

# Writing Fellows Program

## Year-Six Progress Report 2009-2010

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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. In the program, trained graduate student fellows are paired with faculty, 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, nearly 1000 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 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. 92% of these students agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their writing.

**2007-2008:** In its fourth year, the program moved beyond the pilot stage and expanded its reach to 280 Boston College undergraduates and employed ten fellows. We partnered with instructors in Sociology, Literature, Political Science, and History. 95% of students agreed or strongly agreed that conferencing with the Fellows improved their writing.

**Summers 2008, 2009 & 2010:** In the summer of 2008, the program began a partnership with the Office of AHANA Student Programs (OASP), pairing five Writing Fellows with the 45 incoming freshman who attended OASP’s Options Through Education (OTE) program. 86% of OTE students stated that the Writing Fellows were an integral part of their summer experience. This program continued in the summer of 2009 and again in the summer of 2010 with four Writing Fellows and promises to be a continuing interdepartmental relationship.

**2008-2009:** In its fifth year, the program partnered with instructors in Theater, History, and Accounting and employed twelve fellows. 92 % of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their writing. Faculty noted that student writing was better organized, and that their ability to write effective assignments improved as a direct result of the program.

**2009-2010:** In its sixth year, the program partnered with instructors in Theatre, Communications, Biology, and Psychology and employed seven fellows. 91% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that the program improved their finished work. Faculty echoed comments from previous years, stating that student writing improved and their own ability to write effective assignments improved because of the program. Most significantly, year six saw the integration of a technological component to the program, including a Mac laptop program for the fellows, a Blackboard learning system online component for faculty, student, and writing fellow collaboration, an MS Word electronic paper-free comment system, and an audio recording element for in-person meetings.

## 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 – 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 three to four times 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*. 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 Writing Fellows Program at Boston College has been involved in 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, and again in 2010. The partnership was so successful that OASP has made the Writing Fellows partnership a permanent component of its OTE program.

## The History of the Writing Fellows 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. Outlined below is a more detailed history of the program:

**2004–2005:** Year one of the Writing Fellow Pilot Program was funded by a Boston College Teaching, Advising and Mentoring Grant (TAM). Four Writing Fellows, each incoming English Masters students, went through training in reading and responding to student writing, and met three times with students during the semester to offer feedback on drafts of papers. In the second semester, the Directors and Writing Fellows researched large, fully realized Writing Fellows Programs at nearby universities such as Brown and Tufts. Research into the effectiveness of the Year-One Pilot was anecdotal, but strongly positive. Seventy-two percent of the students responded that the program provided a useful resource. Dr. Gray, the Sociology Professor, stated that there were “more As and fewer C” papers than in previous semesters of the course.

**2005–2006:** Year two of the Writing Fellow Pilot Program was funded by a Boston College Teaching, Advising and Mentoring Grant (TAM). The program partnered with instructors in Sociology History, Political Science, and Geology. All participating faculty commented on the higher level of writing in their courses overall, particularly from students who seriously committed themselves to the process. Two also noted that they found the program helped their own design of assignments. Of students, 80% found the program a useful resource. All participating faculty commented on the higher level of writing in their courses overall, particularly from students who seriously committed themselves to the process.

**2006–2007:** With \$15,000 in funding from the College of Arts and Sciences, the Writing Fellow Pilot Program sought to increase the diversity of courses with which it had worked as well as to create continuity by extending partnerships with faculty beyond one semester. In the fall, Writing Fellows worked with two courses, Introduction to World Music and Perspectives on Western Culture. In the spring, the program continued with the yearlong Perspectives course and cooperated for a second year in a row with the Rivers and the Environment course. In total, the program worked with 130 undergraduates. The feedback from student evaluations showed that an overwhelming majority of students (92%) saw the value of the program in improving their writing skills, and nearly as many (86%) would take another Writing Fellows course or recommend one to a friend.

