

# **Writing Fellows Program**

## **Year-Seven Progress Report 2010-2011**

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## Executive Summary

The Writing Fellows Program at Boston College began in 2004 as an initiative to enhance the effectiveness of writing and writing instruction in undergraduate courses across the curriculum. We currently reach about 3-5% of the student body each year, but hope to increase this percentage as our program continues to grow and become a permanent fixture on the Boston College campus. In the program, trained graduate student fellows are paired with faculty members, working closely throughout the semester with students and student writing. The benefits of this program are three-tiered: first, the students benefit from conferencing, mentorship, and direct writing instruction with their Writing Fellow. Second, faculty benefit, finding out what type of writing instruction is most beneficial and effective for their students. Third, the Writing Fellows benefit, honing their teaching and conferencing skills as they prepare to teach in the First-Year Writing Seminar (FWS) program the following year at Boston College. Since 2004, over 1300 students have been a part of a writing-fellowed course at Boston College. Following is a brief summary of our history and accomplishments; for more detailed reports, please see the “History of the Writing Fellows Program” section.

**2004-2007:** For its first three years, the pilot program tested whether a Writing Fellows Program could enhance the quality of writing and writing instruction at Boston College. We partnered with instructors in Sociology, History, Political Science, Geology, and Music. In years one and two, 80% of students found the program a useful resource. All faculty noted higher levels of writing in their courses, and two found the program helped their own assignment design. During year three, the program worked with 130 students and 92% of these students agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their writing.

**2007-2009:** In its fourth and fifth years the program moved beyond the pilot program stage and expanded its reach employing more writing fellows and reaching more students. The response was overwhelmingly positive: 94% of students agreed or strongly agreed that conferencing with the Fellows improved their writing. The program partnered with instructors in Sociology, Literature, Political Science, Accounting, Theater and History. Faculty noted that student writing was better organized and that their own ability to write effective assignments improved as a direct result of the program.

**2009-2010:** In its sixth year, in addition to new partnerships in Communications, Biology, and Psychology, the program integrated a technological component that included a Mac laptop program for the fellows, a Blackboard online learning system for faculty, student, and writing fellow collaboration, an MS Word electronic paper-free comment system, and an audio recording element for in-person meetings. During this transition the student and faculty feedback remained positive. 91% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their finished work and faculty noted continued improvement in student writing and in their own ability to write effective assignments because of the program.

**2010-2011:** In its seventh year the program partnered with faculty in Economics, Biology, Accounting, Theater, and Literature. The technology component was further developed and more effectively implemented as fellows, faculty and students became more familiar with it. Over both semesters 98% of students reported receiving clear feedback from the writing fellows, an accomplishment jointly attributable to the fellows and the technology they used to make their comments and their conferences available to students throughout the revision process. The faculty response was likewise positive with a number of professors requesting that their fellows from the fall continue on in their spring courses. Most importantly, 96% present of students stated that their finished work had been improved as a result of their participation in the program.

**Summers 2008-2011:** Since the summer of 2008, the program has partnered with the Office of AHANA Student Programs (OASP), pairing Writing Fellows with the 45 incoming freshman who attended OASP’s Options Through Education (OTE) summer program. 90% of OTE students stated that the Writing Fellows were an integral part of their summer experience. This program promises to be a continuing interdepartmental relationship.

## What is the Boston College Writing Fellows Program?

Since 2004, the Writing Fellows Program at Boston College – directed by Dr. Paula Mathieu, in cooperation with Dr. Suzanne Barrett and The Connors Family Learning Center and Marla De Rosa in the English department—has enhanced the effectiveness of writing instruction in undergraduate courses. The Writing Fellows Program pairs trained graduate-student Writing Fellows with faculty members who want to focus more attention on student writing in a course. Fellows meet individually with students and assist them with three to four papers during the semester, offering feedback on paper drafts. Fellows receive training in responding to student writing and in the rhetorical expectations of the specific discipline and writing assignments. The faculty members also engage in dialogue with the Writing Fellows to clarify what constitutes effective writing in each specific disciplinary and rhetorical situation. Working with the fellows becomes an integral and required part of such classes, ensuring that students are not writing papers at the last minute. The program insures that students are getting quality feedback on their writing, especially in larger courses that make such concentrated individual attention difficult for faculty to provide. In this way, the Writing Fellows Program at Boston College benefits the students, the faculty, and the writing fellows.

