emphasized this connection to the students during class discussion.

When I asked students to look at narrative writings that serve different purposes and have different audiences while working on their own narrative writing skills, one of my goals was to help them understand the nuances and complexities of writing and the many ways writing skills need to be adapted to different contexts (Lea & Street, 2006). Another goal was to help them become more careful observers and interpreters of the ways writing is used so that they may begin to understand how what they learn in a developmental writing course can be helpful if flexibly adapted in other contexts. When instructors help students to think about the ways different types of writing might play different roles depending on the context, they can help students practice what Gee (2008) has called their ability to “juxtapose diverse Discourses” (p. 220-221). Such juxtaposing of Discourses is aligned with an important aspect of Lea and Street’s (1998) academic literacies model in which they have stated that academic literacy practices require that students develop the ability to “switch practices between one setting and another” (p. 159).

Student Support and Academic Resources

Researchers have asserted that developmental courses can provide students with a valuable form of capital when they integrate meaningful interactions between students and support services such as tutoring (Boylan, 2002; Callahan & Chumney, 2009; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). Consistent with these findings, an additional practice of the course design was an integration of student support services into the class. For instance, to further foster the process-oriented disposition towards writing, the process for completing the final essay included a required submission of the draft to the college's online tutoring service. After they had submitted it, students received emailed feedback from a tutor in the Academic Support Center. The feedback they received helped guide the focus of the mini-conference session each student had with me about their work before they submitted it for a grade. I helped the students to prioritize what they should focus on in their writing, such as improving their examples and details, writing a more precise thesis statement, organizing their main ideas around topic sentences, and integrating and documenting research sources more effectively. The dialogue that occurred during the conference was intended to help the students better understand the role of feedback in the writing process and in their academic growth as well as improve the quality of the final product. It was also incorporated to help find a balance between written feedback (via the online tutoring service) and oral feedback. This balance was important because research has suggested that while in some cases students in developmental writing courses benefit more from oral feedback than written feedback, in other cases, the opposite is true (Gulley, 2012; Sipple, 2007).

The overall aim of incorporating various kinds of feedback (instructor, tutor, and peer) into the drafting process was to help students internalize the important habits and

skills of treating writing as a process so that they could then use them in their other classes. It was also aligned with the Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing developed by the Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al. (2011), which asserted that instructors should create opportunities for students to “work with others in various stages of writing” because it can help students “develop flexible processes” (p. 8).

Because they were required to interact with the Academic Support Center as part of the process, students were learning how to tap into a crucial feedback resource that could become a part of their writing process throughout their education. As Conley (2005) has suggested, the use of writing processes is “both a skill and an attitude” (p. 81). To reinforce this idea, I explicitly told students on every discussion of an assignment my rationale for structuring my class around the writing process and why the various types of feedback were a part of the course. I emphasized that they should not think of the idea of the writing process as only relevant to the developmental writing course. Instead, it is a “skill” and an “attitude” (Conley, 2005, p. 81) that will help them throughout their entire education and beyond.

To further align with the research findings arguing for creating meaningful interactions between a college’s resources and developmental courses, class activities related to the final essay included a librarian-directed guide to using the library’s onsite and electronic resources. Students then had to use library research sources for their paper. Such an integration of library services into the developmental course can help students to become more confident and skillful in conducting research for college writing (Roselle, 2009).

Part of the intention of incorporating the feedback service and the library into the course was to help students move away from thinking of their instructor as the sole source of support and guidance while they are students and toward accessing a “form of academic capital” (Callahan & Chumney, 2009, p. 1658) that would be available to them subsequent to the course. This intention was made explicit to students during class discussions. Becoming comfortable with using such resources can help them to better meet the writing expectations of college courses as they come to recognize and value such resources as playing a key role in their writing process and in their ability to navigate collegiate Discourse and writing.

Reading Instruction

Additionally, since the research essay required that students analytically read their research sources and determine what kinds of evidence would effectively help them to make a persuasive case about their topic, the course incorporated some discussions of reading strategies so that students made the connection between reading and writing. The reading strategies taught included annotating, raising questions, monitoring for comprehension, and connecting texts to other contexts. As the research has suggested, such practices can help students to become more strategic and active readers (Caverly, et al., 2004; El-Hindi, 1997). Doing so was designed in part to help students who had taken the developmental reading course make the connections between the two sequence developmental literacy courses. If any of the students in the class had not been required to take the developmental reading course, the discussions of reading strategies acted as a refresher on using strategic and analytical reading in an academic setting. Additionally, by analyzing their research sources closely, students could think about what kinds of

research sources would best help them to make a convincing argument as well as how to integrate such sources into the context of their own writing.

Grammar and Punctuation

Finally, grammar and punctuation were built into the course's instructional design to help students develop knowledge of how to proofread their work. Based on my own observations of common student errors and some of what Shaughnessy (1977) documented in her work about grammatical concepts that tend to lead to student patterns of error, I incorporated a few short lectures, activities, and quizzes around several common problem areas, including comma splices, fused sentences, sentence fragments, and verb tense inconsistency. I kept such activities to a minimum to avoid what Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have referred to as a "part-to-whole" instructional approach in which isolated skills are taught without connecting them to a larger purpose (p. 52). Additionally, in order to help prevent students from compartmentalizing what they were learning, each time a grammar and/or punctuation point was the focus of the class, I stated that such concepts should not be viewed in isolation from the rest of the discussions about writing. Instead, the knowledge they learned about grammar and punctuation should be viewed as being an important tool that could help students make their writing more effective and reader friendly. Such emphasis was done with the intention of helping students move beyond thinking predominantly about the "surface features of language" (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368).

Grammar and punctuation instruction also occurred in less direct ways using methods similar to what Shaughnessy (1977/2007) has advocated for in teaching developmental writing. Students were provided opportunities to focus on grammar and

punctuation issues that were occurring in the context of their own work. Providing such opportunities was aligned with much of the research about writing instruction and the teaching of grammar and punctuation (Bartholomae, 1980; Neuleib and Brosnahan, 2007). For example, after students had completed both the narrative and illustration paragraphs, they received a grade and feedback on their work. They then needed to use my feedback to revise their work for inclusion in their ePortfolios. Some of the comments I provided was on patterns of error I saw in grammar and punctuation. My comments had explanations about the patterns of error I saw and methods for revising them so that students could then review their work and correct their errors after having analyzed them. Additionally, when students submitted their work to the college's online tutoring service, the tutors pointed out patterns of error in grammar and punctuation that were appearing in their work. They also linked to resources that could help them to understand their errors. Finally, during the mini-conference sessions each student had with me for their final essay, I discussed some of the patterns of error that were emerging in their drafts of the assignment.

Participants

In order to get a variety of student perspectives, I focused on the experiences of eight students enrolled in developmental writing courses that I taught. One participant was drawn from a course section I taught in the summer of 2013. The other seven participants were drawn from a section I taught in the fall of 2013. The limited number of students helped me to get an in-depth understanding of student experiences since I was able to closely examine multiple forms of data revolving around the participants. I asked

students to volunteer to be in the study via email after they had completed the course and received a final grade. They were provided with detailed consent forms (see Appendix C).

I aimed to select participants of a variety of ages so that I could get the perspectives of both traditional age and nontraditional age college students. The criterion for choosing the participants was that in the quarter in which they took the developmental writing course, they were also enrolled in at least one credit-bearing course that included writing assignments. This helped me to examine how students discussed the activities and assignments of the writing course in relationship to the writing practices and expectations in other classes they had taken while enrolled in the course as well as after having completed the course. Pseudonyms have been used for all participants. Four participants received the grade of A, two received a B+, and two received a B. Table 2 provides an overview of the participants based on information they shared with me during the interviews about their age, major, and courses they took while they were enrolled in the Foundations course and in the quarter after they completed the course. It is followed by a brief introduction of each participant.

Table 2

Student Participants

Name	Age	Major	Courses taken during Foundations course	Courses taken after completion of Foundations course
Adam	18	Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Management • Introduction to Networking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to Information Technology • Systems Analysis • Technology and Law

Amesha	22	Business Administration Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Organization and Management • Project Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expository Writing • International Business • Math
Bruno	24	Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Management Seminar • Principles of Management • The Individual and Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expository Writing • International Business • Math
Dana	38	Health Management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ethical and Legal Aspects of Health Care • Introduction to Health Services • The Individual and Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Organization and Management • Expository Writing • Computer Applications • The Art of the Argument
Gideon	33	Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business • Psychology 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Career Management Seminar • Computer Applications • Police and Society
Heidi	21	Fashion Marketing and Merchandising	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Computer Applications • Introduction to Fashion • Textiles 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expository Writing • Math • The Mind and the Body • Visual Merchandising
Janice	21	Criminal Justice	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovering Science • Police and Society • The Individual and Society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expository Writing • World Religions • Additional Courses unknown due to lack of second interview
Tiffany	19	Business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discovering Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Expository

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Business Organization and Management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Writing • International Business • Jazz to Hip Hop • Marketing
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Gideon Brown

Gideon is a military veteran. He had recently completed his service and was transitioning back into civilian life when he took the course. He had spent time serving in Afghanistan. When he was enrolled in the Foundations of Critical Writing course, he was in his third quarter. He was different than the other cases in this study since he had also previously taken an additional class with me, the Foundations of Critical Reading course. He seemed to enjoy the process of interviewing more and more as he became comfortable with it. At one point, as he reflected on the idea of being listened to so intently during the interview, he brought up the film *My Dinner With Andre*, which focuses entirely around two characters having a conversation over dinner. He observed, “I never actually did an interview like this before.” Prior to entering the military, Gideon had gone to a different college in New York City. In multiple instance, he contrasted his experience at the prior school with his current college experience and seemed to be having a much more positive experience at the college than he had had at the prior institution.

Heidi

Heidi reported that she liked the fact that she could take courses that were geared towards a career path that she was interested in. During the interview, she explained to me that she had doubts about her own reading and writing abilities, observing, “So I came here and my reading and writing level wasn’t as high, so I had to take classes...and

that's why I was enrolled in your class." She had attended a different college also in the New York area. She seemed to have had some positive learning experiences at the college. However, she also reported that she viewed the college under study in a more favorable light than the other institution. She also noted differences between high school and college, stating, "I think in high school, they're more about if you've done it, not fully if you understand it."

Adam

Adam had recently graduated from high school. He seemed to view the idea of being interviewed positively, observing during our first session that it was his "first time going on an interview." At the beginning of the second interview when we were talking about my research process, he said, "you're preparing me too" in relationship to the interview process he anticipated going on when searching for a job in the future. He liked the small size of the classes at the college, stating, "other universities have those huge classes." He was also reflective about having learned from previous mistakes and overcoming procrastination: I mean I did [make]...a few mistakes... but...I managed to learn from it." In the course he took with me he had submitted his first paper late and lost some credit for having done this, but it was the last time he did so, suggesting that he had indeed learned from his early error.

Janice

Unlike all other participants, Janice was only interviewed one time for this study due to scheduling conflicts for the second interview, so the data discussed regarding Janice is more limited than for the other students who were interviewed. Her feelings towards writing were positive, and she was very interested in creative writing. She

indicated in her writing inventory that she enjoyed writing both short stories and poetry. She also brought up a positive experience she had in high school, explaining, “One of the poems I wrote in high school was published in a book by my high school English teacher and that was a great experience.” Janice hoped that taking the course would help her improve her abilities to write creative works. She also was determined to “sound more educated through writing.”

Amesha

At the time of the study, Amesha had recently come to the United States from Guyana. Her prior schooling experiences had taken place in her native country. She had been anxious about coming to the United States because she did not know many people. She was also nervous about studying overseas, explaining, “I always wanted to pursue my education and take it farther, but not internationally.” Amesha was nervous about the interview process. When I assured her that she was not the only one who gets nervous during interviews and that doing this would be good practice for her future in which she would go on job interviews, she explained that she was always nervous. During the second interview, when I asked her if she was still nervous, she explained that she was but a little less so than when she was interviewed the first time. Amesha had negative beliefs about herself regarding her writing, stating “I’m not good at writing” and other negative views about herself as a writer at several instances in the interviews. She had a preference for math, stating, “I just hate writing. I can deal with math.”

Dana

Dana had grown up in Guyana and had completed high school in her native country. She was completing her service in the U.S. military at the time of the study.

While on duty, she had traveled extensively. When she first came to the United States, she had enrolled at a college and received some credits before she had decided to join the military. She was very concerned with being able to compete in the workplace, saying “you know in this environment, you know you need college to get anything.” Dana was probably the strongest writer who participated in the study based on her grades. She also later appeared on the college’s President’s List for academic success. However, she did not seem to have positive feelings about writing or her own writing experiences, explaining on her writing inventory that she had “never concluded that my writing experiences have been good.” She did, however, express interest on the inventory to write “about issues affecting our society.”

Bruno

Bruno had come to the United States from Brazil three years prior to the study. Portuguese was his first language. He mentioned having taken an English as Second Language immersion course at a nearby community college. He also indicated that he spoke French and basic Spanish. At times, he expressed a little self-consciousness about his communication skills in English. At different points throughout the interviews, he shared that he had a passion for nutrition and health. During the second interview, Bruno explained that he wanted to change his major from Business because he was not interested in the field after having taken courses in the subject matter. He felt that his true passion was in the field of health and nutrition, and he wanted to transfer to a school that offered programs in nutrition. Bruno was very concerned with being able to compete in the world, and he viewed a college degree as essential in a world that has become increasingly competitive. He explained that in his city of Rio De Janeiro, the cost of

living had increased drastically and that there were enormous disparities between the wealthy and the non-wealthy.

Tiffany

Tiffany's mother had attended the same college and told her that she had had a positive experience attending the institution. She also explained that her friend had attended the college and had also had a positive experience, so she decided to attend. She informed me that she was sometimes nervous about speaking in college classes, and in her Business class, her grade had been lowered because of her lack of participation in class discussion. Tiffany expressed that she preferred creative writing to academic writing. On her writing inventory, she indicated that her best experience with writing had been in a creative writing class in which she had written a short story. She also discussed her preference for creative writing during the interview process, explaining that her writing flowed more smoothly when she was engaged in creative writing: "I love doing creative writing...But when...it's...education [settings], that's where I had the hard time with writing a five page paper."

Data Collection

Various forms of data were collected throughout the study. In drawing upon phenomenological traditions of research, however, interviews were the primary mode of data collection as I gathered student perceptions of the course. Using the interviews as the primary data source was guided by Patton's (1990) notion that "Qualitative interviewing begins with the assumption that the perspective of others is meaningful, knowable, and able to be made explicit" (p. 278). Additionally, I drew from case study traditions of qualitative research by collecting data in the form of field note observations of my own

experiences in the classroom and student work and documents connected with the Foundations of Critical Writing course. Doing so helped me to triangulate the data because I was collecting various sources of information to corroborate and enrich what I learned from students through interviews. The additional data sources acted as points of both comparison and contrast to what emerged during the interviews as well as helping to create a richly described case.

Interviews

Each participant was interviewed twice. The interviews were semi-structured and lasted roughly forty-five minutes to one hour. Interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed. The first interview was conducted after students had completed the developmental writing course and grades had been submitted (see Appendix D). It was directed mainly at trying to understand what they believed were the necessary writing skills and dispositions needed for success in college, in what ways (if any) this seemed to change, and which of the course activities and skills were most helpful to them in preparing them for college writing. This interview also focused on questions that aimed to get at students' perceptions of how the course was connected to their other first quarter classes that had included writing assignments.

The second interview was conducted during the second half of the academic quarter after which they had completed the developmental course (see Appendix E). At this point, participants had a chance to experience some of the writing requirements of their courses in the quarter after they had completed my course. As part of the second interview, participants were asked to email me a writing assignment they had worked on for one of their courses. I asked the participants to walk me through their approach to

working on the assignment and compare this process to the process they used to complete the research assignment in my class.

Using the interviews helped me to understand how taking the developmental course was "interpreted by participants" (Weiss, 1994, Chapter 1, Reasons to Conduct a Qualitative Interview Study, para. 1). The interviews aimed to examine the ways participants seemed to perceive a connection (or a lack of a connection) between their credit-bearing college work and their developmental writing course. In order to help me to develop effective interview questions that got at the kinds of responses that could help me to capture the essence of student experience, I piloted my questions with one student who had previously been in my class. Based on this pilot, I made revisions to my questions to better elicit detailed responses.

Field Notes

As part of my documentation process, I acted as both a participant and an observer as I took field notes in my classrooms (Freeman, 1998). For the field notes, I wrote down jottings after every class in which something occurred that seemed relevant to my research questions. Drawing from the traditions of case study methodologies, I paid particular attention to documenting "critical incidents" in which students seemed to be connecting or failing to connect the course content to contexts independent of the developmental course (Patton, 2002, p. 439).

Documents

In discussing documents as a form of data, Merriam (1998) has explained that "because they exist independent of a research agenda, they are nonreactive, that is, unaffected by the research process" (p. 126). When participants produced the documents

I analyzed, they were still enrolled in my class, and thus not yet specific participants in the study, so their comments on these sources were not affected at all by the participants' knowledge that they were part of a study. One form of document I looked at was student blog responses (see Appendix F). I analyzed the ways students reflected in blogs on their own writing process as they worked on developing major written assignments for the course. I used them as a form of comparison and contrast to the ways students discussed their writing process in the context of the interviews. A second form of document that was analyzed was a writing inventory students filled out as part of the course in which they discussed some of their prior experiences with writing as well as what they believed were the writing skills and habits necessary for success in college (see Appendix G). Finally, the welcome page of the electronic portfolio was a data source that helped me to understand how students were experiencing the course and how they reflected on what they felt they had learned through taking the course (see Appendix H). Students were required to have as part of their welcome page a discussion of the learning goals that were listed on the syllabus. Since this short written assignment happened at the end of the quarter, it was helpful to give me insight into their experiences with the course as it came to a close.

Researcher Journal

I kept a researcher journal throughout the entire process. The journal helped me to reflect on the evolving nature of my research questions, data collection, and early data analysis. It was used to assist me with comparing and contrasting the data that emerged in the various forms. As I collected data, I used the journal to begin the coding process as

themes emerged. It was also helpful in allowing me to think about my own evolving sense of how the critical writing course appeared to be experienced by the participants.

Data Analysis

Creswell (2007) has explained that an important characteristic of phenomenological research is “studying several individuals that have shared the experience” (p. 78). All participants in the study had “shared the experience” of taking a developmental writing course intentionally designed to connect course content with college writing while also taking an additional course. They also shared the experience of completing the course and continuing their education into the quarter after completion. The interviews were the primary source of data in capturing student perceptions of the shared experience. In keeping with phenomenological traditions of using interviews as the central data source, I drew from phenomenological approaches to analyze the data (Creswell, 2007, p. 78).

The data analysis process was ongoing, occurring while I was collecting the data as well as after I had collected all the data. Using the conceptual framework of Gee's (2008) Discourse theory and Lea and Street's (1998/2006) theory of academic literacies as my deductive starting points, I coded and analyzed participant documents and interview transcriptions (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996). Additionally, using in vivo codes, I analyzed the “terms and language” (Coffey & Atkinson, 1996, p. 32) of the participants to interrogate the ways they perceived the activities of the developmental course in connection with their experiences independent of the developmental classroom. Codes also emerged inductively based on my close examination of the data (Creswell, 2007).

During this stage of coding the data, I crafted analytical memos to help me think about categories that were prominently emerging through close analysis of the data.

Using a combination of the inductive and deductive codes that emerged through the early stages of the coding process, I then created a master list of 36 codes (see Appendix I). Using this master list, I reexamined all data collected and organized it into segments revolving around the master code list.

Next, in looking over the various data sources, I did what Ryan and Bernard (2003) have described as “discovering themes and subthemes” (p. 85). Themes that were emerging were documented in analytical memos that I wrote throughout this stage of the process. To arrive at these themes, I used a combination of the views and language of the participants (“emic”) and my own interpretive perspective (“etic”) on the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2007, p. 72). Throughout the memoing process, my aim was to examine ways the data seemed to relate to my research questions and to my theoretical framework.

I first searched for evidence suggesting that students perceived the course as connected (or not connected) to their development of a set of skills, habits, values, and dispositions necessary for success in writing for college. I also examined in what ways (if any) students connected this development to activities and assignments in the course. Next, in drawing from case study traditions, I investigated the data found in the written artifacts produced in the class to look for recurring ideas and thoughts that occurred in multiple data forms. Finally, the field notes documenting class sessions helped me to see the participants as they were engaged in the course itself so that I could analyze what Geertz (1973) has referred to as “the flow of social discourse” (p. 20). Additionally, the

notes were also an important source of data about the curriculum and the pedagogical strategies I used throughout the course. Using my research questions and the frame of Gee's (2008) Discourse theory and Lea and Street's (1998/2006) model of academic literacies, I sought to analyze whether or not participants appeared to be acquiring the academic writing skills and collegiate habits necessary for success in writing in a college setting.

Both the field notes and the interviews helped me to get an “empathetic understanding of the social worlds” (Emerson, Fretz, & Shaw, 1995, p. 72) of learners as they were engaged in the actual process of completing the course and embarking on the next step of their educational journey. As the interactions unfolded in the classroom and in the interviews, I looked for “significant statements” which offered insight into ways students in the class might be connecting the course to contexts independent of the developmental course (Creswell, 2007, p. 170). I also used the data analysis method of “looking at language” (Corbin & Strauss, 2008, p. 69) to focus on the ways participants described their experiences with taking the course and completing it and writing for college courses. Using various forms of data helped me to interpret the nuances of the phenomenon of taking a developmental writing course designed to promote connections between the class tasks and college course expectations. Ultimately several major topics emerged, which served as the basis for discussing the central findings of the study. These were the following: (a) the connections between the developmental writing course and the college curriculum; (b) the development and evolution of a process-oriented disposition and approach towards writing in relationship to class assignments, tools, and activities; (c) the importance of grammar/punctuation instruction and the student desire

for more of it; (d) the transfer of knowledge beyond the developmental writing course; and (e) the tensions between what was learned about writing in the Foundations course and what was needed in writing across the curriculum.

Trustworthiness

Multiple methods were used to maximize the validity of the findings. These methods included triangulation of data, an audit trail, a researcher journal, peer debriefing, and searching for disconfirming evidence (Anderson and Herr, 1999; Cochran-Smith and Lytle, 1993; Creswell, 2007; Miles and Huberman, 1984; Wolcott, 2009). I also made a conscious effort to explicitly address my positionality in relation to the participants.

