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THE COMMUNITY COLLEGE ROLE IN
PREPARING STUDENTS FOR WRITING IN THE WORKPLACE

by

Sandra Eason Webb

A Thesis

Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the

Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

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Since its inception, a major role of the American community college has been to prepare its students for success in the workplace. A critical workplace skill that has been overlooked is that of writing in the workplace. If the American community college is to prepare its students with all of the skills needed for workplace success, then it must restructure its writing programs to address workplace writing. This thesis begins with a historical overview of the community college to establish its role in preparing America's workforce. Workplace writing is then defined and is compared and contrasted with the academic writing that is typically taught in first and second semester composition courses. Workplace writing and academic writing are discussed within the local context of the Mid-South that includes community colleges in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee. Interviews with local Mid-South employers and employees identify the specific writing skills required in local business and industry. Finally, a proposal is presented for restructuring community college writing programs to include workplace writing skills.

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Introduction

President Barack Obama gave a speech in July 2009 at Macomb Community College in Warren, Michigan in which he outlined his American Graduation Initiative. President Obama's Warren, Michigan speech was made in the midst of a recession. The context of the president's speech is one in which he described proactive measures that would help the United States pull out of economic distress and move forward. It is significant, but not surprising, that this proactive approach took the form of an education initiative built around the American community college:

Community colleges are the largest part of our higher education system, enrolling more than 6 million students, and growing rapidly. They feature affordable tuition, open admission policies, flexible course schedules, and convenient locations, and they are particularly important for students who are older, working, need remedial classes, or can only take classes part-time. They are also capable of working with businesses, industry and government to create tailored training programs to meet economic needs such as nursing, health information technology, advanced manufacturing, and green jobs, and of providing customized training at the worksite.

The Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC) *Fact Sheet 2010* states four main purposes for two-year colleges: preparation for transfer to a four-year university; technical skills education; developmental or remedial education; workforce training for business/industry. The community college (the terms *two-year college* and *community college* are now interchangeable, and have supplanted the term *junior college*, which was most commonly used prior to 1946) is thus a multi-purpose institution, but preparing students for the workplace is among its central goals. Furthermore, that goal has been a part of its mission for decades. For example, a 1938 article by Nicholas Ricciardi and John Harbeson entitled "Principles Underlying Curricular Revision at the

Junior College Level" asserts that the role of the junior college is to provide students with an overall education to help them successfully function within American society as well as to provide them the skills to enter the workplace (qtd. in Eells 255). AATYC's and Ricciardi and Harbeson's descriptions define the community college in terms of the needs of the students as well as the needs of business and industry within the community in which students live, as well as the country as a whole.

Writing is an essential skill within the workplace that evolves with the changes that take place in the internal and external workplace environments. An *internal* environment refers to the nature of business within the walls of a specific company whereas an *external* environment refers to the nature of business outside a company's walls. Individual companies have their own writing requirements and specific audiences to whom they must communicate on a daily basis. Because community colleges are often found within close proximity of local business and industry, they are ideally situated to prepare students for workplace writing to meet the writing needs of local business and industry. The "education initiative" identified by President Obama is one that the institution needs to emphasize. Unfortunately, many community colleges are not taking on this responsibility, despite offering business communication courses as well as the basic English composition courses. Most community colleges simply have not kept up with the evolving nature of twenty-first century workplace writing.

The writing needs of business and industry have outpaced the curricula of most community colleges. The technological changes in electronic communication have created an imbalance between the writing that is taught in the community college with the writing that is actually done within the workplace. The average employee now has access

to a computer and, in many cases, has the responsibility of creating written texts intended for administrators, supervisors, and peers located within his or her particular workplace. In addition, employees may be responsible for communicating to an external audience such as customers, product providers, and others who are not located within the confines of a specific workplace.

The workplace writer has a much larger audience than he or she found when writing in a college classroom. An excerpt from The National Commission on Writing In America's Schools and Colleges April 2003 report entitled "The Neglected 'R': The Need for a Writing Revolution" notes that "e-mail, instant messaging, and electronic conferencing provide writers with an immediate and much larger audience" (22). Moreover, much writing done within the workplace requires critical thinking and problem solving skills. Unfortunately, problem solving and critical thinking are not always part of the typical English composition class where the syllabus focuses on various modes of writing that are not necessarily relevant to those found within the typical workplace. Ruth Fennick, Mary Peters, and Lois Guyon, in "Solving Problems in Twenty-First Century Academic and Workplace Writing," declare: "English teachers have to wonder whether too-intricately detailed syllabi and too-rigidly prescribed assignments have contributed to students' inability to be problem solvers and thus valued employees Nowhere is the need to adapt to change more critical than in the teaching of writing" (46).

The central argument of this study is that community colleges need to restructure their writing programs to ensure that their students develop the writing skills required within the workplace. The history of the American community college shows that it has

been challenged to prepare students not only for academia but also for the workplace. I contend it can do both without sacrificing either.

I begin with a historical overview of the American community college and how writing was taught in the early years of its existence. My second section defines workplace writing. I describe its importance and distinguish it from academic writing. I argue that local context is important and provide an overview of the types of writing taught in community colleges located in the Mid-South region of Arkansas, Tennessee, and Mississippi, and I include interviews with local employers and employees describing their writing expectations. My third section explains why community colleges should rethink writing instruction and presents a proposal for restructuring writing courses to adequately prepare their students for writing in the workplace.

A Brief History of the American Community College

The development of the community college makes clear that the two year-college has always struggled to define its role in postsecondary education. Its educational mission has focused on two primary considerations: preparing students for a four-year college and preparing students for the workplace. These considerations are not mutually exclusive, of course, and those responsible for establishing direction for community colleges have consistently said as much. But fulfilling both responsibilities has proved more difficult in practical terms.

The first community college was established in 1901, but, according to George B. Vaughn, author of *The Community College Story: A Tale of American Innovation*, the establishment of the junior college can be traced to the early land grant colleges that were created as a result of the Morrill Act of 1862, more commonly referred to as the Land

Grant Act (27). The purpose of the Morrill Act was to establish a United States federal land grant program in which the federal government would provide states with public lands to build colleges that would be accessible and affordable to the average citizen. Initially, these colleges were referred to as land grant colleges. The Morrill Act stated that "the leading object shall be, without excluding other scientific and classical studies, and including military tactics, to teach such branches of learning as are related to agriculture and the mechanic arts" (Transcript of Morrill Act 1). In 1890, a second Morrill Act was passed that stipulated monetary distributions to land grant colleges. Of significance to this study, the act ensured that funds would be allocated to the teaching of English:

An Act To [capital letters theirs] apply a portion of the proceeds of the public lands to the more complete endowment and support of the colleges for the benefit of agriculture and the mechanic arts . . . accordance with act of Congress approved July second, eighteen hundred and sixty-two, the sum of fifteen thousand dollars for the year ending June thirtieth, eighteen hundred and ninety, and an annual increase of the amount of such appropriation thereafter for ten years by an additional sum of one thousand dollars over the preceding year, and the annual amount to be paid thereafter to each State and Territory shall be fifty thousand dollars to be applied only to instruction in agriculture and mechanic arts, the English language and the various branches of mathematical, physical, natural and economic science, with special reference to their applications in the industries of life, and to the facilities for such instruction . . .(Higher Education Resource Hub 1)

Clearly, the teaching of English was considered a critical component of education. In addition to establishing the allocation of funds for critical courses, the Second Morrill Act also provided for the admission of minorities to the newly established colleges.

A Cornell University article titled "The Land Grant College" claims that any college denying minority admission would no longer be eligible for federal funding

unless it provided a separate institution for blacks (2). The second Morrill Act had a significant impact on the student population of community colleges because it created greater access to higher education. No longer was higher education a privilege for the upper class white male; the doors of the land grant colleges were opened to anyone regardless of class, race, or gender.

Although the Morrill Act did state that the newly formed land grant colleges would not deny anyone an education, it also said that the schools could be separate if they were "equal." Three years after the first Morrill Act went into effect, women began attending coeducational institutions, including the recently established land grant colleges. However, not all colleges were receptive to the idea of accepting women into a previously all male school. According to historian Maggie Lowe:

In fact, women did begin to go to college after the Civil War, and for the most part they went to coeducational institutions. The newly established mid-western land grant colleges opened as coeducational facilities, while the more established institutions of the northeast resisted the move to coeducation. Several, in fact, opened women's colleges as adjuncts to the traditional male college to avoid having to admit women undergraduates. The "Seven Sister" colleges were examples of this kind of institution. (1)

Not only were separate but equal colleges created for women, they were also created for blacks. In the majority of U.S. states, especially in the South, blacks would continue to attend separate colleges until the mid-1950's. Nevertheless, the Morrill Acts did establish the precedence that *all* people, regardless of race or gender, had the right to a higher education. This right would pave the way for what would become the American community college.

The philosophy of the land grant colleges and universities would be the base upon which the community college would be built. In *The Community College Story: A Tale of American Innovation*, Vaughn writes:

From the Morrill Act of 1862 to the early 20th century, the philosophical threads of practical higher education and accessibility to all people created the loom on which the rich fabric of today's community college is woven. Philosophically, the pattern was created for the public community college which would emphasize service to the community along with programs providing liberal and technical education. (28)

This philosophy was the catalyst for the establishment of the first public junior college in Joliet, Illinois in 1901. The college was a direct result of the influence of the president of the University of Chicago, William Rainey Harper, who is acknowledged as the founder of the American junior college (Vaughn 28). Harper contended "that students should be able to study the first two years of college in their own communities to be better prepared for the rigors of college" (Williams 270). Within the first twenty-five years of the twentieth century, community colleges were established in eight states: California, Texas, Illinois, Mississippi, Missouri, Iowa, Kansas, and Michigan (29). As more states saw the benefits of creating community colleges, the country would come to rely on these newly established institutes of higher learning as a means to train America's workforce, especially in times of economic stress amid the evolving nature of industry and technology.