Our approach to the Writing Fellows program at Boston College owes much to the distinction Anne Beaufort makes in *Writing in the Real World: Making the Transition from School to Work*<sup>1</sup>. Beaufort shows that writers need five kinds of knowledge to succeed as workplace writers: discourse-community knowledge, rhetorical knowledge, genre knowledge, process knowledge and subject-matter knowledge. Through training by the Writing Fellows Program directors and dialogue with the course faculty member, the fellows learn the discourse-community, rhetorical, and genre expectations. Through discussions with the students they reinforce and help teach process skills of revision. And while the fellows do not become experts in the course content, they are in a position to pick up on students' questions and direct students to the appropriate resources for further information.

## The History of the Writing Fellows Program

Since 2004, over 1300 students have been a part of a writing-fellowed course at Boston College. The program has supported faculty and students in numerous courses across the curriculum, including Sociology, Philosophy, Theology, Political Science, English, Theatre, Business, History, Biology, Psychology, and Communications. Furthermore, the Writing Fellow Program has developed a relationship with the Office of AHANA Student Programs' Opportunities Through Education (OTE) summer program for incoming freshmen, working with OTE students in 2008, 2009, 2010 and again in 2011. The partnership was so successful that OASP has made the Writing Fellows partnership a regular component of its OTE program.

The idea for the BC Writing Fellows Program began at a meeting of the Boston College Core Curriculum Committee in 2003 when Prof. Paula Mathieu (English) attended the meeting to discuss the aims and structure of the First-Year Writing Program – the only required writing course at BC – which she directed. Prof. Paul Gray (Sociology) asked how he might better teach writing in a core sociology course of 60 students. Prof. Mathieu briefly described the Writing Fellows concept as one used at other universities that might work here. Dean Joseph Quinn followed up that meeting by encouraging Mathieu to apply for a Teaching, Advising and Mentoring (TAM) Grant to develop a pilot for such a program. The first three years of the program demonstrated the value of the program and during the fourth year the program endeavored to expand its reach.

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<sup>1</sup> Beaufort, Anne. 1999. *Writing in the real world: making the transition from school to work*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Outlined below is a more detailed history of the program:

**2004-2006:** The first two years of the Writing Fellow Pilot Program were funded by a Boston College Teaching, Advising and Mentoring Grant (TAM). Four Writing Fellows were hired, trained and met with students during the semester to offer feedback on drafts of papers. Additionally, program Directors and Writing Fellows researched large, fully realized Writing Fellows Programs at nearby universities such as Brown and Tufts. Initial feedback regarding the effectiveness of the program was largely anecdotal but very positive. Approximately 80% of students found the program useful, while faculty noted a higher level of writing in their courses. A few added that the program helped them reconsider how they design writing assignments.

**2006-2009:** Over the next three years the program secured additional funding from the university: \$15,000 from the College of Arts and Sciences (2006-2007) and \$25,000 from the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences (2007-2008, 2008-2009). The increase in funding enabled the program to increase the number of writing fellows as well as the number and diversity of courses with which it partnered. The expanded program reached over 400 students and saw a rise in positive feedback with 92% reporting that the program improved their writing skills and 86% reporting that they would take another writing-fellowed course and recommend it to a friend, despite the extra work required. In 2008-2009 the Carroll School of Management (CSOM) provided an additional \$7,000 to fund writing fellows for three sections of Managerial Accounting enabling the program to reach a larger and more diverse student population.

