

**Writing Across the Curriculum**  
**Psychology Bibliography**  
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The journal *Teaching of Psychology* regularly publishes articles on WAC and psychology, or on integrating writing instruction in the college-level psychology class. In this bibliography, all annotations appeared in the ERIC database, available online from the Golda Meir Library website at: <http://www.uwm.edu/Library/Info/db.html>.

Gottschalk, K. (1995). Contact zones: composition's content in the university. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communications Skills ED 390041.

Abstract: Contact zone theory--spaces where cultures meet, clash, and grapple with each other--helps writing program administrators to situate themselves. Writing programs and composition courses seem most troubled where the viewpoint of the most powerful faction is assumed as "the" viewpoint. One way to defuse tension is to recognize that writing is not exclusively the domain of the English or composition department; writing occurs within a specific context or discipline. But what happens when the teaching of first-year composition is given to such departments as music, government, and psychology as well as to English? First, educators in disciplines other than English start thinking about writing in ways they might not have before. Second, if given not only advice and training but also freedom and responsibility, instructors, whether graduate students or faculty, will rise to the occasion. Third, writing courses take on a plethora of agendas and subject matters which meet the wide-ranging tastes and needs of the student body. Faculty benefit as they begin to see the teaching of writing as something more than the conveyance of skills and correct grammar. Students benefit by experiencing writing as part of their normal intellectual and emotional lives, by gaining direct familiarity with writing as it occurs in different arenas. Dangers exist, however, because some faculty, who value content over process, will treat writing as an afterthought, and because some graduate students do not write well themselves and have not thought about writing.

Hinkle, S., Hinkle, A. (1990). An experimental comparison of the effects of focused Freewriting and other study strategies on lecture Comprehension. *Teaching of Psychology*, 17 (1), 31-35. ERIC EJ409484.

Abstract: Contrasts immediate and delayed effects of focused freewriting and focused thought on lecture comprehension. Finds the immediate effect was increased comprehension. However, on a one-week delayed test, the performance of the focused freewriting group was below that of the focused-thought group.

Levine, J. (1990). Using a peer tutor to improve writing in a psychology Class: one instructor's experience. *Teaching of Psychology*, 17 (1), 57-58. ERIC EJ 409492.

Abstract: Describes a peer tutoring program and how it was implemented in an introductory psychology class. Presents data suggesting that both students and instructors found the program useful. Reports students with high scores on the English Placement Examination were invited to enroll as peer tutors.

Madigan, R., Brosamer, J. (1990). Improving the writing skills of students in introductory psychology. *Teaching of Psychology*, 17 (1), 27-30. ERIC EJ409483.

Abstract: Compares two studies in which the effects of a writing component in introductory psychology were measured. Evaluates the impact of the format on students' writing skills. Notes essay questions were restricted to four rhetorical forms previously encountered by students in freshman composition classes.

Radmacher, S., Latosi-Sawin, E. (1995). Summary writing: a tool to improve student comprehension and writing in psychology. *Teaching of Psychology*, 22 (2), 113-115. ERIC EJ 509184.

Abstract: Describes the use of the writing-across-the-curriculum approach in a college psychology course. Reports on a study of the effect of summary writing exercises on 16 students. Finds that participating student scores on the final examination were eight percent higher than nonparticipating students. \*

Wade, C. (1995). Using writing to develop and assess critical thinking. *Teaching of Psychology*, 22 (1), 24-28. ERIC EJ 507452.

Abstract: Asserts that written work has advantages over oral discussion in the development and assessment of students' critical thinking skills. Describes a set of short writing assignments that focuses on eight essential aspects of critical and creative thought. Provides examples of how to use writing assignments in college psychology courses.\*

Weiss, R., & Walters, S. (1979). Research on writing and learning: some effects of Learning-centered writing in five subject areas. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communications Skills ERIC ED191073.

Abstract: A study was conducted to test the following four hypotheses: (1) more subject-area writing will produce better writing, (2) more subject-area writing will reduce writing apprehension, (3) the frequency and amount of learner-centered writing about a subject will increase learning of that subject, and (4) concepts students write about will be clearer to them than the concepts they do not write about. The study involved 178 college students and five

instructors in the areas of history, psychology, physical sciences, reading theory and practice, and statistics (the latter two being graduate courses). Students were placed into either control or experimental (writing) groups for one semester. Both groups experienced the same, or similar, activities, lectures, discussions, assignments, and tests, with the exception that the writing groups received regular writing assignments designed to fix and reinforce student learning. Students completed pretests and posttests, a writing apprehension inventory, content-area tests, and writing samples. The findings supported the third and fourth, but not the first and second hypotheses.

Willingham, D. (1990). Effective feedback on written assignments. *Teaching of Psychology*, 17 (1), 10-13. ERIC EJ409479.

Abstract: Suggests specific approaches to critiquing A student's paper motivates THE student to produce better papers and to improve writing skills. Warns against overemphasis on the mechanics of writing, and points out steps the instructor may follow to involve students in the editing process.

Young, A. (1985). *Research Connections: Writing in the Disciplines*. ERIC Clearinghouse on Reading and Communications Skills ED266476.

Abstract: The writing across the curriculum program at Michigan Technological University was designed to change teacher and student attitudes about course-assigned writing as well as to change writing practices by means of a series of faculty workshops. After four years, a team of seven faculty members from rhetoric and composition, literature, psychology, and linguistics--with the help of faculty from several other fields--designed a research and evaluation program to determine the success of the writing across the curriculum project. The evaluation proved that many students and instructors came to view writing as a complex and central activity, integral to learning and understanding in all disciplines. A total of 20 individual studies was conducted for the evaluation, including the following: (1) two studies of student laboratory reports, in biology and engineering, which showed the success of the faculty workshops; (2) a writing assessment of engineering students, which showed that the evaluation design had not been integrated to program goals as well as it might have been, and that the program itself was not quite as effective with engineering students as the faculty had hoped; and (3) two studies of student journals in mathematics and civil engineering, which showed that speculative writing plays an important role in student learning in content area courses. Among other things learned by this evaluation was the value of the multiple measures approach.

Young, A., & Fulwiler, T. (Ed.). (1986). *Writing across the Disciplines: Research into Practice*. Upper Montclair, NJ: Boynton/Cook. ERIC ED264592.

Abstract: The impact of a writing-across-the-curriculum program on the professional life of a single university department and on the pedagogical life of an entire campus community is the

focus of this book. The essays in the first section explain writing across the curriculum and provide a context for collective writing research. This section demonstrates the process by which an organized effort in writing-across-the-curriculum research can occur, and suggests the benefits of such an effort. The second section focuses on evaluation, describing the results of the six-year writing-across-the-curriculum program. Each chapter looks at a different area of impact, discusses how the investigations were made, and states the findings. The third section evaluates specific techniques (such as journals, peer groups, and poetry writing) in individual classes in such areas as psychology, biology, civil engineering, mathematics, and literature. The final section contains essays on the possibilities and the problems that arise in connection with such a program, academic and political as well as theoretical and practical.