As the community college system grew, so did the necessity to re-evaluate and reformat its mission to meet the needs of its growing student population. Furthermore, the community college had to adjust to problems that were a direct result of the economic and social conditions that the United States faced during the early part of the twentieth

century. Therefore, in September, 1939, The Commission on Junior College Terminal Education was established by the General Education Board of the American Association of Junior Colleges, Washington, D.C. and placed under the direction of Walter Crosby Eells, Executive Secretary of the American Association of Junior Colleges. The goal of the commission was to review publications in the field of junior college terminal education as well as existing terminal education programs in community colleges throughout the United States to establish the importance of terminal education. *Terminal education* is defined by Eells as "designed primarily to give young people who complete their formal education in the junior college preparation for an occupation and also preparation for personal and social citizenship" (Eells Forward). The study was published as *Why Junior College Terminal Education?*, and in the volume's introduction, Eells explains:

This volume is an effort to provide a variety of material for the thoughtful consideration of those who are concerned with the vital problems of so-called terminal education at the junior college level - problems that have evolved as a result of the changed and changing problems of the present century, problems which are some of those who try men's souls today. The solution of these problems, if found at all, will be found in the future not in the past. Intelligent attention to these problems, however, requires that we be familiar with some of the factors which have brought about the present conditions, lack of adjustment, and in too many cases, actual maladjustment. The horse and buggy dirt highway and sluggish travel of the earlier years of the twentieth century have given way to the automobile, paved highway, and speed of transportation today which promise in turn in the remaining years of the century to be replaced by the airplane, freedom from highways, and the super speed of travel tomorrow. (vii)

Eells describes two separate schools of thought regarding where the junior college should maintain its focus. There were those who believed that the college should concentrate on preparing its students for entering the university. Conversely, there were

those who believed the focus should be on preparing students for occupations as well as functioning in society. Eells contends that each is equally important; therefore, he argues that the goal of the junior college should be to provide its students with an education that would prepare them for either path. Eells concedes that the students who wished to continue their education towards a four-year degree are the minority; however, he asserts that these students are important and cannot be ignored.

The Community College at Midcentury

While the competing, and sometimes conflicting, educational purposes of the community college described by Eells in 1939 have never been entirely resolved, clarifying the educational mission of the two-year college became even more important after World War II. After the European victory in May, 1945, American troops began leaving; upon the surrender of the Japanese in September, 1945, the troops in the Pacific also began making their way home. In anticipation of these returning soldiers, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signed into law one of the most significant pieces of legislation that would affect the enrollment of the community college, the Servicemen's Readjustment Act of 1944, otherwise known as the GI Bill of Rights. A United States Department of Veterans Affairs article titled "Born of Controversy: The GI Bill of Rights" states:

Before the war [WWII], college and home ownership were, for the most part, unreachable dreams for the average American. Thanks to the GI Bill, millions who would have flooded the job market instead opted for education. In the peak year of 1947, veterans accounted for 49 percent of college admissions. By the time the original GI Bill ended on July 25, 1956, 7.8 million of 16 million World War II veterans had participated in an education or training program. (*GI Bill History* 1)

Steven Brint and Jerome Karabel, in *The Diverted Dream: Community Colleges and the Promise of Educational Opportunity in America, 1900 - 1985*, note that "this concern with the effects of the returning veterans on domestic stability led to one of the major higher education acts in American history" (68). The G.I. Bill provided tuition grants for returning soldiers who wished to go to school for the purpose of preparing for the job market. Community colleges experienced the greatest influx of students because these colleges were accessible in the communities in which the returning soldiers lived, and they were affordable. The influx of students forced the colleges to again rethink their goals and how they could best meet the needs of these former soldiers:

The influx of huge numbers of new students, following the passage of the G.I. Bill, raised fundamental issues regarding the future organization of higher education. What policies would be most helpful to the expansion of educational opportunities? How could higher education best be organized so as to serve the interests of the returning veterans? And of particular interest to the community college, what institutional forms would be most appropriate for handling the unprecedented numbers of students seeking higher education? (Brint and Karabel 68)

In July 1946, with these and other such questions in mind, Harry S. Truman established the President's Commission on Higher Education. A year and a half later, in December 1947, the Commission released a landmark six-volume report, *Higher Education for American Democracy* (68). The Commission, most commonly referred to as the Truman Commission, was led by George F. Zook, a higher education specialist for the U.S. Bureau of Education and proponent of the junior college (68). Coincidentally, Zook's experience with the junior college included membership on the 1939 Commission on Junior College Terminal Education headed by Walter Eells. Zook believed that the junior college could provide opportunities to minorities who, if given the opportunity,

could succeed in four year institutions while also providing terminal degrees for those students, regardless of race or social class, who were not academically capable (or desirous) of continuing their education in four-year colleges and universities:

If the ladder of educational opportunity rises high at the doors of some youth and scarcely rises at all the doors of others, while at the same time formal education is made a prerequisite to occupational and social advance, then education may become the means, not of eliminating race and class distinctions, but of deepening and solidifying them. *It is obvious, then, that free and universal access to education, in terms of the interest, ability, and the need of the student, must be a major goal in American education* [emphasis theirs] (1948, vol. 1, p. 36). (qtd. in Brisk and Karabel 69)

Although the Truman Commission wanted to insure that minorities would be offered the same educational opportunities as whites, these opportunities were still governed by the separate but equal requirement as stipulated in the second Morrill Act of 1890. In *America's Community Colleges: The First Century*, Allen A. Witt, et al discuss African American colleges that black students attended, or were "channeled into" (108):

These [Negro colleges] were usually small private institutions, supported by African American religious denominations, averaging only 117 students - about half that of White junior colleges. Because most of these segregated schools received no public support, their tuition was usually above average and their quality questionable, since few, if any, were ever accredited. (108)

It would not be until the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision that the United States Supreme Court ruled "separate but equal" unconstitutional. However, the ruling did very little to change minority entry into the community college, as Arnold M. Kee, in a 2004 issue of *Community College Times*, notes:

Twenty-two days after the U.S. Supreme Court ruled that institutions created under the "separate-but-equal" doctrine were unconstitutional, the state of Mississippi created Utica Institute. The institute was a reformation of Hinds Agricultural High School for Negroes and was intended to provide postsecondary education to black students. Even after the Brown decision, state law forbade black students from attending the nearby Hinds Junior College, then a whites-only institution. (1)

Nevertheless, the Truman Commission did have a major effect on the American community college because it did pave the way for all citizens, regardless of race, gender, or social status, to further their education in an institution of higher education. In addition, it was the Truman Commission that ceased referring to two-year colleges as junior colleges and began referring to them as community colleges as a means of emphasizing that these two-year institutions were to prepare students for the specific job needs within the community that students lived. Preparing students for jobs within the communities they lived was the means of preparing students for jobs that were pertinent to the needs of the nation as a whole.

Vocational mandates became even more pronounced after October 4, 1957 when the Soviet Union launched *Sputnik*, thus igniting a technological race for world power to the country that could demonstrate greater technological advances. Business and industry experienced technological growth as a result of *Sputnik*, and colleges were faced with the need to provide training for their workforce. Michael Brick's historical study of the community college declares that "Sputnik, not speeches, made the concept of [technical] training acceptable" (qtd. in Brint and Karabel 82). Brint and Karabel continue:

Although Brick's assessment is perhaps exaggerated, *Sputnik* was undoubtedly important as a symbol, for it crystallized the growing concerns about U.S. strength in geopolitical competition within the Soviet Union, the perception of new technical needs in industry, and the increasing acceptance of Cold War meritocratic ideas. . . All these factors encouraged national elites to take a greater interest in community college vocational programs. *Sputnik* condensed all of these concerns into a single symbol and made actions seem imperative. (83)

Community college leaders took advantage of the attention generated by *Sputnik* because the technical training offered by the community college was now viewed with new respect. In 1957, American Association of Junior College Executive Secretary Jesse Bogue asserted: "Potential sponsors must be convinced that junior college education is interlocked with business and industrial progress, social advancement, [and] better citizenship" (qtd. in Brint and Karabel 83). Following the 1957 *Sputnik* launch, community college enrollment increased (83). Furthermore, *Sputnik* marks an important turning point in the history of the community college because the perception of its educational mission shifted.

Moving into the Twenty-First Century

The Eighty-Ninth Congress enacted the Higher Education Act of 1965 as part of President Lyndon Johnson's education plan. According to an article titled "The Higher Education Act of 1965 Despite Evolution, Goals Remain the Same," found in the *Women in Government* publication *AccessEd*:

The Act was part of a domestic agenda titled "Great Society" created by former President Lyndon B. Johnson. Great Society aimed to eliminate racial injustice and poverty, and allowed for increased spending in areas such as education, medical care, and transportation...The HEA's main goal was "to strengthen the educational resources of our colleges and universities and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education." (1)

The most significant effect on community colleges of the Higher Education Act of 1965 and its subsequent amendments (amended over the years as recently as 2009) was the creation of financial support for students. A major component of the Higher Education Act was the Pell Grant, named after Rhode Island Senator Claiborne Pell (CNN Politics1). This monetary award based upon the financial status of the student was to be used for tuition, books, and other school related expenses. As occurred with the G.I. Bill of 1944, the majority of students who took advantage of the opportunities provided under the Higher Education Act and Pell Grant tuition assistance program enrolled in local community colleges. The Pell grant award could cover tuition, and the community college offered remedial courses that many of the new students were required to take due to low admission test scores.

Such remedial courses are one major factor that differentiates the community college from most four-year institutions. Vaughn observes: "The community college differs from most other colleges and universities in the nation and in the world in that, instead of turning away individuals who do not have the prerequisites for college-level work, community colleges offer avenues for students to obtain the necessary prerequisites" (5). The Higher Education Act provided opportunities to anyone who desired to become successful members of the American workforce. What is more, not only do individuals benefit from further education and enhanced workforce skills, but their communities and states do as well.

Just as Presidents Roosevelt, Truman, and Johnson saw the need to insure that all Americans were offered the opportunity to an education that would ultimately prepare them to be functional members of America's workforce, so has President Barack Obama.

In President Obama's July 2009 speech at a Michigan community college, he invokes a familiar refrain: "It's time to reform our community colleges so that they provide Americans of all ages a chance to learn the skills and knowledge necessary to compete for the jobs of the future". Once again, community colleges are expected to take the lead in preparing the nation's workforce. As with the G.I. Bill, the Truman Higher Education Commission, and the Higher Education Act before it, the Obama initiative recognizes the importance of community colleges in providing the training necessary for jobs in business and industry.

Preparing students for the workplace, however, means preparing students for writing in the workplace. In 1939, Walter Eells argued that many of the problems facing two-year colleges were due to the colleges not adjusting to changes. Eells was acutely aware that the world is in a constant state of change and community colleges must be prepared to adjust to the challenges brought about by these changes, an observation as pertinent now as it was seventy years ago. He alludes to problems that were created by "maladjustment." As in 1939, the community colleges of 2010 are in a constant state of changes and cannot afford to be guilty of "maladjustment" to these changes. Adjustments in writing curricula must be made to adequately prepare students for the workplace, regardless of the degree course they choose to take. As a final historical reflection, I conclude this section with a historical consideration of community college writing instruction.

Writing Instruction in the Early Community College

Looking back at the early junior colleges, it appears that writing was taught in the liberal arts classes and that grammar and mechanics were the focus when teaching

students how to write well enough for the workplace or the university. This ambiguity regarding the precise curriculum of the early community college is due to the lack of definitive documentation. As John H. Frye notes in *The Vision of the Public Junior College, 1900-1940: Professional Goals and Popular Aspirations*, "The junior college literature is so consistently vague at certain levels that this condition is likely to indicate a significant source of conflict that can help explain the dissonance found between the theory and practice of the junior college 1900 to 1940" (6).