**2007–2008:** An increase in funding to \$25,000 from the Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences enabled the program to increase its number of Writing Fellows to ten, significantly expanding its reach to work with a total of 280 students. In the fall, the program partnered with Dr. Juliet Schor’s Shop ‘Til You Drop course, a core class of 180 students. In the spring, the program partnered with three classes: Prof. Marla De Rosa’s Literature and Society core course, Prof. Jennie Purnell’s Fundamental Concepts of Politics II and Prof. Kerry Cronin’s Perspectives on Western Culture, working with close to 100 students. By working with these larger courses, the fellows provided students with much-needed personal attention that they could not otherwise have.

**2008–09:** The Office of the Dean of Arts and Sciences provided the 2008-2009 academic year funding of \$25,000. The fellows partnered with Howard Enoch’s Introduction to Theatre course, Bethany Tanis’ History core course, and Elizabeth Keating’s Managerial Accounting course. An additional \$7000 in funding was provided by the Accounting Department in the Carroll School of Management, which supported three sections of Managerial Accounting. By continuing to work closely with the humanities and expanding to CSOM, the Writing Fellows Program continued to reach a larger body of students; since 2004, nearly 1000 students have been a part of a writing fellowed course at Boston College. 92% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that conferencing with the Writing Fellows improved their finished work.

**Summer 2009 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. 86.1% of the 2008 OTE summer program students either agreed or strongly agreed that the Writing Fellows program was a "necessary part of the OTE program." This OTE partnership is a prime reminder that not only do the Writing Fellows provide students with professional writing guidance, but they also provide leadership models and mentorship to undergraduate students at Boston College.

## **2009-2010 Report on the Writing Fellows Program**

### ***Faculty Partnerships in 2009-2010***

In 2009-2010, the Writing Fellow Program employed seven Writing Fellows, six of whom were graduate students in the English Department and one of whom was a graduate student in the Philosophy Department. By expanding our fellows to graduate students in departments outside the English department, we have increased our profile on campus and begun to increase the visibility of the Writing Fellows program as a cross-discipline, "writing across the curriculum" program not only for students and faculty, but also for the fellows involved in our program.

In 2009-2010, the Writing Fellow Program continued a partnership with Howard Enoch's Introduction to Theatre course, and added new partnerships with Lisa Goodman's Abnormal Psychology course, Laura Hake's Biology course on Environmental Disrupters of Development, and Elida Laski's Child Growth and Development Psychology course. By continuing to work within our strength in the Humanities departments, we have also begun to work within the business (2008-09), social sciences and education, and science departments. This has expanded our reach on campus to truly be a "writing across the curriculum" program.

In the summer of 2010, our Writing Fellows Program partnered for the third 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.

Since 2004, nearly one thousand students have been a part of a writing-fellowed course at Boston College. 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.

### ***Accomplishments in 2009-2010***

Since the Writing Fellows Program began at Boston College in 2004, we have consistently met – and even exceeded – our 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.

- In the fall of 2009, 95% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that "the conferences improved [their] finished work." In the spring of 2010, 89% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.
- In the fall of 2009, 89% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that "the

Writing Fellows Program provided a useful resource.” In the spring of 2010, 90% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.

