

Oregon Writing Project at Southern Oregon University

2018-19 Site Report



Cover photos

Upper left: "Teaching the Moves of Re-Writing" workshop
Lower left: "Culturally Responsive Teaching in Action" workshop
Upper right: Young authors' reading and reception
Lower right: "Teaching the Moves of Re-Writing" workshop

Oregon Writing Project at SOU 2018-19 NWP Site Report

Authors of this report:

Margaret Perrow and Merrilyne Lundahl

Dates covered by this report:

September 15, 2018- September 15, 2019
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I. Overview and Current Context of the Site

Southern Oregon University (SOU) is a small regional public university serving an extensive, mostly rural, area of the state. 2018-19 was our seventh year of re-affiliation with the National Writing Project¹.

Highlights from 2018-19 include

- Seven workshops or open classes (298 teachers attended one or more of these)
- One intensive C3WP institute (45 hours), attended by 15 teachers
- Nine teachers taught four OWP 2019 summer young authors' camps, attended by 82 students
- Young authors' reading and reception in fall 2019, attended by 90 people
- Three teachers gave presentations at professional development workshops or regional conferences

This year, we continued to emphasize the alignment of OWP's work with the university's mission. Now in her third year at SOU, President Linda Schott's energy and focus have helped SOU articulate a clear mission that prioritizes community connections, and supports active engagement with our K-12 and community college colleagues. Dr. Schott continues to express enthusiastic support for the work of the OWP; she clearly understands how we directly contribute to the university's mission of being a "regionally engaged learning community" that promotes "responsible global citizenship" by supporting teachers' professional development in their classrooms *and* as leaders in their schools. By fostering relationships with teachers and administrators, providing a variety of teacher-led professional development, offering affordable young-authors' camps, and maintaining active partnerships with a wide range of institutions and organizations, in 2018-19 the OWP contributed directly to the university's mission as a thriving regional university with strong, active, and sustainable connections to K-12 teachers and schools.

The OWP plays a key role in linking SOU with teachers in our extensive geographic region, supporting their development throughout their careers. Teachers who attend OWP workshops and institutes come from over twelve school districts extending from Yreka (northern California) to Klamath Falls to Roseburg. Many of these teachers began their careers as undergraduate English

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majors at SOU, enrolled in the MAT program, and completed their student teaching in classrooms of OWP teacher-consultants.

The OWP directors teach in both the English program and the School of Education, working closely with student teachers in secondary schools and with the cooperating teachers who mentor them. The site directors also oversee SOU's Advanced Southern Credit program in English language arts, working closely with approximately 35 high school teachers who teach these dual-credit courses. These overlapping roles help us facilitate SOU's outreach to teachers as they move through their careers, continue their professional development as required by the Oregon Teacher Standards and Practices Commission, and become mentors to pre-service teachers. The connectivity, or sense of professional 'home' throughout their careers that the OWP offers teachers, is part of the vision we hold for the OWP — and a clear example of the “regionally engaged learning community” serving learners throughout their lives that is promoted in the institution's mission statement.

In addition to fostering individual teachers' leadership development, the OWP plays a key role in linking teachers with their colleagues. Summer institutes and classes, as well as workshops throughout the year, create opportunities for teachers to learn from each other's experience and practice — both as participants in colleagues' workshops, and as facilitators themselves. Summer young-authors' camps give teachers opportunities to collaboratively develop and try out creative, engaging writing lessons.

Securing university support for the site directors' course-release time continues to be a challenge, in an ongoing period of fiscal uncertainty at our university, statewide in higher education, and nationwide in public education. The OWP site director and co-director each received one (10-week quarter) university-supported course release in 2018-19. These two releases comprise approximately 8% of each site director's annual academic loading. This support is due in part to ongoing efforts to keep the provost, the associate vice provost for academic resource management, and the president informed of the OWP's ongoing work. It is also due to the OWP's strong relationships with other programs on campus, including the School of Education, the Division of Humanities & Culture, Advanced Southern Credit (SOU's dual-credit program), and University Studies. The two university-supported course releases are provided by the Division of Humanities & Culture, and the Division of Education, Health & ROTC respectively. This joint support reflects the OWP's long history of productive inter-departmental partnerships on campus.