As a precursor to this discussion, it is helpful to once again mention the Second Morrill Act because it stipulated that government funds be allocated for the teaching of English and the mechanical arts. The mechanical arts that the Morrill Act refers to includes technical writing; therefore, this is the type of writing that most resembled writing that was work related and that was being taught in the schools of the late nineteenth century and into the twentieth century. In the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century, technical writing was most often connected to the engineering profession and was therefore job specific. Conversely, workplace writing, the topic of my study, is writing performed in the workplace but is not necessarily job specific. I provide a fuller definition of workplace writing in the next section; however, the similarities between workplace writing and technical writing make technical writing important for this historical overview.

Robert J. Connors, in "The Rise of Technical Writing Instruction in America," traces the technical writing course back to the early 1900's. Connors reports: "The Mann Report on Engineering Curricula in 1918 recommended more time spent on English, and by 1920, 64 percent of all engineering schools required some sort of technical writing

course for their students" (8). Conflicts arose between traditional teachers of English and teachers of technical writing because English instructors considered the writing that students of technical writing produced less than stellar because they were not adept in correct usage of grammar. However, World War II changed the nature of technical writing by demonstrating the crucial need for clarity and precision:

the striking growth of technical writing was also in part a result of the nature of WW II, the first truly technological war. During six years, necessity had mothered thousands of frightful and complex machines, and the need for technical communication had never been greater. . . Technical writers were in great demand during the war, for each new airplane, gun, bomb, and machine needed a manual written for it, and the centrality of the lucid explicator of technology was obvious as never before. (12)

As previously noted, one of the roles of the community college is to prepare students for transfer to a four-year institution. Therefore, the types of writing instruction taught in the early four-year colleges and universities must also be considered in order to determine whether the early junior colleges followed suit. James A. Berlin, in *Rhetoric and Reality: Writing Instruction in American Colleges, 1900-1985*, discusses the history of writing in four-year colleges and universities. Among the courses taught in universities and colleges during the initial establishment of junior colleges across the nation were creative writing such as short story and plays, journalism and newspaper writing, business writing, and writing for engineers (56). Furthermore, World War I "showed the power of basing education on the study of language and literature as public school teachers throughout the country made their subject 'a way to instill a sense of national heritage and to encourage patriotism' [Berlin quotes from Arthur N. Applebee 68]." Berlin continues: "But the fervor for English studies would not have been nearly as

intense had it not been for the national threat posed from abroad. English courses—from elementary school to university—were seen as central to the effort to make the world safe for democracy and America safe for Americans" (57). It is reasonable to assume that the junior college followed this same line of thinking.

Berlin's description of what was taught at Minnesota's General College, a two year college connected with the University of Minnesota, does provide some insight into the nature of writing courses taught at community colleges after World War II. Berlin explains the military's effort to improve the communication abilities of its soldiers in a program called Army Specialized Training Personnel (ASTP), a "program dealing with English [that] emphasized the coordination of reading, writing, and speaking . . . many of these courses were taught by college English teachers, who were available because of diminished wartime enrollment" (96). After the war ended and the returning soldiers enrolled in colleges, the ASTP program was continued as a way to teach communication skills in settings such as Minnesota General College. Because this college was a community college and enrolled students who were not prepared for the four-year college or university, its communication program "was housed in a general education program intended for students who would probably not continue in college beyond two years" and "designed for the poorly prepared and those lacking confidence" (98).

Whether writing was taught in a two-year college or a four-year one, the American college had "the commitment to teaching writing, speaking, reading" (98). Berlin cites a 1949 text edited by Earl James McGrath titled *Communication in General Education* that describes Minnesota's communications program as placing "emphasis upon the linguistic effort to develop the student's general ability to communicate

effectively as an adult citizen in a democratic society” (qtd. in Berlin 98). The preparation of the student to communicate "as an adult citizen" directly corresponds with the scholarship of John Frye.

Frye, in his 1992 essay "The Vision of the Public Junior College, 1900-1940," explains the conflicting ideologies of the early junior college leaders and states "From this perspective, ideology is equivalent to social outlook" (7). The social perspective is key to understanding what the early junior college curriculum would have encompassed. Again, according to Frye, early educators believed that people needed an education in order to know how to function and to be successful within the culture that they lived and worked (7). This is evident in a 1932 *Junior College Journal* article entitled "Three Years of New Type College Training," written by Robert E. Harris. Harris quotes William Henry Snyder, director of Los Angeles Junior College, who wrote the following in the foreword of *A New Type of College Training*:

We are convinced . . . that the semiprofessional curricula should not in any way become similar to those of the trade or vocational schools. If the junior colleges are to maintain themselves as collegiate institutions, they must develop in their students an orientation to the social, economic, and spiritual life of the age. This has always been the prime function of a college education and has been attained by a study of the liberal arts. Therefore these semiprofessional curricula must contain such subjects. Because of the limits of time, the academic studies offered in the junior college must be more exploratory and less intensive than those of the four year college.. This, however, is not as a rule disadvantageous to the semiprofessional student . . . Those who desire detailed work should unquestionably arrange to pursue the curricula of the universities and four year colleges. (qtd. in Harris 24)

Harris, however, recognizes the practical difficulties of achieving the goals described by Snyder. Preparing students to succeed in all realms of society appears to be the prominent goal of the early junior college. Harris explains:

To acquaint today's youth with today's world, with today's social complexities, economic anxieties, spiritual uncertainties, political instabilities—in fine, to provide in two years of educational opportunity a panoramic presentation of the world in which every young man and woman must live, and live richly and advantageously, is little short of a herculean task. (24)

Community colleges have nevertheless earnestly attempted to fulfill the complicated, multiple, diverse roles ascribed to them by politicians and educational leaders. Because their educational mission has historically proven to be in flux, community colleges may be more flexible in adapting to the challenges that now confront them and their students.

Workplace Writing and the Educational Mission of Community Colleges

By now, it is obvious that the community college has multiple purposes and provides multiple services (see Appendix 1). As it has since its inception, the community college provides the basic courses required for four-year college and university transfer. The community college also provides terminal degrees and certificates for specific work related skills. As the 1939 Commission on Junior College Terminal Education headed by Walter Crosby Eells found, providing terminal degree programs was an essential component of its educational mission in preparing students to go directly into the workplace. Finally, the community college also provides skill training for employees who are not enrolled but are working in local businesses and industries. To be sure, business and industry have long played a role in how the community college structures

itself to better meet the needs of its students and community. For example, the study released by the commission headed by Eells included "a collection of the judgments of a group of almost two thousand educational leaders and business and professional men. Their opinions were asked concerning a number of problems closely related to the theory and practice of junior college education both of the academic or preparatory type and of the semiprofessional or terminal type" (viii).

The relationship between community colleges and business and industry has continued to grow and change. Marvin J. Feldman writes in "Establishing Linkages with Other Educational Providers" that the 1980's began to see more *linkages* with business and industry. Essentially, linkage refers to a contract that a community college establishes with a company in which the community college agrees to provide specific job related skills for the company's employees (84). These skills, according to a May 2, 2010 interview with Jerry D. Webb, Director of Business and Industry at Mid-South Community College, West Memphis, Arkansas, can include team building, safety, supervision, and soft skills such as how to handle conflict and communicating with others. Linkage between the community college and local business and industry is becoming an increasingly important component in shaping the mission of the community college, and it requires that community colleges attune to the needs of local business and industry. In their 2003 article in *The Journal of Human Resources* entitled "Do the Returns to Community Colleges Differ between Academic and Vocational Programs?" Andrew M. Gill and Duane E. Leigh note:

More recently, community colleges have evolved into a second role as the primary institutional supplier of adult training services. Adult training services include terminal vocational training programs, remedial education, and "customized" or "contract" courses designed to meet the particular needs of local employers. Customized courses generally provide either job-specific skill training or remedial training delivered to employers on site. We apply the term "terminal training" to this heterogeneous mix of vocational and remedial courses. (134 - 135)

Thus, the expectations for the contemporary community college is that it prepares students for transfer to four-year institutions, offers terminal degrees and certificates, and works closely with local businesses and industries to maintain a current knowledge of the skills companies require for employment. In order to do all of this, it is imperative that the colleges' academic leaders, technical leaders, and workforce training leaders have a cohesive relationship. Unfortunately, this does not always happen, which is why workplace writing preparation courses get lost in the shadows of the agendas of the above mentioned college leaders. A focus on preparing students for writing in today's workplace is an essential skill that must be taught if community college students are to be ready to enter the local workforce. This focus must be a critical component of the community college purpose.

Defining Workplace Writing

Although there are many similarities between academic writing and workplace writing, it is the differences that must be addressed if students are to be prepared for the types of writing most commonly performed on the job. Where academic writing encompasses the teaching of various genres of writing that include the essay and research paper, workplace writing includes a variety of writing functions. Some of the most common functions of workplace writing are letters, reports of all types, proposals,

product orders, and electronic mail. A common factor between academic writing and workplace writing is attention to the rhetorical situation that includes the writer, the audience, the purpose, and the context of the situation. However, academic writing tends to be longer and more scholastic in language; workplace writing is direct with language that is precise and clearly understood by anyone who reads the text. Another important difference between the two types of writing is that academic writers typically know who will be reading their texts. In contrast, writers in the workplace cannot always be sure who their readers are, thus creating the necessity for an awareness of shadow readers, especially when the text is in electronic form and easily copied from one reader to the next.

Ann Beaufort's "Transferring Writing Knowledge to the Workplace, Are We on Track?" in *Expanding Literacies: English Teaching the New Workplace* extends the definition of workplace writing by asserting that the emphasis of workplace writing is on "taking action rather than on a leisurely reflection on thought processes or on creative expression (qualities usually valued by English teachers)" (180). Most writing in the workplace involves a collaborative effort and is seldom authored by one person. Furthermore, the purpose and the tone of the writing is representative of the company, not the individual (180). A workplace writing instructional guide titled "Rhetorical Awareness and User-Centered Design," found in the On-Line Writing Lab of Purdue (OWL) site identifies the significant components of rhetorical awareness in workplace writing as follows:

- Purpose (why the document is being written, the goals of the document)
- Audience (who will read the document, includes shadow readers—unintended audiences who might read your work)
- Stakeholders (who may be affected by the document or project)
- Context (the background of and situation in which the document is created).

In "What do People Need to Know About Writing in Order to Write in Their Jobs?" by Chris Davies and Maria Birbili, business communication via writing is described as, "everyday writing in the context of work . . . the documents of various kinds that are instrumental in achieving the aims and ensuring the productivity of most organisations [sic], but which are not in themselves the main products of those organisations. . . We claim that all such writing is potentially important, and demanding" (5).