Triangulation. According to Creswell and Miller (2000), “Triangulation is a validity procedure where researchers search for convergence among multiple and different sources of information to form themes or categories in a study” (p. 126). In order to incorporate a data triangulation strategy, I used interview transcripts, various documents written in the class, researcher journal entries, and memos to help me compare and contrast the sources (Creswell & Miller, 2000). Doing so assisted me in examining what I perceived to be happening as an instructor with what the data were saying about the actual experiences of the participants (Wolcott, 2009).

A key advantage of having the follow-up interview as a method of triangulation was that I had established a level of rapport with the participants. By the time they got to the second interview, they had had the opportunity to discuss their experiences with the course in the earlier interview. As a result, they might have become more comfortable with my position as researcher and their position as participants in the study. This

triangulation method was also beneficial since at the point of the second interview, participants had more experience with college writing and also had some distance on the developmental writing course and its relationship to writing expectations beyond it.

Researcher journal. The researcher journal was a tool to enhance the validity of the research process. By reflecting regularly on the classroom interactions related to the research questions, I was able to consider how what I was experiencing as an instructor was similar to or different from what came up in the other sources of data. Being immersed in the field helped me to act as an insider while documenting my experiences in the journal. As Cochran-Smith and Lytle (1993) have stated, “teachers use the interpretive frameworks of practitioners to provide a truly emic view that is different from that of an outside observer” (p. 18). This “emic view” was compared and contrasted with my journal observations about participants after they were no longer enrolled in my course. Such documentation helped me to capture a richly detailed account of student experiences.

Audit trail. As I collected data, analyzed it, and coded it, my research journal helped me keep a detailed audit trail of my process, my decisions along the way, and the stages of the research (Creswell, 2007; Creswell & Miller, 2000). This process helped me to be both analytical and self-reflective throughout the different stages of the research study. It also helped me to keep a record of what steps were taken in my process of collecting data, analyzing it, and drawing conclusions from it (Miles & Huberman, 1984).

Memoing. Building on some of the key ideas I recorded as I kept a research journal trail as data emerged and themes began to arise, I wrote memos in which I formulated coding schemes, reflected on emerging themes, presented detailed discussions

of crucial moments and emerging findings, and documented in detail my steps in analyzing the data (Creswell & Miller, 2000).

Peer debriefing. Another method I used to increase the validity of my findings was having peer debriefing sessions with Jennifer Renner Del Nero and Jessica Darkenwald DeCola (Creswell, 2007). In my coursework at Rutgers University, I have taken three qualitative research courses with both of them. They are Ph.D. students in Literacy Education and are very familiar with the stages my research has undergone. For the debriefing sessions I had with them, I shared drafts, brainstormed ideas, and reflected on my own research and writing process. Both acted in the capacity of a “critical friend” (Anderson & Herr, 1999, p. 16). Their role in the research process was to provide feedback on drafts, check my coding schemes, and challenge me to clearly articulate my interpretations (Creswell & Miller, 2000). They were critical in helping me to increase the trustworthiness of my findings.

Disconfirming evidence. To further increase the validity of my findings, I also looked for “disconfirming evidence” (Creswell, 2007, p. 204) that suggested that students might not have experienced the course or learned from it in ways I thought, hoped, or assumed they would have. Two interview questions were used to help me get at disconfirming evidence. One asked students to discuss what they wished they had learned, and the other asked students to discuss something they believed they needed to know about college writing but was not covered in the class. I stressed to them that their candid responses to these questions were pivotal in helping me to better design the course.

Researcher role, positionality, and bracketing. Throughout the research

process, I needed to be attuned to the fact that I was interviewing students who had previously been in my class, which could potentially bias or have other effects on their responses. Even though they were no longer students in my class when they were interviewed, participants could have potentially felt anxious about my role as a researcher and their role as participants. In order to reduce the possibility of such anxieties, when I recruited students to the study, I made explicit to them the purpose for conducting the study so that they had a full understanding of it before they volunteered to participate. Also, the nature of the questions asked during the interviews were designed in a way that aimed to focus on the experiences of the course rather than on evaluations of the instructor. During the interviews, I also made a point of explaining some of my goals in conducting the research and reiterated how valuable it was to get their insights into the experience of the course.

Since I was an insider in the role of teacher researcher within my own classroom with my own assumptions about how the class activities helped students make connections to college writing, I needed to bracket my own experiences and biases as the instructor of the course (Creswell, 2007). According to Creswell (2007), bracketing is a process “in which investigators set aside their experiences, as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under examination” (p. 59-60). Naturally, as the instructor, I had the goal of helping my students to attain the learning goals that were outlined on the course syllabus. Additionally, I played a role in designing the standardized learning goals with other faculty members in the department, so I clearly have a stake in the course’s success. Finally, in working from the standardized learning

goals, I designed the course in such a way in which I believed I was actively and explicitly striving to help students make connections to college writing expectations.

To bracket my own experiences, in investigating the data and writing up memos about it, I sought to focus first on what exactly participants were saying in their own words before putting my own interpretive stance on the data. The memos allowed me to engage in “self-reflexivity” (Patton, 2002, p. 495), which entailed a process of examining my own perspectives on teaching and learning and how my experiences and background as an educator who played a role in the design of the course have shaped those perspectives. Engaging in such self-reflexivity helped me to recognize and reflect on the stakes I had in students attaining the writing skills and habits necessary for success in writing for college courses. Making my thoughts explicit about the teaching and learning processes helped me to implement my study and analyze the data in a way that reduced my biases. Finally, my position and experiences as a teacher-researcher provided me with opportunities to collect a wide range of data sources that were able to “confirm and/or illuminate one another” (Cochran-Smith, & Lytle, 1993, p. 18). The traditions of teacher research are part of a rich and rigorous field of study.

Finally, an additional important dimension of my role as a teacher and a researcher in the field was that as an experienced full-time instructor working on my doctorate in Literacy Education, I brought a deep level of knowledge to the instructional design of the course. I had previously worked at the institution in various roles, including as a writing coordinator. In that role, I worked with faculty members across the curriculum. These experiences gave me in-depth knowledge of some of the kinds of writing expectations that occur in other courses. I had also worked in learning

communities in which the developmental course was linked with other disciplinary courses, including Criminal Justice and Psychology. Finally, as a doctoral student, I was engaging in continuous research on effective practices and reflecting on my own teaching. Without such direct knowledge of the curriculum and high quality pedagogical practices, other instructors would likely find it difficult to replicate the kind of instruction I designed to promote transfer that was an important aspect of the course unless they were given ongoing support and professional development. Furthermore, due to my years of working with students in developmental courses, I had knowledge of their learning needs that other, less experienced faculty members might not have.

Overview of Findings

Chapters 4 and 5 are organized around several key topics that emerged as central to answering the research questions. They emerged as a result of analysis of the interviews, documents, and field notes that were collected for the study. To arrive at these topics, I used a combination of the views and language of the participants (“emic”) and my own interpretive perspective (“etic”) on the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2007, p. 72). Chapter 4 focuses first on the participants’ development of the elements of the Discourse of college writing and then moves into a description of students’ perceptions about the connections between developing these qualities, skills, and tools and the course design. Then, it addresses participant views on the helpfulness of explicit grammar and punctuation instruction and their desire for more of it. Finally, it addresses the variety of feedback resources built into the instructional design of the course and what role they played in helping foster in students a recursive approach to writing. Chapter 5 focuses on the connections, tensions, and differences between the knowledge and skills

obtained in the developmental course and the skills participants actually discussed using in credit-bearing college courses that included writing assignments.

Chapter 4: The Development of a Discourse of College Writing

In this study, I drew from elements of both case study and phenomenological traditions of qualitative research. The study sought to discover how students perceived taking and completing a developmental writing course that had been designed to explicitly help them connect course activities and assignments with college course expectations. In an effort to examine their perceptions, I put a great deal of focus on what writing skills and dispositions students believed they needed to be successful in college. I also explored in what ways (if any) their beliefs seemed to change throughout the course of the study. Students documented their beliefs about writing for college on a learning inventory at the beginning of the quarter when they first started taking the developmental course (see Appendix G). Then, during the first interview, participants were also asked what kinds of writing skills and habits they believe are necessary to being a successful college student (see Appendix D). This interview occurred shortly after they had completed the course. Finally, a variation of the same question was posed during the second interview (see Appendix E), which took place during the second half of the quarter after participants had completed the developmental course. Additionally, the study focused on how participants described the class activities in relationship to their development of the habits, skills, and dispositions necessary for college writing. Finally, the study focused on how students described the activities and assignments of the class in relationship to the writing skills they actually used in writing for college classes they were taking subsequent to the course.

The findings of the study were examined in relationship to what the research has suggested make up common elements of college writing Discourse. As Gee (2008) has

argued, there are distinctive Discourses that make up any institution, culture, or community. He defined Discourse as “a socially accepted association among ways of using language and other symbolic expressions, of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting” (Gee, 2008, p. 161). One purpose of the developmental writing course under study was to help students begin to acquire the practices associated with writing for college classes. After a review of what multiple literacy scholars, composition theorists, and college writing focused professional organizations have documented about college writing, I identified several key dispositions, competencies, tools, and practices that make up the Discourse of much of college writing across contexts. As detailed in the theoretical framework, these included a process-oriented disposition and approach to writing, critically analyzing and using research as evidence to support and illustrate ideas, constructing an argument, writing as a way to learn and inquire, organizing written work, effectively using grammar and punctuation, and writing with a sense of audience, purpose, and awareness of context. (Addison and McGee, 2010; Beaufort, 2007; Conley, 2005; Cooper, 2006; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Graff, 2003; Melzer, 2009; Rose, 2012; Shaughnessy, 1977; Sullivan, 2003; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006).

The developmental class was designed to help students acquire these elements, and it explicitly aimed to help students develop their understanding of the ways such elements could be transferred across classroom contexts. In particular, it sought to foster a process-oriented disposition and approach towards writing so that students could learn to value and understand that most college writing is recursive and requires various stages of development. These stages include prewriting, drafting, proofreading, and revising.

Additionally, the course aimed to help students develop grammar and punctuation knowledge, basic research and citation skills, and using evidence to make an argument. All skills, tools, and practices of college writing were discussed in relationship to the stages of the writing process. In its continuous focus on the recursive aspects of college writing, the course was designed to help students rethink ideas about writing they might have internalized through prior schooling experiences in which the recursive aspects of the composition process might not have been emphasized (Rose, 2012).

To analyze the data, I used the college writing Discourse concept to understand the ways participants described the phenomenon of taking a developmental writing course. In particular, I sought to uncover the ways their discussions of the course seemed to be reflective (or not) of elements of the Discourse of writing for college classes. I also used Lea and Street's (1998/2006) model of academic literacies to inform my work. This model was primarily used to analyze some of the differences and tensions that arose when students encountered writing expectations in their credit-bearing courses that differed from the writing expectations of the developmental course.

Although there are multiple practices, tools, values, and competencies of college writing that are common across disciplines, it is also important to recognize and account for the variations that students encounter across writing contexts when they take different courses. The Discourse differences across disciplines and contexts in higher education are accounted for in Gee's (2008) theory of Discourse in that each discipline can be considered a sub Discourse within a larger overarching Discourse. However, Lea and Street (1998) have argued that writing expectations and standards vary because there are a "variety of communicative practices" in college, sometimes even within academic

disciplines (p. 159). I assumed that participants in the study would experience this variety because they had different college majors and they were taking a range of courses. Such varieties might lead to confusion for students who are struggling to successfully navigate the literacy demands of college unless they have explicit opportunities to explore and discuss these differences. A writing course is an ideal context for doing so. Lea and Street's (1998/2006) model helped deepen my understanding of the variations in expectations regarding writing practices that participants experienced in other courses.

I also used Lea and Street's (2006) academic literacies model to frame much of the analysis of the secondary research question regarding the ways participants' beliefs about writing for college changed throughout the study. Research has suggested that writing pedagogy has often directly and indirectly stressed the notion that effective writing is primarily writing that is grammatically correct (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Lea & Street, 1998/2006; Rose, 2012; Shaughnessy, 1977). This kind of teaching tends to focus largely on what Lea and Street (2006) referred to as the "surface features of language form" (p. 368). Based on what the research has suggested and my years of teaching developmental writing, I assumed that participants likely came into the course having internalized the primacy of surface level correctness (Conley, 2005; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rose, 2012). I sought to examine if, as the course unfolded, participants came to view college writing as being a more dynamic and recursive process, involving a variety of habits, skills, and practices beyond grammatical and other kinds of surface level correctness.

This chapter focuses first on participants' changing belief systems about writing. Relating to this change in beliefs, I then describe participants' perceptions that the course

activities and assignments were helping them develop important process-oriented dispositions that could be useful in how they approached writing tasks in college classes. Additionally, I address the ways an analysis of participant perceptions suggested that they had developed a set of “tools” and practices associated with the process-oriented Discourse of college writing (Gee, 2008, p. 161). These tools included knowledge of grammar and punctuation, which some participants believed the course could have spent more time covering. Furthermore, connected to the notion of a process-oriented disposition, a key recurring idea that emerged from analysis of the data was the helpfulness of having a variety of resources for feedback built into the overall design of the course: peer, instructor, and academic support services. All three kinds of feedback resources are addressed as integral components of the course because they had an impact on how students perceived taking the class. In particular, the varied feedback forms appeared to help participants perceive, value, and treat writing as a process.

The Development and Evolution of a Process-oriented Disposition and Approach Towards Writing

My analysis and interpretation of the data suggested that as the quarter unfolded, evidenced in varying degrees and ways, all participants developed or evolved a process-oriented set of beliefs and practices with regard to college writing. Using three different data collection strategies, I asked participants at three different times what they believed were some of the writing habits and skills necessary for success in college. The first of these data sources was a writing inventory given to students in the class at the beginning of the quarter in which they took the course. Participants were also asked a question about their beliefs during the first interview, which was conducted shortly after they had

completed the course. Finally, they were asked a variation of this same question during the second interview, which took place during the second half of the quarter after they had completed the developmental course. In all eight cases, participants' ideas about writing skills and habits necessary for success in college seemed to have evolved throughout the study period.

Across cases, participants' perceptions about writing changed the most with regards to their views of writing as a recursive process. In multiple cases, coming into the course, participants had limited to no awareness of writing as a recursive process. However, throughout the course of the study they developed an understanding of this. Amesha and Gideon were the strongest exemplars of this developing understanding because data analysis revealed the biggest change in their views about writing. When Amesha began the class, her writing inventory comments indicated the belief that the habits and skills necessary for successful writing in college involved being able "to use proper punctuation" and that "Reading should [be] an important tool as part of writing." Essentially, she was focusing on "surface features of language" (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368). However, in the two interviews, she appeared to have developed a sense of writing for college as a more recursive process that includes stages such as "drafting" and "proofreading." Also relevant to her deepening understanding of the recursive nature of college writing, she believed that in order to be successful in college, student writers "should be able to do research papers." As stated in the theoretical framework, an important element of much of the college writing process entails finding and integrating research sources (Conley, 2005; Graff, 2003; Melzer, 2009). Like several other

participants in the study, Amesha's views of the college writing process expanded to include not only the stages of the process but also the role of research in that process.

Analysis of Gideon's views of writing illustrated possibly the greatest evolution of views regarding writing. On the inventory, there was no evidence of a writing as process disposition. Like some of the other participants, his responses indicated his belief that "proper grammar and punctuation are key elements to being a successful college student." Such sentiments are the same as what Rose (2012) found with students he studied who were enrolled in developmental writing programs. He asserted that due to years of internalizing an "atomistic approach" to teaching and learning in which isolated skills are emphasized, they often "will define 'good writing' as not making grammatical mistakes" (p. 124-126). As evidenced on his inventory, coming into the course, Gideon similarly focused exclusively on the "surface features of language" where effective writing is seen as writing that is free of grammatical errors (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368).

In contrast, in his interviews, Gideon discussed a variety of skills and habits associated with a process-oriented disposition and approach towards writing. For example, the qualities he said were necessary to being successful for writing in college included "the ability to brainstorm," "organizing and planning," and "writing in steps." He also discussed how important it is to "grab the reader or audience" along with the need to make sure "the research you do [is] credible." It was evident that his perception of college writing had evolved towards an understanding of its recursive elements. His "model of writing" (Rose, 2012, p. 137) seemed to have changed as the course unfolded. The cases of Gideon, Amesha, and several others illustrate that students can revise their ideas and beliefs about writing for college so that they recognize and value it as a

recursive process. Understanding writing as a process is a characteristic that researchers and professional organizations have identified as being key to success in college (Beaufort, 2007; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al, 2011).

Analysis of the data revealed that in certain cases, participants had some understanding of the recursive nature of the college writing process coming into the developmental course but that this understanding deepened as the course progressed. Both Tiffany and Adam were representative of this kind of deepening awareness. On her inventory, Tiffany wrote about the need to “reread your work...to make sure everything is good.” Her comments suggest she was aware of the need to revisit her work after she had drafted it, which is an integral aspect of the writing process. Analysis of her interviews suggested a growing awareness of other dimensions of the process. She discussed the writing process as including the need to “get started early,” “think about what you’re going to do, how you’re going to write,” “try to do a draft,” and “when you’re done look over it.” Such comments accounted for the prewriting and drafting stage of the writing process in ways that her inventory had not. She also reiterated her understanding of the proofreading stage. However, it was not apparent what she believed the final stages of writing entailed beyond rereading written work.

Coming into the class, Adam also accounted somewhat for the different stages of the writing process. On his inventory, he asserted that a writer should “never [write] at the last minute” and “always check your work before [it is] due.” Like Tiffany and some of the other participants in the study, his views towards the writing process seemed to have evolved throughout the duration of the study. During an interview, he discussed how important it was to “do a draft” and to get input from professors or tutors “to see if

it's good". Additionally, he explained the importance of research to the writing process, explaining the need to find and use "sources [that are] able to prove your topic."

Although participants like Adam and Tiffany seemed to have come into the course with somewhat of a sense of writing as a process, they appeared to have become more conversant and aware of the tools, habits, and skills associated with the process. Their discussions expanded to include an awareness of audience, time management, and the importance of using evidence to prove a point. This deepened sense of awareness of the recursive nature of writing could help students navigate courses with in-depth writing assignments. Furthermore, as detailed in the review of the literature, writers need to be attuned to how their reader will transact with a text (Rosenblatt, 2004). They also need to be able to build an effective argument using research (Graff, 2003). In their discussions, which included addressing the need to "grab the reader or audience" and use sources to "prove your topic," the participants showed evidence of increasing awareness of these important aspects of the college writing process.

The data from multiple participants illustrated that they were developing ways "of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting" that are associated with writing as a process, a key dimension of the Discourse of college writing as it applies to many academic disciplines (Gee, 2008, p. 161). Although some participants appeared to come into the course with little knowledge of the recursive nature of the process and others seemed to have some sense of it coming in, in all cases the students showed evidence that their knowledge about writing for college evolved. The next section focuses on ways participants linked the development of a process-oriented disposition and approach

towards writing to the design, structure, and specific activities of the developmental writing course.

Writing Process Disposition and Approach as Linked to Course Design and Structure

In this section, I examine participant perceptions of the course structure and specific activities in relationship to the ways they believed they developed a process-oriented approach to writing along with a set of habits and tools to navigate this process. The course was designed to foster this awareness in various ways. Participants discussed a range of assignments, tools, and structural aspects of the course as being helpful to their emerging or evolving understanding of the writing process, pointing to the multiple ways students might be taught to acquire a process-oriented disposition.

Emphasis on writing as a means of thinking. Two participants discussed the ways elements of the course design such as freewriting activities helped them perceive writing as a process of thinking about and exploring ideas. For example, Dana discussed how being introduced to freewriting helped her think through her writing. Students practiced this strategy during the prewriting stage of the narrative assignment. They were also encouraged to use it when working on other assignments in the course. In her first interview, Dana explained, “I think [freewriting is] a good writing tool” because “eventually you find you get a[n] idea that you could really develop” when you do it. She also stated that freewriting can help generate thoughts which can then “evolve.” Like Dana, Gideon connected elements of the course design to the notion of writing as a process of thinking. He explained during the first interview,

One of the things I enjoyed about the class first of all was the fact that you had time to think and write stuff through. My impression was always, of writing

was...write this now...I came into the class with those expectations...I always thought writing was you kind of have an assignment pushed in front of you and you write it there and you are timed.

Based on his report about his prior experiences with writing compared to his experiences in the class, I inferred that the way the writing assignments were designed in the course, moving sequentially and over several weeks from prewriting to drafting to proofreading and revising seemed to challenge Gideon's prior experiences and the beliefs about writing which they engendered.

Dana's positive feelings about freewriting also seemed to challenge some of her prior ways of thinking about writing (Gee, 2008). Her interviews contrasted with what she had reported on her writing inventory at the beginning of the quarter, where she wrote, "I have never concluded that my writing experiences have been good." Given that freewriting seemed to really turn her thinking in another direction, her comments affirm Rosenblatt's (2004) assertion about using freewriting: "Especially for those inhibited by unfortunate past writing experiences, this can be liberating, a warm-up exercise for starting the juices flowing" (p. 1379). When freewriting is built into the in-class writing process as a way of generating and exploring ideas, it might be particularly helpful for students who might not have had positive experiences with writing in the past.

Dana and Gideon perceived that the class helped them view writing in a different way, where the acts of writing and thinking are interwoven aspects of the writing process. Dana's commentary on using freewriting as a means of exploring thoughts that might then evolve suggested that she valued the strategy as helping her improve her writing process. Using writing to think through and explore ideas as well as using "writing to learn" are important dimensions of writing for college (Melzer, 2009, p. W257). Dana's

views of freewriting are evidence that she was learning to value the process of exploring ideas prior to molding them into a unified piece of written work. Likewise, in his own words, Gideon perceived that having “time to think” as part of the writing process culture of the course was helpful to him. When he described writing as being rushed in previous course contexts, it was consistent with prior research which found that it is common for many students entering college to have had limited opportunities to take their writing through recursive stages of a process (Conley, 2005). In developmental writing courses, students should be taught to view the writing process as a means of thinking about ideas and that this occurs when writing slows down and is done in stages over time.