- In the fall of 2009, 98% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed that “the Writing Fellow provided clear feedback.” In the spring of 2010, 94% of students surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with this statement.
- 86% of the 2008 OTE summer program students either agreed or strongly agreed that the Writing Fellows program was a “necessary part of the OTE program.” The OTE/Writing Fellow partnership is currently in its third year.
- Students began to develop better writing habits because of the Writing Fellows Program. In the spring of 2010, one student responded that: “If for no other reason, the program was really nice to have in the way that it made you start writing an assignment earlier versus procrastinating until the final due date. I also thought the two-week gap between turning the assignment in to the writing fellow and turning it in to the professor was a perfect amount of time.”
- Students commented on the applicability of the Writing Fellows Program to other courses at the college. One fall 2009 student writes: “Not only did it force me to create a rough draft of my paper, as opposed to writing one draft last minute, [my Writing Fellow’s] comments helped improve my overall writing in all of my classes.”
- Marla De Rosa, an English Instructor who has worked with the Writing Fellows through the OTE summer program in 2008 and 2009, observed: “I saw dramatic increases in the student's writing abilities and their confidence. The dedication and time shown by the Writing Fellows gave students the encouragement and help they needed to really work on and push forward with their writing.”
- Howard Enoch, a Theatre Professor who worked with the Writing Fellow Program from the fall of 2008 to the fall of 2009, added: “The student’s writing was much better organized” in his fellowed courses as opposed to his non-fellowed courses. He called this difference “a dramatic improvement.”
- Lisa Goodman, a Psychology professor who worked with the Writing Fellows Program in the fall of 2009, stated that she “liked the structure of the program, and the way it slowed down the students and got them to focus on their writing.” She continues, “I think that the Writing Fellows are incredibly useful for our discipline. Our courses are not, in large part, designed to focus on students’ writing. This program provides a great way to enable students to work on their writing as a major focus of the class.”

**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.

- Laura Hake, a Biology professor who worked with the program in the spring of 2010, stated that the program helped her to write better assignments. She writes, “Next year I will be making some changes based on the comments you gave me in our meetings. First, I’m going to have them turn in an annotated bibliography. Second, I’m going to have them turn in a detailed outline with topic sentences about a week before the first draft is due. I also learned that I have to update what my expectations are for these assignments.”

- Howard Enoch, a Theatre Professor who worked with the WF Program from fall 2008-fall 2009, continually met with the Writing Fellows to brainstorm about better ways to write clear assignments for the students. Emma Perry, a Writing Fellow who worked with Professor Enoch's course for all three semesters, added that she perceived definite improvement in the clarity of assignments, due in part to this feedback and brainstorming sessions. Enoch commented: "The Writing Fellows Program would be beneficial to any course that requires papers."
- Warren Chiang, Director of the OTE summer program, stated: "I am fully confident that our students are better off for having spent the extra time solidifying their skills, setting a higher standard for themselves, and making a connection with another potential resource in the fall." As a positive resource and addition to the program in 2008, the Writing Fellows continued to work successfully with OTE in the summer of 2009 and 2010.

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

- Bridget, a 2009-2010 Writing Fellow, commented: "Overall, this process and this program was amazing. I really cannot say enough about how well prepared I feel for conferences and working with students on their writing. There was also this amazing sense of community between the fellows, which I think sometimes is lacking in academia. I am incredibly grateful for the opportunity."
- Julie, a 2009-2010 Writing Fellow, commented: "Serving as a Writing Fellow has definitely helped to prepare me for teaching FWS next year. Having the opportunity to interact with BC undergraduates during regular writing sessions gave me a better idea of what BC students are like and what strengths, weaknesses, and general concerns they demonstrate with regard to writing. I found it particularly rewarding when students would exhibit progress from one paper to the next, clearly taking the advice I had given them on the previous paper into account. I think I will easily be able to apply the knowledge I've garnered from being a part of the Writing Fellows program in my position as an FWS teacher next year. As a result of my experience in the Writing Fellow program, I also feel that I have been able to find a better balance between providing students with encouragement and letting them know when they need to do something differently in order to achieve success."
- Erin, a 2009-2010 Writing Fellow, commented: "Participating in the WF program at BC has been beneficial for several reasons. First, it allowed me to get to know several undergraduate students at this university. This experience has helped prepare me for (and reminded me not to make assumptions about) the group of students I'll be teaching in my FWS class next year. Fellowing has also allowed me to assess the specific issues that BC students struggle with in their writing. Having had previous experience as a Writing Fellow in Wisconsin, the practices of commenting and conferencing were not novel to me. The biggest benefits I gained from Fellowing for the BC program were getting to know the student body and familiarizing myself with the writing-related issues that need addressing at this institution."
- Emma, a 2008-2009 and 2009-2010 Writing Fellow, commented: "One of my favorite aspects of the Writing Fellow program at BC is the 'repeat customer' - getting to work with the same students throughout a semester on a variety of assignments. It was rewarding to see students improving from one paper to the next, and valuable to hear the ways in which our last meeting