With the distinctions made between academic and workplace writing, the question becomes whether community colleges make such distinctions, and more to the point, whether the two types of writing are taught hand in hand or seen as separate entities.

An Overview of Writing Taught at Mid-South Community Colleges

A sampling of the writing curriculum found in community colleges located in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee shows no indication that workplace writing is addressed (see Appendix 2). The closest that the schools come to teaching writing related to the workplace is in the business communication courses that several of these schools offer. However, based upon the descriptions of these courses, the skills taught do not reflect those that are needed for the twenty-first century workplace.

Of five local community colleges, only one, Coahoma Community College in Clarkdale, Mississippi, indicates that workplace writing is addressed in its English composition course. Clearly, community colleges in this particular region of the United States do not consider the English composition courses to be the forum for teaching students skills needed for workplace writing. The only indication that workplace writing is addressed in the community college samples is in the business communication courses that are offered by four of the colleges, which suggests that workplace writing is only considered a skill needed for students pursuing careers in business. Therein lies the problem with adequately preparing students for writing in the workplace. A career in business usually indicates that a student desires to work in specific business-oriented fields such as accounting, management, human resources, etc. The reality is that there are a plethora of careers and jobs found within the general workplace and most of them require writing. It is therefore difficult to understand why workplace writing is not addressed in all writing courses in all community colleges.

There are community colleges that provide such instruction for their students, and their examples can be instructive. For example, Richland Community College in Washington offers a course entitled "English 110-01: Communicating in the Workplace" taught by Laurie Hughes. The course description is as follows:

Communicating in the Workplace provides instruction and practice in the preparation of reports appropriate for business and industry. Various rhetorical strategies for identifying and reaching particular audiences are presented. Students learn all aspects of preparing reports: choosing a topic, identifying a primary audience, completing various kinds of research, which may include phone or personal interviews, surveys, letters, and questionnaires, organizing materials, writing and documenting the text, revising, designing graphics appropriate to the text, and as needed, creating glossaries and appendices to the text.

Hughes lists the following assignments as course work: Persuasive Memo; Complaint Letter; Informal Report; Instructions; Job Portfolio; Proposal; Formal Report; and Oral Presentation. This course does endeavor to prepare students for writing in the workplace. Unfortunately, as this review shows, this course seems to be the exception instead of the rule in community college composition when it comes to preparing students for writing in the workplace.

Why Workplace Writing Should Be Taught

An ongoing evaluation of job profiles by WorkKeys™, an evaluation arm of American College Testing (ACT), has done a total of 1,693 job specific profiles to determine specific workplace skills needed for each job, including writing skills. These profiles and WorkKeys™ skill assessments are recognized in thirty-two states as validated workplace skills assessments. These profiles reveal that 56% of the job profiles require some type of workplace writing (Dictionary of Occupational Titles and O*NET™). (See Appendix 3 for the full report.) Clearly, students must be exposed to not only the types of writing performed within a workplace setting but also to the precise skills that these types of writing require because writing is a critical component of the everyday business operations of the company.

Every business has a product or products that provide its livelihood. Although writing is certainly not considered a product, there can be little argument that it is a means through which an organization conducts its business, whether through written documentation of internal affairs via memos, reports, forms, e-mail, etc. or through these modes of communication for the purpose of external affairs to promote the product that it sells. Regardless of whether the reader is a member of the internal audience or the

external one, the ultimate goal of the writing is to maintain company stability in order that it may produce the best product and maintain financial success. More than ever, especially since the advent of digital communication, companies are requiring writing as part of their job requirements.

According to the National Commission on Writing in America's Schools and Colleges report "The Neglected 'R': The Need for a Writing Revolution": "Although only a few hundred thousand adults earn their living as full-time writers, many working Americans would not be able to hold their positions if they were not excellent writers. And the number of full-time writers is expected to grow faster than employment generally for the next decade" (10). Furthermore, "More than 90 percent of midcareer professionals recently cited the 'need to write effectively' as a skill 'of great importance' in their day-to-day work" (11). However, there are many current, as well as prospective, workers who do not have the workplace writing skills that are required by business and industry.

Larry Mikulecky, author of "Adjusting School Writing Curricula to Reflect Expanded Workplace Writing," writes about the National Adult Literacy Survey (NALS) done in the early 1990s that "surveyed more than 26,000 adults on their literacy capabilities and practices" (201). According to Mikulecky, the NALS survey used a five-point scale in which one is the lowest and five is the highest in ranking literacy skills. The survey identified workers who had graduated from community colleges as scoring a one and two (205). Mikulecky reports:

Thousands of graduates from two-year colleges were part of the NALS sample. A typical graduate has had twelve years of high school education plus two years' work toward a two-year degree. Despite their post-secondary education, however, nearly 25 percent of these graduates scored at the two lowest levels of the NALS. Many students graduate from high school and then from post-secondary education without being able to do the sorts of writing and reading called for in the new workplace. The large percentages of workers scoring in the lower two levels while the new workplace demands higher levels of literacy is cause for concern. (205)

Although the NALS survey was performed in the early 1990s, based upon recent interviews I conducted that will be discussed in the next section, the survey is still indicative of the underdeveloped literacy skills found in today's workplace.

The University of Minnesota's "Three-Year Plan for The Department of Writing Studies, College of Liberal Arts" offers a concise description of the changes that have occurred and that colleges must recognize. The plan states: "Writing in the 21st century is *global, social, and digital* [italics theirs]. The literacies of the new century are culturally diverse, socially powerful, and technologically sophisticated" (2). Further in the same text, the three types of twenty-first century writing are discussed as follows:

Digitally, people are doing more writing than ever before. Much of this is what one would call 'everyday writing': workplace writing, writing on the fly, texting in place of a phone call. The ubiquity of writing in the 21st century requires teachers, students, and scholars to take a critical approach to understanding the relationship between technology and all forms of discourse. (3).

Indeed, it is globalization and digitalization that have completely changed the social networking of the workplace because it has made writing appear everywhere. Thus, students must learn how to adapt to this networking and rethink how they write in terms of the rhetorical situation, especially when it comes to audience consideration.

The Importance of Local Context

If community colleges are going to fulfill their mission of preparing students for the communities in which they live, it is essential that those in the colleges know what it is local businesses and industries need from their employees. As a means of collecting such information, I arranged to meet with an array of representatives of businesses and industry in West Memphis.

The Mid-South Business Council, Inc. is a consortium of business and industry that is focused on incumbent worker training. The members of this consortium include business stakeholders from local businesses and industries that includes manufacturing, distribution, the service sector, health care, education, city government, and economic development. These leaders meet monthly with a common focus of creating a stronger, more skilled, and better educated workforce. At the meeting that I attended, I addressed a group of fifteen consortium members to ask them about the nature of writing in their particular workplaces as well as the most common writing problems that they encountered. Overall, their major concerns were grammar, spelling, and sentence structure. In addition, there was a concern for writing focus, audience awareness, and most importantly, critical thinking skills. Two consortium members stated that a lack of critical thinking skills resulted in inaccurate reports, especially those concerned with job injuries. In addition, the inability of employees to think critically leads to miscommunication causing undue time spent in retracing steps to gain a full understanding of what the writer actually intended to convey. These same concerns were echoed in interviews conducted on site of several businesses within the West Memphis area.

During interviews conducted at several businesses located in West Memphis, the most prevalent mode of written communication used in the workplace was electronic mail, and the most common concern was clarity of text. Clarity included a range of issues: audience focus, attention to the purpose of the document, as well as grammar and spelling errors that obviously interfered with the purpose and meaning of the text. One person interviewed shared a short e-mail as an example of poorly written communication. The text stated: "Today there will not be no incoming and outgoing mail today because of a Holiday for the post office (Columbus Day)."

A February 2, 2010 interview with Jerry Webb, Director of Business and Industry Services at Mid-South Community College in West Memphis, Arkansas, further confirms writing concerns found in local business and industry. Webb works closely with Mid-South businesses in meeting the training needs for employees. He related how Robert Bosch Tool Corporation, a major manufacturing facility in Marion, Arkansas, contacted him with training needs regarding the writing skills of its employees:

While many companies will tell you "our employees do not use writing skills in the workplace," they are starting to realize that this is an important and essential skill. It may be one that is not measured as a pre-employment requirement but it is still essential. This was noted in a recent interview with Robert Bosch Tool Corporation managers. While writing skills are not a requirement for entry level employment, Bosch managers have discovered that good employees are not prepared for advancement when the opportunity presents itself. One of the main deficiencies is writing skills. This is just one example that there should be more emphasis placed on writing skills for the workplace. Writing is like any other skill, if you don't use it you will lose it, and in today's multimedia environment it is very easy to stray away from standard writing principles. The employees mentioned above relayed that they have a problem writing in a clear and easily understandable style. They have problems with numerous grammatical errors,

sentence structure, word usage, style and tone, as well as making the writing smooth and understandable. The managers above also mentioned that critical thinking skills play a large part in these errors because the employees lack the ability to compile their thoughts into a logical flow or in some cases does not see the need.

Another example cited by Webb is a local tobacco company in Memphis, Tennessee that expressed a need to train their managers by improving their writing skills. When asked why they felt they needed this training, they answered that this was necessitated by new ownership at the corporate level that is now in a large city and expects better communications from their managers. Additionally, new Food and Drug Administration (FDA) rules make it essential that they improve their managers' writing skills.

The two companies discussed by Webb are not the only major companies in the Mid-south region of the United States concerned about the writing skills of their employees. A representative of a major grocery chain in the area, who wished to remain anonymous, contacted Bradley Harris, a freelance trainer in workplace skills, to create a training project in leadership communication skills. Harris related to me that the company approached him with concerns regarding the poor communication skills of its upper tier employees, including those in top management. One major problem that Harris deduced from his discussions with the company is that employees had a tendency to communicate using regional dialect, idioms, and slang rather than the standard American English required in business. Harris is convinced that employees who fail to adapt their business language, spoken and written, to that of standard American English will remain stagnant in their jobs and miss opportunities for company transfers to other cities that provide greater opportunities and broaden the horizons of employees. In

addition, Harris shared a general overview of the written communications segment of the project he is currently developing for the company. A portion of this overview is as follows:

The [. . .] Company values precision, caring, customer focus, integrity. We will therefore teach a brand of written English—Standard American English—which best articulates these values. We will begin with a test of Standard American English (SAE) syntax and diction, centered around specific document types identified by [. . .] as common for managers.