Writing process checklists. Three participants discussed the ways the writing checklists I provided throughout the quarter were helpful scaffolds in the writing process. For every major assignment, students were given a grading checklist to guide them as they moved into the drafting, proofreading, and revising stages of the writing process (see Appendix B for sample). Heidi said that they helped her envision and plan what she needed to do to complete a writing assignment. As she explained, they helped her “see what I have to do.” Like Heidi, Amesha also referred to the checklists as being useful because they helped her approach her writing in “steps.” Similarly, Janice discussed the helpfulness of using the checklists and then explained that she had developed the habit of creating and using her own checklists in other contexts. She said, “I never even thought about making a checklist before, but then I actually took the ideas from the classroom and used them for every other class, not just for English.”

Data analysis reveals evidence that Amesha, Heidi, and Janice were using the checklists to assess and think about what was being asked of them in assignments. In

Janice's case, there was also evidence that she had started to use this skill in other classes. Research has suggested that assessing a writing task is an integral dimension of the learning process and that without guidance, first year students often fail to fully understand the expectations of assignments (Ambrose, et al., 2010). Writing checklists can be a useful scaffold in a developmental writing course because they can help students analyze the demands of a writing task and think about how to complete such a task by making the requirements of the assignment clear and explicit to students. Furthermore, they can help instill in students the value of closely analyzing a writing task so that they can repeat this behavior for writing assignments in other classes.

Explicit emphasis on the stages of the writing process. Bruno and Dana specifically discussed the course emphasis on the writing process and how it helped them understand the point of writing recursively. Presumably, this was because each major assignment required them to do prewriting tasks, drafting, proofreading, and revising. When students turned in work in the early stages of the writing process, there was no grade at stake. My rationale for not providing a grade was to reduce the possibility of students perceiving there was finality to the product at the early stages of development. Instead, students received class participation credit for having submitted a draft and for having participated in a peer feedback session. Bruno and Dana provided strong evidence of how the course activities that emphasized the stages of the process helped them develop a process-oriented disposition. For example, Bruno reported that it was helpful to require students to submit first drafts due prior to the deadline for submitting the final product because "You can improve, so it's not just one grade and you're out. So, you can always improve." Bruno's commentary has important implications for

incorporating the drafting stage into the assignments for a developmental course. Taking his writing through more than one draft and getting feedback between drafts gave him the opportunity to improve in ways that writing only a single draft would not have afforded. It also appeared to help him internalize the value of writing as a recursive process because he believed that writing “can always improve” when it moves through multiple drafts.

Like Bruno, Dana discussed in detail the way the overall design of the course helped her learn to value the stages and habits of process-oriented writing. For instance, on her first reflective blog post after having taken her first major writing assignment for the class through all the stages of the writing process, she discussed what she had learned about herself as a writer, explaining, “I realized in writing it is beneficial to write in steps or sections, it is a process.” Later in the quarter, on her portfolio welcome page when she was asked to write a reflection on which of the learning goals listed on the syllabus she believed the course had most helped her attain, Dana wrote that she had learned to apply the writing process to various written tasks. She explained,

I have employed the techniques [of the writing process] when writing the works enclosed in my e- portfolio... As the weeks elapsed this quarter, the process became easier to engage, and I observed my writing got more grammatically accurate and the flow of my content seems more logical. In writing my last essay, I found that I kept going back to the process, and realized that revising is critical in writing.

Dana’s comments focused not only on the grammatical components of her writing, but also on the flow and logic of her writing. These statements suggested that, like several of the participants, she was viewing the writing process in ways that moved beyond grammatical and mechanical issues to the more conceptual and organizational features of her text. She was not focusing only on the “surface features of language (Lea & Street,

2006, p. 368). Her realization that the revision stage is so crucial to composing effective writing suggested that she understood the purpose of writing recursively, including proofreading and revision. Because she discussed this in relationship to what she believed the course had helped her attain, it was evident that she viewed her development as being connected to the course's writing process emphasis. This finding is important because research has suggested that students often misperceive why their professors assign certain kinds of activities and assignments (Cox, 2009; Grubb & Cox, 2005). As Ambrose et al. (2010) have asserted, effective instruction should include emphasizing what is valued in the classroom. The explicit discussions in the class about why each stage of the writing process is valuable for effective written communications, the short blog tasks asking students to reflect on their writing experiences, and the frequent use of the language of writing process likely helped participants like Dana, Bruno, and others perceive the importance of the approach. This could be beneficial to students when they encounter increasingly complex writing demands in college because they will need to use a recursive process-oriented approach to successfully complete such demands.

Additional activities and elements of course design fostering a process-oriented disposition. Ameshia and Adam brought up other elements of the course that other students did not discuss. In both instances, the participants reported on surprising or revealing ideas that are pertinent to this study because they highlighted how important it is for developmental faculty to use a variety of classroom strategies to cultivate a process-oriented disposition. Their experiences and perceptions of the course are good reminders that some teaching methods might work better than others for different students. For instance, although analysis of the data contained in the blog tasks and

reflective ePortfolio welcome pages provided rich insights important to the ways the course design helped participants develop a process-oriented disposition, only Amesha explicitly pointed to the blog tasks as particularly helpful to her process. In discussing them, she emphasized that they gave her the opportunity to “really explain myself.”

More surprisingly, she believed that the blogs acted as an alternative means of communicating her writing needs with me (her instructor). For her, these reflections on her writing process were particularly helpful because, as she explained, “Sometimes I stay quiet even if I don’t understand something. I just zip it. And I know it’s not right. But I can’t help it. Cause some people tend to shun you” if you speak up too much. This discussion suggested that students might find seeking out help with completing stages of the writing process to be difficult and embarrassing. However, reflective writing, such as the kind required for the blog posts, could reveal barriers that an instructor could subsequently address in class without a student having to ask publicly for help.

Also connected to the development of a process-oriented disposition, Amesha believed that the ePortfolio activity in which she was asked to reflect on what she learned from the course at the end of the quarter had been helpful to her because it allowed her to “explore” and “expand” her ideas. She believed that when students have this opportunity to reflect on their own process, they can then “better themsel[ves] in writing.” It is true that none of the other participants brought up these tasks as standing out as being particularly helpful to developing their understanding of the writing process. Therefore, it is hard to know if more explicit explanation of the rationale for their inclusion is necessary so that students can internalize the value of engaging in such activities or if it might simply be that it is not a particularly helpful activity for most students. However, it

is worthwhile to build into a course's design multiple ways of emphasizing and affirming the writing process since students learn in a variety of ways.

Also distinctive was Adam's response to the interview question focusing on which assignments or activities he believed were the most helpful. In his response, he recognized a key component of the overall design of the course. He discussed the way the development of the illustration paragraph helped him get ready for the writing process for the final persuasive research assignment in the course. The illustration writing component of the course included discussions, activities, and assignments that stressed the need to illustrate ideas to the reader through examples and specific details rather than just making general statements. As evidence that students have learned to do this, the final assignment required students to find and use research sources in part to provide examples that helped illustrate their assertions and provide evidence that there are grounds for such assertions. Adam explained that the illustration writing portion of the course "was definitely a good one because you know it really prepared me for doing the research paper." When asked to discuss what he meant, he explained that for the research assignment, students have to "provide details similar to the illustration paragraph." He also indicated that including information from research sources could help illustrate an idea because the writer has to explain "how [the research source] proved your point."

Analysis of Adam's statements suggested that he was becoming conversant with the process and tools of crafting an argument, which Graff (2003) has asserted is the most critical dimension of writing for college classes across disciplinary contexts. Adam stated that using evidence to support claims was similar to "arguing with another opponent." Furthermore, he emphasized how important it is "to be persuasive." He further

demonstrated this awareness of the necessity of building arguments effectively on his ePortfolio welcome page, where he discussed using research and providing details as skills he believed he obtained through taking the course. The way the assignments in the course progressed—going from an emphasis on illustrating ideas towards an emphasis on persuading—helped him recognize the importance and value of finding and using examples that could act as evidence to support claims and ideas. These elements of the writing process are integral to the Discourse of college writing (Addison & McGee, 2010).

As discussed in the theoretical framework of the study, the Discourse of college writing includes a process-oriented approach towards writing and multiple habits, skills, tools, and values that are associated with such an approach. These qualities include writing to learn, building an argument, organizing written work, using evidence to support ideas, integrating research in writing, and writing with a sense of audience (Addison & McGee, 2010; Conley, 2005; Cooper, 2006; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al; Graff, 2003; Melzer, 2009; Rose, 2012; Sullivan 2003). The course was designed to help students acquire these habits, skills, and values. Participants brought up many of them as they discussed and reflected upon their own writing process and how the course design helped them develop these process-oriented qualities. The findings suggest that in various ways the course helped students practice and develop the ways “of thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting” that are so crucial to a recursive writing Discourse (Gee, 2008, p. 8).

The Importance of Grammar/punctuation Instruction

Another important finding that emerged from analysis of the data was the benefits

most participants perceived in learning about grammar and punctuation. Grammar and punctuation lessons and practice tasks were part of the course in various ways. The topics explicitly covered through class activities focused on issues I have found to be common and recurring in much of student writing, including correcting sentence fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, and verb tense inconsistencies. Three quizzes on key concepts were also part of the course to help students practice and master what they learned. Grammar and punctuation were also taught indirectly via the written corrections that participants received from me on their submitted work and from the college's online tutors when students submitted their work for feedback on the final paper. In these instances, such instruction was provided based on problems specific to the individual's written work.

I aimed to avoid overemphasizing what Lea and Street (2006) have described as the "surface features of language form" (p. 368), which stresses the primacy of grammar, spelling, and punctuation. Whenever I taught a short grammar and/or punctuation activity, I stated that students should not think about the topics in isolation from their actual writing; instead, they should view knowledge of the rules of grammar and punctuation as a tool they should use in the proofreading and revision stages of the writing process. This emphasis aimed to help them view grammar and punctuation as just one aspect of the writing process used to improve a text. It was also aimed at preventing them from thinking about grammar and punctuation as concepts to be learned solely for quizzes or as stand-alone, isolated mastery tasks. This emphasis was aligned with the study's theoretical framework in that the class was designed to help students access the "tools" of the Discourse of writing for college (Gee, 2008, p. 161).

When participants were asked to discuss activities from the class they found to be the most helpful, several focused on how the grammar and punctuation instruction helped them gain knowledge of the rules. For example, Tiffany explained that before taking the foundations course, she “never knew about comma splices” or “fused sentences” and stated that the explicit grammar instruction helped her get a “better understanding” of concepts such as sentence fragments and verb tenses. Dana explained that the grammar instruction was helpful because “you could get familiar, refresh your memory on your grammar” and on “the sentence structure.” Heidi explained that she liked this component of the course because she “always had problems with [grammar and punctuation].”

In other instances, participants discussed the importance of grammar and punctuation instruction in direct connection to actual writing. For instance, in an interview, Bruno stated that he felt that this element of the course was useful to him because “people are not going to want to read” writing that has grammatical issues. Similarly, Janice wrote on her second reflective blog post, “I’ve learned how to fix my sentence fragments as well as my sentence structure.” Relatedly, on her ePortfolio, she expressed her belief that by taking the course, she had learned how to avoid sentence fragments in her own work. These findings suggest that some participants were thinking about grammar and punctuation knowledge as a tool that could help them improve their writing rather than as something that was isolated from their own actual writing. Participants might have been viewing grammar and punctuation in this way because of the course’s attempt to move away from a “remedial pedagogy” approach and towards an emphasis on writing as a recursive process (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 49). Knowledge of grammar and punctuation rules was explicitly discussed as a tool of the writing and

revising stages of the process, and much of the instruction on grammar and punctuation was contextualized in students' actual writing.

The Desire for More Grammar/punctuation Instruction

In multiple cases, participants expressed a desire for additional grammar and punctuation instruction that was more explicitly part of class activities. For instance, when Gideon was asked during the second interview if there was something that could have been covered in the course that would have helped him, he explained that he had had a “personal battle” with grammar and punctuation. He continued, “I feel like we should have covered it more extensively.” Similarly, when Tiffany was asked one way she believed the course could be improved, she said “add more about grammar...Cause there's a lot more” that could be covered. She also said that she believed she needed more help with the various verb tenses. Dana felt that the class should have had more emphasis on sentence level instruction, starting with “building sentences.” She also expressed a desire to know more about how “[c]ertain words have different functions in sentences.” Similarly, in the second interview, when asked what she felt could have been covered in the foundations course that was not, she said “more of the basic grammar.” Finally, Bruno believed there could have been “more about run-on sentences.” One way of interpreting these comments is that some participants might have internalized prior schooling experiences in which the emphasis was on a “study skills” approach to writing, focusing primarily on the “surface features of language” such as grammar and punctuation (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368). However, in certain cases, there might also have been additional reasons for such perceptions that were linked to their experiences in the first credit-bearing English course.

Some participants' feelings about the desire for more explicit instruction in grammar and punctuation seemed to be at least partly connected to their having to do a continuous series of grammar, punctuation, and usage quizzes in Expository Writing. For example, Tiffany explained that she had done really well on the coordinating conjunctions quiz, which was a topic we had discussed in the developmental course in relationship to correcting fused sentences and comma splices. She had, however, not done as well on several of the other quizzes. This lack of consistent success on the quizzes might have played a role in her perception that more direct grammar and punctuation instruction should have been covered in the Foundations class because it might have helped increase her success in this next class that she was taking. Similarly, Dana said that the foundations course could have included "a little more of the basic grammar...because [in] English 105, our professor most Mondays gave us a grammar quiz."

It is challenging to determine how best to incorporate grammar instruction into college writing courses. In working at various colleges, I have observed many disagreements amongst faculty members teaching writing about how much grammar and punctuation should be explicitly included in classroom instruction. Too much emphasis on direct grammar instruction risks falling into a remedial pedagogical approach to developmental coursework, which might demotivate students or limit the amount of skill application from the developmental course to writing tasks for the subsequent course work (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). The findings on participants' desire for more grammar and punctuation instruction point to the challenges of teaching these topics in a developmental course in ways that avoid perpetuating the

idea that effective college writing is primarily about “not making grammatical mistakes” (Rose, 2012, p. 126).

Writing Skill and Process Development as Connected to the Various Feedback Resources Built into the Class

A major finding in the data across cases was that the participants found the various feedback resources built into the class to be helpful. The following section addresses in detail how participants perceived the variety of feedback resources (peer, instructor, and online tutoring) and what role they reported these played in helping them develop a process-oriented writing disposition and more effective writing skills.

Peer Feedback

One important component of the course was the requirement that students take the narrative and illustrative paragraph assignments through a peer feedback process prior to submitting their work to me for a grade and comments. The peer feedback sessions were carefully scaffolded. To prepare the class for the process, I informed students via PowerPoint lecture some of the reasons for and benefits of giving and receiving peer feedback session and how this activity is connected to the writing process (See Appendix J). I also gave clear guidelines about how to provide feedback and how to use feedback received from peers (Wyrick, 2011). Drawing upon Berne’s (2009) recommendations for structuring such sessions, I provided the students with several sentence starters to help direct them towards giving their peers specific and detailed feedback. They needed to use at least three of them when making comments. Some examples of sentence starters were: 1) “One sentence that was not specific enough was....because...”; 2) I don’t think you needed to include....because...” Students were also required to begin with a positive

statement about their classmates' work. Before providing feedback to their classmates, under my guidance students did a mock feedback session by using the sentence starters on a fake student draft. We then discussed their feedback, and I emphasized the need for specificity in feedback when students provided vague responses. Students then gave written feedback to their classmates within a wiki space on Blackboard that I had created. They later reviewed the feedback and used it to revise their work.

Benefits of receiving and providing feedback. Most participants reported that the peer feedback activity was extremely helpful to improving their writing. Many of them focused on the benefits of receiving feedback, but Dana stood out as a distinctive case because she emphasized the helpfulness of reading the work of others. In this section, I describe participants' perceptions of the benefits of receiving and providing feedback.

Several participants connected the peer feedback workshops to helping them revise and proofread their work because they were able to look at their writing from the perspective of a reader. For instance, during an interview, Tiffany explained that "getting insight" into the viewpoints of peers "helped me a lot." She believed that it was useful because it helped her and her classmates identify aspects of their writing that "you need to fix." Janice felt that the workshops provided her with "an insight on what others think about my writing and not just what I personally think." Heidi felt that the process was helpful because "other people could see...if something could be added or something could be taken away." Elsewhere in the data, on a reflective blog post Adam stated that having peers review his writing helped him "perfect my writing even more." Additionally, on his second blog post, Gideon wrote, "The fear I used to have for my

writing not being clear and concise has been replaced by enthusiasm to see what people think of my ability to write.” These findings relate to Grubb & Gabriner’s (2013) assertions about using a process-oriented pedagogy: “The writing process approach stresses writing as a form of communication among people” (p. 96). Because the peer feedback sessions required students to act as readers of each other’s work, they appeared to help participants become more attuned to improving their work with an audience in mind through “getting insight” into the ways readers reacted to their writing.

Dana’s commentary provided an interesting contrast with the perspectives of several other participants because she focused on the role of the feedback provider. Although she said little about how the feedback she received from her classmates helped her improve her own work, she discussed some of the benefits of reviewing her classmates’ work and providing them feedback. She explained that the activity was helpful because she had the chance to “see how others write.” She also indicated that through providing feedback, a writer can become more “mindful” of her own mistakes. Building on this idea in the first interview, she explained:

So now I’m conscious [of] the leaving of time so that I could proofread the essay because you know from reading [the work of others], you know there’s words in there or the sentence’s structure... That’s not the way the person speaks, so you know it had to be an error. Had they read it prior to submitting it, they would have caught it.

Dana’s comments suggest that she perceived providing feedback to others helped her become more aware of the need to engage her own work attentively. It seemed obvious to her when work had not been carefully reviewed, thus reinforcing the value of having a process-oriented disposition. Using grades as a gauge, Dana was possibly the strongest writer in the class. She later appeared on the President’s list for academic achievement at

the college. Her comments point to some of the ways stronger students might benefit from providing feedback to their less writing proficient peers. As Liu and Carless (2006) have asserted, “One important way we learn is through expressing and articulating to others what we know or understand” (p. 281). If carefully designed, peer feedback workshops are a good way of helping to reinforce a process-oriented disposition in students of varying writing proficiency levels.

The specific structure that I provided for participating in peer feedback sessions seemed to have been a key element in participants viewing it as beneficial to their writing. Gideon explicitly discussed this during the first interview when he commented on the “certain way” that the peer feedback was designed, stating that it put no one “on a pedestal.” Clarifying, he said that the design of the sessions helped emphasize that all student writers “have room for improvement” and that writing is “a continuous process.” Gideon returned to his commentary on getting peer feedback during the second interview. He explained that the instructions I provided to help students give feedback “were very precise...It was kind of like well tell me how you feel about this paper here...and then you gave us...the guidelines on how to critique a paper...I know how important guidelines are.” Similarly, Heidi made the following comment on her first blog post, discussing the way I scaffolded the peer feedback activity:

What I did not know is that when you proofread your peers work, you should say the good things first then the things they need improvement’s on...I did a lot of proofreading at [another college] but they never taught me how to really do it. Such commentaries on the guidelines for giving peer feedback and the design of the workshops when I taught students how to participate affirm the importance of a

supported process for effective implementation (Ertmer et al., 2010; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Mulder, Pearce & Baik, 2014). In order for students to benefit from peer feedback sessions, they need clear guidelines. As Ambrose et al. (2010) have argued, students can get a great deal out of providing each other with feedback if they are given explicit and clear instruction on how to do it effectively.

Ambivalence about peer feedback sessions. Unlike the other participants, Bruno and Amesha had some ambivalence about peer feedback, suggesting that more can be done to help students understand its value. For instance, in his first interview, Bruno mentioned that the feedback workshop component of the course “kind of helps” and also mentioned in his first blog post that “the peer feedback helped the editing process.” He also discussed that he liked having to submit a draft for peer feedback prior to submitting it for a grade, commenting, “instead of going and giving just the final [version] you can have the students like view your essay and say oh this point is not so good. You need to improve that so I like that too.” However, further investigation of the data revealed that he seemed to prefer receiving feedback from me [his instructor] and professional tutors at the college’s academic support center. He stated that his peers “just say the same thing” and that they “don’t have all the knowledge that you have and the other people [referring to tutors] have.”

Like Bruno, Amesha also appeared somewhat ambivalent about peers giving her writing feedback. In her third blog post at the end of the quarter, when she was asked to explain the process of writing a successful college essay, she mentioned having “peers and other people look at your work” as being important to the college writing process. However, some ambivalence emerged during the second interview when I inquired if she

ever asked her classmates to look at her writing in contexts independent of the developmental course. She answered, “Yeah, but they will say, it’s OK. Cause they are just student[s]. Why will I just listen to them?” Her commentary about her classmates echoed Bruno’s feelings about himself and his classmates not having the “knowledge” professors or tutors have. Considering such perspectives is important because some students might view their peers as being unequipped to provide effective feedback. These perceptions also speak to the importance of having explicit discussions in class about peer feedback, its benefits, its limitations, and its role in the writing process (Ambrose, et. al, 2010). Having these conversations might assist students with understanding the rationale behind such peer feedback approaches to the teaching and learning environment (Hodges & Stanton, 2007). This understanding can help them value the feedback they receive from their classmates and think critically about it.

It is beyond the scope of this study to analyze the quality of feedback students receive from their classmates versus the quality of feedback they receive from other feedback resources such as their professors or tutors. Peer feedback might be better for some issues than others. Future research should seek to closely analyze the type and quality of feedback students provide each other when asked to give peer feedback. However, regardless of the quality of feedback provided, there is a value to students providing peer feedback because it helps them consider writing for an audience beyond their professors.

Feedback from Academic Support Services

One course goal was to introduce students to the larger academic support system they could use to improve their writing in other classes. To help achieve this goal,

interaction with the college's Academic Support Center was built into the course's design in several key ways. During the first week of classes, an academic support center representative introduced herself to the class, notified the students that they had access to writing tutoring, and encouraged them to take advantage of this service. She introduced the class to both the online and onsite writing tutoring services. Throughout the quarter, I reminded participants that they could use the resources of the Academic Support Center to get help with the course writing assignments.

Later in the quarter, the same support center representative collaborated with the college librarian in presenting a research and writing workshop, which was given in class during the time when students were working on their final research paper. The presenter used writing process language, including a discussion of prewriting, drafting, revising, and proofreading. Like in her earlier visit, the representative reminded students about the online and onsite tutoring services that the college offers. She also reiterated that they could use such resources for any class that included writing assignments. This component of the course aimed to acquaint students with the feedback "tools" of writing at the college (Gee, 2008, p. 161). In this case, the tool of receiving professional feedback was framed as "a form of academic capital" that could help students continuously throughout their time at the college (Callahan & Chumney, 2009, p. 1658).