2018-19 was co-director Merrilyne Lundahl's second year at SOU. Dividing the release time between two directors has energized our site leadership. We have found it helpful to each take the lead on different initiatives and events, learning from and supporting each other. Dr. Lundahl has quickly built strong connections with teachers, and this year oversaw a second highly successful C3WP cohort (see below) and took the lead on coordinating the summer young writers camps.

In June, 2019 Margaret Perrow received SOU's Faculty Distinguished Service Award, largely based on her work as OWP site director. This award represents acknowledgment that the work of OWP site directors — which far exceeds the amount of time compensated by a single four-credit course release — is a valued contribution to university service.

II. The Work of the Writing Project

The work of the Oregon Writing Project (OWP) in 2018-19 included an advanced C3WP institute, a series of open workshops, and summer young writers' camps. We did not offer a summer institute in 2019, instead concentrating on developing a long-term strategy for future institutes aligned with the needs of our region's teachers.

College-Ready Writers Program (C3WP) Advanced Institute

Partly based on the success of our 2017-18 C3WP Advanced Institute, OWP was awarded a SEED (Supporting Effective Educator Development) grant of \$20,000 for a high-needs school in 2018-19. We selected North Medford High School based on their existing argument-writing initiatives, and on the teacher-leadership of Jamie Leach and Tonya Noon-Toledo, participants in the 2017 advanced institute. Tonya and Jamie planned and facilitated the 2018-19 institute and attended National Writing Project trainings in New Orleans.

Jamie and Tonya recruited English Language Development (ELD), English, and social studies teachers for 45-hours of professional development. An orientation in May 2018 introduced some of the C3WP resources, and summer sessions (6/19-6/20 and 8/16-8/17) included strategies for teaching argument and time to design curricula. During the academic year, teachers met on six Saturdays to share demonstration lessons, troubleshoot, and conduct formative assessments of student writing.

Participants reported that the most valuable aspect of the program was having regular opportunities to work with colleagues. They benefitted from a sense of community and the time to plan, collaborate, think deeply, and discuss their experiences with C3WP lessons and teaching writing generally. In addition to improving instruction and curriculum in argument-writing, other tangible results included an increase in the amount of writing social studies teachers assigned and changes in their approach to writing instruction. Students in classes of participating teachers did more writing to learn and had greater autonomy in choosing topics. [The 2019 C3WP report](#) is available on our website.

Although no additional SEED grants were available in 2019, we continue to build on the work of our argument-focused institutes. This includes planning for future institutes, as well as leveraging the expertise of C3WP teachers. (For example, based on their work with C3WP, three North Medford HS teachers—Kim Stevenson, Jamie Leach, and Tonya Noon-Toledo—presented a C3WP-inspired demonstration lesson as part of the ILGA workshop in October, 2019.)

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Teaching about language and power: Culturally responsive pedagogy in action. September 7, 2019. Linda Christensen, known for her work on literacy and social justice, presented this daylong workshop designed to provide some practical examples of culturally responsive teaching to follow up on Zaretta Hammond's presentation in the spring. Over 75 participants (K-12 teachers, SOU faculty, MAT students and undergraduate education majors, retired and substitute teachers) attended this workshop. The \$75 registration fee included lunch and six PDUs. The School of Education provided partial scholarships for students. All participants received a copy of Christensen's book *Reading, Writing, and Rising Up*.

Young Writers' Camps

A young authors' reading and reception was held on October 26, 2018 on the SOU campus. Over 150 people attended; 45 young authors from summer 2018 camps read from their work, and received a free copy of the anthology [Wordscapes 2018](#). Local public television station SOPTV made a [short video about our summer young writers' camps](#).