In February of 2010, I participated in communication training that the Robert Bosch Tool Corporation was providing for its employees who were preparing for supervisory positions. My task was to offer these particular Bosch personnel written communication strategies that would provide the clarity and tone necessary for effective workplace writing. In addition, I was to address the specific grammar and syntax skills that were most problematic to these employees. During the question and answer portion of the training, I was made aware of writing problems that these employees faced on a daily basis.

An employee who had the responsibility of communicating with a company counterpart located in India found it difficult to discuss simple billing issues. The problems encountered stemmed from her counterpart's lack of English skills and her own lack of understanding the language spoken by the other person. A common problem that many of the other employees discussed was the tendency to write in conversational English instead of written standard American English. In addition, one person had the responsibility of overseeing a subordinate's completion of an incident report. Since the report had to be written in the subordinate's words, the team leader had difficulty in assuring that the report reflected clarity without appearing to having been coached by the

team leader. Finally, this group of employees found that critical thinking skills were imperative because it was these skills that enabled them to insure that their message was conveyed with accuracy and detail.

These concerns show the complexity of workplace writing. In the case of the Bosch training, not only are team leaders responsible for their own writing skills, but they are also responsible for the writing skills of their associates. (See Appendix 4 for writing samples from this workshop.) The company's human resource manager was responsible for arranging the training. He recognizes that the communication skills of these employees are a direct reflection of the company. In addition, through this type of training, the company is preparing these employees for future team leader positions.

Clearly, when major companies approach trainers specializing in workplace skills to request training programs to teach their employees how to write in standard American English, it is obvious that there is a need for educating people how to write within the workplace. The companies that I interviewed for this project had national and international ties and are well known not only to the business world but also to the general public. Because the major companies are located within small towns and communities such as Marion and West Memphis, Arkansas the responsibility for teaching students how to write in the workplace falls to the local community colleges.

Restructuring Writing Courses in the Community College

Taking on the task of restructuring a writing program to include workplace writing is daunting. Many college English composition instructors simply do not understand the precise nature of workplace writing or how they could incorporate this

type of writing into their composition courses. Ruth Fennick, Mary Peters, and Lois Guyon note in their *English Journal* article "Solving Problems in Twenty-First Century Academic and Workplace Writing":

Historically, English teachers have had an unfortunate bias against nonacademic writing. The reluctance to incorporate such writing in the curriculum is rooted in notions that writing in non-academic settings is fundamentally different from writing in the humanities and that, by assisting students in their attempts to succeed in the world of work, English teachers are compromising their humanistic values. (46)

Furthermore, since composition courses are considered general education that will transfer to another college, there is concern that a workplace writing component of the course would negate the courses' transfer eligibility. Finally, adding a workplace writing component to a composition course would require a textbook that includes workplace writing sections, and many community college instructors simply oppose textbook changes because they are comfortable and familiar with the textbook currently in use.

My central argument, however, is that community college composition courses should incorporate a workplace writing component. All students who are on an associate degree path, whether it is an Associate of Arts in General Education or Teaching or an Associate of Science in Business or in Technology, currently must take an English composition course. Furthermore, it matters not whether students will immediately enter the workforce after obtaining their associate degrees or continue their educations in a four-year college or university. Every student who walks through the doors of a

community college does so with the expectation of learning skills that will make him or her workforce eligible and most importantly, workforce skilled. To become skilled writers, students must learn the writing skills required by academia as well as the writing skills required by the workplace.

Essential Course Components

Many of the components needed for academic writing are also needed for workplace writing. Both types of writing require knowledge of the *rhetorical situation*. For example, the author must be aware of his or her audience, which determines the terminology that is used based upon how well the audience is informed about the topic. For an academic assignment, the medium may be a typed research paper; on the other hand, for workplace writing the medium may be a memo that is on a company memo template. The context of the rhetorical situation also must be considered. For instance, the context for the composition student's research paper may be within the confines of a particular assignment and the audience only the composition instructor. On the other hand, the context of a problem solving report written within a workplace setting may have the components of a problem relevant to the particular nature of the business or industry in which the report is composed. In addition to the rhetorical situation, academic and workplace writing require knowledge of different writing strategies.

The writing strategies most often required for both types of writing include, but certainly are not limited to, the following: cause and effect, compare and contrast, argument, and problem solving. Critical thinking skills are needed for these and other types of writing; therefore, critical thinking skills are necessary components of a composition course. Likewise, these skills are imperative to the nature of workplace

writing. For the writer to accurately approach the different forms of writing, skills in tone, voice, syntax, grammar, and punctuation are needed for clarity and organization. Again, both academic and workplace writing require these skills. My point is that workplace writing can easily be incorporated into English composition courses. However, there are several components of workplace writing that do differ from that of academic, and these need to be addressed.

Generally speaking, the academic audience is usually singular. Conversely, workplace writing may have multiple audiences. For example, the writer may intentionally write to more than one person or one group of people. On the other hand, the writer may only intend to write to one audience, but if the text is written in electronic form, then the intended audience may very well forward the text to another person or persons. This unintended audience is known as the *shadow* audience. Syntax, grammar, and vocabulary often require a different approach than that used in academic writing.

Time is a precious commodity in the world of business and industry. Through the means of electronic communication, information is instantly shared with a workplace audience. The audience does not want to sift through compound and complex sentences, nor does it want to keep a dictionary on hand to decipher word meanings. Instead, readers of workplace writing expect syntax clarity, vocabulary relevant to the context, and the purpose, main idea, and supporting details identified at the beginning of the text. Such texts are often comprised of outlines and bullets so that content points are easily seen and referred to without problem in a follow-up verbal conversation. Furthermore, in the workplace of the twenty-first century, it is quite common for the audience to be located in a different country and speak a different language than that of the writer.

English speaking writers need to have an awareness of *International English*, which requires that the writer must avoid jargon and idioms that are commonplace in America or to a specific American region. Furthermore, metaphors and similes are especially inappropriate when writing to a foreign audience. Inattention to syntax, grammar, and vocabulary leads to miscommunication and costs a company both time and money. Attention to voice and tone is also important for avoiding communication problems.

Emotion rarely has a place in workplace writing. Most workplace writing has the singular purpose of sharing information. Consequently, the tone must be void of anger, sarcasm, sadness, or silliness. Letters, memos, and e-mails certainly should have a tone of pleasantry if they are to capture the attention of the reader without risking being offensive. Voice also is a major component of workplace writing when securing the reader's attention. A voice that comes across as knowledgeable and confident creates reader comfort and trust. Tone and voice may not always be easy to convey in workplace writing because many times workplace writing is done collaboratively. Therefore, the writing styles of more than one writer must be considered when a text is written collaboratively.

Students must learn to work collaboratively with workplace peers, regardless of the job or career. Fennick, Peters, and Guyon note: "Writers need to see collaboration as a resource—collaboration of individuals with other individuals and of groups with other groups, all working together in both spirit and practice to solve the problem at hand" (47). Many times when the collaboration involves problem solving, research becomes a fundamental component of the collaborative project. In academic writing, research most often results in the research paper. However, in workplace writing research may involve,

"archives, interviews, first-hand observations (say, of a new piece of equipment to be highlighted in a press release), statistical analysis, projected budgets, marketing reports, and many, many other tools of 'invention,' ways of generating ideas for the written text" (50). Therefore, collaborative writing and research skills are also necessary for workplace writing and should be taught to college students.

Community college writing programs must integrate into their writing courses all of the above components of academic and workplace writing if they are to adequately prepare their students for writing in the workplace in which they will ultimately be employed. Before providing a proposal for restructuring composition courses that will effectively teach students academic and workplace writing, however, it is necessary to consider textbooks for such a course.

Reconsidering the Course Textbook

Choosing a composition textbook that includes a variety of writing modes, including that of workplace writing, is critical if the community college course is to be eligible for transfer. Fortunately, there are composition textbooks that meet this criterion because publishing companies now recognize the need for including a workplace writing component in the composition textbooks that they publish. For example, Wadsworth, a publishing arm of Cengage Learning, publishes *The College Writer Brief: A Guide to Thinking, Writing, and Researching*. Written by Randall VanderMey, Verne Meyer, John Van Rys, and Pat Sebranek, this text covers all of the writing modes incorporated in a typical composition course but also includes a chapter entitled "Writing for the Workplace." An example of a textbook based entirely upon workplace writing that could easily be incorporated into a composition course is that written by the University of

Southern Mississippi's Philip C. Kolin, *Successful Writing at Work*. The text parallels topics that are taught in both first year and second year composition courses except it delves deeper into each one.

In "What First-Year Composition Textbooks are Beginning to Say about Writing in Business," Donald Samson describes how, in spite of colleges and universities balking at including workplace writing in English composition courses, textbook companies are beginning to include workplace writing skills in their English composition text: "As more composition textbooks discuss business writing (and do so more fully), business writing instructors will increasingly find that their students have received some instruction in business writing in their composition courses" (1). Samson identifies the primary reason that instructors of English do not include workplace writing in their courses as simply a matter of not understanding the nature of workplace writing. He argues: "Most composition researchers are temporary observers of writing in non-academic settings rather than professionals engaged in business writing as part of their career" (1).

Samson contends that if instructors of composition and instructors of business writing discussed the textbooks used in their respective courses, then the instructors of business communication would have a better sense of what their students learned in composition and therefore would know where to pick up the discussion of workplace writing. The proposal that instructors of composition and instructors of business communication should have conversations about how their courses are related is an excellent starting point. Coming together with a common goal of preparing students for

writing in the workplace is an excellent place to begin when composition instructors consider how to restructure their writing programs to include a workplace writing component.

Finally, my interview with a community college executive vice president offers a revealing perspective regarding some of the challenges faced by those who would revise curricula to more effectively address student needs in terms of workplace writing. This community college administrator has a background in English and admitted being a "bit biased"; the administrator wished to remain anonymous due to his/her high ranking position at the college. The following is the transcript from this May 14, 2010 interview:

Perhaps the point [regarding community colleges preparing students for workplace writing] is that the emphasis in English departments continues to be upon expository writing, research papers, and the MLA system of documentation, which is used almost exclusively by English departments. Although business majors generally have the opportunity to take a business communication course, students in other technical programs may not find such a course in their programs of study, but are required only to take English Composition I. Although, in theory, skills learned in traditional composition classes should transfer to situations, research supports that less well-prepared students, like those attending many community colleges, are not adept at applying knowledge and skills to different situations. Consequently, students choosing an associate of arts degree should receive not just instruction about how to write for academe, but also need adequate preparation for writing in the workplace by being introduced to and experimenting with the types of writing they will encounter in their careers.

Coupled with the fact that the majority of instructors who teach English in a community college have backgrounds in literature, trying to convince everyone that the school's writing program needs restructuring will not be an easy task.