**2009-2010:** The Writing Fellows Program employed seven Writing Fellows including a graduate student in Philosophy, increasing our profile on campus as a cross-curricular program. For the second year the program expanded beyond its traditional partnerships in the humanities and worked with faculty in the social and empirical sciences. With the addition of an Academic Technology Innovation Grant (ATIG) the program supplied writing fellows with Macbooks equipped with audio recording software and an online interface, *Blackboard Vista*, which allows fellows, faculty and students to track the progress of a paper from its earliest drafts to the final product.

**Summers 2008-2010 OTE:** In addition to these academic year achievements, \$5000 was provided by the Provost's Office for the Options Through Education summer program and allowed four Writing Fellows to partner with OTE students. On average, 90% of the OTE summer program students either agreed or strongly agreed that the Writing Fellows program was a "necessary part of the OTE program." The OTE partnership provides a clear demonstration of how the Writing Fellows provide students not only with professional writing guidance, but serve as mentors, providing models of leadership to undergraduate students at Boston College. The summer program also provides fellows with opportunities to work collaboratively with English instructors. They often attend class and guest lecture along with regular fellow responsibilities.

## **2010-2011 Report on the Writing Fellows Program**

### ***Faculty Partnerships in 2010-2011***

In 2010-2011, the Writing Fellows Program renewed its partnership with Howard Enoch's Introduction to Theatre course and continued its expansion into the human, business and empirical sciences. Over the course of the year fellows worked with two of Joseph Quinn's courses in Policy and Economics, Robert Wolff's Principles of Ecology as well as Rita Owens' course in Business Writing and Karen Arnold's Adult Psychology class.

In 2010-2011, the Writing Fellows Program employed nine Writing Fellows, eight of whom were graduate students in the English Department and one of whom was a graduate student in the Philosophy Department. For a second year the program extended a fellowship to a graduate student outside the English department as a sign of its commitment to cross-curricular writing instruction. Should the program expand in the near future, our hope would be to open the application process to graduate students in other disciplines making our writing fellow population as interdisciplinary as the course we support.

The program's funding also expanded in 2010-2011. The ATIG grant was renewed for a second year and we received additional funding from the Economics (\$4,000) and Accounting (\$1,000) departments - promising indicators that the program is considered a worthwhile investment for departments. Additionally, writing fellows, faculty and students used the various technological components with greater facility. The percentages of students using the audio recordings and electronic comments were up significantly from the previous year.

In the summer of 2011, our Writing Fellows Program partnered for the fourth consecutive year with the Options Through Education (OTE) Summer Transitional Program for incoming BC students. Four Writing Fellows worked with the OTE program and the four sections of English offered over the summer.

### ***Accomplishments in 2010-2011***

Since its inception in 2004 the Writing Fellows Program at Boston College has sought to achieve three goals. First, to cultivate in students an ability to write confidently across the curriculum and continue developing their writing ability over their undergraduate years at Boston College. Secondly, the program endeavors to provide faculty with a helpful teaching aid and pedagogical reinforcement tool. Finally, the frequent interaction with faculty and students provides the Writing Fellows with valuable experience in teaching, tutoring and mentoring thereby making them better Teaching Fellows in the First-Year Writing Seminar program. Over the past seven years the program has consistently met and exceeded these three main objectives:

**1. Students have become more adept and confident writers**, encountering greater continuity between their First-Year Writing Seminar and discipline-specific core courses.