Our summer 2019 camps served 82 students and included elementary (Griffin Creek and Hedrick), middle school (Ashland), and themed (Logos) camps. We also had a college application essay camp. This year, some camps increased the amount of instructional time from three hours to four hours a day.

We continue to benefit from having Cliff Cowley in the role of Camps Coordinator. He provides critical leadership and oversight, and partners with districts in managing the logistical demands of camps.

Based on the success of our 2018 camps and our commitments to access, diversity, and inclusion, we were awarded a \$1000 grant from the Gordon Elwood Foundation, which we will use to support more equitable and inclusive outreach to potential campers in 2020.

Scholastic judging 2018-19

OWP served as an adjudicating site for the Scholastic student writing contest in winter 2019. Six graduate students and eight undergraduate English majors scored student submissions online. More students were interested than slots were available. Adjudication was a course requirement for MAT528B students, who used their observations and experience to launch winter term's discussion of student writing and voice. Students received \$50 (and a good professional item for their resumes.)

University partnerships

In 2018-19 we engaged in multiple collaborations with faculty and programs on the SOU campus.

- On May 14, 2019, we hosted a screening of the documentary film *American Creed* followed by community conversation about values we share in America, and bridging differences. The conversation was facilitated by English professor Dr. Alma Rosa Alvarez. Twenty-five people attended (including faculty, staff, students, teachers, community members, and middle school students). This event was held in partnership with the Multicultural Resource Center, and the Southern Oregon Arts and Research conference (SOAR), and was supported by a small NEH grant made possible by the National Writing Project.
- The April 2019 Culturally Responsive Teaching event with Zaretta Hammond (see in-service above) is a prime example of our engagement across campus. The OWP proposed and organized this event in partnership with Dr. Younghee Kim in the School of Education. We received financial sponsorship from the Campus Theme Series, the SOU School of Education, Advanced Southern Credit English, the Division of Humanities & Culture, and the Provost's office. (We also received support from the Medford School District, Ashland School District, Crater High School, and the SOESD Mentor Consortium — see District Partnerships below.)
- Site director Margaret Perrow was part of a small group of faculty, led by Dr. Kylan DeVries, that established the Faculty Writing House on the SOU campus. A comfortable space for faculty to gather to work on their scholarship and collaborate on creative projects, the Faculty Writing House received generous support from the Provost's Office, Facilities Management, and several academic divisions on campus. A grand opening was held in late September 2019. The OWP plans to host future writing workshops for faculty at the House.

- In July 2019 the OWP contributed to the School of Education’s proposal to the state Educator Advancement Consortium (EAC). As part of this regional EAC network, we are seeking funding for a summer 2020 invitational institute focused on equity and culturally responsive teaching. Rather than creating a separate Writing Project EAC network (see grant-writing, below), we believe our proposed institute makes a relevant contribution to the existing regional network.

District and community partnerships

The OWP maintains a strong partnership with the Medford School District, which donates facilities for our summer writing camps, promotes teacher workshops, and was a financial sponsor of the spring 2019 Culturally Responsive Teaching workshop with Zaretta Hammond. A new Medford district superintendent came on board this fall, and we look forward to meeting him to further strengthen our partnership as we develop our summer 2020 equity-focused institute.

We have good working relationships with Pheonix-Talent, Central Point, and Ashland districts, as well as the Southern Oregon Education Service District’s Mentor Consortium (several of which were financial co-sponsors of the spring 2019 Culturally Responsive Teaching workshop).