Course Proposal

Course transfer eligibility is an important consideration when restructuring a community college course, especially one that falls within general education. This is because general education courses are those so-called basic ones that all students must take regardless of their chosen field of study. First and second year composition courses are included in the general education group. Thus, if a workplace writing component is to be added to composition courses, it must be done in a way that it does not diminish the overall content of the courses nor make them ineligible for general education credits. Therefore, first and second year composition courses must contain all of their original components that make the courses eligible for transfer while adding those of workplace writing. This is not as difficult a task as one might first imagine. I offer an example of first semester composition and second semester composition courses in which a workplace writing component can easily be added.

In the typical first year composition course, the rhetorical situation is taught in relation to writing the basic essay. This includes attention to writer, audience, situation, and context. In addition, students are taught essay structure, organization, and clarity in terms of the writing process. Also, different modes of writing are taught that include, but are not limited to, narration, descriptive, cause and effect, as well as compare and contrast. Furthermore, students are made aware of correct grammar usage and mechanics that include punctuation, sentence structure, and text format. These skills are all required for academic style writing. However, these skills can easily be transferred to workplace writing once the students understand the basic qualities of these skills.

There are a number of workplace writing skills that must be considered when restructuring basic English Composition courses to include writing for the workplace. According to the interviews conducted with employees of business and industry within the West Memphis, Arkansas workforce, there were specific writing skills that were found to be the most critical. Grammar and sentence structure errors were found to be the most troublesome. Therefore, grammar, syntax, and writing mechanics must be critical components of both first and second semester composition courses. In addition, skills in critical thinking were found to be lacking. Those interviewed stated that employees who were deficient in critical thinking produced writing that lacked clarity and resulted in miscommunication. Focusing on this skill through writing prompts, drills in clarifying writing that is unclear, as well as group projects that require critical thinking would need to be a major part of both courses. The writing prompts used would be those in which a workplace scenario would be given, such as a workplace accident. The student would be asked to write an incident report that clearly states the who, what, when, and where of the accident. Drills would come in the form of a list of unclear statements that the student would be asked to rewrite for clarity. Finally, the purpose of group projects would be to teach students how to address a workplace problem. Their task would be to clearly identify the problem, find a solution to the problem, and then clearly explain the solution and why it will solve the problem at hand. Students would present a collaborative oral presentation as well as a written report.

First semester composition would incorporate the critical thinking skills primarily in the form of drills and writing prompts, whereas group projects as well as individual projects that required critical thinking would be comprised into the second semester

composition course. Focus on audience would be essential to both composition courses through teaching students the importance of being cognizant of multiple audiences, the shadow audience, and an international audience. Writing to multiple audiences and the shadow audience would be a focus in first semester composition. The second semester course would create an awareness of an international audience.

In one of my interviews, a supervisor told me that she had a difficult time corresponding with her company's office located in India. This sentiment was echoed in the Mid-South Business Council consortium meeting, especially by one of the business leaders whose company's home office is located in Japan. Because electronic communication allows companies daily to interact with their foreign counterpart, students must learn how to clearly exchange written information with people who may have only have a basic understanding of the English language. Furthermore, the second semester composition course would have a major focus on collaborative projects, especially in regard to those projects found within the workplace. Research for these projects would incorporate first hand observations and interviews. This particular research component is a result of my experience teaching workplace writing to the Bosch employees mentioned earlier. A major component of the assignment that I gave them was to interview as well as to observe employees in terms of specific company safety guidelines. This assignment was a direct result from a discussion with the Bosch training administrator who believed this to be a necessary skill for supervisors and lead personnel. I have created syllabi with course objectives and expected outcomes for both first semester and second semester composition courses that have a workplace writing component incorporated into the standard composition course syllabus. (See Appendix 5.)

What has changed in these composition courses is the addition of workplace writing. This element is intentionally included in the second half of the semester so that students can build upon the basic writing skills introduced in the beginning of the term. Restructuring the second semester composition course is similar to what was done for the first semester course. The major differences include more difficult writing assignments and instruction in research and documentation. However, the restructuring of both courses maintains their transferability.

Restructuring composition courses to incorporate workplace writing requires the recognition by those who teach them that workplace writing complements academic writing. It is not necessary for instructors to choose one over another. Rather, many of the skills stressed in academic writing can be shown to be of use in workplace settings as well. Typically, the greatest challenge to teaching composition courses that include workplace writing is the composition instructor. These restructured composition courses will only be successful if the instructor has a willingness to understand the need for adding a workplace writing component, a willingness to learn about the specific elements required for workplace writing, and more importantly, an enthusiasm to teach *all* the elements of writing that will prepare students not only for academic studies but for workplace writing.

In addition to adding a workplace writing component to the general composition courses, another workplace writing course should be offered to those students who understand the importance of such writing as well as the knowledge of how it will be used in their chosen field of study. When designing a course with a workplace writing concentration, there are two primary factors that must be considered. First, the course

should be structured in a way that will make it eligible as a transfer elective or as a core course of study for a particular field of study. In the case of business communication, a course in workplace writing could very well count as a core course that would replace the usual business communication one. The second factor that must be considered is that of course content. The relevance of content demands that a workplace writing course should focus on the actual modes of writing performed within a work setting as opposed to writing needed for resumes and cover letters (see Appendix 2, MSCC BUSN 1143). The following is an example of how a workplace writing course could be structured.

The prerequisites for a writing in the workplace course must be second year composition because, as demonstrated in the above second year course, students then would have experience in collaborative writing, argument and problem solving, and an understanding of the rhetorical situation as it relates to workplace writing. Furthermore, they would have had two semesters of English composition in which they were immersed in grammar, spelling, sentence structure, proofreading, and other basic writing skills that are critical to workplace writing.

The proposed workplace writing course would be a concentration of the most common modes of writing that are performed in a workplace setting. The assignments would consist of these various modes with at least half of the assignments done in collaboration with classroom peers. Collaborative assignments would teach students how to divide the assignment into specific components with each group member responsible for one or two specific elements of the project. Collaboration is a necessary component of this course because many workplace projects, especially those that require reports and

proposals, are performed with colleagues in the work environment. This is a feasible community college course that would fulfill the need to prepare students for writing in the workplace.

Conclusion

The community college has been, and will likely continue to be, the educational institution most responsible for preparing America's workforce. It is located in areas of the nation that are accessible to most, and the community college is affordable to people who live in small towns and communities who otherwise would not have the opportunity for higher education and job training. As demonstrated in my historical overview, the community college has been enlisted to aid the country countless times since its inception one hundred and nine years ago. However, the typical community college currently falls short in teaching the specific skills required for workplace writing. I am reminded of The National Commission on Writing's "The Neglected "R"" in which they assert that schools have always had the tendency to focus on reading and "rhythmic" but have neglected "r"ighting (3). This appears to be true within the community college. As a composition instructor in a community college, I know firsthand that instructors do well in teaching basic composition skills. However, due to the way college program coordinators and administrators structure writing programs, as well as the unwillingness of composition instructors to change their ways of teaching writing, workplace writing has been left to the business instructors, and business communication courses are not designed to cover workplace writing to the extent needed.

If community colleges are to continue meeting the needs of local businesses and industries that, in most cases, are the major financial contributors to the colleges, then they need to recognize that there is a dire need for employees who possess the writing skills that enable them to perform their jobs. Workplace writing skills will continue to be a major requirement of most workers, especially those in supervisory and upper management positions. There is little doubt that electronic communication is the driving force behind the demand for employees who have writing skills. Everywhere one turns, people are writing, whether they are texting, messaging on social networks, or surfing the Internet. Walk into any business and people can be seen typing on computer keyboards and staring at computer screens. Writing is all around us, yet the community college seems reluctant to turn its focus towards this skill that is obviously needed for students to survive in the workplace. My college is a leader when it comes to education. Our classrooms are state of the art with wireless computer networks; our Learning Success Center and library are filled with computers for student use. The college even loans laptop computers to students. In short, the college where I teach is on the cutting edge of educating people who live in the Mid-South area that surrounds Memphis, Tennessee. Despite all of this, my college, like so many others, falls short in teaching workplace writing skills.

Workplace writing goes beyond grammar, sentence and paragraph structure, and the five- page research paper. Workplace writing centers on two considerations: audience and clarity. Without clarity, mistakes are made and money is lost. Without attention to audience, mistakes are made and customers and business partners are lost. There is a great deal riding on today's workplace writing. Hopefully, the community

college will once again, as it has done so many times in the past, step up and take a leading role in preparing America's students for the demands of writing in the workplace. More importantly, the community college will fulfill President Barack Obama's American Graduation Initiative to "build on the strengths . . . and usher in new innovations and reforms for the 21st century economy".

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Appendix 1



Mission

The Arkansas Association of Two-Year Colleges (AATYC) is a private, non-profit higher education membership organization serving the educational needs of two-year college students and the business/industry needs of the State. AATYC represents all twenty-two (22) public two-year colleges in Arkansas. The Association facilitates the sharing of ideas, resources, and opportunities among its members, and advocates on behalf of members' students.

Arkansas Two-Year College Fact Sheet 2010

Two-Year Colleges Serve Four Main Purposes

1. Preparation for transfer to a four-year university
2. Technical skills education
3. Developmental or remedial education
4. Workforce training for business/industry

Cost

- Average Tuition & Mandatory Fees = \$2,504

Enrollment

- Enrollment = 59,582, and an additional 50,000 are upgrading skills directly related to business/industry needs.

A total of 109,582 Arkansans are receiving education/training at a two-year college.

- One-Year Growth = 9.8%; Five-Year Growth = 26.5%
- Five Arkansas two-year colleges were named among the "Fastest-Growing Public Two-Year Colleges" in the country by *Community College Week*.
- Public two-year colleges serve 40% of Arkansas undergraduate students and high school students enrolled in college level coursework.

Students

- 66.5% are white, 21.6% are black, 3.7% are Hispanic, 2.1% are other minority, and 5.9% did not report race.
- 64% are female.
- 48.4% are ages 25 and older.
- 42.9% attend part-time.
- Nationally, nearly half of all community college students are first generation students.

WorkForce Training

The AATYC WorkForce Training Consortium (WFTC) identifies and creates business/industry training capabilities and best practices at each college, and collectively responds to local, regional, and statewide workforce training requests. All Arkansas public two-year colleges participate in this consortium. *Sector emphases include aerospace, allied health, entrepreneurship, and green technology.*

Regional Consortia

Regional two-year college consortia serve as tools for collaboration on economic development and job creation approaches that are productive for their region. These partnerships will enhance each region's ability to serve and benefit their students, communities, and regions. *Regional consortia include Arkansas Delta Training and Education Consortium, North Arkansas Two-Year College Consortium, Southwest Arkansas Community College Consortium, and Central Arkansas Two-Year College Consortium.*

Center for Student Success

Through a grant from the Winthrop Rockefeller Foundation, AATYC is partnering with Southern Bancorp to identify and promote best practices for student success. The goals are to further the efforts of Achieving the Dream and other existing initiatives, identify and implement new practices and policies, and improve retention and completion rates of two-year college students- *making Arkansas a national model for student success.*

According to the American Association of Community Colleges:

An associate degree increases earnings by an average of \$7,200 annually. State and local governments reap a 16% return on every dollar they invest in community colleges due to the increased earnings of community college graduates.