- Approximately, 94% of students surveyed in both the fall and spring semester of 2010-2011 felt the program as a whole was a useful dimension of their class. Another 97% of students both semesters felt their Writing Fellow was a helpful resource for their writing questions. Between 94% and 98% of students each semester said the program improved the quality of their finished work.
- During both semesters approximately 92% of students said if possible they would take a writing-fellowed course again. Another student requested that the program identify what courses it was partnering with so she could steer toward them. Students include many added additional comments such as:
  - “Absolutely, I just handed in the best paper I have ever written.”
  - “Yes I would prefer to take a course with a writing fellow than one without one.”
  - “I had a great experience with [my writing fellow]! She was extremely helpful. I think the advice that she gave me will carry over into other subjects and make me a better writer overall.”
- Robert Wolff, professor of Ecology, noted that “the Writing Fellows Program is a signal to my students that writing in the science field is important.”
- Joe Quinn, professor of Economics and former dean of the school of Arts and Sciences, wrote: “I can’t really remember having one large paper due at the end of the semester like this. I simply could not have done that in a class this size without the aid of the Writing Fellows. The WF program provides an opportunity to deliver one-on-one attention in large courses that would not typically be able to do so.”

- Commenting on papers from her Adult Psychology class Professor Karen Arnold wrote: “Working with the writing fellows improved the students’ argumentation skills...and this carried through into the second paper. They were better able to make claims and support them with evidence, and to abstract from evidence to a theoretical or at least analytical argument. Papers were more thoughtful overall.” When asked if the program was helpful for her academic discipline (Psychology) she said “Definitely!” and added that students learned the basics of structure and argumentation, the kind of things that apply across disciplines. They were more engaged with their papers over a longer period of time, which improved their thinking and writing.

## 2. Faculty have found the WF Program a helpful teaching aid and pedagogical reinforcement tool as they teach students what are often tacit assumptions about what constitutes successful writing in their disciplines.

The entire faculty interviewed found the program to be a tremendously helpful resource and one which will effect how they write and communicate assignments in their respective disciplines in the future.

- Professor Karen Arnold explained that the Fellows function “as a **mediating presence**--students are comfortable talking to them in ways that they might not be with a professor, so they can try out ideas or ask questions they might not otherwise ask. Arnold also noted that the program had influenced the way she thinks about assignments, that she now has a better sense of what students need from an assignment and will make sure that students understand better what’s expected of them. She added that she was very grateful for the Writing Fellows Program and “all the time and skilled help” it provided her students. She would definitely partner with the program again.
- Professor Joe Quinn wrote: “I simply could not have done that (i.e.: a 12-15 page paper with 3 revision cycles and one-on-one meetings) for a class this size without the aid of the Writing Fellows.” As a result of working with the Writing Fellows he has made changes to his syllabus and restructured parts of his research assignment. His main critique is that “... not enough professors know about the program and the budget is too small.” He has taken action to advise BC to provide additional resources for the WF program so that the fellows can be in more classrooms.
- Professor Robert Wolff plans to make adjustment to his assignments as a result of his interactions with the program: “I plan on being more structured in terms of communicating my expectations regarding the organization of the assignment. I will repeat certain instructions more, such as the importance of the hypothesis.”

## 3. Writing Fellows have improved their teaching, tutoring and mentoring skills, which in turn improve the quality of teaching fellows in the FWS Program.

- Across the board the 2010-2011 Writing Fellows found the program to be an invaluable tool in preparing them to teach the First-Year Writing Seminar next year. Sarah wrote: “The conferencing aspect of the program has encouraged me to develop greater confidence and rapport in dealing with students, familiarizing me with typical strengths and weaknesses and allowing me the opportunity to test various pedagogical techniques.” Jared wrote along similar lines: “I learned firsthand how to create a comfortable conferencing atmosphere that inspires students to share their concerns, and ... how to effectively interact with students in a way that inspires them to take responsibility for their own writing and revision.” Many also added that it provided “a great opportunity to see what student writing looks like across disciplines.”
- The program also aided fellows in developing their syllabi for their upcoming classes. Anastasia wrote: “Being able to work with individual students and learn about and from them helped me to get a better

sense of the undergraduate student body. As I was planning my FWS class, I was able to think of the students I'd worked with and their responses to assignments, which was very helpful both in terms of thinking about putting together a syllabus and in terms of making teaching feel less intimidating."