For the final research paper, students were required to use the online component of the support center for feedback. They needed to submit a draft of their papers via email to the center's online tutoring service so that they could get feedback emailed to them about how to improve their work. Once they received the feedback, they had a scheduled conference session with me to discuss the feedback, get my input, and finalize

and submit their work for a grade. Like with the peer feedback workshop, during a class session I shared my rationale for including this activity in the class. One key purpose I emphasized was that this activity was designed in part to help familiarize students with a resource they could use in any class that required writing. Multiple participants discussed finding this feedback requirement to be particularly helpful to their development as writers. Most participants discussed the service and its helpful role in the course. Only Adam and Gideon did not discuss it.

Several participants explained that the online tutoring service helped raise their awareness of writing issues they had not known about or had overlooked. For instance, Bruno, a non-native English speaker, explained that he liked having his mistakes pointed out to him that he had not been able to detect on his own, especially because “the punctuation in English and Portuguese is different.” Dana explained that the online tutoring service “might find out something that you haven’t thought of or...you didn’t see.” Janice observed that the online tutor helped her recognize and correct “mistakes that I didn’t see.” Finally, Heidi reported that the tutor helped her find “many mistakes I didn’t even realize.” Elaborating, she explained that the tutor helped her understand when her final assignment was “using too much information” from the research and not enough of her own ideas. In these instances, participants appeared to value the role the service played in assisting them with revising and proofreading, important aspects of the writing process. However, several of their comments suggested that participants were thinking of the final stage of the writing process as being mostly about looking for and correcting errors rather than more global level revisions such as organization, evidence, and other concerns.

Other participants commented on the way the online tutoring requirement helped scaffold the development of the final assignment. For instance, in an interview, Dana explicitly described the online tutoring as scaffolding her efforts to improve and complete the final paper. She explained that having a timeline for the stages of development in which “you have to submit this to [the online writing tutoring service] by this time...that creates a time line for us...and that’s helpful because you realize if you have the draft finished and you submit it, when it comes back with corrections, it’s not due until next week.” She appreciated having the time to “be able to incorporate any corrections” that she needed to do based on the input provided by the online tutor. Affirming that she found the process helpful, on her third blog post, she discussed how an effective approach to writing a college essay should include “Getting into the habit of having a critical eye review and comment” on written work. These comments suggested that she was “valuing” the idea of getting reader input on her writing (Gee, 2008, p. 161).

Amesha’s commentary was also connected to the way the feedback resource acted as a scaffold for the final assignment. During an interview, she explained that when she first received the tutor’s written feedback, she was not fully able to “understand what [the tutor] was saying.” However, she said that once she sat down with me to discuss the feedback during our writing conference session, she was able to use it because I “broke it down and it was a bit simpler” to understand after we had talked through it. She also explained that even though she didn’t fully understand all the tutor’s written feedback, “I didn’t want to go to [the tutor] because I have a problem with explaining myself.” The rapport she had with me might have helped her feel more comfortable about talking to me about the feedback. However, while some students might feel most comfortable speaking

to their professors about how to improve their work, others might feel fearful and intimidated by their instructors (Cox, 2009). Regardless of their comfort level, it is important that students in developmental courses learn to seek out help with writing beyond their professor. As Callahan and Chumney (2009) have argued, if students become too dependent on receiving assistance from a developmental writing instructor, such help can have “little exchange value” independent of the developmental course (p. 1658) because they are unlikely to be able to receive feedback from that instructor in future courses. Students should have experiences receiving feedback from a variety of sources so that they can use such tools of “academic capital” beyond the one course (Callahan & Chumney, 2009, p. 1658). Furthermore, having the follow-up discussion in the short conference helped me discuss with students how to think about and use written feedback in their writing. This was particularly important in Amesha’s case because she seemed to struggle at first with figuring out how to use the tutor’s comments to improve her work.

It was evident in the data that the online feedback requirement followed by the writing conference helped multiple participants practice ways of “thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting” (Gee, 2008, p. 161) using college writing Discourse by experiencing it as a recursive process as opposed to something that happens quickly and without stages of development. These findings are important because as Conley (2005) has asserted, many students begin college with limited knowledge of the time and effort it takes to complete writing assignments. Furthermore, the feedback elements of the course underscored the “social processes” of composing by emphasizing a dialogue around students’ own written work (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369).

Another important finding connected to the online feedback service was that multiple participants reported never having used it prior to the required submission of their final paper. For instance, Janice explained, “I had no idea that I could even go to [the online tutoring service] before we even had that whole conference.” Commenting on being introduced to the tutoring service, Dana explained, “That was the first assignment I used [the] Academic Support Center.” Likewise, Tiffany reported that this was the first time she had ever gotten help from the resource and that doing so “gave me insight how to use them too.” Such findings have important implications for the role a developmental writing course can play in helping students understand and use the resources that are available to them. As Callahan and Chumney (2009) have asserted, “institutional resources serve as critical capital to remedial students” (p. 1661). In order to be effective, such services need to be purposefully integrated into a course design (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). It seems probable that once students become familiar with this type of resource, they will be more likely to continue using it throughout their education if they have a positive experience. Ameshia was the only participant who reported having difficulty understanding the feedback commentary provided by the tutors. However, her experience speaks to a need for assisting students in understanding how to use tutor feedback to improve their writing so that they learn to value it as a helpful resource.

It is important to point out that I did not mandate that students seek out traditional onsite tutoring help. I introduced them to such services, but they were encouraged to use the services rather than required to do so. It was the online tutoring services that were a requirement. In most cases, participants seemed to feel positively about the required submission of their work to an online tutor. It is beyond the scope of this study to

determine whether students would have reported similar positive responses if they were required to have a visit with an onsite tutor.

Instructor Feedback

As part of the course, I aimed to help students recognize that they can seek feedback from multiple sources, not just from a professor. I did this in part to help reduce the problem of what Melzer (2014) has called assignments that are written only for an audience of “teacher-as-examiner” (p. 29). I also wanted to help students get used to using feedback resources that they could access in other courses. However, I did incorporate instructor feedback in several ways to help students improve their writing skills. During drafting workshops while students wrote in a computer lab, I circulated around the room, answered questions, and read portions of drafts when students requested that I do so. Also, for the narrative and illustration paragraph assignments, after students had gone through peer feedback and submitted their work for a grade, I made written comments on their work via Blackboard. Students then had to use my comments to revise their work and include it in their ePortfolios. During this stage of the process, I provided feedback about a variety of topics, including specificity in writing, structural problems, clear topic sentences, as well as grammar and punctuation issues. For instance, Tiffany had recurring problems with verb tense inconsistency. In order to help her understand the concept, in my written feedback on her work, I pointed out instances of this issue and provided a link that explained how to look for and correct issues of verb tense inconsistency; she then moved towards resolving such issues in her work. This strategy was aligned with Shaughnessy’s (1977) practices of helping students analyze and correct patterns of error in the context of their own writing.

An additional crucial form of feedback I provided to students was during their one-on-one mini conferences. They had to meet with me after they had submitted their final research essay to the online tutoring services for feedback. In order to help them make better sense of the online tutoring feedback, I scheduled ten-minute sessions with each of them to discuss how they could use the feedback to revise their work. During the conference, I also provided feedback about what I thought they should focus on as they moved into the final stages of the writing process.

Interestingly, of the three types of writing feedback that were part of the course (peer, online tutor, and instructor), instructor feedback came up least explicitly in the data. Several participants commented generally about how my feedback helped them to improve as writers. For instance, on her third blog post, Heidi wrote that my input helped students to “understand and be better writers.” Adam also mentioned instructor feedback on his third blog post. Discussing the development of the final assignment, he explained that instructor feedback can help students “improve the essay.” On his ePortfolio, he also briefly discussed the way he believed his proofreading skills had improved because his professor “offered feedback to me by providing comments on my finished work and how to improve it more.”

When other participants discussed instructor feedback, some of them perceived it as receiving input from an authority on writing. For example, during his second interview, Gideon explained that he liked getting his writing “critiqued” by me, his instructor, who he referred to as an “authority” on writing. Elaborating, he said that he viewed me as an authority because I was working on a dissertation and had reached “that level of writing.” Bruno explained that he liked getting my feedback because he

perceived that I had “knowledge” about writing that his classmates did not. These comments connect to what Cox (2009) has argued about effective pedagogy. She has asserted that it is important that the instructional approach used by a faculty member helps students view their instructor as competent in the subject matter.

The comparatively limited discussions on instructor feedback that emerged in the data might have been connected to an important element of the course design. Throughout the course, I provided feedback on student writing. However, I intentionally chose not to make my feedback more dominant than the other feedback resources of the course. Although it is helpful for students to view their instructor as a valued authority on writing and academic support, Callahan and Chumney (2009) have cautioned that developmental writing faculty might inadvertently create a sense of dependence in their students. They argued that if students view the faculty member “as their sole lifeline to academic support,” they are not being positioned to use other sources of academic capital that will be available to them beyond the developmental course (p. 1658). This is why it is important to include various feedback resources in a class.

It was evident that participants valued diverse sources of feedback. In some instances, participants preferred my feedback. However, in many instances, they spoke most thoroughly about feedback provided by their classmates or by the online tutoring services. These findings are important because students might perceive feedback provided by readers other than their professors as less intimidating, especially because there is no grade at stake (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). Additionally, if students view their work from the perspective of various readers, they can begin to think about writing “as a form of communication among people” rather than as something that happens only

between a professor and a student (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 96). By incorporating multiple readers into the writing process, an instructor can highlight the “social processes” involved in written correspondences (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369). Finally, helping students develop what Rose (2012) has called “help-seeking behavior within institutions” is a crucial role that developmental writing instructors can play to assist students in attaining the process-oriented disposition essential to the Discourse of much of college writing.

Conclusion

All in all, participants appeared to develop more of a process-oriented disposition and approach to writing as the class unfolded. Certain key aspects of the course design helped foster in students a Discourse in which writing is a recursive process, involving several stages of development. These aspects included the checklists I provided, the emphasis on writing as a means of thinking, and the ways each major writing assignment was designed around an explicit emphasis on the stages of the writing process (prewriting, drafting, revising, and proofreading). Additionally, some students viewed the grammar and punctuation instruction as helpful to the development of skills that could help them when they drafted and proofread their work. However, some participants felt that the course could have incorporated more explicit instruction in grammar and punctuation. These commentaries suggest that more can be done to help students understand an instructor’s rationale for focusing on grammar and punctuation in the context of their own writing rather than too much focus on stand-alone activities. It is important that instructors avoid instilling in students an “atomistic skills orientation to

learning” (Rose, 2012, p. 122) in which what they learn about grammar and punctuation is not incorporated into their own writing.

Other key dimensions of the course design that helped students develop a process-oriented mindset were the various feedback resources that were a part of the course. Most participants reported that they found the peer and academic support resources to be particularly helpful to them. Other participants reported that they found the feedback they received from me, their instructor, to be most valuable. Such findings illustrate that incorporating various feedback resources into a course’s design can be useful because different strategies might be more likely to benefit individual students. Additionally, if students have the opportunity to have different readers look at their work, it reduces the problem of students writing only for the limited audience of “teacher-as-examiner” (Melzer, 2014, p. 28). Finally, the experience that participants had with using the online tutoring service gave them the opportunity to practice using a resource that could be helpful to them as they continued their education. They gained access to a form of capital that could pay off in improved academic success when they wrote for other courses (Callahan & Chumney, 2009).

Chapter 5: Participant Experiences with Writing Across the Curriculum

One important component of this study was to examine participants' perceptions about the connections (or lack of connections) between what they learned about writing in the Foundations course and what they actually used when writing for college classes. When I taught the course, I aimed to avoid what Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have called a "remedial pedagogy" approach in which skills are taught "in decontextualized courses devoid of any connection to further study, more advanced coursework, or the world outside the classroom" (p. 210). Instead, I emphasized that the skills, habits, and dispositions taught in the class were transferable to credit-bearing college classes.

One way I aimed to help students avoid compartmentalizing what they were learning in the Foundations course was by using examples that connected to other courses at the college. One instance of this was when we focused on writing thesis statements. To illustrate the skill for students and help them understand its transfer value, I used examples of thesis statements that might occur in papers for courses such as Writing Through Literature and Criminal Justice. I also asked students to brainstorm ideas about the role of narrative, illustrative, and persuasive writing in course contexts other than the Foundations classroom. Furthermore, final assignment topic options were pertinent to classes across the curriculum. Additionally, during the class, we discussed some of the differences between APA and MLA format and how professors of Psychology or Criminal Justice would likely require APA, while English professors would require MLA. Finally, when the class was introduced to the college's academic resources such as

tutoring and the library, I informed students that using these services would be helpful to them when they wrote for other classes.

For this chapter, I used several interview questions (see Appendix E) related to understanding how students were using what they were learning in the Foundations course for writing in their other courses. In certain cases, other data sources (blog posts and ePortfolios) were also helpful. In the following sections, I focus on several key ideas about writing for college classes that most participants tended to discuss extensively and repeatedly. Participants reported applying the skills, strategies, and dispositions of the writing process not only to writing in their Expository Writing class, but also to writing tasks completed in other discipline-based courses. I also examine some of the tensions and difficulties that arose for certain participants when they needed to write assignments across the “variety of communicative practices” of college (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 159).

Applying the Skills, Strategies, and Dispositions of College Writing Discourse Across Contexts.

In Chapter 4, I asserted that although they didn’t describe it that way, participants’ descriptions of skills and habits that they were learning in the Foundations course indicated that it was helping them gain writing skills and dispositions that are aligned with the Discourse of college writing. This section describes the way they reported actually using these in college classes. Participants reported that they were required to complete multiple writing assignments in their other classes during the quarter in which they were enrolled in the Foundations course and in the quarter immediately after completing it. For this chapter, I drew on the descriptions of the writing process that participants used for these other courses. In particular, I focused on analyzing the

similarities and/or differences between participants' descriptions of their approach to completing a written assignment (which they had selected and emailed to me before the interview) for one of their credit-bearing courses and the approach they took to complete the final paper for the Foundations course. Table 3 provides an overview of the skills, strategies, and habits participants reported using or intending to use in their credit-bearing courses.

Table 3

Participant Discussions of Writing for Credit-bearing Courses

Participant	Prewriting	Drafting	Proofreading and revising	Using tutoring services	Writing thesis statements	Illustrating ideas	Using research skills
Adam						X	X
Amesha		X	X	X	X		X
Bruno	X	X	X	X			X
Dana	X	X	X	X	X		X
Gideon	X	X				X	X
Heidi		X	X	X	X		X
Janice			X	X			X
Tiffany		X	X	X	X		X

Using a Process Approach

As reported in Chapter 4, each major writing assignment in the Foundations course required that students use a process approach, going through stages from prewriting, drafting, revising, and proofreading. Most participants reported that they had subsequently used at least some aspects of a process approach to complete writing assignments for courses other than the Foundations course where they had learned about and practiced using it. Only Adam, who had been assigned few writing assignments in the quarter after completing the Foundations course, did not explicitly discuss any of the stages of the writing process when describing his approach to writing for other courses.

To foster the process approach, I sequenced all major writing assignments. I guided students through the writing process for each assignment over several weeks, and I taught various skills, strategies, and tools in conjunction with the different stages of the process. These included analyzing assignment requirements, brainstorming, organizing work using thesis statements and topic sentences to guide the reader, using evidence, examples, and details to support ideas, carefully rereading as a way to proofread effectively, using instructor, peer, and tutor feedback to revise work, and looking over drafts multiple times during the revision stage with the goal of making the writing more persuasive, unified, and coherent. Additionally, when I discussed using freewriting as a means of generating ideas, I equated it with making a mess. I shared my own use of this strategy in my dissertation writing process. In doing so, I was referring to a piece of advice I encountered in Bolker's (1998) book on the dissertation writing process. She asserted that a writer should first "make a mess" when generating ideas (p. 34). I explained to the students that during the early stages of writing, they should not worry about whether what they write makes sense. They should simply allow themselves to pour ideas onto the page without editing themselves.

Gideon, Bruno, and Dana specifically discussed the prewriting stage in their process approach to writing in credit-bearing courses. For instance, when I asked Gideon to walk me through his approach to working on a cover letter assignment he had written for his Career Management Seminar course, he said he began by "looking over the instructions to see what exactly the professor was asking." His next step was "brainstorming [for] information I wanted to put in the cover letter" before he moved into the drafting stage. This approach paralleled the prewriting stage of the writing process

taught in the Foundations course, where closely analyzing an assignment and generating ideas were emphasized as essential first steps of the college writing process.

Dana and Bruno both reported that they used freewriting during the prewriting stage of their process for courses other than the Foundations class. For example, when Dana discussed writing a narrative essay for Expository Writing, she explained that at first, she struggled to get started. However, she reported that doing freewriting helped her to construct “the basic story, the basic outline.” When Bruno described his approach to working on an Expository Writing assignment, he said that his process involved “first just writ[ing] whatever I think.” He also described this early stage of his writing process as being “messy.” His use of this word might have been connected to our discussion in the Foundations class about how a writer should be free to make a mess when generating ideas. Amesha had also previously reported on a blog post she wrote for the Foundations course that she had allowed herself to “make a mess instead of interrupting the thinking process” when she was generating ideas. Because the “making a mess” idea appeared to resonate with several students, it could be a useful metaphor for instructors to use to teach their students about freewriting, brainstorming, and other prewriting methods. It might assist students in overcoming writer’s block, and this could be helpful in completing a writing task for any class. It was evident that some participants were using prewriting techniques such as analyzing expectations of an assignment, brainstorming, and freewriting in contexts beyond the Foundations course.

Bruno reported on taking his work through other aspects of the writing process after the prewriting stage, including drafting and proofreading. He explained that his writing process for Expository Writing was “mostly the same” as what he did in the

Foundations course in that he developed his work in stages. When he discussed writing a paper for the credit-bearing writing class, he explained that his drafting stage entailed “organizing the words” into an introduction, a body, and a conclusion and equated this process to “build[ing] a puzzle.” After this drafting stage, he said he “proofread” his work by reading it out loud “just to make sure” it was effective. He also said that he had taken a break between writing his initial draft and then reviewing it because “after a break, you go again and you can find the error, but if you read after you write, there will be a lot of mistakes [you will miss because] your brain is tired.” His description provided evidence that he was using a recursive approach to writing, which he had learned in the Foundations course, in other classes. However, his use of phrases such as “find the error” and “there will be a lot of mistakes,” suggests that he might have been thinking about the post-drafting stage as being mostly about proofreading for grammatical correctness, rather than about revising for other important qualities such as style, persuasiveness, and clarity.

Heidi’s commentary during the second interview was also reflective of using a process-oriented approach to writing because she reported developing her work in stages such as drafting, proofreading, and revising. In the class, we discussed that the drafting stage is when a writer moves from generating ideas to beginning to organize them into a coherent structure. When Heidi described her approach to developing a research paper for the Expository Writing class, she reported that when she drafted her work, she organized it so that each of her main points was explored “in its own paragraph.” Then, she explained that as part of her approach to writing “I have to read [my work] out loud to myself.” She believed this strategy was useful when she wrote for the credit-bearing

course because it helped her verify whether her assignment was “what she [the professor] asked for.” She also reported that asking the instructor for feedback was now part of her process. Her statements suggested that she was using several aspects of the drafting, proofreading, and revising stages of the process emphasized in the Foundations course in the credit-bearing writing course, including organizing her writing around her main points during the drafting stage, rereading her work, and obtaining feedback during the proofreading and revising stages of the process.

Using online tutoring services. Also related to the process approach to writing, most participants used or expressed intentions to use the online tutoring service as part of the proofreading and revising stages of the writing process in courses other than the Foundations course. In Chapter 4, I asserted that participants found it helpful to have utilizing the online tutoring service as a mandatory requirement of the Foundations course when students got to the proofreading and revising stages of the process. As part of the course, they first needed to submit a draft to the service via email. After receiving emailed feedback on their work, students met with me for a ten-minute conference to discuss how they should use the feedback to revise their work prior to submitting it for a grade. Before requiring students to submit their work for feedback, I informed them that this online tutoring service could be helpful to them in many courses that required writing assignments. In this section, I show that participants continued or intended to use that service to help them proofread and revise their work for writing tasks they completed in other courses. Of the eight participants, only Gideon and Adam did not discuss using the service at all.

Tiffany and Heidi were required to submit their work to the online tutoring

service for credit-bearing courses they were taking. Regardless of whether they were just using it because they had to, both participants expressed that they valued it. Heidi needed to use the service to receive feedback on a draft of an assignment she wrote for a Textiles course, which was connected to her major. Similarly, Tiffany explained that for her Jazz to Hip Hop class, the professor was requiring the class to submit their work to the service after they had drafted it. She described the experience of having been introduced to using the online service in the Foundations course as having given her “insight how to use them.”

Both Tiffany and Heidi reported using the online tutoring resource even for courses that did not require them to submit their work for feedback. Tiffany explained that using the service for other courses was beneficial to her because it helped her “get a better understanding. A professional view of [her work].” Heidi reported that she sought help from an online tutor when she was struggling to write a press release assignment for her Visual Merchandising course. She also explained that when she was improperly switching between MLA and APA formats in a draft of an assignment, the online tutor caught this error and pointed it out to her.

Other participants who had not been required by any of their professors to use the service reported that they used it anyway. For instance, Bruno explained that he requested online tutoring for an assignment he wrote for the Expository Writing course he had enrolled in during the quarter after having completed the Foundations course. He said that doing so was helpful to him because the tutor helped him correct in-text citations, improve the paper’s structure, and decrease wordiness. He stated that he planned to continue using the service in the future. Similarly, Janice reported using it to help her

with an assignment for her World Religions class and said, “And now I’m using it a lot more.”

By the time their second interview was conducted, Dana and Amesha had not used the online tutoring service for any of their writing assignments. However, both participants explained that they had intentions of doing so. For instance, during the second interview, Dana reported that she would be submitting a draft of her work to the service for her Expository Writing course because it would give her a “first opinion of the paper to see whether [the] message is conveyed, [and whether there are] any errors and such.” Similarly, Amesha explained that she would use the college’s writing tutoring services after composing a draft because “I know I’ll need some other person’s input on it.” She said that using the services would be a “self-requirement.” However, it was not clear whether she was referring to the online tutoring or the onsite tutoring service. Regardless, like Dana, she seemed to perceive the value of using the college’s tutoring resources for successfully completing writing tasks across class contexts.