Grant-writing, scholarship and presentations

Writing and presenting about our work is a way to share the work of the site, while also bringing national recognition to the university. Some examples from 2018-19:

- Site director Margaret Perrow’s article was published in *College Teaching* (Perrow, M. 2018. “Designing Professional Learning to Support Student Success: Lessons from the Faculty Writing Fellows Seminar.” *College Teaching*, 66:4, 190-198, DOI [10.1080/87567555.2018.1483316](https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2018.1483316)). The data show that the overall objectives of the yearlong seminar for university instructors of first-year writing classes at SOU were met: *to develop instructors’ skill and confidence in writing instruction, so that they in turn could better support students’ success in academic writing*. The seminar afforded opportunities for faculty to try out new approaches, reflect on their successes and challenges using evidence from their classrooms, and engage in constructive conversations to revise their instruction based on theory and best practices in writing pedagogy. The notably higher final-essay scores of the students in FWFS participants’ classes point to the power of professional development that is intensive, sustained, and focused on effective instructional design.
- Site director Margaret Perrow organized a panel of four NWP site directors from around the country (Richard Louth, David Franke, Amy Lannin, and Margaret Perrow), at the November 2018 National Council of Teachers of English conference as part of the NWP strand. National Writing Project Executive Director Elyse Eidman-Aadahl served as respondent. Panel title: **Professional Development for Faculty as Writers: Modeling the Process of Finding Voice**. As part of that panel, Dr. Perrow’s presentation “Awkwardness and Empathy: Lessons from a Faculty Writing Fellows Seminar” shared lessons from a 2015-16 OWP seminar for university faculty at SOU.

- Co-director Merrilyne Lundahl convened, proposed, and moderated an NCTE panel and presentation at the annual conference of the National Council of Teachers of English, as the part of NWP strand. Classroom teachers who have worked in outdoor education discussed how settings shape “voice.” Panel title: **Where Student Voices Take Place: Building Literacy, Identity, and Community in wild spaces.**
- In November 2018 the OWP responded to a Request for Information (RFI) from Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Educator Advancement Council (EAC). We defined our site as an “emerging” network, and described current and recent partnerships with Medford, Ashland and Phoenix-Talent districts. This submission positioned us to pursue further funding opportunities as a network through the ODE/EAC. (The OWP had some prior input into the creation of the RFI, including June 2018 testimony by the site co-director and teacher consultants at a Jackson County hearing, and a presentation by the Teaching Argument Writing Collaborative at the ODE in 2017.) After attending a winter 2019 EAC Design Institute (along with faculty from the School of Education), the OWP created a proposal for a summer 2020 intensive institute.
- The May 2019 screening and community discussion of the film *American Creed* film was supported by a \$300 National Endowment for the Humanities grant (administered through the National Writing Project).
- \$1000 grant from Gordon Elwood Foundation, awarded May 2019 for YA camp scholarships in summer 2020. As principal investigator, Merrilyne Lundahl worked with students in Ed Battistella’s grant-writing course to develop the proposal.

Site continuity activities

The ILI reunion brunch was held October 26, 2018. Participants from the Phoenix-Talent summer institute, which focused on content-area literacies and support for ELLs, met to discuss how summer commitments were proceeding. The event was hosted by teacher consultant Marcel D’haem. We handed out anthologies of our summer writing, announced upcoming opportunities, and discussed implementation of goals from our summer institute.

The annual renewal meeting was held at SOU in December. Teachers were thrilled to hear Margaret Perrow present on her 20-year writing project, *Learning in Transition: A hidden history of youth development in post-apartheid South Africa*. We discussed the 2017-18 site report, changes at the National Writing Project, and ideas for the future, including a writing prompt on “renewal.” Thirteen people attended.

Site directors’ retreat. In May, Margaret Perrow and Merrilyne Lundahl participated in the NWP’s site directors’ retreat, in Albuquerque, NM. This three-day meeting included collaboration with site directors from around the country, and strategic planning for the OWP at SOU site. We established short- and long-term priorities, including holding a summer institute in 2020. A “thoughtshot” about our fall 2018 oral history workshop (see above) led to an interview and a featured story on the new NWP site.

Website and Facebook. We did a better job this year posting updates, including announcements about upcoming events and teacher accomplishments. However, this is still an area for growth, as is managing our contacts lists and creating sortable spreadsheets.