- The technology components were likewise well received and employed by the fellows. Kyle felt that, "more valuable than the conferences themselves was the way we used technology in them. Many of my students indicated that the recordings became an integral part of their revising process. Not only did it provide them with the opportunity to revisit ideas that we had discussed in the meeting, but it also freed them up to have a more focused and meaningful meeting with me because they did not have to worry about taking notes as we were talking. This particular pedagogical tool is one that I will definitely be carrying with me into my teaching career." Another fellow responded that, "Students in both classes told me that they valued having two kinds of resources, the written comments in MS Word and the audio recordings of our meetings."
- The laptops also proved a valuable resource. Kate found them to be "infinitely helpful for meeting with students. I could take their papers with me on the go and read them at my leisure. I also had the flexibility to meet with students in places most convenient for them, such as the Chocolate Bar or Lower Dining Hall."
- All the fellows surveyed, like the students, found the "Comment" function of MS Word very helpful; they plan to use it as a primary means of providing feedback in their classes this fall.
- All the fellows surveyed found the program to be a valuable experience on personal, intellectual and pedagogical levels. Summing up nicely the sentiments expressed by his colleagues Kyle wrote: "I cannot speak highly enough of the Writing Fellows program. I think it provides such a unique resource to students. Because we know the courses and instructors well, we can provide a much more focused and informed commentary on their work than, say, a tutor. At the same time, because we are not grading them, my communication with students, both in and beyond the meetings, felt very open and therefore encouraged them to ask questions and take paper-related risks that they might not have otherwise."
- Additionally, many fellows acknowledged the able leadership of the program directors in not only administering the program, but also fostering a sense of academic community amongst the fellows which resulted in fruitful program meetings and the helpful exchange of strategies and best practices.

### ***Technology and the Writing Fellows Program in 2010-2011***

A major goal of the 2010-2011 academic year has been the further implementation and development of the program's technological component. In 2009 the Writing Fellows Program received a grant from ATIG that facilitated the integration of technology into the Writing Fellows Program and its courses. With the help of an Instructional Design consultant and project oversight by Instructional Design and eTeaching Services (IDeS), we used laptops, audio recording tools, Blackboard Vista, and Microsoft Word to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the Writing Fellow program. The overwhelming consensus of the Writing Fellows, Faculty and Student surveys is that these additions have been tremendously beneficial. The program saw significant increases amongst all three populations when surveyed about both the value and the relative ease in using each of the three main technological components.

A brief breakdown of these technological components and their effectiveness are included below:

#### ***Blackboard Vista***

We made use of Boston College's Blackboard Vista program. On Blackboard assignments can be uploaded for students and fellows to see, students turn in their drafts and final assignments, and fellows upload their comments on student drafts and audio files from conferences for student's future revisions. This component was, in general, the most prone to technological difficulties. However, they were



relatively few and easy to correct. Approximately, 80% of students surveyed found the site submittal process relatively easy to navigate. All the faculty and fellows surveyed found that, despite minor glitches, the Blackboard tool was easy to use once they became familiar with it.

### ***Microsoft Word***

Microsoft Word's "Insert Comment" function allows writing fellows to type comments in the margins of student submissions. This created an easy, paperless system for students, fellows and faculty. It allowed fellows to make all of their comments electronically, cutting down on paper use, eliminating any legibility problems and left a "paper trail" that can be shared with both students and faculty. The system also allows fellows to keep a copy of their comments for their records for future meetings with the students. This component was by far the most popular feature among students. Approximately 96% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that these typewritten comments and the Microsoft Word technological elements were helpful. One spring student commented specifically on this aspect of the program writing that, "[the comments] Helped [me] stay on target for [my] revision and gave [me] ideas as [I] continued writing."