It was evident that multiple participants were viewing the online tutoring service as an important aspect of the proofreading and revision stages of the writing process. In doing so, the students demonstrated a process-oriented disposition, a key element of the Discourse of college writing. Additionally, using the services of the Academic Support Center could help students to navigate the “variety of communicative practices” of college (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 159). The students submitted work for feedback on writing assignments that came from diverse courses, including Expository Writing, World Religions, Jazz to Hip Hop, and Textiles. A developmental writing course cannot attempt to introduce students to all of the aspects of writing associated with the “genres,

fields, and disciplines” (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 159) they will encounter in college. However, as research has suggested and this study further illustrates, if developmental writing courses help students understand the purpose of and learn how to use writing tutoring services, such courses can help them to effectively navigate a wide range of writing requirements well beyond their developmental course requirements (Callahan & Chumney, 2009).

As researchers have shown, a process-oriented disposition and approach to writing is a crucial dimension of the Discourse of writing for college (Beaufort, 2007; Conley, 2005; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011). However, many students enter college with limited awareness of the extensive, time-consuming, and recursive dimensions of writing required to be successful in higher education institutions (Conley, 2005; Rose, 2012). To varying degrees, participants appeared to be transferring some of the process-oriented dispositions, habits, and skills of the writing Discourse taught in the Foundations course into writing they did for other college courses. Heidi and Bruno most explicitly reported on using all the stages of the writing process that had been used in the Foundations course. Most of the other participants discussed some but not all of the stages of developing their work.

The majority of the participants discussed taking their work through the proofreading and revising stages of the process. It was not always clear, however, whether the participants were viewing the final stages of the writing process as being mostly about proofreading for “surface features of writing” such as grammar and punctuation (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368), or if they were looking at more substantive features of their work such as whether the argument is effectively structured.

Finally, two participants did not report on taking their work in credit-bearing courses through the proofreading and revising stages. Gideon discussed using prewriting and drafting to compose his work, but he did not indicate that he had taken his work through the proofreading and revising stages. Likewise, Adam did not explicitly discuss any of the specific stages of the process approach, including the proofreading and revising stages. They were also the only participants who did not discuss the online tutoring service at all in relationship to completing writing tasks beyond the Foundations course. Also, unlike the other participants, they had not enrolled in Expository Writing in the quarter after they had completed the Foundations courses. They both reported having few writing assignments for their courses in the quarter after completing the Foundations course. It is possible that this lack of opportunity to practice their writing skills played a role in their limited discussions of using a process approach to writing. Both participants, however, did discuss other specific skills and values associated with college writing.

Using Thesis Statements in Writing

The students learned about writing thesis statements in the Foundations class and some demonstrated their knowledge of this skill in talking about their work in subsequent classes. As part of the final persuasive research essay required in the Foundations class, students had to write a thesis statement establishing the central argument of their essay. In preparation for this task, we discussed different kinds of thesis statements, including ones that clearly mapped out the central points of the rest of the essay. I also emphasized that an essay's thesis statement should be an assertion of an informed perspective on a topic. Four participants, Tiffany, Ameshia, Dana, and Heidi, reported using thesis statements in their written work for Expository Writing. When the participants talked

about writing thesis statements, they mostly focused on using them for what Dana referred to as an “opinion paper” they had to write for that class in which students needed to choose a controversial person and take a position on whether they admired this individual. They also needed to conduct research on the person to help support their position. Tiffany explained that talking with a classmate about his paper helped her compose her own thesis statement about Miley Cyrus, the focus of her paper. Amesha reported that for the Expository Writing course, she had to put forward a viewpoint, which “would be the thesis.” Dana explained that her writing needed to contain a thesis that asserted an idea about the topic and that the thesis should contain a “roadmap” previewing the reasons for her perspective. This language was similar to what I had used in the Foundations course, where we looked at examples in which a writer composed a thesis statement with a “map” of the central ideas, which would be explored subsequently as a way to give the reader a sense of an essay’s direction.

Heidi not only reported being required to write a thesis statement for the Expository Writing course, but also for another course in which the professor assigned writing. When discussing her writing for the Expository course, she said that to compose her thesis, she first read research material on the topic, which had helped her “find the thesis.” In a different interview, she used similar language to describe her process of writing a thesis statement for an assignment she did for a fashion course, explaining, “First I gathered my information, and then I found...the thesis.” Her use of the word “find” to describe writing a thesis in two courses suggested that she perceived research as a process of exploring a topic so that she could take an informed position on it. Because Heidi was the only participant who discussed using thesis statements in a context other

than the Expository Writing course, it seemed that for several participants, using thesis statements was something they associated mainly with writing courses. The other participants did not discuss using thesis statements in their writing.

Based on the data collected, it is difficult to say why some students did not report using thesis statements for writing and why others only discussed using them in relationship to Expository Writing. It is possible that their other professors did not use the word “thesis” in relationship to the writing they assigned, so the students did not transfer this skill to other courses. Another possibility is that the type of writing that was used in some of the other courses was not writing that was organized around thesis statements. Such possibilities relate to the work of Thaiss and Zawacki (2006) who found that in some cases faculty members disagree with the concept of writing a thesis. For instance, in one department at their college, half the faculty who attended a workshop examining writing conventions and expectations disagreed with the notion of including a thesis. These professors believed that “writers should not give away their ‘conclusion’ before they had presented reasoned evidence in support of their argument” (p. 84). In another department, faculty members expressed the belief that in some writing assignments, the inclusion of a thesis statement “encourage[s] students in their bad habit of making unwarranted and unwanted generalizations” (p. 85). Although I cannot say whether this way of thinking about writing by other faculty members was part of the reason why most participants did not discuss using thesis statements in their credit-bearing courses other than Expository Writing, it is possible. As Lea and Street (2006) have asserted, literacy practices are “nuanced” and “complex” (p. 369). Faculty beliefs

about writing and the ways they discuss writing with students might play a role in how effectively students can transfer writing skills learned in one class into another.

Illustrating Ideas

When discussing writing across the curriculum, Gideon and Adam discussed the process of illustrating an idea for the reader through using examples, details, and support. I discussed the concept of illustrating ideas for the reader during the Foundations course, where I emphasized that writers should move beyond over general writing. Instead, they should “illustrate” their ideas by using specific examples. We discussed various ways a writer could illustrate a concept, including using a personal example, a series of examples, a short narrative, or an example derived through reading research material. To help explain the point, I told students that when writers use the skill of illustration, they can help “show” their readers what they mean by using examples that help support an idea established in a topic sentence. When Gideon discussed the cover letter he wrote for the Career Management Seminar class, he asserted that the details and support he had used in his letter were “showing” several of his best qualities, including analytical, communication, and leadership skills. Gideon’s use of the word “showing” suggested that he was carrying a skill he had practiced in the Foundations course through to writing he was doing in another course. Adam similarly showed evidence that he was using his understanding of the need to illustrate ideas when he discussed the similarities between working on the final assignment in the Foundations course and a writing assignment he had worked on for his System Analysis computer course. He explained that for both assignments he had used a topic sentence to “give the reader the key” to the paragraph so

that he could then “show” the reader what he meant by “say[ing] more” about the idea established in the topic sentence.

These participants’ descriptions indicate that they were trying to illustrate, or show, ideas in their writing for courses across the curriculum. Their discussions suggested that there was a relationship between this skill, which was taught and practiced in the Foundations course, and what they actually did when writing for other classes. These findings are important because researchers have asserted that inexperienced student writers often do not recognize the importance of elaborating on their ideas (Graff, 2003). Because only two participants explicitly discussed this skill when they talked about their approach to writing in courses other than the Foundations class, there might be a need for further discussions of how the skill can be used across contexts so that students do not think of it mostly in connection with a writing course.

Conducting Research and Incorporating It into Writing Assignments

Most participants were required to conduct research to complete writing assignments for courses both during the quarter in which they were enrolled in the Foundations course and in the quarter after they had completed it. For the final paper in the Foundations course, students needed to find and incorporate three research sources into their work. The students were taught that the research material they found should be used as evidence in making persuasive claims about their topic. They also learned to evaluate the quality of a source by establishing the author’s expertise and veracity when searching for sources to help build their arguments. As part of this process, a college librarian introduced the students to online databases they could use to search for reliable research. Students were also taught how to use in-text citations and signal phrases to

incorporate research into their work, and they were instructed how to cite their sources on a Works Cited page using MLA format. Most participants believed that what they had learned in the Foundations course, in particular evaluating sources and using research to provide evidence for claims, was valuable and applicable to meeting requirements for other courses.

Three students, Gideon, Adam, and Dana, spoke specifically about the influence of the Foundations class on their understanding of the importance and the process of conducting research for writing persuasively. For example, in his second interview, Gideon discussed his process of developing a paper for a business class by explaining that he needed to make sure that he was using “reliable sources.” He said that he believed he could find them by using the college’s online library. He explained that his knowledge about the research process came from what he had been taught in both the Foundations and Business Applications classes. Similar to Gideon’s statement about the importance of having “reliable sources,” Dana more explicitly addressed the value of discernment in conducting research. She discussed the ways her research process had become more critical and careful since she had started taking classes at the college. Prior to enrolling, she said that she had “never really thought about” reliability of research sources based on authorship. However, now she when she conducted research to reinforce her assertions for college course writing assignments, “I make sure that the person that I’m quoting or reading or researching at least has some expertise in that field before...I quote or go deeper in researching something.” Her comments seemed to reflect activities and discussions in the Foundations course where we focused on using authorities in a given field to make a point persuasively. She said she used these research

skills when she wrote an “academic research paper” in Expository Writing, which required that she use only sources that were available through the college library.

Adam also reported recognizing the value of using research to support assertions, and his understanding evolved in relationship to completing the Foundations course and taking other classes. When I asked him what really stuck with him from the Foundations class that he believed he would do again when he had to write a paper for other courses, he said research was the “number one” skill. He also explained, “so far in most of the classes I’ve been taking, like IT, Business, Management... [it] is about...using sources that you know that’s able to prove your topic.” His perspective about the value of research had evolved since high school, when, he reported, it had felt like a “waste of time” to him. In contrast, he said the Foundations course helped him recognize the value of “why we have to do this, why is it important.” He also explained, “we live in a world where...we can’t just jump to the conclusion” and expressed the “need to start writing and thinking critically.” Adam’s comments suggest that he was “valuing” the importance of having effective research skills in college and beyond (Gee, 2008, p. 161).

These participants seemed to deepen their understanding of the value of the research process in relationship to completing the Foundations course and encountering research requirements in other courses. They also seemed to increase their awareness of the importance of discernment in evaluating evidence to support claims, a key dimension of the Discourse of writing for college (Conley, 2005; Rose, 2005). It was evident that the participants who discussed the values associated with conducting effective research were not thinking about writing for college as being essentially about “surface features” such as grammar and punctuation (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368). Instead, they were becoming

conversant with some of the values of what Graff (2003) called “argument literacy,” which involves critically analyzing and evaluating the work of others and determining how to use it to write persuasively about a topic (Graff, Introduction, para. 5-6). If students more deeply understand the underlying values of the research process, and they learn to examine research material with discernment, they might become more critical researchers and writers. As Conley (2005) has argued, an essential quality college students need is the ability to use discernment when determining what kinds of evidence they want to use to back up their claims.

Other participants reported that they had learned how to integrate and document research sources into writing for assignments across the curriculum. For example, Janice said that she needed to use what she had learned about MLA format in the Foundations course to incorporate “research on... different cultures, different religions” into an assignment for her World Religions class. Heidi discussed her process of integrating and documenting research sources into fashion courses. She explained that what she had learned in the Foundations course about integrating research into written work helped her with assignments she had to do in classes she was taking concurrently with the course. When asked to elaborate, she said that she had learned “how to write in-text citations...I never used to write in-text citations.” She reported that learning about citations also helped her understand how to avoid plagiarism in her work.

During the second interview, Heidi said that she wished we had spent “more time” during the Foundations course on writing research papers because she had encountered them so extensively across the curriculum. In particular, in her fashion classes (which were connected to her major), she was required to write several research

papers. This desire for more practice with the research process seemed to be related to a difficulty she had encountered in one fashion class in particular, which she had taken concurrently with the Foundations course. She reported that the professor had spoken to the entire class because he was concerned that students did not know how to properly integrate research into their writing. She also explained that the professor said that “when you’re writing a paper, you have to put more of your ideas.” He informed the students that many of them had not incorporated enough “original thought” in their writing, so he gave the class an opportunity to revise their work. Based on her own account, Heidi’s work suffered from some of these issues. In her second reflective blog written for the Foundations class, she discussed her belief that she still needed “to develop how to do in-text citations” and reported that when she was composing the illustration paragraph assignment, she had difficulty figuring out how to use the research to “support my point at the right time.” Heidi’s case points to an implication for the design of developmental writing courses. It might be helpful to introduce students early in a course how to find a balance between using their own voices and integrating research sources into their writing assignments. The first major writing assignment, focusing on narrative writing, did not require students to use text sources in their work.

Integrating research sources into written work and citing them correctly are key skills that students need when writing for college. Based on the perspectives of the participants, several of them needed to integrate research and other texts into their written work early in their other courses, including in courses they were taking concurrently with the Foundations course. Many of them appeared to have used these important tools as they worked on writing assignments for other classes. Students need explicit and

continuous help and guidance in “entering the conversation” about the topics they address in writing (Rose, 2005, p. 39). If students do not receive this kind of assistance, they might struggle when professors require them to use research material in their written work.

Tensions and Inconsistencies Amongst Research and Citation Conventions Across Courses

As Lea and Street (1998) have argued in their academic literacies model, the writing demands of college involve “a variety of communicative practices” that vary across contexts (p. 159). They have also explained that the expectations of one faculty member might be different than the expectations of other faculty members even if the faculty members are in the same academic discipline. The discussions of several of the participants affirmed this phenomenon because they encountered a variety of researching and citation expectations in their other courses. Throughout the Foundations course, I stressed that not all writing expectations for all courses will be exactly the same, and in fact students reported that their instructors had varying standards and expectations regarding appropriate research sources and citations styles. The participants seemed to understand that this variation was normal, but they did not always feel well prepared to handle it.

The Variety of Research Expectations

Several participants encountered instructors from across disciplinary areas who had varying expectations about using research in written assignments. For instance, some professors required that students use only research from the college’s library, while others were more open to students using different types of research. For example,

Amesha explained that for the International Business course, she “didn’t use the library”. Instead, she said that she used business websites and the course textbook as resources, and this was acceptable to her instructor. In contrast, in Expository Writing she was required to use only the college’s library databases to find sources for the research paper she had to write. However, while Bruno encountered the same expectations as Amesha for his Expository Writing class, in his International Business course he was also required to use “academic sources.” When I inquired whether the instructor had defined “academic sources” for the class, he explained that the professor said that the research “can’t be [from] Wikipedia [or] blogs”. However, the research could come from such well-regarded newspapers such as *The New York Times* or *The Washington Post*. Bruno’s experience affirms that research papers are “one of the most complex and dynamic genres in college writing” (Melzer, 2014, p. 51) in part because expectations about what counts as research resources is often not the same across disciplines or contexts. As Lea and Street (2006) have asserted, and Amesha and Bruno experienced, there is “variation across individual faculty members’ requirements” (p. 369). Such variety can sometimes make the task of navigating college research and writing more complex than it at first might seem. It might also complicate the process of transferring skills from a class such as developmental writing into other classes that require students to find research sources and use them in their written assignments.

The Variety of Citation Formats

Some participants struggled with inconsistent expectations across the curriculum with regards to citing research sources. I had discussed this kind of variety with the students during the Foundations class, and near the end of the quarter, I also sent out an

email to students reminding them about the resources they could continue to use to help them with this even after the course concluded. Because it was likely that students would encounter varying citation format expectations, I included in the message links to sites with examples of MLA and APA in-text citations and bibliography formats even though the requirement for writing assignments in the Foundations course is to use MLA. The email also contained links to model essays in both formats. However, despite the inclusion of these resources and discussions, some participants struggled when they encountered diverse research citation expectations in other classes, suggesting that my efforts had not been successful. None of the participants reported that they had used the links I provided when they struggled with incorporating and citing their research sources using various formats.

Tiffany, Heidi, and Ameshia each described the situation of having difficulty using the variety of citation styles required in their classes. For instance, in the quarter after Tiffany had completed my course, she was encountering a variety of citation expectations that were confusing to her. After she had completed the Foundations course and agreed to take part in the study, she emailed me for assistance with navigating some of the citation requirements in her classes, and she also discussed these challenges during the interviews. Three of her courses-- Expository Writing, Jazz to Hip Hop, and International Business--had major writing assignments with research requirements. However, for each class, the professor requested a different citation format. Paralleling the Foundations course, the Expository Writing class required MLA format for citing research. For the International Business class, the professor required that the students use APA format. In the Jazz to Hip Hop class, the professor required Chicago Style citations

and requested that students create an annotated bibliography for their work. This variety of citation expectations was overwhelming for Tiffany, prompting her to contact me for help with understanding the differences. I provided her with links to examples of in-text citation formats, bibliography formats, and model papers. She reported during the interview that “it came in handy.” Her experiences affirmed that different fields of study emphasize different writing practices (Addison & McGee, 2010). Switching back and forth among three different formats seems likely to be daunting for even experienced college writers. It seems necessary to provide students explicit practice using tools and resources that can help them with effectively citing their sources.

Heidi also seemed to struggle with navigating the different research and writing citation requirements of various courses. In the quarter in which she had been enrolled in the Foundations course, she was also taking a fashion class, which had required her to cite her sources in APA format. She reported having some difficulties with moving back and forth between MLA and APA. She had originally discussed this with me during her mini one-on-one conference about her final paper while she was enrolled in the Foundations course. She also discussed these difficulties during the first interview, explaining that learning how to do in-text citations in the Foundations course was helpful to her in other classes, “but then I got confused” because of the “switching back and forth.” She had also reported that her fashion instructor told the class that they needed to learn how to use in-text citations correctly because some students had not included them at all, while others “didn’t do it right.”

Based on the data collected, it was not always clear what specific challenges Heidi and Tiffany were having with effectively citing their research sources, and whether

it was the in-text citations or the bibliographical pages at the end of the essay that caused them to struggle the most with the format. Based on Heidi's more specific discussions of her difficulties, it seems likely that their challenges had more to do with how to integrate research into writing using in-text citations. In the Foundations course, a librarian showed students how to automatically generate a bibliographic reference for sources they found via the college library. Other tools can also help with this process, and the students might have benefited from more practice using some of these tools. However, writing in-text citations can sometimes create more complex sources of confusion than creating a bibliography, which likely was the more significant reason for the participants' difficulties.

The conventions of integrating research sources using signal phrases and in-text citations vary depending on whether an essay is written in MLA, APA, or some other format. For example, when students write a paper in MLA, the first time they introduce a research source into their essay using a signal phrase, the author's full name needs to be included. All other times, the author should be referred to by last name only (Hacker & Sommers, 2015). In contrast, for APA papers, the in-text citation never includes the author's full name (Hacker & Sommers, 2015). Additionally, for APA papers, the in-text citation includes the year of publication, which is not a requirement of MLA papers. Furthermore, for MLA style writing, it is appropriate for a writer to use the present tense in a signal phrase integrating a research source into a paper, while in APA format, it is not appropriate to use this tense (Hacker & Sommers, 2015). Such variations speak to Lea and Street's (2006) assertions about the nuances of writing depending on the context. Students need continuous help in developmental courses and beyond recognizing that

these variations exist. They also need help and practice using tools and resources they can use to navigate these variations. Otherwise, they might find that what one professor views as a correct integration and citation of research sources into an essay, another professor might view as an error.

Amesha's second interview also provided important insights into the ways students might struggle (and even resist) switching back and forth between the different writing expectations and conventions they encounter in college. When discussing her approach to working on a paper for International Business that needed to include some research, Amesha informed me that the professor asked for the citations to be done using APA format. However, she reported that, "I didn't use APA. I used the normal citation." After I confirmed that the professor had requested APA format, she repeated, "Yeah, but I used normal citation." She had used the word "normal" twice in describing how she cited her sources, so I asked her what she meant. She stated, "I'm accustomed to the...MLA." When I asked her if she had been penalized for writing using the MLA format, she said she had not. Concerned that this might be a problem for her later, I emailed her with links to a resource that provided annotated examples about how to write APA in-text citations and References pages. The email also included an annotated model paper in APA format to help her see what this kind of essay looks like so that she could use it to help her write her papers in this format.

When Amesha described MLA as the "normal" citation format, it was likely because of her experiences in both the Foundations course, which she had taken with me, and the Expository Writing course, which she was taking concurrently with the International Business class. Her comments were an example of what Beaufort (2007)

has referred to as “negative transfer” in which a student inappropriately transfers the skills learned in one context to another (The Question of University Writing Instruction, para. 7). Amesha likely viewed the MLA format as the “normal” way of writing a college paper because it was the required format in both of her writing classes. This instance of inappropriate transfer points to a need for faculty members to do more to help students develop skills that can help them adapt to a variety of writing conventions.

The variety of research documentation expectations that the participants encountered is aligned with prior research suggesting that there are differences in meaning making and sharing that occur in various disciplines and that these variations might cause students to struggle with transferring skills across writing contexts (Beaufort, 2007; Cox, 2009; Madigan, Johnson, & Linton, 1995). Teaching students more explicitly about switching between different research and writing practices seems necessary in developmental and credit-bearing writing courses. To do this, the Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al. (2011) has asserted that college instructors should give students opportunities “to examine the underlying logic in commonly used citation systems (e.g., MLA and APA).” Likewise, Ambrose et al. (2010) have explained that students need assistance in recognizing the need to be flexible in their approach to navigating college class expectations. If students do not learn to adapt a flexible disposition when writing for college classes, they might inappropriately apply what they learned about writing in one context to others with different style and format expectations (Beaufort, 2007).

Conclusion

All in all, there was evidence that participants used several of the skills, strategies, and habits they learned in the Foundations course when they wrote to fulfill assignments for courses across the curriculum. In particular, they appeared to have applied elements of a process approach to many of the assignments they wrote for other classes. Several of them discussed using prewriting strategies such as freewriting to generate ideas before moving on to composing drafts of their work. Additionally, multiple participants appeared to have become conversant with important aspects of composing such as using thesis statements and providing examples and evidence to clarify meaning and support assertions when they wrote for credit-bearing classes. Furthermore, some participants deepened their understanding of the need for discernment in selecting research sources to help them make persuasive claims about their topics. Finally, in certain cases, participants focused on the proofreading and revision strategies they had learned in the Foundations course for writing assignments in disciplinary classes, including carefully rereading their work and seeking feedback from instructors or tutors.