III. Concluding Thoughts

Several big ideas continue to define our work:

The importance (and challenge) of designing programming to meet multiple needs simultaneously

A priority continues to be finding ways to meet the needs of multiple constituents simultaneously (e.g., in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, MAT students, the OWP, and the university). Offering a choice of regular graduate tuition or professional development units for a workshop fee creates a win-win-win situation for SOU, OWP, and participating teachers: the course generates enrollment numbers and revenue for the university, MAT students can take electives alongside more experienced colleagues, and teachers who don't need graduate credits for continuing licensure are able to participate at lower cost, simultaneously generating workshop revenue that directly supports the work of the OWP.

One way we have tried to meet these needs has been by creating ENG 505 syllabi (independent studies for teachers, available at the 'contract' rate). We have had mixed success: teachers who complete these courses appreciate the ability to earn reduced-rate credits, but in our experience teachers frequently request credits, then subsequently change their minds—after a substantial amount of time has been invested (creating syllabi, creating CRNs, listing courses, etc.).

Nonetheless the OWP will continue to work with the School of Education to design courses that are 'flexible:' that are taught as part of a faculty member's regular loading when appropriate; that count as electives in graduate and undergraduate programs; and that are also open to in-service teachers whether they are seeking lower-cost graduate credits, or simply a low-cost workshop.

The importance of engaging creatively and visibly with the needs of the host university

In addition to external grant funding to support programs and workshops, the survival of the Writing Project at SOU depends on sufficient course release time for the site director to plan programming, write grants, and oversee the work outlined in this report. The cost of two annual course releases to support the work of the site director is relatively small in light of what the OWP contributes to the university, so it is important to maintain the visibility of the Writing Project as we work in alignment with the university's mission.

The challenge of funding

We are committed to offering professional learning opportunities that are high-relevance and low-cost. Most often, this entails workshops led by local teachers; sometimes it entails bringing recognized experts from farther afield (e.g., Zaretta Hammond, Linda Christensen, Joseph Harris). We managed to break even on all our professional learning events in 2018-19, but we did not bring in significant additional revenue to expand our programming. This remains a challenge and a concern.

Our camps are not a source of revenue, even though we raised our rate from \$110 to \$135. We want to continue offering camps at an affordable rate for families, to reimburse teachers fairly, to have more cultural and linguistic diversity, and to streamline our workflow.

The importance of bringing a more intentional equity focus to writing project work

With recent passage of bills such as SB13 and SB644, the critical importance of culturally responsive teaching skills and dispositions is more in the public awareness than ever before in Oregon. Yet while the student population is increasingly diverse, the majority of teachers are still white women. And most do not have a strong background in literacy pedagogy in service of social justice. While culturally responsive teaching is much discussed, what it looks like in practice is still often unclear to teachers. We are committed to bringing an equity lens more intentionally to our work with teachers (as well as our own teaching practices).

Looking forward

The May 2019 National Writing Project Site Directors' Retreat helped us take stock of our strengths and our challenges as a Writing Project site and evaluate some potential opportunities for collaboration and funding. We emerged with a commitment to develop a 2020-21 institute with a focus on equity and inclusive teaching practices, which we look forward to planning during the academic year 2019-20.

The OWP is uniquely positioned at Southern Oregon University to promote connections between K-12 and university programs and instruction, a current priority of both the state of Oregon and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. The projects described above reflect the desire and capacity of the OWP at SOU to contribute meaningfully to the mission of the university, as well as the professional development needs of teachers regionally at all stages of their careers, and the field of English language arts more broadly.

For more information, visit www.sou.edu/owp or email owp@sou.edu. Like the Oregon Writing Project on Facebook: facebook.com/owpsou.

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Young Writers' Camps

A young authors' reading and reception was held on October 26, 2018 on the SOU campus. Over 150 people attended; 45 young authors from summer 2018 camps read from their work, and received a free copy of the anthology [Wordscapes 2018](#). Local public television station SOPTV made a [short video about our summer young writers' camps](#).