### ***Audio Recording***

The Mac computers given to the fellows were equipped with audio recording software used to capture the interactions between the Writing Fellows and students during their conferences. The program recorded each student/fellow conference. The audio files were easily uploaded to Blackboard as .mp3 files. Students could then listen to their conference at their leisure on their home computer, allowing them to re-visit topics covered during the conference without having to take copious hand-written notes. This technological component saw the greatest increase in popularity. In 2009-2010 the response was "neutral" indicating that many students most likely did not use the recordings. However in 2010-2011 a majority of students each semester used the audio recording and found it helpful. Approximately, 67% of students in the fall semester agreed or strongly agreed with its usefulness. A more modest majority replied in the Spring (46%), but this is likely due to a smaller survey sample and larger numbers of juniors and seniors in the classes that semester. Many students added comments on the feature:

- "It recorded particular ideas that I would have forgotten otherwise."
- "It was great to hear the feedback while looking over the revised version-it helped to hear certain issues talked over and suggestions given."
- "[I] loved this aspect, [it] greatly helped with revisions"
- "This was very helpful because I didn't have to spend the whole time writing notes and could just re-listen to the meeting if I forgot anything."

We are very encouraged by these results especially when considered in light of the fact that the technological component is only in its second year and writing fellows, faculty and students are still in a process of learning and integrating the technology into the teaching routine.

### ***Community Records***

In 2009 we began to develop a program archive and community website where these records and other resources of the program could be stored for research, training, and program evaluation. An initial presentation on our system was unveiled in March of 2010 at the University of Connecticut at the Fifth Annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing. In April 2011 we made a second presentation at the New England Writing Center Association's annual conference, which was met with much interest. Additionally, a former writing fellow used our growing electronic archive as the data for a semester-long research project on effective conferencing strategies. She attended one of our Writing Fellow program

meetings in the spring and conducted a workshop with the 2010-2011 fellows on effective questioning strategies in student conferences. The workshop was well received and provides a great example of one of the applications of the data garnered from our technological initiative.

These technological advances not only provide a clear communication triangle between writing fellow, faculty and student, but also make the Writing Fellow Program's process easier for all parties. By providing laptops to the Writing Fellows, the ATIG grant allowed the Writing Fellow Program to facilitate these technological advances and make the drafting, conferencing, editing, and communication aspects of the program easier, standardized, and more readily accessible for students, faculty and fellows alike.

## **Goals for the Writing Fellows Program in 2011-2012**

Our goal is to see the Writing Fellows Program continue to grow until it is a fully realized and established program within the university—with a program director, stable budget, and the ability to reach a quarter to half of BC undergraduates annually. We think this program would be an ideal component of a much-needed university Writing Center, which could house not only the Writing Fellows Program but also the Online Writing Center (OWL) and the writing tutoring. As Liz Keating, a former faculty member for a writing-fellowed course, stated, "We need more support for teaching writing across the curriculum." We believe the Writing Fellow Program can provide this support as we continue to grow.

When asked what could be more effective about the Writing Fellow Program at Boston College, Professor Joe Quinn, former Dean of the College of Arts and Sciences, responded that his "only real concern about the Writing Fellow program is that not enough professors know about it and that the budget is small. He has taken action to advise BC to provide additional resources for the Writing Fellows program to get it into more classrooms." Another student from Spring semester 2011 requested that we identify which courses each semester would be writing-fellowed so she could plan her academic schedule accordingly. Nor is she alone: approximately 92% of students surveyed said they would take another writing-fellowed class and recommend their roommate or friend to do the same. We are encouraged by the consistent accolades and support of faculty and students. We hope to respond with a more wide-reaching, comprehensive, integrated Writing Fellow Program at Boston College, and thereby, realize a true "writing across the curriculum" support system for students.