Regarding the revision stage of their work, some participants might have been viewing this aspect of the process as largely about correcting “surface features” of writing (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368). This focus contrasted with what I aimed to teach them about revising their work. During revision practice tasks, I had stressed that revision should involve looking for qualities such as unity, persuasiveness, coherence, and effective transitioning from idea to idea. However, despite these efforts, some of the participants appeared to view the final stages of the writing process as being largely about finding and correcting errors, suggesting that more can be done to help students

understand the deeper level revisions that often take place after a draft has been composed.

In spite of the skills and understandings about writing that students reported they had used in their classes, several participants expressed challenges. In particular, they reported that they struggled when research and citation expectations for writing assignments in their credit-bearing courses differed from what they had learned in the Foundations course. It seemed that students would have benefitted from more activities that explicitly helped them develop specific tools that could assist them when they need to switch to different writing formats and expectations. This kind of instruction might have helped participants when they encountered a “variety of communicative practices” in writing across the curriculum (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 159).

Chapter 6: Discussion

This qualitative research study emerged from the recent criticisms about the limited success of developmental coursework in college curriculums. As Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have argued, many developmental courses are designed around a “remedial pedagogy” approach in which skills such as writing are taught in isolation from the rest of the college curriculum and with limited emphasis on writing as a means of communication (p. 50). Similarly, Lesley (2004) has cited research indicating that developmental courses are often taught with a focus on the “memorization of discreet rules devoid of a meaningful, social context.” Such pedagogical approaches to teaching developmental courses tend to foster a disconnect between what students learn in their developmental courses and what they are asked to do throughout the rest of the college curriculum (Rutschow & Schneider, 2011). If such a disconnect occurs, students might not develop certain habits, skills, knowledge, and tools that could help them successfully navigate the literacy demands of college.

With such critiques in mind, the developmental writing course under study was designed to move away from a remedial pedagogical approach using strategies and activities that explicitly aimed to support the transfer of knowledge, skills, and dispositions into college writing across courses and disciplines. The central aim of the study was twofold. First, I examined how participants experienced and described taking and completing a developmental writing course focusing on improving students’ abilities in areas that researchers have suggested are common elements of college writing across contexts. Second, I explored how participants discussed the course in relationship to the

writing demands they encountered in their credit-bearing courses. The study's research questions were the following:

1. What are students' perceptions of a developmental writing course designed explicitly to help them connect course activities and assignments with college course expectations?
2. What writing skills and dispositions do students believe they need to be successful in college and in what ways does this change throughout the course of the study?
3. How do students describe the course activities as supporting their development of the habits, skills, and dispositions necessary for college writing?
4. How do students describe the developmental course activities in relationship to the skills they actually use in writing for college classes?

To explore these questions, this qualitative teacher-research study drew from both phenomenological and case study traditions of research. In drawing upon phenomenology, its aim was to come to a detailed understanding about student perceptions of taking and completing a developmental writing course (Creswell, 2007). Eight students from two sections of a developmental writing course agreed to be part of the study after having successfully completed the course. The study sought to capture the perspectives of individual students (cases) by triangulating amongst various data sources. Data triangulation was achieved by examining transcripts of two interviews, course assignments, including blog posts, ePortfolio welcome pages, and writing inventories from each participant, and researcher field notes documenting course activities and student interactions. As discussed by Creswell and Miller (2000), triangulation helps a researcher increase the validity of the qualitative inquiry process because it involves

looking at the data to find “convergence” within the various pieces of data (p. 126). A researcher analyzes these sources to identify recurring themes to develop findings and make interpretations.

The study used the lens of Gee’s (2008) Discourse theory along with aspects of Lea and Street’s (1998/2006) academic literacies model. Gee’s theory helped me examine the elements of writing for college across contexts that contain qualities of a unified Discourse, including valuing and using process-oriented approaches to writing, evaluating and using research sources, building arguments, organizing, writing to inquire, and using grammar and punctuation effectively. At the same time, Lea and Street’s model helped me to examine the data in relationship to the complexities and nuances of college writing expectations, which vary depending on the specific context within college settings. Through this lens, I also examined some of the limitations of teaching college writing as a unified Discourse.

Summary and Discussion

In this section, I summarize the findings in light of the study’s research questions. After a careful process of coding and analysis in which I categorized themes that emerged from the data, five central findings emerged that were pertinent to the study’s research questions. The findings centered around the following topics, which are summarized below: (a) the connections between the developmental writing course and the college curriculum; (b) the development and evolution of a process-oriented disposition and approach towards writing in relationship to class assignments, tools, and activities; (c) the importance of grammar/punctuation instruction and the desire for more of it; (d) the transfer of knowledge beyond the developmental writing course; and (e) the tensions

between what was learned about writing in the Foundations course and what was needed in writing across the curriculum.

Connections Between the Developmental Writing Course and the College Curriculum

A central finding of the study that responded to the primary research question was that, as a whole, the participants did perceive connections between what they were learning in the Foundations course and what they believed they needed to know and do in their college classes that involved writing. These findings are important because researchers have suggested that students often struggle to transfer skills from one context to another (Ambrose, et. al, 2010; Beaufort, 2007; Cox, 2009).

I explicitly aimed to help students understand the ways the knowledge about writing learned in the course could be applied in other courses. First, the class was designed to help students think about writing as a recursive process. I repeatedly emphasized that the dispositions, habits, skills, tools, and values associated with the process approach learned in the Foundations course should be adapted in other classes that assigned writing assignments. Additionally, the course was designed to prompt students to think about what role the different types of writing learned in the course can play in contexts other than in the developmental course. For example, during class sessions, participants were asked to brainstorm ideas about the roles played by narrative, illustrative, and persuasive writing in contexts independent of the developmental course. This was meant to help the participants think about how writing skills and strategies they were learning about in the developmental course might be adapted in other situations, thus encouraging them to consider the transfer value of what was taught in the course.

Additionally, the course used elements of a “contextualized” approach in which the skills taught in a developmental course “are presented in the context of content from current or future disciplinary courses” (Perin, 2011b, p. 1) as a way to increase the likelihood that they would transfer their learning from this course to others. I did this by providing students with topic options for both the illustration paragraph assignment and the persuasive research essay that connected to issues that were relevant to the college’s curriculum and student majors. For example, the options students could choose from included topics that related to criminal justice, health care, technology, business, and marketing, all popular majors at the college. The pedagogical approaches used in the course likely helped students perceive a connection between what they learned in the class and college course expectations. The findings of this study suggest that the participants were using several of the process-oriented skills, habits, values, and resources that they learned in the developmental course when they wrote for other classes.

The Development and Evolution of a Process-oriented Disposition and Approach Towards Writing

Speaking to the second and third research questions, the data indicate that the course seemed to have helped participants deepen their knowledge about what writing skills and dispositions they need to be successful in college. As research has suggested, valuing writing as process and treating it as such are integral dimensions of college writing (Conley, 2005; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rose, 2012). All of the participants appeared to develop more of a process-oriented disposition in which a variety of skills, strategies, and habits played a role in their recursive approach to writing. The course

helped students change “the model of writing” they might have learned in prior educational contexts (Rose, 2012, p. 137).

This finding seemed to be linked to several key aspects of the course’s design. One of them was that students were required to complete each major writing assignment by engaging in a series of sequential steps over several weeks. They had to do prewriting, drafting, proofreading, and revising for each project. During this process, students were directly told which stage we were focusing upon. Additionally, at multiple points throughout the course, a visual was used to illustrate for students the stages of the writing process (see Appendix A). Furthermore, talk about “process” was a part of the culture of the course during many specific activities done in class, including the peer review workshop, the reflective blog tasks, using grading checklists for proofreading and revising work, and submitting the final assignment to the online tutoring service for feedback before completing the final draft. Such direct enactment of writing as process likely helped participants learn about and value such a disposition as an important part of the Discourse of college writing (Gee, 2008).

Additionally, the course activities and tasks in which students reflected on their own writing process and skill development may have helped participants recognize that writing is recursive and that college writing skills develop over time and with practice. When students are given an opportunity to reflect on their skills, they can sharpen their metacognitive abilities and develop a greater awareness of their own academic development (Ambrose et al., 2010). There is evidence that helping students develop strong metacognitive skills, including reflection, can help foster skill transfer across courses (Billing, 2007). Furthermore, Wardle (2007/2009) has asserted that providing

opportunities for students to reflect on and write about their own writing can foster transfer because they can become more aware of their own evolving habits, skills, and strategies. At the beginning of the quarter, participants were given a writing inventory, which put an immediate emphasis on reflection. This task solicited their beliefs about the writing skills and habits they thought they needed for success in college. Additionally, throughout the quarter, participants were given several opportunities to reflect on their own writing process and what skills they believed they needed to work on during the remainder of the quarter. At the end of the quarter, they also wrote on their ePortfolio welcome page about what they believed they had learned to do as a result of having completed the course and which aspects of the course they believed had helped them with this learning process. By completing these tasks, participants documented a variety of skills and habits that they believed they were developing as the class unfolded.

It was evident that, to varying degrees, all participants deepened their ideas about college writing. Several of them initially focused solely on issues of grammar and punctuation as detailed on their writing inventories at the beginning of the quarter. However, as documented on participant reflective blogs, interview responses, and ePortfolios, their views evolved so that college writing was perceived as involving critical thinking, making a persuasive case for an idea, incorporating research, taking writing through stages of a process, writing with a reader in mind, and referring to published authorities on a subject to build an argument. All of these elements are important parts of the Discourse of college writing (Addison & McGee, 2010; Conley, 2005; Cooper, 2006; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011; Gee, 2008; Graff, 2003; Melzer, 2009; Rose, 2012; Sullivan, 2003).

Additionally, participants were introduced to multiple forms of feedback in the course. At different times in the quarter, students' work was reviewed by peers, their instructor, and online writing tutors. Aligned with the research on the process of learning by Ambrose et al. (2010), the variety of feedback forms the students experienced may have played an integral role in students' development of a process-oriented disposition and approach towards writing for college.

The carefully scaffolded peer feedback workshops appeared to help students expand their concept of the writing process. This finding was significant because the prior research has suggested that peer feedback sessions can fall short of their potential, especially if they are loosely designed with limited guidelines for students to follow (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). Cox (2009) and Ambrose, et al., (2010) have emphasized the importance of professors providing students thorough and explicit guidelines to avoid confusion or anxiety about undertaking course activities such as peer feedback. Without guidance, students might become distracted from the task or fail to see the relevance of the peer feedback (Cox, 2009; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). Consistent with such research, the explicit instructions and scaffolding of the peer feedback activities built into the course seemed to help students understand that such activities could be useful in their development of writing skills and dispositions, which, in turn, could help them succeed in college. Participants reported that the guidelines I provided were helpful to them in improving their work and making it more reader focused.

The requirement to get feedback using the online academic support center was also an integral component of the design of the course and appeared to help students learn ways of "valuing" the idea of writing as process (Gee, 2008, p. 161). Linking the tutoring

requirement with the completion of the final assignment was designed to highlight the service's importance in relation to the writing process. Subsequent to their getting feedback from the online tutor, students then had to discuss with me how they intended to use the feedback to improve their drafts. This practice was in response to Grubb and Gabriner's (2013) finding that developmental programs are more effective when "student services and classroom instruction are inextricably linked" (p. 144). The tutoring requirement in the class was directly linked to the final assignment, which helped highlight the service's importance in relation to the writing process. Most participants viewed the online tutor as acting as a professional reader who could help them look more closely and critically at their work when proofreading and revising it. Students may have viewed this feedback as less threatening than feedback from their professor because it was low stakes; there was no grade involved in the transaction. Based on these findings, explicitly requiring that students use this resource seems integral to building an understanding of the role of feedback in the writing process.

Grammar and Punctuation

Most of the participants started the course with the belief that achieving correctness in grammar and punctuation were of primary importance for college writing. Although most of them developed a broader and deeper understanding of the Discourse of college writing, most of them valued the grammar and punctuation instruction built into the course and found that it was helpful. Half the participants reported that they would have liked there to be more explicit instruction on these topics. However, I purposefully avoided emphasizing stand-alone grammar and punctuation instruction. I did so in response to the research literature that critiques the "part-to-whole" approach to

teaching in which grammar and punctuation are taught in isolation from actual writing (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 58). The course was designed to help students think about using grammar and punctuation as a way to communicate effectively in writing rather than as skills in and of themselves. I did incorporate some explicit instruction of grammar and punctuation concepts in the form of short PowerPoint presentations, in-class activities, and quizzes. However, as several participants indicated, such activities were not a large portion of class time. I also implicitly taught grammar and punctuation by noting patterns of error on student writing. Online tutors also did this when students were required to submit their drafts to them. This gave students the opportunity to analyze and correct their own errors in the context of their own writing (Shaughnessy, 1977; Bartholomae, 1980). Such approaches were designed to help students avoid focusing only on what Lea and Street (2006) have called the “surface features of language” (p. 368).

One explanation for participant beliefs about the need for more explicit in-class grammar instruction is that students had deeply internalized the belief through years of prior education that good writing is largely about not making surface level errors such as grammatical mistakes (Rose, 2012). Additionally, for some participants, grammar quizzes were a regular part of their first credit-bearing writing class after completing the developmental course. This experience might also have played a role in some of their saying they would have liked more direct grammar and punctuation instruction as central parts of a writing class. This helps highlight that faculty who teach writing courses must be conscious of the messages they may inadvertently give about the importance of grammar and punctuation. It is true that students need to know the crucial rules of

grammar and punctuation so that they can write clearly and coherently. However, too much focus on stand-alone grammar/punctuation instruction and quizzes might inadvertently convey the message that grammar and punctuation rules are of primary importance in college writing. Rose (2005) has traced the ways developmental writing curriculums have had a tendency to teach students “that the most important thing about writing—the very essence of writing—is grammatical correctness” (p. 211). In such cases, it seems likely that students will focus on the “surface features of language” (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 368) more than on other important dimensions of college writing such as thinking deeply and critically about the subject matter and writing with an awareness of audience, context, and purpose (Melzer, 2014).

The findings of this study further illustrate that there is no easy answer about how best to teach grammar and punctuation. On the one hand, if too much emphasis is placed on grammar and punctuation instruction, students might be lead to believe that it is more important than the other features of college writing. On the other hand, if too little emphasis is placed on such instruction, students might not learn important knowledge that can help them write more coherently. Because several of the participants expressed that they wanted more direct instruction in grammar and punctuation, it seems important for instructors of developmental writing courses (and other classroom contexts) to emphasize explicitly that knowledge of grammar and punctuation rules are just some of the many important tools of the writing process. It also seems necessary for faculty members to clearly share their rationale for teaching grammar and punctuation in particular ways. This kind of instruction might help students focus more broadly on what is involved in effective college writing.

Transfer of Knowledge and Skills Beyond the Developmental Writing Course

Many of the data sources suggested that in writing contexts other than the developmental course, to varying extents, most participants were “acting” (Gee, 2008, p. 161) in ways which indicate that writing was treated as a recursive process involving stages of development. Such findings suggest that participants had at least begun to develop a process-oriented disposition and approach so crucial for success in the Discourse of college writing and transferring such dispositions to writing they had to do across the curriculum. Likewise, participants described several specific skills associated with the writing process that they applied to writing for credit-bearing college courses, including conducting and incorporating research into writing, thinking critically about research, using examples to illustrate points, and composing thesis statements.

One thing that was not always clear about participants’ use of a process approach in other courses was the types of changes they believed were necessary and important to make in their work during the revision stage of the writing process. Some of them might have mainly been thinking about revision as being primarily about looking at the “surface features of writing” such as grammar and punctuation. They might not have been transferring knowledge of other important dimensions of revision that had been taught in the developmental course, such as looking at their work to determine whether their writing was persuasive and effectively organized.

Transfer of knowledge about the writing process was also evident when several participants reported that they were using or planning to use the tutoring support services to assist them in completing writing assignments for classes other than the Foundations course. Researchers have found that if students learn to use such services in a

developmental course, they can gain access to a source of “critical capital” because these resources can be used in courses across disciplinary contexts (Callahan & Chumney, 2009, p. 1661). This kind of resource can be crucial for success in college because students often struggle with navigating the nuances of writing assignments and the varying demands of different disciplines, courses, and professors (Beaufort, 2007; Graff, 2003; Lea & Street, 2006). Participants reported using the services for a wide variety of courses including Expository Writing, World Religions, Jazz to Hip Hop, and Textiles. Although the course could not attempt to introduce students to all of the varieties of writing expectations across the curriculum, it helped them learn to use a resource that could assist them across disciplinary contexts. It also appeared to instill in most of them the kind of “help-seeking behaviors within institutions” that could help them succeed in college (Rose, 2012, p. 160).

Tensions and Differences Amongst Writing Practices Across the Curriculum

In addition to all the positive skills and dispositions that students came to understand and were using in other classes, the data analysis illuminated some tensions and differences between what participants had learned about writing in the developmental course and the type of writing they were being asked to do in other courses. In particular, this tension occurred when several participants were asked to move back and forth between different research expectations and style and citation formats. Some participants encountered APA and/or Chicago style writing and citation expectations in addition to encountering MLA in the developmental course; it was evident that such encounters caused them some confusion and even resistance. This finding speaks to Lea and Street’s (1998) assertions that writing for college often involves a “variety of communicative

practices” (p. 159). The findings of this study provide further evidence that teachers of developmental writing need to be attuned to the often “nuanced, situated” (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369) dimensions of college writing so that they do not inadvertently convey the idea that all writing for college classes is always the same. Furthermore, instructors need to help students develop skills and resources to manage the diversity of expectations.

Recommendations

In this section, I offer several recommendations based on the findings of the study. First, I discuss implications for the teaching and learning environment of developmental writing classrooms. These recommendations can be helpful to faculty members who work with students enrolled in developmental writing classes. However, developmental writing faculty members do not work in a vacuum, so the recommendations can also help guide the decision making process amongst other stakeholders such as developmental program administrators, curriculum designers, and faculty across academic disciplines who work with first-year students. After discussing implications for teaching and learning, I focus on implications for future research because there is still much to be learned. The findings and conclusions of this study offer several possible directions for further inquiry.

Recommendations for Teaching and Learning

The findings of this study suggest that faculty members should ensure that the writing activities and assignments of a developmental course are connected to the types of writing that students will do in their other courses. They can also take specific steps to help students understand these connections. If students learn to view and experience the course as relevant to learning important writing skills and dispositions they will need for

college classes, it seems more likely that they will use what they learn about writing across curricular contexts. Understanding the transfer value of what is learned is crucial because students often have a difficult time transferring learning from one context into other contexts unless explicitly instructed how to do so (Ambrose et. al, 2010; Beaufort, 2007; Lea & Street, 2006). This section focuses on several ways developmental courses can be designed to help students develop important transferable skills and habits.

Explicitly emphasize the writing process. Instructors should put repeated and explicit emphasis on the recursive dimension of writing. They should also make it clear to students early and often that all written work across course contexts and real life applications should go through stages of a writing process, thus emphasizing the transfer value of the process. As Rose (2012) has stated about his own experiences with teaching developmental writing courses, a central goal of his teaching was to help students rethink their prior ideas about writing. The instructional design of this study was consistent with Rose's goals. Faculty should actively help students reconceive what writing for college entails. Even though writing tasks might vary significantly across disciplines, the recursive dimensions of the writing process can be applied to the composition process across the curriculum. If professors put repeated emphasis on how writing in college is recursive, they can help students to begin "thinking, feeling, believing, valuing, and acting" (Gee, 2008, p. 161) in ways in which writing is a process. In order to emphasize and make this idea concrete and to give students practice applying it, written assignments should be built around recursive writing stages. Students should also be given opportunities to reflect on their own writing so that they develop an awareness of their evolving approach to the writing process.

Instructors should make as explicit as they can what each stage of the process entails. One important finding in this study was that some participants seemed to view the revision stage as being mostly about eliminating errors. This finding suggested that I might have made more explicit what the goals are during the revision stage, including making clear that it is not just for the purpose of correcting errors. A great deal of modeling and discussion should be done to help students understand that revision should also focus on other aspects of writing including structure, coherence, organization, and clarity. They should be explicitly taught that this stage of the process involves much more than simply looking at surface level issues. Instead, they need to learn that it involves restructuring, rewriting, making their work more persuasive and logical, and other important dimensions of writing.

Teach students to participate constructively in carefully designed peer feedback workshops. One important way a process-oriented disposition should be instilled in students is by providing them with the experience of having a variety of readers give them feedback prior to submitting a finished piece of writing. When possible, technology such as the use of wikis, blogs, or discussion board posts can be used for this feedback process to help them learn to compose in a variety of digital formats because “electronic technologies continue to spread and evolve” both in schools and other contexts (Council of Writing Program Administrators, et al., 2011, p. 10). Additionally, as Rosenblatt (2004) has stated, writing is usually “part of a potential transaction with other readers” (p. 1382). When students look at their work from the perspective of readers, they can more fully understand writing as a “transactional” process between the writer and the reader (Rosenblatt, 2004, p. 1378). Peer feedback

workshops are one way students can become more conscious of this transaction because they can raise student awareness of writing as an act of communication (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). However, these workshops must be carefully and intentionally designed to help students understand their role in the writing process. As Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have found, when peer feedback sessions are poorly designed, students fail to get much out of them. This might be particularly likely to happen if the instructor does not encourage students to challenge the common belief that they cannot learn from their classmates (Cox, 2009; Hodges & Stanton, 2007). In general, the participants in this study responded positively to the careful design of the peer feedback sessions. There are several ways to assure productive peer feedback sessions.

First, instructors should share their rationale behind including such activities, emphasizing how these workshops promote the recursive nature of writing and reader awareness and help the writer write better. Then, they should have students practice providing feedback on a fake student paper or a paper from an anonymous student from a previous class prior to engaging in the activity with each other's papers. Students should be given clear guidelines about the type of feedback they should provide to their classmates. These guidelines might include giving students sentence starters for providing feedback and beginning with a positive statement. Without such guidance, students might focus only on what Lea and Street (2006) have called the "surface features of language" (p. 368) such as grammar, or they may not engage meaningfully in the process. Finally, students should be offered an opportunity to debrief and reflect on the experience by discussing what they learned about the process of writing through giving and receiving peer feedback.