Our summer 2019 camps served 82 students and included elementary (Griffin Creek and Hedrick), middle school (Ashland), and themed (Logos) camps. We also had a college application essay camp. This year, some camps increased the amount of instructional time from three hours to four hours a day.

We continue to benefit from having Cliff Cowley in the role of Camps Coordinator. He provides critical leadership and oversight, and partners with districts in managing the logistical demands of camps.

Based on the success of our 2018 camps and our commitments to access, diversity, and inclusion, we were awarded a \$1000 grant from the Gordon Elwood Foundation, which we will use to support more equitable and inclusive outreach to potential campers in 2020.

Scholastic judging 2018-19

OWP served as an adjudicating site for the Scholastic student writing contest in winter 2019. Six graduate students and eight undergraduate English majors scored student submissions online. More students were interested than slots were available. Adjudication was a course requirement for MAT528B students, who used their observations and experience to launch winter term's discussion of student writing and voice. Students received \$50 (and a good professional item for their resumes.)

University partnerships

In 2018-19 we engaged in multiple collaborations with faculty and programs on the SOU campus.

- On May 14, 2019, we hosted a screening of the documentary film *American Creed* followed by community conversation about values we share in America, and bridging differences. The conversation was facilitated by English professor Dr. Alma Rosa Alvarez. Twenty-five people attended (including faculty, staff, students, teachers, community members, and middle school students). This event was held in partnership with the Multicultural Resource Center, and the Southern Oregon Arts and Research conference (SOAR), and was supported by a small NEH grant made possible by the National Writing Project.
- The April 2019 Culturally Responsive Teaching event with Zaretta Hammond (see in-service above) is a prime example of our engagement across campus. The OWP proposed and organized this event in partnership with Dr. Younghee Kim in the School of Education. We received financial sponsorship from the Campus Theme Series, the SOU School of Education, Advanced Southern Credit English, the Division of Humanities & Culture, and the Provost's office. (We also received support from the Medford School District, Ashland School District, Crater High School, and the SOESD Mentor Consortium — see District Partnerships below.)
- Site director Margaret Perrow was part of a small group of faculty, led by Dr. Kylan DeVries, that established the Faculty Writing House on the SOU campus. A comfortable space for faculty to gather to work on their scholarship and collaborate on creative projects, the Faculty Writing House received generous support from the Provost's Office, Facilities Management, and several academic divisions on campus. A grand opening was held in late September 2019. The OWP plans to host future writing workshops for faculty at the House.

- In July 2019 the OWP contributed to the School of Education’s proposal to the state Educator Advancement Consortium (EAC). As part of this regional EAC network, we are seeking funding for a summer 2020 invitational institute focused on equity and culturally responsive teaching. Rather than creating a separate Writing Project EAC network (see grant-writing, below), we believe our proposed institute makes a relevant contribution to the existing regional network.

District and community partnerships

The OWP maintains a strong partnership with the Medford School District, which donates facilities for our summer writing camps, promotes teacher workshops, and was a financial sponsor of the spring 2019 Culturally Responsive Teaching workshop with Zaretta Hammond. A new Medford district superintendent came on board this fall, and we look forward to meeting him to further strengthen our partnership as we develop our summer 2020 equity-focused institute.

We have good working relationships with Pheonix-Talent, Central Point, and Ashland districts, as well as the Southern Oregon Education Service District’s Mentor Consortium (several of which were financial co-sponsors of the spring 2019 Culturally Responsive Teaching workshop).