AATYC □ 1400 West Markham, Suite 402 □ Little Rock, AR 72201 □ 501-371-0404 □ www.aatyc.org

Degrees & Certificates Awarded in '08-'09

- Certificates of Proficiency = 3,653
- Technical Certificates = 3,276
- Associate Degrees = 4,709
- Total Degrees/Certificates = 11,638
- Arkansas public two-year colleges increased awards by 53.9% from '05 to '09, and they lead the state's higher education institutions in growth of credentials awarded.

Top 5 Certificates & Degrees Awarded

Certificate of Proficiency

1. Health Professions & Rel. Science
2. Transportation & Material Moving
3. Precision Production Trades
4. Mechanics & Repairers
5. Engineering-Related Technology

Technical Certificate

1. Health Professions & Rel. Science
2. Liberal Arts, General Studies
3. Mechanics & Repairers
4. Business Mgt. & Admin. Services
5. Protective Services

Associate Degree

1. Liberal Arts, General Studies
2. Health Professions & Rel. Science
3. Business Mgt. & Admin. Services
4. Education
5. Engineering-Related Technology

Appendix 2
Sample Writing Curriculum from Selected
Community Colleges in Arkansas, Mississippi, and Tennessee

Arkansas

- Arkansas Northeastern College, Blytheville, Arkansas:
 - EN 10013 Technical Communications: This course covers a broad range of topics with emphasis on competencies required in the employment setting. Students practice listening, speaking and writing techniques useful in finding, applying for, and getting a job. The course includes an introduction to human relations, verbal and non-verbal communication, contemporary employee rights, substance abuse, team building, and self-growth.
 - ENG 12003 English Composition I: A course that enables the student to write with a purpose and express himself through written communication by logical presentation of ideas. Emphasis will be placed on acceptable grammatical options, appropriate usage, variety in sentence and paragraph structures, as well as organizational patterns, and on content.
 - EN 12013 English Composition II: A continuation of English Composition I with emphasis on more advanced composition, reading, and rhetorical skills. The research paper will also be part of the semester's study.
 - (Arkansas Northeastern College Course Catalogue 135)

- Mid-South Community College, West Memphis, Arkansas:
 - ENGL 1113 English Composition I: English Comp I gives attention to critical reading and thinking skills applicable to all college courses. The course stresses writing as a process and uses the essay as the vehicle while stressing invention, drafting, revising, and rewriting. This course utilizes computers and requires keyboarding skills of 20 wpm or better. (Mid-South 156)
 - ENGL 1123 English Composition II: English Comp II continues to develop the student's writing skills through practice in different kinds of rhetorical development while emphasizing quality and forms of writing. Students learn both APA and MLA documentation and produce a research paper using MLA documentation. This course utilizes computers and requires keyboarding skills of 20 wpm or better.
 - BUSN 1143 Business Communication: This course focuses on written and oral communication within an organization. Topics covered included the foundations of business communication, the composition and revision of letters, memos, reports, proposals, and resumes, as well as the preparation and delivery of oral presentations. Attention is given to appropriate style and diction for business environments and to techniques for composing direct, routine, rejection, and persuasive correspondence. (152)

- National Park Community College, Hot Springs, Arkansas:
 - ENG 1113 English Composition I (3-0-3): Writing paragraphs and expository themes to give the student practice in communication. Emphasizes good writing techniques and correct grammatical construction, enabling the student to think coherently, write clearly and effectively, and read more efficiently. (National Park 214)
 - ENG 1123 English Composition II (3-0-3): Continuation of English Composition I. Study of good writing and rhetorical style. Students develop research skills through writing a formal, documented paper. (National Park 214)

- Phillips Community College University of Arkansas, Helena-West Helena, Arkansas:
 - English Comp. I/EH113: EH 113, Freshman Composition I, is a course concerned with language and writing. Since the best method of improving writing is to write, writing will be the main activity of EH 113. This class will also incorporate the study of thought provoking literature concerning such topics as drug abuse, secular rights, women's and men's right, prejudice, censorship, conservation, philosophy and religion. This course will emphasize critical thinking and writing skills. You will use threaded discussions, email and chat rooms to share information and writings (Phillips Community College)

- English Comp. II/EH 123: EH 123 surveys the major genres of literature - fiction, poetry and drama. The intent of the course is to provide students inexperienced in the critical reading of literature with the basic skills needed to understand, evaluate and write about a work of literature. (Phillips Community College)

Mississippi

- Coahoma Community College, Clarkdale, Mississippi:
 - ENG 1113 English Composition I. ENG 113 is designed to prepare the student for writings required in college and the workplace with an emphasis on effective paragraph and essay development. (Coahoma)
 - ENG 1123 English Composition II. ENG 1123 is a continuation of ENG 1113 with emphasis on research and composition. Readings, essays, and a research paper are required.

Tennessee

- Jackson State Community College, Jackson, Tennessee
 - BUS 231 Business Communications
 - No course description available
 - ENGL 1010 English Composition I
 - No course description available
 - ENGL 1020 English Composition II
 - No course description available
- (Jackson State Community College Fall 2010 Class Schedule)

- Southwest Tennessee Community College, Memphis, Tennessee
 - ENGL 1010 English Composition I (Gen. Ed.)
 - Course description not available
 - ENGL 1020 English Composition II (Gen. Ed.)
 - Course description not available

Appendix 3
WorkKeys Job Profiles

Source	Total Companies Job Profiles	WorkKeys™ Writing Requirements					
		Level 1	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4	Level 5	None Required
ONET*	434	7	69	136	40	5	177
DOT**	1259	45	160	323	139	24	568
Total	1693	52	229	459	179	29	745
		3%	14%	27%	11%	2%	44%

* U.S. Department of Labor Occupational Information Network (O*NET)

** Dictionary of Occupational Titles (DOT)

WorkKeys™ Writing

In a survey of 402 companies, executives identified writing as the most valued skill required in their businesses given that their employees spend an average of 30% of their day writing. Of those employees, 80% at all levels need to improve their writing skills because nearly 1/3 of their writing needs to be clarified. Messages that are written clearly and correctly can spell success for a company by increasing credibility, reputation, and client satisfaction.

The *Writing* portion of the *WorkKeys Listening and Writing* test measures the skill individuals use when they write messages that relay workplace information between people.

The test is administered in audio format that contains all directions and messages. Examinees are asked to listen to the audio taped messages and then write messages or summaries based on the information they hear. Examinees are placed in the role of employees who receive information from customers, co-workers, or suppliers and must then write down the information to communicate it to someone else.

The taped messages reflect various workplace settings, but no prior knowledge of the occupations is necessary. The messages are delivered by both male and female speakers of differing ages and with various accents. Each message is given twice, and examinees are encouraged to take notes. After a message is given the second time, examinees have a

specified amount of time to write before the next message is given. Examinees are given 40 minutes to complete six responses; they may return to work on previous responses at any time during the test.

Initially, the messages contain about six pieces of information given by one speaker; by the end of the assessment, messages are given by two speakers and contain approximately seventeen pieces of information. As the assessment progresses and the messages grow longer and more complex, the time allotted to write the messages increases from two minutes to six minutes.

WorkKeys™ Writing Characteristics

Level	Characteristics of Responses
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Messages are very difficult to understand because of numerous errors ▪ The majority of the sentence structures are incorrect ▪ Major mechanical, grammatical, and word usage errors are numerous ▪ Rude or overly casual language not consistent with standard business English is used ▪ No organization is evident
Level	Characteristics of Responses
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Messages are generally understandable ▪ Some correct sentence structures are used, although some sentences may require further clarification ▪ Writing has enough correct mechanics, word usage, and grammar to convey an idea, although many errors may interfere with comprehension ▪ Casual language or slang may be used rather than standard business English ▪ Although topical information is used, writing lacks connections that would make it flow easily

Level	Characteristics of Responses
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Messages are clear ▪ The majority of the sentences are complete ▪ Writing has few mechanical, grammatical, and word usage errors so the message is adequately conveyed ▪ The language may be more casual than standard business English but never contains slang or is rude

Level	Characteristics of Responses
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Messages are clear, with almost no errors ▪ All sentences are complete ▪ There are very few mechanical, grammatical, and/or word usage errors ▪ The tone is professional and consistent with standard business English most of the time ▪ The writing style is adequate but may be somewhat choppy ▪ Good organization is demonstrated with only minor transition or logical order problems

Level	Characteristics of Responses
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Messages are clear, precise, and free of errors ▪ Correct, complete sentences are used and are varied, smooth, and polished ▪ There are no mechanical, grammatical, or word usage errors ▪ A businesslike, courteous, and professional tone is maintained with language that is highly consistent with standard business English ▪ The writing style flows smoothly ▪ The information is presented in a logical order; for example, the writer may rearrange the information so that the important part comes first

ACT Writing Scoring Guide

A Reminder

While *Listening and Writing* is administered as a single assessment, the *Listening* portion and the *Writing* portion are scored separately.

Scoring of the *Writing* portion is based on the writing mechanics (sentence structure and grammar) and the writing style used in the examinee's written messages. It is not based on the accuracy or completeness of the information (these skills are assessed in the *Listening* assessment).

The following is a summary of the criteria used in scoring the *Writing* assessment. Responses, which are scored holistically, do not always fall precisely into any one level. Therefore, this summary should be used as an overall guide, not as a checklist.

Score - 5

- Conveys message clearly
- Highly appropriate for the business setting of the prompt
- No mechanical errors
- Good sentence structure
- Smooth and logical style

Score - 4

- Conveys message clearly
- May have a few minor mechanical errors that do not interfere with comprehension
- Good sentence structure (e.g., all sentences are complete)
- Adequate style: Sentences may be somewhat choppy. Overall message may not be completely smooth or logical

Score - 3

- Conveys message clearly
- Some mechanical errors: Problems with spelling, punctuation, etc. do not interfere with comprehension
- Adequate sentence structure (e.g., most sentences are complete)

Score - 2

- Conveys message adequately.
- Many mechanical errors that may interfere with comprehension
- Weak sentence structure; incomplete sentences or poorly structured sentences (e.g., comma splices, fused sentences)

Score - 1

- Conveys message inadequately
- Gross mechanical errors that may be very difficult to decipher
- Overall lack of proper sentence structure

Score - 0

- An attempt is made at the message, but the response is completely garbled, with no recognizable sentence structure; one or more comments within the response are grossly inappropriate (e.g., profanity, threats); message is off-topic; page is blank; or message is completely illegible.