helped them gain tools that they could then apply to their next assignment. When teaching a class, we will be working with the same group of students throughout a semester, so the process of building an actual relationship with the student - and not merely a relationship with their writing and their writing only - was invaluable. When I TAed for British Literature I at BC in fall 2009, I used the same Microsoft Word system developed by the Writing Fellows program. My students loved it and were able to receive more thorough feedback from me, while I was able to keep records of their work and progress, which was beneficial when it came time to give final grades. In this way, the Writing Fellows program has already helped me to be a better college instructor.”

### ***Technology and the Writing Fellows Program in 2009-2010***

The biggest change the program underwent in the 2009-2010 academic year was the addition of a significant technological component. 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 audio recording tools, Blackboard Vista, and Microsoft Word to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of the WF program. Audio recordings of meetings and typed paper comments were posted with the draft and made available to the student, the Writing Fellow and the instructor. In this way, the instructor could review fellow comments and easily see the draft progress of each student. Students can access recordings of their meetings, ensuring they will not forget any helpful tips or conversations they had with their fellow. The fellow can ensure that assignments are turned in on time, and can keep a record of each student’s progress in an easy-to-access electronic format.

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

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

We made use of Boston College’s Blackboard Vista program, and requested that each 2009-2010 faculty member create a Blackboard course site for their class. On this site, assignments could be uploaded for students and fellows to see, students could turn in their drafts and final assignments, and fellows could upload their comments on student drafts and audio files from conferences back to the students. These file uploads were made private, so only faculty and fellows could see students’ papers, drafts and audio files; students could not access their fellow students’ assignments or audio files. Since all of these materials were available in one place, Blackboard cut down on organizational confusion. Papers could not be lost, and all drafts could be viewed in one place so that faculty could easily consider student revision and improvement. 80% of students found the Blackboard system easy to use. The most common complaint from students, faculty and fellows was that the assignment deadline feature often shut students out so they could not submit their assignments; we have been working to fix this feature with an easy setting change and to increase understanding of this new technological tool for all parties involved.

#### ***Microsoft Word***

We used Microsoft Word’s “Insert Comment” function to allow fellows to comment on student writing. This created an easy, paperless system for students, fellows and faculty. This system allowed fellows to make all of their comments electronically, cutting down on paper use and eliminating any problems that might arise from handwritten margin notes. Electronic written comments also leave a paper trail that can be shared with both students and faculty; under a

handwritten paper comment system, faculty might never see comments from the writing fellow. This system also allows fellows to keep a copy of their paper comments for their records for future meetings with the students, instead of returning their comments to the student without retaining a copy. This makes for more effective conferencing and helps fellows to avoid repetition. These electronic comments were overwhelmingly popular; 96% of students either agreed or strongly agreed that these typewritten comments and the Microsoft Word technological elements were helpful. One spring 2010 student commented specifically on this aspect of the program: “[My writing fellow] was really helpful. I especially liked the notes she put in the margins of my papers; it made it super easy to go in and revise my papers, and you didn't need to worry about printing out the corrected copy or deciphering someone's handwriting.”