Grant-writing, scholarship and presentations

Writing and presenting about our work is a way to share the work of the site, while also bringing national recognition to the university. Some examples from 2018-19:

- Site director Margaret Perrow’s article was published in *College Teaching* (Perrow, M. 2018. “Designing Professional Learning to Support Student Success: Lessons from the Faculty Writing Fellows Seminar.” *College Teaching*, 66:4, 190-198, DOI [10.1080/87567555.2018.1483316](https://doi.org/10.1080/87567555.2018.1483316)). The data show that the overall objectives of the yearlong seminar for university instructors of first-year writing classes at SOU were met: *to develop instructors’ skill and confidence in writing instruction, so that they in turn could better support students’ success in academic writing*. The seminar afforded opportunities for faculty to try out new approaches, reflect on their successes and challenges using evidence from their classrooms, and engage in constructive conversations to revise their instruction based on theory and best practices in writing pedagogy. The notably higher final-essay scores of the students in FWFS participants’ classes point to the power of professional development that is intensive, sustained, and focused on effective instructional design.
- Site director Margaret Perrow organized a panel of four NWP site directors from around the country (Richard Louth, David Franke, Amy Lannin, and Margaret Perrow), at the November 2018 National Council of Teachers of English conference as part of the NWP strand. National Writing Project Executive Director Elyse Eidman-Aadahl served as respondent. Panel title: **Professional Development for Faculty as Writers: Modeling the Process of Finding Voice**. As part of that panel, Dr. Perrow’s presentation “Awkwardness and Empathy: Lessons from a Faculty Writing Fellows Seminar” shared lessons from a 2015-16 OWP seminar for university faculty at SOU.

- Co-director Merrilyne Lundahl convened, proposed, and moderated an NCTE panel and presentation at the annual conference of the National Council of Teachers of English, as the part of NWP strand. Classroom teachers who have worked in outdoor education discussed how settings shape “voice.” Panel title: **Where Student Voices Take Place: Building Literacy, Identity, and Community in wild spaces.**
- In November 2018 the OWP responded to a Request for Information (RFI) from Oregon Department of Education (ODE) Educator Advancement Council (EAC). We defined our site as an “emerging” network, and described current and recent partnerships with Medford, Ashland and Phoenix-Talent districts. This submission positioned us to pursue further funding opportunities as a network through the ODE/EAC. (The OWP had some prior input into the creation of the RFI, including June 2018 testimony by the site co-director and teacher consultants at a Jackson County hearing, and a presentation by the Teaching Argument Writing Collaborative at the ODE in 2017.) After attending a winter 2019 EAC Design Institute (along with faculty from the School of Education), the OWP created a proposal for a summer 2020 intensive institute.
- The May 2019 screening and community discussion of the film *American Creed* film was supported by a \$300 National Endowment for the Humanities grant (administered through the National Writing Project).
- \$1000 grant from Gordon Elwood Foundation, awarded May 2019 for YA camp scholarships in summer 2020. As principal investigator, Merrilyne Lundahl worked with students in Ed Battistella’s grant-writing course to develop the proposal.

Site continuity activities

The ILI reunion brunch was held October 26, 2018. Participants from the Phoenix-Talent summer institute, which focused on content-area literacies and support for ELLs, met to discuss how summer commitments were proceeding. The event was hosted by teacher consultant Marcel D’haem. We handed out anthologies of our summer writing, announced upcoming opportunities, and discussed implementation of goals from our summer institute.

The annual renewal meeting was held at SOU in December. Teachers were thrilled to hear Margaret Perrow present on her 20-year writing project, *Learning in Transition: A hidden history of youth development in post-apartheid South Africa*. We discussed the 2017-18 site report, changes at the National Writing Project, and ideas for the future, including a writing prompt on “renewal.” Thirteen people attended.

Site directors’ retreat. In May, Margaret Perrow and Merrilyne Lundahl participated in the NWP’s site directors’ retreat, in Albuquerque, NM. This three-day meeting included collaboration with site directors from around the country, and strategic planning for the OWP at SOU site. We established short- and long-term priorities, including holding a summer institute in 2020. A “thoughtshot” about our fall 2018 oral history workshop (see above) led to an interview and a featured story on the new NWP site.