During the 2011-2012 academic years, we plan to continue implementing and familiarizing writing fellows, faculty and students with the technological advances begun in 2009-2010. A second primary goal will be to conduct a more formal analysis of the data and archived documents collected thus far. This research will result in, among other things, an increasingly refined collection of pedagogical techniques for fellows and faculty to use in teaching and tutoring writing across the curriculum. We will use the experiences and data collected to better assess and improve the program. With over two years of archived documents and recordings the database will be an invaluable training tool for the incoming writing fellows and all those we reach through our conference presentation and future publications. Regarding the latter we hope to publish our findings in peer reviewed academic journals so that our successes may be imitated in programs at other universities.

## **Acknowledgments**

As in any successful educational initiative, collaboration has been essential to the Writing Fellows Program; the collegial relationships forged here have been extremely rewarding. This initiative began from a series of conversations between Paula Mathieu, Bryan Marinelli, Paul Gray and Arts and Sciences Dean Joe Quinn. The collaboration among Paula, Bryan and Staci Shultz was instrumental to getting the pilot off the ground, and the

insights and hard work of Staci, Bryan, and Sue Barrett have been essential to its continued existence and development. The faculty were generous with their time and adaptable to this new idea and provided support throughout. The OTE program directors, Dr. Ines Maturana-Sendoya, Andy Petigny, Warren Chiang and Donna Lee, made possible the smooth integration of the Writing Fellows into the summer program beginning in 2008. Our seven years of Writing Fellows offered their hard work, enthusiasm, and vital feedback, which helped refine this pilot program.

We are especially grateful this year, as last, for the Academic Technology Innovation Grant (ATIG) that enabled us to add such an innovative technological component to the program. The following members of Instructional Design and eTeaching Services (IDeS) group have provided invaluable support this year as we implemented the system: Rita Owens, Elizabeth Clarke, Cristina Joy, Tim Lindgren and Helen Healy. Whenever we had a question or needed help with the technology, they provided timely and expert assistance.

Many other hands and minds helped shepherd the Writing Fellows program to its current form, to whom we would like to offer our gratitude. This project would not have been possible without the support of two BC Teaching Advising and Mentoring Grants and the Offices of the Academic Vice President and of the Provost, especially Dr. Donald Hafner. David Quigley, Dean of Arts and Sciences has shown strong support and continued funding for the program. Mary Crane and Suzanne Matson, Chairs of the English Department, have also been strong supporters of the initiative, offering advice, encouragement, and an office for the fellows. We are grateful to the Department of Sponsored Programs, who has met with us on several occasions to discuss the planning, fundraising and reporting of this project. Finally, we would like to thank the students who have and will take part in the Writing Fellows Program, and who, we hope, will appreciate and understand writing a bit more because of this project; the students and their writing is what is most important to the Writing Fellows Program.

## About the Report's Authors

Paula Mathieu, Director, Writing Fellows Program, is Associate Professor in the English Department and shares responsibility with Lad Tobin for running the First-Year Writing Program. She is a specialist in rhetoric and writing pedagogy, with a doctorate in Language, Literacy and Rhetoric from the University of Illinois at Chicago. In 2005, she published *Tactics of Hope: The Public Turn in English Composition* and has co-edited two other books. In addition to writing pedagogy, her scholarship centers on public discourse and homeless writers.

Suzanne Barrett is Director of the Connors Family Learning Center. With a doctorate in English literature from Brown University, Dr. Barrett has worked at BC since 1992. In addition to coordinating all the services of the CFLC, she teaches a wide array of undergraduate courses and runs pedagogy and orientation workshops for Teaching Assistants and new faculty.

Marla De Rosa, Associate Director of the Writing Fellows program is an adjunct faculty member in the English Department. In addition to teaching First-Year Writing Seminar and the Literature Core, she has a background in business and technology writing. She has worked with Paula Mathieu as a mentor for new FWS instructors. She is also a doctoral student in the Lynch School of Education where she is studying the complex factors involved in student writing in different disciplinary areas.

Gregory Floyd is a doctoral candidate in Philosophy at Boston College and was a member of the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 Writing Fellows program and summer 2010 OTE Writing Fellows Program.