### ***Audio Recording***

We used an audio recording program on the fellows' Mac computers to capture the interactions between the Writing Fellows and students during their conferences. The program recorded each student/fellow conference, but participation in this element was voluntary. Students could opt to not have their meeting recorded, but most students took advantage of this feature. 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. This allowed students to easily re-visit topics covered during the conference without having to take copious hand-written notes. Since most meetings are 20-30 minutes long, this allowed fellows and students to cover more topics without having to pause to write notes or record ideas. The audio recordings met with mixed feedback. Some students liked this feature and stated: “I liked this addition. It took a lot of pressure off of the conference so that I could really focus on what she was saying and ask follow-up questions, rather than worry about writing everything down as we went.” However, other students expressed legitimate concerns. One student stated: “I felt it prevented me from asking my writing fellow all of my questions because I did not want my teacher to hear certain concerns I had.” Overwhelmingly, the surveyed response to the audio recordings was “neutral.” Anecdotally, many students volunteered that they did not use the recordings at home, which explains this “neutral” response. Overall, the audio recordings were productive for those who used them. If we encourage more familiarity with this system, audio recordings could become much more widely used and appreciated.

### ***Community Records***

In addition 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. In fact, we have already begun to present our findings at professional conferences; in March of 2010, the Writing Fellows Program presented this new technological system of conferencing and archiving at the University of Connecticut at the Fifth Annual Conference on the Teaching of Writing. Conference organizers and attendees were impressed with the system and expressed interest in implementing similar tools at their own institutions.

These technological advances not only provide a clear communication triangle between 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 2010-2011

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 2008-09 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, one fall 2009 student writes: “The Writing Fellows Program would have been more effective if it was implemented in all courses at Boston College. Obviously, one can't change their writing in one semester.” We agree, and we would love to see this student's idea become reality. With a more wide-reaching, comprehensive, integrated Writing Fellow Program at Boston College, a true “writing across the curriculum” support system could be realized.

During the 2010-2011 academic years, we will fully implement the technological advances begun in 2009-2010. We will use the experiences and data collected to better assess and improve the program. The archived collection of work from the 2009-2010 Writing Fellows will be an invaluable training tool for the incoming writing fellows as we work with a new group of instructors and students. In the fall of 2010, we will be partnering with the following courses: Professor Karen Arnold's Adult Psychology class, Professor Joseph Quinn's Public Policy in an Aging Society economics course, Professor Robert Wolff's Principles of Ecology, and Professor Rita Owens' Business Writing and Communications course.

## Acknowledgments

As in any successful educational initiative, collaboration has been essential to the Writing Fellows Pilot; the collegial relationships forged here have been extremely rewarding. This initiative began from a series of conversations: lunch between Paula Mathieu and Bryan Marinelli, where we first discussed the idea of Writing Fellows; a meeting of the Core Curriculum Committee, where Paul Gray expressed concerns about his students' writing with Paula Mathieu; and subsequent e-mails from Arts and Sciences Dean Joe Quinn, who encouraged Paula to develop the idea further. The collaboration among Paula, Bryan and Staci Shultz was key to getting the pilot off the ground, and the insights and hard work of Staci, Bryan, Sue Barrett and Diane Hotten-Somers have been essential in giving this program life. The faculty with whom we have cooperated were generous with their time and adaptable to this new idea as well as supportive throughout. The OTE program directors, Dr. Ines Maturana-Sendoya, Warren Chiang and Donna Lee, made possible the smooth integration of the Writing Fellows into the summer program in 2008, 2009 and 2010. Our six years of Writing Fellows offered their hard work, enthusiasm, and vital feedback, which helped refine this pilot.

We are especially grateful this year for the Academic Technology Innovation Grant (ATIG) that enabled us to add such an innovative technology 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 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. The Arts and Sciences Deans Office have shown unwavering support and continued funding for the program. Mary Crane, Chair of the English Department, has also been a strong supporter of the initiative, offering advice, encouragement, and an office for the fellows. We are grateful to the Department of Sponsored Programs, who have 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 will be studying the complex factors involved in student writing in different disciplinary areas.

Emma Perry is a doctoral candidate in English Literature at Boston College and was a member of the 2008-09 and 2009-2010 Writing Fellows program and summer 2009 OTE Writing Fellows Program.