Website and Facebook. We did a better job this year posting updates, including announcements about upcoming events and teacher accomplishments. However, this is still an area for growth, as is managing our contacts lists and creating sortable spreadsheets.

III. Concluding Thoughts

Several big ideas continue to define our work:

The importance (and challenge) of designing programming to meet multiple needs simultaneously

A priority continues to be finding ways to meet the needs of multiple constituents simultaneously (e.g., in-service teachers, pre-service teachers, MAT students, the OWP, and the university). Offering a choice of regular graduate tuition or professional development units for a workshop fee creates a win-win-win situation for SOU, OWP, and participating teachers: the course generates enrollment numbers and revenue for the university, MAT students can take electives alongside more experienced colleagues, and teachers who don't need graduate credits for continuing licensure are able to participate at lower cost, simultaneously generating workshop revenue that directly supports the work of the OWP.

One way we have tried to meet these needs has been by creating ENG 505 syllabi (independent studies for teachers, available at the 'contract' rate). We have had mixed success: teachers who complete these courses appreciate the ability to earn reduced-rate credits, but in our experience teachers frequently request credits, then subsequently change their minds—after a substantial amount of time has been invested (creating syllabi, creating CRNs, listing courses, etc.).

Nonetheless the OWP will continue to work with the School of Education to design courses that are 'flexible:' that are taught as part of a faculty member's regular loading when appropriate; that count as electives in graduate and undergraduate programs; and that are also open to in-service teachers whether they are seeking lower-cost graduate credits, or simply a low-cost workshop.

The importance of engaging creatively and visibly with the needs of the host university

In addition to external grant funding to support programs and workshops, the survival of the Writing Project at SOU depends on sufficient course release time for the site director to plan programming, write grants, and oversee the work outlined in this report. The cost of two annual course releases to support the work of the site director is relatively small in light of what the OWP contributes to the university, so it is important to maintain the visibility of the Writing Project as we work in alignment with the university's mission.

The challenge of funding

We are committed to offering professional learning opportunities that are high-relevance and low-cost. Most often, this entails workshops led by local teachers; sometimes it entails bringing recognized experts from farther afield (e.g., Zaretta Hammond, Linda Christensen, Joseph Harris). We managed to break even on all our professional learning events in 2018-19, but we did not bring in significant additional revenue to expand our programming. This remains a challenge and a concern.

Our camps are not a source of revenue, even though we raised our rate from \$110 to \$135. We want to continue offering camps at an affordable rate for families, to reimburse teachers fairly, to have more cultural and linguistic diversity, and to streamline our workflow.

The importance of bringing a more intentional equity focus to writing project work

With recent passage of bills such as SB13 and SB644, the critical importance of culturally responsive teaching skills and dispositions is more in the public awareness than ever before in Oregon. Yet while the student population is increasingly diverse, the majority of teachers are still white women. And most do not have a strong background in literacy pedagogy in service of social justice. While culturally responsive teaching is much discussed, what it looks like in practice is still often unclear to teachers. We are committed to bringing an equity lens more intentionally to our work with teachers (as well as our own teaching practices).

Looking forward

The May 2019 National Writing Project Site Directors' Retreat helped us take stock of our strengths and our challenges as a Writing Project site and evaluate some potential opportunities for collaboration and funding. We emerged with a commitment to develop a 2020-21 institute with a focus on equity and inclusive teaching practices, which we look forward to planning during the academic year 2019-20.

The OWP is uniquely positioned at Southern Oregon University to promote connections between K-12 and university programs and instruction, a current priority of both the state of Oregon and the Higher Education Coordinating Commission. The projects described above reflect the desire and capacity of the OWP at SOU to contribute meaningfully to the mission of the university, as well as the professional development needs of teachers regionally at all stages of their careers, and the field of English language arts more broadly.

For more information, visit www.sou.edu/owp or email owp@sou.edu. Like the Oregon Writing Project on Facebook: facebook.com/owpsou.