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1. ONET Website: <http://online.onetcenter.org/>
2. <http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/writing/index.html>
3. <http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/writing/criteria.html>
4. <http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/writing/errors.html>
5. <http://www.act.org/workkeys/assess/writing/levels.html>
6. <http://support.keytrain.com/profiles/resultslist.asp?searchset=national&locality=&searchcat=none&RI=&searchtype=best&AM=&LI=&AT=&L=&OB=&TW=&W=&submit=Search>
7. <http://support.keytrain.com/profiles/resultslist.asp?searchset=national&locality=&searchcat=none&RI=&searchtype=best&AM=&LI=&AT=&L=&OB=&TW=&W=1&submit=Search>
8. <http://support.keytrain.com/profiles/resultslist.asp?searchset=national&locality=&searchcat=none&RI=&searchtype=best&AM=&LI=&AT=&L=&OB=&TW=&W=2&submit=Search>
9. <http://support.keytrain.com/profiles/resultslist.asp?searchset=national&locality=&searchcat=none&RI=&searchtype=best&AM=&LI=&AT=&L=&OB=&TW=&W=3&submit=Search>

Appendix 4
Bosch Training - Employee Writing Samples

BOSCH WRITING EXERCISE

[REDACTED]

The PPE we current I use is the Workplace Attire Audit. This audit is effective because it's strictly for our safety and welfare. It can only be effective if all associates comply. This audit helps to prevent serious accidents. We may have a bump here or nick there, but I think we could live with that. By preventing serious accidents we get to enjoy the fruits of our labor. For example, celebrating 1 million hours without a lost time accident. Go Bosch !!!!!!!

There are a couple of things I would change are the wearing of jewelry and no shorts. Now, I understand not wearing a long necklace or hoop earrings, but why not wedding rings? There are some of us who don't like taking their rings off. Since it gets so hot throwing boxes in here; we should be allowed to wear shorts. Most men shorts are down at the calve anyway.

I think the only way we can have 100% compliance is to continue to stress how important safety in the work place is. A safe work environment is a productive work environment. Thank You.

Best Regards,

[REDACTED]

Robert Bosch Tool Corporation



Topic: Being Prepared for OSHA Visit

Here at Robert Bosch Tools we consider our Facility always ready for any type of inspection, weather it's OSHA or any other organization. We know our associates have been well trained on all safety requirements for this facility. The reason we feel so sure of our associates and their safety work habits is the type of training we conduct at our facility.

Here at Robert Bosch Tool we provide not only classroom, and hands on training, but computer base training as well. The computer base training that we offer here at Robert Bosch Tool has over two hundred courses for our associates to choose from.

Once an associate has taken a computer base course or classroom training course the associate is required to take a written test for the course or courses they have taken, after this is completed and the associate has passed his or her test, they are asked to go out into the facility and perform a hands on demonstration of what they have learned. Weather it was a forklift certification or a new hire general safety awareness program.

Here at Robert Bosch Tool we take our safety training for our associates very seriously. We strive to make Robert Bosch Tool a very safe workplace for our associates and those who visit Robert Bosch Tool. We have worked very hard at this facility to change the way we think about safety here at Robert Bosch Tool. We feel that our entire facility has made great strides toward our goal of changing the culture of how we look at safety. With the help of management and everyone who works here at this facility we consider our facility to be one of the safest in the state of Arkansas.

Thanks You:



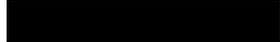
Bosch Team Lead Training Writing Assignment

I am currently the Team Leader of the Inventory department here at Bosch. I have recently reviewed and made assessments after analysis in regard to the necessity as well as to the effectiveness of the PPE that we are currently required to us. My assessment of those items has determined the following.

1. Gloves are the number one item used in our department and are highly effective in reducing cuts and product slippage from ones grip.
2. Gloves also serve as a barrier against the spreading of germs within this facility due to unprotected hands that come into direct contact of dirt etc. that has accumulated on old product.
3. Box cutters help us to speed up the process of product verification.
4. Reflective vest helps Inventory personnel to be more easily identifiable to other equipment operators that are on the same aisle as we are.
5. Composite toe shoes are an excellent defense against foot injuries, but can also be the cause of blisters.

All of the above listed PPE I strongly recommend that it continues to be used in our department. The small inconveniences that can be associated with the PPE far outweigh the potential injuries that could result from non-compliance. Therefore I don't see a need to make any modifications to the PPE listing. I will reevaluate this listing in the future as safety concerns arise in the facility, or as our areas of responsibility increase. For now I feel as though our PPE is both adequate and sufficient for Inventories daily operations, and do non warrant a need for change. By sticking to the newly implemented safety requirements established for all departments from recent safety workshops. We can become a safety first minded organization. Having safety as first on the agenda no matter what's the agenda will help to produce a safety first consciousness. Safety will also become viewed as a serious matter due to the prioritizing done through the proper placement initiative of making first things first. Weekly safety slogans, seven minute training material and PPE are always mentioned first in Inventory daily meetings. I truly believe that this type of redundancy breeds knowledge that reacts. If we say what we mean and mean what we say we can achieve 100% facility wide compliance. Since actions speak louder than words our words need to match our actions. This is vital to any cultural change and Bosch leadership has to be the driving force by being examples to all associates. Once we gain the associates trust then they have confidence in the culture, moral is lifted and fuels the drive toward the expected outcome 100% compliance. To do this we all have to be "Safety minded not safety blinded."





Personal Protective Equipment

The PPE in my departments are very effective. The use of gloves and hard toed shoes more or less eliminated any/all injuries to the hand and/or foot. As an added safeguard against minor cut, splinters, contusions, and burns. Bosch policy states that all associates must wear long pants. (no Capri's or shorts). Most associates also wear florescent colored vest. Every department is assigned a unique color. If I had to recommend a change; it would be eliminating the vest. To warrant that the PPE we have in place are 100% in compliance, we do daily PPE/Workplace Attier Audits . These audits cover everthing including fall protection, use of gloves, use of proper eye protection, wearing of prohibited jewelery, and loose clothing. We also perform random inspections that are completed by the Safety dept and the administrative staff. We believe that all associates should be adquately trained and equipped to safely and effectively perform their job tasks.

Appendix 5
Sample Syllabi for First and Second Semester English Composition

English Composition I

Purpose of Course: English Composition I gives attention to critical reading and thinking skills applicable to all college courses. It stresses writing as a process and uses the essay as the vehicle while stressing invention, drafting, revising, and rewriting (Mid-South Community College English Composition I Course Description). Additional attention is given to the writing skills required for the workplace. Workplace writing skills stressed are attention to multiple audiences, content and context clarity, as well as critical thinking. English Composition I also stresses the importance of grammar, spelling, syntax, and writing organization and structure that are skills imperative to both academic and workplace writing.

Course Objectives: This course will give students an understanding of the relationship between basic academic writing, (that performed within a school classroom) and basic writing skills needed for the workplace. In addition, students will learn the significance of the rhetorical situation as it applies to both academic and workplace writing. The course emphasizes the rhetorical situation in terms of awareness for audience, purpose, situation, context, and writer.

Course Outcomes: At the end of the course, successful students will be efficient in the following:

1. Students will have a clear understanding of the rhetorical situation as it is related to academic and workplace writing.
2. Students will be able to produce well organized and structured writing that has clarity in grammar, syntax, tone, and voice as it relates to the various modes of writing found in academia and the workplace.
3. Students will be able to demonstrate critical thinking skills as related to both academic and workplace writing.

Course Structure:

- Beginning of semester to mid-term
 - Rhetorical Situation
 - single writer
 - single audience
 - academic situation and context based upon a specific mode of writing
 - modes of writing
 - narrative
 - descriptive
 - compare and contrast
 - Grammar, syntax, and mechanics

- Mid-term to end of semester
 - Rhetorical Situation
 - collaborative writing
 - multiple audiences
 - workplace situation and context
 - grammar, syntax, and mechanics
 - modes of writing: memo, letter, report
 - tone voice

English Composition II

Purpose of Course: English Composition II continues to develop the student's writing skills through practice in different kinds of rhetorical development while emphasizing quality and forms of writing. Students learn both APA and MLA documentation and produce a research paper using MLA documentation (Mid-South Community College English Composition II course description). Additional attention is given to the writing skills required for the workplace. Workplace writing skills stressed are attention to multiple audiences, content and context clarity, as well as critical thinking. Furthermore, group project collaboration is incorporated into the course as an essential skill often used in a workplace setting. Research skills as well as APA and MLA documentation will be practiced as related to the workplace. English Composition II also stresses the importance of grammar, spelling, syntax, and writing organization and structure that are skills imperative to both academic and workplace writing.

Course Objectives: This course will give students an understanding of the relationship between advanced academic writing, (particularly regarding the research paper and argumentation) and advanced writing skills needed for the workplace. In addition, students will learn the significance of the rhetorical situation as it applies to both academic and workplace writing. The course emphasizes the rhetorical situation in terms of awareness for audience, purpose, situation, context, and writer. In addition, students are given the opportunity to work collaboratively on a research project assignment that is commonly performed within the workplace. This workplace research project will incorporate research and documentation skills used in academic writing. In addition, students will learn how to conduct research through first hand observation and interviews as often done in workplace research projects.

Course Outcomes: At the end of the course, successful students will be efficient in the following:

1. Students will be able to demonstrate the rhetorical situation as it relates to both academic and workplace writing.
2. Students will demonstrate an awareness of audience. This awareness includes the knowledge of a multiple audience as well as the anticipation of a shadow audience.
3. Students will have the ability to compose well organized text that clearly states the purpose of the text as well as attention to supporting details
4. Students will know how to research using scholarly search engines and professional journals. In addition, students will have experience in researching through first hand observation and interviews.
5. Students will be able to demonstrate the ability to incorporate correct grammar, syntax, voice, and tone into well organized texts with reader clarity.

Course Structure:

- Beginning of semester to mid-term
 - Rhetorical Situation
 - single writer
 - single audience
 - academic situation and context based upon a specific mode of writing
 - modes of writing
 - argument
 - Research
 - Academic
 - journals (electronic and/or hard copy)
 - books
 - scholarly search engines supplied by college libraries
 - Citing resources
 - Plagiarism
- Mid-term to end of semester
 - Rhetorical Situation
 - collaborative writing
 - multiple audiences
 - workplace situation and context
 - Tone and Voice - unemotional

- modes of writing
 - Problem Solving
- Structure and organization
 - Precise and to the point
 - Clarity in syntax and vocabulary
- Research
 - Interviews
 - First hand observation
 - Professional journals (electronic and/or hard copy)