Integrate tutoring services into the course. Another way instructors can help students learn to approach writing as a process is to integrate tutoring services into the course design. At the same time, this kind of requirement can help them learn how to use a resource that can assist them beyond the course. As researchers have suggested, it is essential for developmental programs to find ways of meaningfully embedding tutoring and support services into the design of the courses (Boylan, 2002; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Callahan & Chumney, 2009). In the case of this study, participants were required to submit their final assignment to the college's online tutoring service to improve their draft before submitting it to their instructor. This also acquainted them with a service that could continue to play a role in supporting their writing development after they completed the course and had to write for other classes.

Participants tended to view this requirement positively, and they seemed to believe that the service was something they could use in other courses. Several of them reported using it in the quarter after they had completed the Foundations class. If students learn productive ways of seeking out help with writing, it can benefit their writing well beyond the developmental course. It can also play a crucial role in helping them navigate the “complex” and “nuanced” nature of writing for a variety of college classes (Lea & Street, 2006, p. 369).

Tutoring services should be carefully built into the design of developmental courses. They should also be connected directly to at least one major class assignment. Although the students in the developmental class were required to use the college's online tutoring service, face-to-face tutoring seems likely to prove equally effective albeit less accessible and convenient. The key component to integrating tutoring services

(whether online or onsite) is that it is done not only to help students improve writing for the developmental courses, but also to help them tap into a form of “valued capital” that can assist them as they navigate college writing expectations beyond the developmental classroom (Callahan & Chumney, 2009, p. 1623). Such concepts should be shared with students so that they can learn to value the service as a potential part of their writing process across the curriculum.

Teach crucial rules of grammar and punctuation in direct relationship to student writing needs. Grammar and punctuation instruction should be integrated into developmental writing courses in ways that help students learn to value knowledge of the rules of grammar and punctuation as part of the writing process rather than as a set of skills to be mastered in isolation. As established in the theoretical framework of the study, using grammar and punctuation effectively is an important component of the Discourse of college writing (Conley, 2005; Council of Writing Program Administrators, et. al., 2011). However, it is crucial to help students avoid getting so fixated on correctness that they think writing is primarily about grammar and punctuation. Instructors should aim to avoid the pitfalls of taking a “remedial pedagogy” approach to teaching grammar and punctuation in ways in which skills are taught in isolation from other components of the writing process (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013, p. 52). Instead, they need to help students think about how knowledge of the rules of grammar and punctuation is one of several “tools” that can help them “get recognized” by their professors as students who can write competently (Gee, 2008, p. 155).

There are several ways grammar and punctuation can be taught in direct relationship to student writing. As the prior research has suggested, it is pertinent to help

students examine their own patterns of error so that they can then correct such issues in their work (Shaugnessy, 1977). Instructors can focus on pointing out a few of the patterns of error that occur in a student's writing with a brief explanation of the error. Students can then look over their own work with an eye toward finding and correcting this type of error. For example, students who were enrolled in my class needed to revise their work for inclusion in an ePortfolio after having had some of their errors pointed out to them by me and/or the online writing tutors.

Instructors should be very clear in explaining their rationale for how they teach grammar and punctuation in the course. Several of the participants in this study believed that I had not included enough direct grammar and punctuation instruction throughout the class. This finding suggests that I might have more clearly shared my reasoning for not putting too much emphasis on stand-alone grammar and punctuation instruction. If instructors explicitly share their rationale for teaching grammar and punctuation mainly in the context of students' own written work, they might help them better understand the role of grammar and punctuation in writing. Finally, even if instructors include some direct instruction in grammar and punctuation in the form of drills or quizzes, it seems necessary to clearly communicate to students how these activities can be applied to their own writing. Such communication might help instructors avoid unintentionally promoting an "atomistic skills orientation to learning" (Rose, 2012, p. 122) in which students fail to connect what they are learning about grammar and punctuation with the actual process of writing.

Regularly discuss the transferable quality of the skills taught in the course.

Developmental faculty members should engage students in discussions about the ways in

which what is being taught in developmental writing courses is applicable in a variety of other contexts. Throughout the course, I put continuous emphasis on how what students were learning could be used in other courses. These kinds of discussions can help students view the course as giving them the knowledge, habits, tools, and values that are key dimensions of the Discourse of college writing (Gee, 2008). For instance, when discussing research and its role in the writing process, instructors can engage students in a brainstorming activity in which they come up with ideas about how research skills might be used in specific courses. When students have opportunities to reflect on what they are learning in relationship to the rest of college, it can help them to think about writing skills as they apply across the curriculum.

Include a research requirement. Students should be given ample opportunity to practice the skills of conducting research and integrating it into written work. As this study illustrates, students encountered research requirements in writing assignments early and often in college courses. Other researchers have also shown how central the use of research material is in writing for college classes (Conley, 2005; Graff, 2003; Thaiss & Zawacki, 2006). It is evident that students enrolled in developmental writing courses need extensive practice with these skills. Many participants in this study encountered research demands even in classes they were taking concurrently with the developmental course. The research process should be carefully scaffolded by the instructor. This might include integrating a visit to the college library into a developmental course to help students learn what research resources they have available to them for completing an assignment for the class. This should also involve a discussion about how such services will help them beyond the developmental course.

An additional way instructors can scaffold the research process is by having students look over and critique an essay that has not effectively integrated research. The instructor should ask students to point out some of the specific flaws of the paper and discuss ways it might have been improved to more fluidly and persuasively integrate the sources into the paper. Then, students can be shown a revised version of the paper that more successfully integrates the research into the paper. Such scaffolding can help make explicit to them the ways a research paper can move from a draft to a more refined finished product, thus emphasizing the ways the revision stage of the writing process applies to writing a paper that includes the use of research material.

Help students learn how to navigate the variety of research and writing expectations across the curriculum. Additionally, developmental writing instructors need to find ways to help students understand that writing, research, and citation expectations often differ depending on the discipline, course, and instructor. They also need to help students learn how to manage these different expectations. As this study helped confirm, students often struggle when they have to switch between different ways of presenting information such as being asked to write a paper integrating their research sources in the MLA format versus the APA format. They might also encounter contexts in which what is valued as a research source differs. While there are many skills, strategies, habits, values, and actions students can use across the overall Discourse of writing in college, it is also important for them to recognize and adapt to the idea that each class they take is “its own discourse community” (Melzer, 2014, p. 123).

Instructors can help students to begin to think about some of the underlying values associated with different types of writing. For instance, for APA format essays, the

year of publication is included in the in-text citation and on the References page immediately following the author. As Booth, Colomb, and Williams (2008) have asserted, an emphasis on the year of publication “is used in the natural sciences and most of the social sciences, because in those rapidly changing fields, readers want to know quickly how old a source is” (p 198). In contrast, as Gibaldi (2003) has noted, “In the humanities, where most important scholarship remains relevant for a substantial period, publication dates receive less attention” (p. 143). If faculty members engage students in discussions and activities that show them some of these differences in format and help them understand some of the values associated with these differences, it might assist them in better understanding that there are a “variety of communicative practices” that occur in college settings (Lea & Street, 1998, p. 159). When students have this kind of awareness, it could help them avoid the problem of inappropriately transferring a skill from one context to another (Beaufort, 2007).

Additionally, instructors should help students learn about and learn how to use tools and resources that can assist them when they need to use different format preferences for citations and bibliographies. This could include practice using online tools that can help students create bibliographies in different formats. Furthermore, they might also help students use resources that contain models of common writing assignments that occur in different disciplinary contexts and examples of how to create in-text citations in different formats such as APA. It seems likely that if students are going to use such tools in other courses, hands-on activities in which students practice using them in the developmental class can be helpful.

Recommendations for Institutions

Higher education institutions need to do more to help instructors working with academically underprepared students to expand their knowledge of effective instructional approaches. Not all faculty members will have had the opportunities I did to become familiar with the larger curricular context of their institutions or with the needs of students who begin college in developmental courses. There are several ways colleges can build a culture that can help improve pedagogical practices designed to help academically underprepared students.

Increase communication and interaction across departments. Institutions of higher education should do more to increase the interaction that occurs between developmental writing faculty and faculty across disciplines. Developmental faculty need opportunities to discuss writing expectations with faculty from across the academic disciplines. This type of discussion can help instructors incorporate some elements of “contextualized” instruction into their courses (Perin, 2011b, p. 1) so that their classrooms can include activities that emphasize the ways skills can be applied to specific types of writing that occur in different disciplines. Such cross-disciplinary dialogue might occur through conferences and meetings or through implementing structural changes such as learning communities in which courses are directly linked to each other and faculty work together (Dotolo & Nicolay, 2008; Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). For instance, a developmental writing course might be linked to a psychology or business course. Through this process, faculty can begin to build their knowledge of the variations of writing expectations across different disciplines. They can then help students to deepen their understanding of the ways knowledge and skills learned in one course might be flexibly applied to other courses.

Furthermore, although it is important that developmental writing faculty improve their pedagogical practices, it is also essential that faculty members in disciplines across the curriculum are given opportunities to learn strategies for making their writing expectations more explicit to students. As much of the research has documented, and this study further confirms, writing expectations and conventions often vary widely across contexts (Addison & McGee, 2010; Beaufort, 2007; Lea & Street, 2006; Melzer, 2014). Given this wide variety of expectations, it seems likely that students will be able to more effectively navigate diverse writing situations across the curriculum if instructors give them more explicit guidance on how to do so (Beaufort, 2007). Faculty teaching courses with writing requirements should understand that it is essential to make clear their expectations about the writing valued in their field (or in their course). They need to develop an awareness of how their expectations vary from others and what kind of support students will need to respond to their expectations. They also need to learn strategies to continue to build writing development as students progress. Increasing the dialogue between developmental and disciplinary faculty can be beneficial to improving student success in college writing across the curriculum.

This kind of dialogue across subject matter contexts can have multiple benefits. It can help developmental faculty identify student problem areas in writing in different disciplines and provide opportunities for students to “juxtapose” one classroom writing Discourse with another (Gee, 2008, p. 220). At the same time, it can create opportunities for faculty across the curriculum to learn ways of incorporating the stages of the writing process explicitly into their writing assignments. One way to do this is to design assignments that scaffold the writing process. For example, they might require students to

submit drafts prior to the final version of the assignment or they might require them to receive feedback from an online or traditional tutor. Doing so can help them avoid assuming that taking a recursive approach to writing and using the skills and tools that are part of this approach are a “natural” or “obvious” way of writing (Gee, 2008, p. 221). Instead, they can help foster students’ understanding that such an approach is associated with the values and actions of the overall Discourse of writing for college classes (Gee, 2008). They can also reinforce for students the lessons learned in developmental courses and help them continue to develop writing abilities that can contribute to their success in college.

Increase professional development opportunities. Finally, if institutions are to move beyond developmental programs designed around remedial pedagogical approaches, other factors must be addressed (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013). For example, colleges need to find ways to offer and incentivize instructors to participate in professional development opportunities that could help them learn research-based methods for contextualizing their instruction and promoting transfer. Colleges also need to find ways to improve the working conditions of time-pressed, poorly paid adjunct faculty members who teach developmental courses. As Grubb and Gabriner (2013) have asserted, they often have limited opportunities or incentives to engage in the kind of ongoing professional development and dialogue with colleagues across the curriculum that could help them improve instruction.

Recommendations for Future Research

The findings of this study suggest that there is still a great deal to discover about how students experience developmental courses, what they learn in the courses, and in

what ways that learning connects with writing they do for other college classes. The following section addresses areas that could be investigated further, using the findings of this study as a starting point for additional inquiries.

Longitudinal research. More longitudinal research needs to occur to further understand the transfer value of what is taught in developmental writing courses. This study used qualitative research methods to focus on the writing experiences of eight participants as they completed a developmental writing course and took courses in the quarter immediately following their completion of the developmental writing course. It is important to examine student experiences with writing both shortly after they complete a developmental course and as they move beyond their first year courses. In what ways do students build upon (or fail to build upon) what they learned in developmental writing and their first credit-bearing writing courses as they progress in their education and encounter a variety of writing assignments? It is important to know more about the ways in which students transfer the knowledge, skills, habits, values, and dispositions associated with the Discourse of college writing over the longer term as the distance from both developmental writing courses and the first level of credit-bearing writing courses increases.

Longitudinal research can also help researchers examine whether students apply what they learn about using a process-approach to writing to courses across the curriculum and to what extent they do so. In particular, there is a need for additional research that examines the types of changes students make to their work when they revise it after composing a first draft. When participants in this study discussed the revision

stage of their writing process for courses other than the Foundations class, it was not always clear what kinds of changes they were making to their work.

Writing across the curriculum. Additional research needs to be conducted to determine what specific types of writing assignments students regularly encounter during their time in college. This study relied on student accounts of assignments across the curriculum during two quarters, but it would be helpful to get the perspectives of faculty members about their expectations and beliefs about writing in their disciplines and courses as well as to know how writing expectations change as students take upper level courses. Such an investigation can have implications for the design of developmental writing courses. It is important to know how well (if at all) what is commonly taught in developmental writing courses aligns with what writing expectations students later encounter in their courses. Additional research can also help stakeholders in colleges understand how demands change and increase and how writing development can continue to be supported beyond first year course work.

Contextualizing instruction. Additionally, research needs to be conducted on contextualizing writing instruction in developmental courses. Although this study incorporated some elements of “contextualized” instruction (Perin, 2011b, p. 1), the writing skills and knowledge were not taught in direct relationship to any one specific disciplinary context. It seems necessary to investigate whether a course designed more fully around a contextualized approach would more successfully help students transfer skills beyond the developmental class. In such a design, the developmental course would use similar pedagogical methods as the ones in this study, putting a great deal of emphasis on writing process pedagogies. Unlike in this study, it would also be linked

directly to a specific disciplinary course such as business, psychology, or criminal justice. In addition to examining the transfer of learning that does (or does not) occur between the developmental course and the linked disciplinary course, it is also important to examine if the skills, habits, and knowledge taught using fully contextualized approaches transfer broadly across disciplinary contexts. This kind of examination is essential because students encounter such a wide range of writing expectations as they take courses across the curriculum.

Student support services. Another area in need of further inquiry is the role that student support services can play in the design of developmental writing classes. In this study, the inquiry focused most explicitly on the role of the online component of the tutoring service because that was the form of tutoring that students were required to use. It is important to investigate whether mandated onsite tutoring is more, less, or equally effective in student learning, motivation, and skill transfer. Additionally, research inquires should focus on other ways support services might be more fully integrated into the design of developmental writing courses so that students learn to use them as they continue their education. Furthermore, more research needs to examine whether and how students use support services over time, especially if it is not required of them to do so.

Teaching grammar and punctuation. Grammar and punctuation instruction are also fertile grounds for future research. As this study illustrated, most participants believed that direct instruction in grammar and punctuation was helpful, and several participants articulated their desire for more of it. Further inquires should investigate why students might perceive a need for direct instruction in grammar and punctuation rather than contextualized instruction based on needs demonstrated in their writing.

Furthermore, it is important to uncover what types of instruction in grammar and punctuation will benefit students the most in relationship to improving their own actual writing. For example, can online interactive technology be useful in helping students learn about their own patterns of error and how to correct them? Effective practices for teaching grammar and punctuation is an under researched area in the field of developmental writing instruction. Further investigation seems essential.

Learning outcomes. Researchers should investigate the learning outcomes of students who started their education in a developmental writing course which implements what the research has suggested are high quality practices for teaching writing. Institutions of higher education need to know if the intervention of a developmental writing course designed to explicitly help students connect course activities and assignments with college course expectations has the desired effect of increasing student success. If so, it would then be important to understand which specific aspects of the intervention are the most critical to that success.

Additional Factors. On a final note, research inquires into developmental courses and the students enrolled in them must strive to account for the considerable barriers that such students often face as they embark on their educational endeavors. These barriers can include personal, financial, and psychological difficulties (Grubb & Gabriner, 2013; Rose, 2012). Highly coordinated approaches to student support services, financial assistance, and advisement seem to be promising practices for helping students who are academically underprepared succeed (Scrivener et al., 2015). Researchers must use the tools of both qualitative and quantitative inquiry to make as evident as possible when interventions are simply ineffective rather than when other non-

academic barriers have gotten in the way of student success. As Boylan (2012) has argued, too often the rhetoric of failure has been used to dismiss developmental courses as ineffective. Such rhetoric seems likely to demoralize developmental writing faculty so that they come to see limited success amongst students in developmental courses as an intractable problem that cannot be addressed.

Limitations

One limitation of the study was that there was always the possibility that because I was their former instructor, students may have tried responding to my questions by saying what they assumed I wanted them to tell me. This is why I stressed to them that they should answer as honestly as they could because that would help me as well as other instructors at the college and beyond to improve the design of writing courses. The limitation of working with students who were formerly in my class might also have been a benefit because the evolving nature of my relationship with them helped me develop a good rapport with them over several months that might not otherwise have occurred had we been strangers. This may have helped me solicit more candid and open responses during the interviews, especially because I stressed to them that such responses would be very helpful to me. I also made sure to tell them repeatedly that I would gladly respond to any questions they had about my work. Indeed, as the study unfolded, students did ask me questions about the study and its purposes. This signaled a sincere interest and engagement with the process that helped me feel confident that they were telling me honestly about their perceptions and experiences. Furthermore, as was evident in their responses, students pointed out not only aspects of the course that they found helpful but also elements of the course that they believed could have been improved such as

including more grammar instruction and spending more time on the research paper writing process.

Additionally, I analyzed responses for specificity and looked for answers that provided detailed, nuanced descriptions about their experience of taking the course rather than just making statements about whether they liked the class or whether they liked me. I paid particular attention to instances when they were specific about how the course connected (or did not connect) to other college writing experiences. Triangulating the data and searching for any inconsistencies across data sources was also helpful in verifying such connections (or lack thereof).

An additional limitation was that all students who agreed to participate in the study received a grade of B or higher. Students who struggled to pass the course, students who were taking the course a second time, or students who failed the class likely would have perceived the class experience differently than the participants who were part of the study. What they believed they actually learned in the class would probably be different. Additionally, their understanding of how the course applied to other courses and their use of what they learned in other courses would probably be different than the participants who agreed to be part of the study.

Furthermore, the study focused on the experiences of only eight students. Such a small sample size limited the range of perspectives I was able to analyze regarding the experience of the class. However, as Creswell (2007) has reported, qualitative researchers have recommended small sample sizes for studies drawing upon phenomenology, and a benefit of drawing from this tradition is that it provides an opportunity to get a “deep understanding” (p. 62) of the phenomenon under study. While

lacking in breadth of perspectives, the focus on a limited number of participants offered a certain level of depth of perspectives. By focusing on such a small sample of students through the interviews and written artifacts produced during the course, I got a detailed, complex understanding of the experiences of participants and did what Miles and Huberman (1984) have referred to as getting a “rich description and explanation of processes occurring in local contexts” (p. 21). In this case, the local context was my own class. What emerged in this context was compared and contrasted to the research findings of others who have undertaken research in the field of developmental education at other institutions in an effort to improve pedagogical practices and help students succeed in college writing.

An additional limitation of the study was that it did not analyze college writing situations in which the composing process happens during class time in one sitting. As Melzer (2014) has explained in his research on writing assignments across college curriculums, “I was overwhelmed by the amount of short-answer and essay exams, and the limited view of academic thinking and writing these exam genres represent” (p. 51). In such situations, the writing that occurs is not recursive, nor is it aligned with the process-oriented values I argue are associated with the Discourse of writing for college classes. Although it might be true that, as Melzer (2014) suggested, such tasks have their limits, students still need to learn strategies for completing them because they are so often a part of the curriculum. This study did not examine pedagogical practices that might help students with this kind of writing.

Final Thoughts

In showcasing student voices on a developmental writing course, this study sought to contribute to the dialogue about how best to improve developmental courses so that they can help academically underprepared students achieve their educational goals. As I examined the perspectives of the student participants, other published researchers, and my own thoughts and reflections, I gained a deeper understanding and appreciation for the qualitative research process. Through working on this study, I more fully understand the actual experiences and perceptions of students as they take and complete a developmental course and then move on to the rest of the college curriculum. This understanding has been enormously beneficial to me in examining my own assumptions about what I teach and how. In particular, the study has deepened my understanding of the need to help students adapt a flexible disposition as they approach college writing across the curriculum. Writing in different subject areas and classes is often far more complex than it at first might seem. The study has increased my awareness of how important it is to find ways to further equip students with the knowledge and tools that can help them navigate the complex demands of writing for college.

I am confident that what I have learned in this inquiry will be useful to others who embark on the challenging but gratifying task of helping students who are academically underprepared gain access to the tools, intellectual capital, and numerous rewards of a higher education. It is my hope that teachers, researchers, and program administrators can build upon what I have reported here to help contribute to the success of students whose life trajectories have not given them easy access to the academic capital needed to succeed in higher education. In this small way, I hope this dissertation contributes to

building a more just society by increasing these students' access to opportunities that college can give them.

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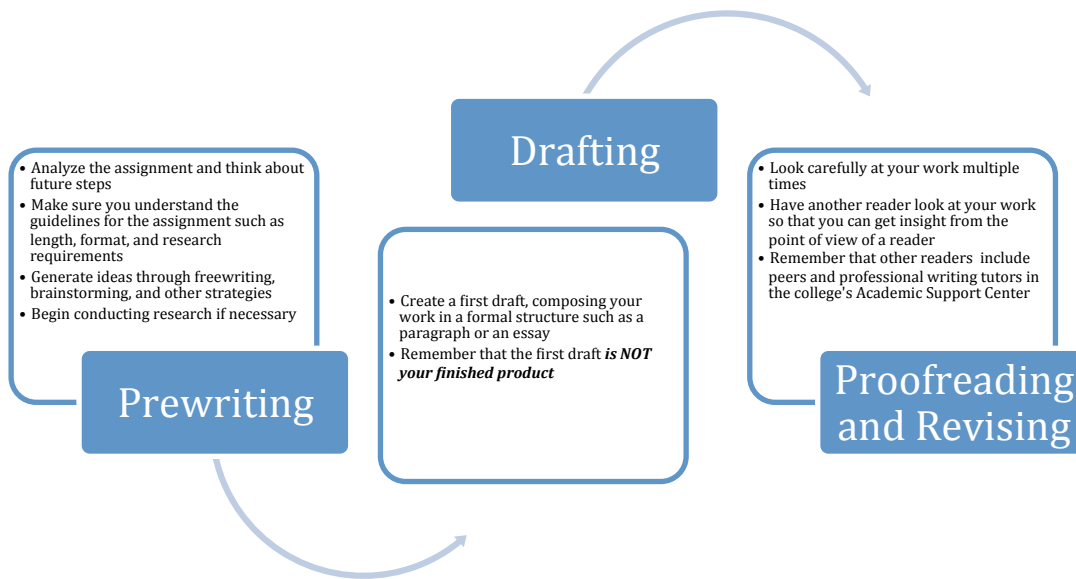
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Appendix A

Steps in the Writing Process

Steps in the Writing Process

All good writing goes through stages in a process. To help you visualize the steps you should take to make your writing more powerful and effective, review this image. When you sit down to work on a writing assignment for any course, take your work through this process.



Appendix B

Final Essay Grading Checklist

<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Introduction</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does the introduction provide a good overview of the topic that will be explored? Does it have an interesting hook or lead-in? 2) Does the essay have a creative, interesting title? 3) Is there a clearly stated, precise thesis statement? 	20 Points
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Body</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Do the body paragraphs have topic sentences that clearly signal to the reader the direction of the paper and the main ideas? 2) Are the ideas in the paragraphs clearly organized around the topic sentences? Does the writing flow coherently from one idea to the next? 3) Does the essay use transitions that help the essay flow smoothly (for example, for instance, next, another, additionally, similarly, finally...)? 4) Does the body of the essay fully discuss the ideas presented in the thesis statement using methods of persuasion such as examples, facts, and appeals to authorities on the topic to help persuade the reader? 	20 Points
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Conclusion</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is there a clear and effective conclusion? 2) Does the conclusion flow logically from the rest of the essay? 	15 Points
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Research</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Are there at least three research sources incorporated into the paper to help make the argument? 2) Has the paper avoided plagiarism by using MLA style in-text citations? 3) Does the paper include a Works Cited page? 	20 Points
<p style="text-align: center;"><u>Proofreading</u></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Is the essay free of sentence fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, and verb tense inconsistencies? 2) Is the essay free of other recurring errors in grammar and/or punctuation that disrupt the flow of what the essay is attempting to communicate to the reader? 3) Is the essay composed using the MLA style of formatting (double-spacing throughout, proper heading, indentations for each new paragraph, 12 point, Times New Roman font, etc.)? 4) Does the essay appear to have been PROOFREAD multiple times? Is it neatly organized and presented? 	25 Points

Appendix C

Consent Forms

Title of the Research Study: Student Perceptions of a Developmental Writing Course: Understanding How Certain Approaches to Teaching Might Help Students Transfer Skills into College Writing

Protocol Number:

Principal Investigator:

James Pacello

Co-Investigator and Emergency Contact:

Alisa Belzer, Graduate School of Education Department of Learning and Teaching, 732 932 7496 Ext. 8234, alisa.belzer@gse.rutgers.edu
--

You are invited to participate in a research study that is being conducted by your former instructor, James Pacello, who is a student in the Graduate School of Education's Teaching and Learning Department at Rutgers University. The purpose of this research is to determine in what ways students perceive the experience of having taken the Foundations of Critical Writing course as being connected to the rest of the college curriculum that includes writing assignments and activities.

You are being asked to join this study because you are a college student who has taken the Foundations of Critical Writing course along with at least one other course, which is a college level course.

Approximately 6-8 subjects over the age of 18 years old will participate in the study, and each individual's participation will last approximately three months. These participants will be drawn from one or more sections of the Foundations of Critical Writing course.

The study procedures include two interviews and an examination of some of the written work research subjects have produced in the Foundations of Critical Writing course and the professor's observations and reflections of the classroom experience.

Each of the interviews will last for roughly one hour, and they will be audio recorded. The interviews will focus on your experiences of taking the Foundations of Critical Writing course as well as your experiences with writing for college classes independent of the course. The first interview will be conducted during the first two or three weeks of the quarter after you have completed the Foundations of Critical Writing class. The second interview will be conducted during the second half of the quarter after which you have completed the Foundations of Critical Writing course.

The writing assignments that you completed in the Foundations of Critical Writing course will also play a role in the study, but they have already been completed in the context of the course, so additional writing will not be a necessary part of the study.

This research is confidential. Confidential means that the research records will include some information about you, such as what you tell James Pacello about your experiences with the Foundations of Writing course and the rest of your experience with college writing. James will keep this information confidential by limiting access to the research data to the researchers helping him with his study, such as his dissertation committee and the Rutgers University Institutional Review Board, except as may be required by law.

Audio recordings of the interviews will be kept on James's laptop computer, which is password protected. These sound files will be deleted at the conclusion of the study's write-up, which should be in approximately two to three years. In transcripts of these recordings, your real name will not be used.

In any write-up of the study's results your name and other identifying information will be changed to a pseudonym. The study write-up will not state that the study took place at _____.

There are no foreseeable risks to participation in this study. Participation in this study is voluntary. You may choose not to participate, and you may withdraw at any time during the study procedures without any penalty to you. If you no longer wish to be in the research study, please contact the researcher, Mr. James Pacello.

In addition, you may choose not to answer any questions with which you are not comfortable. If you feel uncomfortable during any part of an interview you could ask the interviewer to skip a question or stop audio recording. The decision to participate or not to participate will have no effect on your grade or your standing in any class at _____.

Some people enjoy talking about their experiences and reflecting on their own learning process. You may find the interviews and the process of reflecting on your own experiences interesting and helpful in your development as a student. However, you may receive no direct benefit from taking part in this study.

Your participation in this study may benefit future students at the college. This study could help us understand the experiences of students who take Foundations of Critical Writing. In the future, what we learn in this research study may help to improve the Foundations of Critical Writing courses at the college and writing courses at other colleges in the United States.

There are no costs associated with participating in this study. All sessions will take place at _____. There is no compensation for participating in this study.

If you have any questions about the study or study procedures, you may contact the researcher, James Pacello, at 646 734 4498 or _____, or you can contact James's advisor at Rutgers University, Alisa Belzer, at 732-932-7496 x8234 or alisa.belzer@gse.rutgers.edu

If you have any questions about your rights as a research subject, you may contact the IRB Administrator at Rutgers University at:

Rutgers University, the State University of New Jersey
 Institutional Review Board for the Protection of Human Subjects
 Office of Research and Sponsored Programs
 3 Rutgers Plaza
 New Brunswick, NJ 08901-8559
 Tel: 848-932-0150
 Email: humansubjects@orsp.rutgers.edu

You will be given a copy of this consent form for your records.

Sign below if you agree to participate in this research study:

Subject (Print) _____

Subject Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator Signature _____ Date _____

AUDIO/VIDEOTAPE ADDENDUM TO CONSENT FORM

You have already agreed to participate in a research study entitled: Student Perceptions of a Developmental Writing Course: Understanding How Certain Approaches to Teaching Might Help Students Transfer Skills into College Writing, conducted by James Pacello. We are asking for your permission to allow us to audio record as part of that research study.

The recording(s) will be used for analyzing your responses to the interview questions so that the researcher can capture some of your experiences with the Foundations of Critical Writing course and your experiences after the course.

The recording(s) will include only what you choose to state during the interviews. You will not be asked to state your name during the recording.

The recording(s) will be stored on James Pacello's laptop computer, which is locked by a code, and the recordings will be deleted upon completion of the write-up of the study, which should be in approximately two to three years.

Your signature on this form grants the investigator named above permission to record you as described above during participation in the above-referenced study. The investigator will not use the recordings for any other reason than that/those stated in the consent form without your written permission.

Subject (Print) _____

Subject Signature _____ Date _____

Principal Investigator Signature _____ Date _____

Appendix D

Interview 1 Protocol

This interview is to be conducted at the beginning of the quarter after which students have completed the Foundations of Critical Writing course.

Explanation to student:

My goal in asking you the following questions is to capture a detailed account of your experiences with the Foundations of Critical Writing course. Please be as detailed and honest as possible in your responses, since those are the kinds of responses that will be most helpful.

- 1) Can you talk to me a bit about some of your reasons for deciding to enroll at _____ and continue your education?
- 2) Overall, how did your last quarter go?
- 3) What specific courses were you taking?
- 4) Can you tell me a little bit about the types of writing assignments (if any) you did for your [] course? (If student is taking more than one other course besides writing, repeat the question for each course the student is taking.)
- 5) Now I want to start talking about writing for college, which is what I am focusing on in my study. What kinds of writing skills and habits do you believe are necessary to being a successful college student? Where have these ideas about writing for college come from? Did you have these same ideas when you first enrolled at the college or have they changed since you started taking courses? How so?
- 6) Here is a bullet point overview of many of the assignments and activities from our class last quarter to refresh your memory about the course.

Bringing yourself back to our course last quarter, can you explain to me what you think were the three most helpful activities or assignments to help prepare you to become a better college writer? Why? (If respondent does not specify why it was helpful, follow up with the question: In what ways was this helpful?)

- 7) Can you explain to me what you think was the least helpful activity or assignment in our course last quarter to help prepare you to become a college writer? Please do not be afraid to be honest here. Your honest response to this question can be very helpful in the way the course is designed in the future.
- 8) Can you explain to me one way you think the course might be improved to better help students with writing for college classes? Once again, do not be afraid to be honest here. Your honest response to this question can be very helpful to improving the course's design.
- 9) How, if at all, did taking the writing course help you with assignments you worked on in other courses?
- 10) How were the writing assignments you worked on in your other courses similar to the writing assignments we worked on in our Foundations of Critical Writing class? Can you talk to me about a specific assignment?

- 11) How were the writing assignments you were working on in your other courses different than the writing assignments we worked on in our class? Can you talk to me about a specific assignment?
- 12) Think about the most recent writing assignment you worked on for any of your other courses. Can you first explain to me what the assignment was and then can you walk me through your approach to working on this particular assignment, starting from the moment after the instructor gave you the assignment?
- 13) Imagine a student is taking a Foundations of Critical Writing course similar to ours. He is not sure why he needs to develop his writing skills. He is going through the course feeling unmotivated and is beginning to fall behind. He decides to talk to the professor about his lack of motivation. What do you think the instructor might tell him or do to help motivate him to get something out of the course?
- 14) Now that you have completed the Foundations of Critical Writing Course, what really sticks with you that you think you will do again when you have to write a paper? Follow-up in case response is not detailed: Can you tell me a little more about that?
- 15) Do you have anything else that you would like to share about your experience of having taken the Foundations of Critical Writing course?
- 16) Any final questions for me?

Appendix E

Interview 2 Protocol

The following interview protocol is to be conducted with the student participant who has completed the developmental Foundations of Critical Writing course. Although the student might be in developmental math course, his/her developmental reading and writing requirements have been completed.

As a reminder from our first interview, my goal in asking you the following questions is to capture a detailed account of your experiences. The focus of this interview will be about your experiences with writing after you have completed the Foundations of Critical Writing course. Please do not be afraid of being as detailed as possible in your responses, since those are the kinds of responses that will be most helpful to me in capturing your experiences.

- 1) How is college going since the last time we spoke?
- 2) What courses are you currently taking?
- 3) You have had experience with several courses at the college at this point in your education. Knowing what you have experienced so far as a college student, could you share with me what you believe are some of the most important writing skills and habits necessary for college courses? In what ways (if any) has this changed since you first started as a student?
- 4) Can you describe for me the most recent assignment that involved writing in the _____ class? (Repeat this question and question below for all classes student has mentioned)
- 5) How did you approach the assignment for the _____ course?
- 6) How do you feel about your writing skills at this point in your education?
- 7) What role (if any) would you say the Foundations of Critical Writing course played in your confidence to write effectively for college classes?
- 8) In what ways, if any, do you use what you learned in the Foundations of Critical Writing course in your current courses? (*Depending on whether or not the student gives a detailed response, follow up with the question: Can you give me a specific example of an assignment or activity we did in the writing course that you feel has helped you to work on an assignment in one of the classes you are taking now?*)
- 9) I asked you to email me a copy of a writing assignment you worked on for one of your classes. Let's take a look at that. Being as detailed as possible, can you walk me through what steps you took to complete this assignment from the time you received the assignment from the professor to the moment you submitted it? (*If student does not give much detail, follow up with the question: Did you do anything else along the way as you worked on the assignment?*)
- 10) If participant does not bring this into the discussion, ask, in what ways (if any) did you use the library and/or the Academic Support Center to complete this assignment or any other writing assignments?
- 11) Here is a copy of your final essay from the Foundations of Critical Writing course. Take a minute to look over it. Can you explain to me how your approach

- to working on this assignment that you emailed me was similar to or different from the way you worked on the final assignment for the Foundations of Critical Writing course? (For each participant, have a copy of their work from the DED course).
- 12) Imagine I am a new student at the college and I am taking the Foundations of Critical Writing course. We become friends and I look to you for some guidance about college. I am not happy about having to take the writing course, so I go to you and I ask: “What is the point of having to take this class?” What would you tell me? (If student is not detailed, follow up with “What can I get from taking this course?”)
 - 13) Knowing what you know now about college writing, what do you think could have been covered in the Foundations of Critical Writing course that was not covered?
 - 14) Do you have any final thoughts that would capture some of your experiences with writing this past quarter?
 - 15) Final questions or comments?

Appendix F

Blog Task Prompts

Blog Task 1

For this blog task, write a fully developed reflective response that addresses the following questions:

- Describe the way you approached working on the narrative paragraph in as much detail as possible. In your description, discuss the steps you took to work on the assignment from the moment you were given the instructions to the moment when you submitted the assignment via blackboard.
- In working on the narrative paragraph, what do you feel you have learned about yourself as a writer that you didn't know before?

Blog Task 2

For this blog task, write a reflective response that addresses the following questions:

- In working on the illustration paragraph, how do you think you have changed as a writer since the beginning of the course?
- As the quarter continues, what skills do you believe you need to develop further to make your writing more effective?

Blog Task 3

For this blog task, compose a *detailed and specific* paragraph discussing your own writing process. Think about your ongoing process of working on the research essay for the class and address the following questions:

- Imagine you are talking to a friend who is just starting college and is insecure about her writing skills. She is concerned about what writing for college involves. If you were explaining to her your approach to writing a successful college essay, how would you describe your own writing process? What steps do you take and what strategies do you use after you have been given a writing assignment?

Appendix G

Writing Inventory

NAME:**MAJOR** (if decided):

The following writing inventory asks you to reflect upon your experiences with writing prior to this course. Self-awareness is one of the keys to developing the valuable transferable skill of writing. **Be thoughtful and specific in your responses to the questions and answer each of them. DO NOT LEAVE ANY OF THEM BLANK.**

*******To write your responses, click into the rectangle after each question and write your responses there.**

- 1) Besides taking this course, what other classes (if any) are you taking this quarter?

- 2) What was the *best* experience you ever had with writing? What made this experience your best?

- 3) What was the *worst* experience you ever had with writing? What made this experience your worst?

- 4) Have you ever written a research essay before? If yes, can you explain below? Discuss the course and the nature of the assignment.

- 5) What kinds of writing skills and habits do you believe are necessary to being a successful college student?

- 6) Besides receiving credit for having taken this course, write down **two specific** goals you wish to achieve by taking a class in Foundations of Critical Writing:

Goal 1:

Goal 2:

Appendix H

ePortfolio Welcome Page Task

*Like in all courses at the college, at the beginning of this course, you were given a copy of the course syllabus. The syllabus listed multiple **course goals**. Course goals will be listed on every course you take at the college, and they are a good way of giving you insight into what you will be learning as you progress through the course. It is helpful to revisit them at the end of a course to help you to reflect on what you have learned along the way and what you can take with you as you continue your journey through the academic and professional worlds.*

Instructions:

For this task, do the following:

- *Review the learning goals listed for our course on the syllabus*
- *Use the graphic organizer to compose three "I can" statements derived from the goals in which you explain what you can do as a result of taking the course and how you know you can do it.*
- *Be sure to explain yourself by discussing specific tasks/assignments you completed throughout the course.*
- *We will use these statements to help you create your welcome page on your ePortfolio. The welcome page will act as an invitation to the reader to look at the work you completed for our course.*

Here are the course goals for this class as stated on the syllabus: Upon successful completion of the course, a student will be able to:

1. Apply the writing process to a variety of written works by using prewriting, drafting, proofreading/revision strategies and plagiarism avoidance techniques
2. Improve self-confidence in dealing with writing issues; use self-reflection to continually improve from one assignment to the next
3. Develop a two to three page multi-paragraph essay in MLA format, including a thesis, logical support, direct quotations, proper citations and paraphrasing
4. Demonstrate ability to write in multiple modes and for different audiences, using text and digital sources to compose blogs, journals, and standard paragraphs, essays and research papers. These will simulate workplace writing where possible.
5. Work collaboratively to solve real-life problems and communicate using appropriate vocabulary, reading and writing strategies
6. Engage in on-going self-assessment and obtain assistance in developing strategies and skills identified for development
7. Demonstrate knowledge of information literacy and academic support resources both online and on campus
8. Use technology such as Blackboard and software such as MSOffice in class appropriately and effectively, including the use of academic research tools

1) I can...	I know I can because...
2) I can...	I know I can because...
3) I can...	I know I can because...

Welcome Page Overview

Here is what your ePortfolio welcome page will look like.

Welcome to my e-Portfolio for Foundations of Critical Writing. Here you will find a collection of some of my work from the class, including...(brief summary of written work in the portfolio)

As this class ends, I feel confident that I have attained several of the learning goals presented on the syllabus.

1) I can...I know I can because...

2) I can...I know I can because...

3) I can...I know I can because...

Appendix I

Master Code List

1. “The Variety of communicative practices in college.”
2. Skills, habits, and dispositions of college writing
3. Feelings About Writing
4. Connections Between Dev Ed course and college course expectations
5. Motivation
6. Self-confidence
7. Academic Identity
8. A process-oriented mindset and approach towards writing
9. The ability to use grammar and punctuation effectively
10. Helpfulness of Grammar/Punctuation Instruction and the Desire for Adding More Grammar/Punctuation Instruction to Course
11. Writing with a sense of audience, purpose, and awareness of context
12. Help Seeking Behavior and/or Mindset
13. Background/Prior Knowledge
14. Experiences in Other Academic Contexts
15. Writing as a Form of Capital
16. Feedback
17. Narrative Writing
18. Descriptive Writing
19. Illustration Writing
20. Persuasive Writing
21. College Resources
22. Timed writing vs. writing that is given more time.
23. Self-Awareness/Metacognition
24. Freewriting
25. Writing To Express Self
26. Similarities of Writing Across Contexts
27. Helpfulness of DED Course
28. Personal Writing
29. Centrality of Research in College
30. Critical Reading and Critical Writing
31. Writer’s Block
32. Design of DED Course As One Concept Leading to Another
33. Variety of Research Sources
34. Workshop with ASC and Library
35. Views Towards DED Class
36. Having Knowledge

Appendix J

Peer Feedback Workshop

Benefits and Goals for Having Peer Feedback Workshop in Class

- Helps you to develop and value a process-oriented mindset
- Helps you to put yourself in the shoes of your reader
- Provides you with practice in collaborating with others
- Helps you to become a more effective critical reader
- Provides you with the opportunity to become better at providing and receiving constructive academic and professional feedback
- Provides you an opportunity to apply what you have learned about writing in class as it connects with your own work and the work of your classmates

Providing Productive Feedback***Ground rules for receiving feedback from classmates:***

- Be open to receiving feedback
- Think critically about the feedback you receive
- Have a dialogue about the feedback you receive and clarify with your peer if you do not understand the feedback
- Look over your draft with the feedback in mind and make revisions to your work so that your writing becomes more effective

Ground rules for providing feedback to a peer:

- Start with a positive statement about your peer's work
- Do not be afraid of providing suggestions for how your classmate can improve his/her work
- When making suggestions for improvement, be supportive and not rude
- Provide concrete, detailed feedback so that you can help your classmate improve his or her work
- Remember that looking over the work of others can be helpful in training you to more critically review your own work so that your writing will improve

Instructions:

- 1) For each of your group members, read over the draft closely and carefully.
- 2) On your classmate's wiki provide written feedback about his/her draft using the sentence starters below. To begin writing your feedback click on the "comment" button. You can write in your feedback and then click "Add" when you are ready to submit your feedback.

TIP: A good strategy is to copy and paste your classmate's work into a Microsoft Word document and write your comments offline. Then, when you are ready to post your comments to your classmate, copy and paste them into your classmate's wiki.

- 3) Be sure to **begin with a positive statement** about your classmate's work. Use the first sentence starter and at least two of the others to provide your feedback. Explain your statement clearly so that your classmate can benefit from your feedback.

Here are the feedback sentence starters to use in your posts:

- **(REQUIRED)** The part of your draft I thought worked best was... because...

After you have started with the positive statement, choose two of the sentence starters below to provide constructive feedback.

- One sentence that was not specific enough was...because...
 - I think you could have written more about...because...
 - I wasn't sure what you meant when you wrote...because...
 - One place in the paragraph when I think you could have used a transitional word was...because...
 - I don't think you needed to include...because...
 - One part of your narrative that I found a little confusing was...because...
 - The most important thing I think you can do to improve your draft is...because...
- 4) Have a discussion about the feedback you provided each other.
- 5) Review the feedback you received from your peers and decide how you would like to use it to proofread and revise your work before submitting it for a grade.

Note: In order to receive credit for having participated in the feedback workshop, your responses need to be detailed and specific. SEE REVERSE PAGE FOR A SAMPLE FEEDBACK POST

Sample Wiki Post

Stephen's Feedback

Hi Maria:

The part of your draft I thought worked best was your topic sentence because it clearly introduced the idea that your focus is going to be about how your mother's decision to move to The United States from The Dominican Republic had an impact on your life.

I think you could have written more about the actual events that occurred after your mother moved to The United States because I feel like the narrative is not fully developed. After reading it, I was not really sure how your mother's decision had such a big impact on your life. Can you say a little more about the impact her decision had on your own life experiences? This will really bring your narrative to life.

I don't think you needed to include the sentences about your experiences of breaking your arm when you were a child because it breaks the unity of your paragraph. I would keep the paragraph focused on the ways your mother's decision changed the course of your life. By including the details about breaking your arm, the narrative does not flow from one event to another. Instead, it jumps back and forth.

I hope you find my feedback is helpful in guiding you through looking at your paragraph from the point of view of a reader.