UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA,
IRVINE

"Ready to Transition"? Writing Across High School and College Contexts

DISSERTATION

submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements
for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

in Education

by

Rachel Stumpf

Dissertation Committee:
Professor Carol Booth Olson, Chair
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2018

DEDICATION

To my parents:
thank you for supporting me in my own transition
from teacher to teacher-scholar.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Some people say that it takes a village to raise a child. I would also argue that it takes a village to write a dissertation. This manuscript would not have been possible without the help and support of some extraordinary people—my village.

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Olson, C. B., Matuchniak, T., Chung, H. Q., **Stumpf, R.**, & Farkas, G. (2017). Reducing achievement gaps in academic writing for Latinos and English learners in grades 7-12. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, *109*(1), 1-21.

Under Review

Stumpf, R., & Olson, C. B. Conceptualizing the role of coherence in teacher professional development: Examining the relationship among teachers' perceptions, instruction, and student outcomes.

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Stumpf, R. (2017, February). *Similar yet different: A comparison of writing in high school language arts and college composition*. Presented at the Writing Research Across Borders conference, Bogotá, CO.

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Olson, C. B., Matuchniak, T., Chung, H. Q., **Stumpf, R.**, & Farkas, G. (2016, March). *Reducing achievement gaps in academic writing for Latinos and English learners in grades 7-12*. Presented at the Spring Conference of the Society of Research on Educational Effectiveness, Washington, D.C.

Olson, C. B., Matuchniak, T., Chung, H. Q., **Stumpf, R.**, & Farkas, G. (2015, December). *Reducing achievement gaps in academic writing for Latinos and English learners in grades 7-12*. Presented at the Annual Conference of the Literacy Research Association, Carlsbad, CA.

MEDIA COVERAGE

Gorman, N. (2017, January 25). *Professional development helps teachers improve students' writing skills*. Education World.

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ABSTRACT OF THE DISSERTATION

"Ready to Transition"? Writing Across High School and College Contexts

By

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Doctor of Philosophy in Education

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Professor Carol Booth Olson, Chair

"College readiness" has become a national buzzword in light of efforts to improve high school students' ability to successfully transition into postsecondary settings. One component of this transition that has long been an area of concern is students' readiness for college writing. Numerous stakeholders have weighed in on the question of what will improve students' writing readiness, but few studies have considered the perspectives of students as they write in both high school and college. This dissertation addresses this gap by contributing an ecological, multi-layered perspective on how student writers develop as they become college-going adults. By taking into account the role that multiple systems play in this development, this study examines the interwoven contexts that shape writing and writing development. To that end, I used discourse analysis and qualitative research methods to analyze a variety of data sources, which included policy and curricular documents, field notes from classroom observations, and transcripts of teacher and student interviews.

The study focuses on three components of the transition from high school to college writing. First, I identified how writing and college readiness are conceived in policy and curricular documents, and I describe how differences between these documents might impact students' development as writers. Building on these analyses, I then examined the instruction

that occurred within two high school language arts classes, an Expository Reading and Writing Course and an Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition course. I found that the teachers' beliefs and practices reflected some of the ideologies present in the curricula they used and resulted in differences in the kinds of instructional activities they emphasized. Finally, I examined the developmental trajectories of twelve student writers as they moved out of their shared high school environment into a variety of postsecondary institutions. Students' experiences revealed three different trajectories that reflected the extent to which they developed in their writing and/or their relationship to writing. Four components may have contributed to the kinds of trajectories that emerged, and these components suggest areas in which high schools and colleges might consider implementing practices that will help support students during this transition period.

INTRODUCTION

I think maybe I'm ready to transition. We all have to at one point. It's going to be everything…All your life you grew up just having these set schedules and periods at snack and lunch. At college...it gets free. Teachers don't tell you what to do. They lecture you and okay, you know. And everything is you.

-Adam, twelfth grade interview

I always end up getting really wordy, and I'm just kind of nervous, like, what if that's not what my professor's looking for? Then they'll criticize me on that. I feel I may have to change a lot of what I do to fit what they want.

-Crissy, twelfth grade interview

As high school seniors at an urban high school outside of Los Angeles, California, Adam and Crissy both looked forward to starting college. Both students planned to attend postsecondary institutions in Southern California, and both hoped to eventually pursue careers in the medical field. However, despite the similarities in their high school education and future plans, Adam and Crissy expressed different perspectives when I asked them to reflect upon their readiness for college writing. For Adam, college represented freedom and a welcome change from the "set schedules" of K-12 education. Recognizing the inevitability of transitioning out of high school, Adam believed that he was "maybe ready to transition." In contrast, Crissy felt "kind of nervous" about college writing. She wondered if she would be able to meet her professors' expectations and whether she would need to change her current practices in order to "fit what they want." Though different in their feelings of readiness, Adam and Crissy both recognized that moving from high school to college writing would likely be accompanied by shifts in the learning context and instructors' expectations. But how different are high school and college writing? And to what extent do student writers change across this transition?

In the current landscape of "college readiness," the high school to college transition has become a primary focus, and numerous stakeholders have weighed in on the question of what

will improve students' readiness. Surprisingly, though, the perspectives of high school students are rarely included, and few research studies have considered students' views as they navigate the transition from secondary to postsecondary writing. This study addresses this gap by examining the experiences of Adam, Crissy, and their peers as they crossed the threshold from high school to college. To better interpret these experiences within the current educational landscape, I first describe prevailing views on students' college readiness in writing and then problematize the narrative of students as underprepared for college writing. I conclude by situating my study within these conversations and providing a roadmap of the rest of the dissertation.

From Writing in High School to Writing in College: Are Students Ready?

Research suggests that policy makers and college instructors are concerned that many incoming students may not be ready for college writing (Achieve, 2005; Brockman, Taylor, Crawford, & Kreth, 2010). For example, in a 2005 survey, college instructors estimated that almost half of their students are not adequately prepared to meet the demands of college-level writing (Achieve, 2005, p. 4). These concerns about students' writing are not new, however. In the 1870s, Harvard President Charles W. Eliot lamented that "incorrectness as well as inelegance of expression in writing, ignorance of the simplest rules of punctuation, and almost entire want of familiarity with English literature, are far from rare among young men of eighteen otherwise well prepared to pursue their college studies." (Eliot qtd. in Hays, 1936, p. 17-18). In the 1970s, Newsweek magazine published the now ubiquitous headline, "Why Johnny Can't Write" (Sheils, 1975). And in the early 2000's, the National Commission of Writing released policy reports detailing the importance of writing for school and work, and the need for a "writing revolution" (The National Commission on Writing, 2003 and 2004).

Clearly, students' readiness for college writing has long been in question. In recent years, however, "college and career readiness" has become something of a buzzword in light of national efforts to improve students' academic performance, particularly in math, reading, and writing. From the No Child Left Behind Act in 2001 to the current enactment of the Common Core State Standards in over 40 states (National Governors Association Center for Best Practices & Council of Chief State School Officers [NGA & CCSSO], 2010), K-12 schools are increasingly driven by standards and assessments tied to standards. Behind these national policies is the assumption that setting rigorous standards and ensuring that students achieve these standards (as measured by standardized tests) will help students become college ready. Although standards may increase the likelihood that common content is being taught across schools, conceptualizing readiness for college writing in this way might be problematic.

Complicating "College Readiness" in Writing

First of all, college writing is not one kind of writing, as it encompasses a wide variety of genres, disciplines, audiences, situations, and expectations. Tellingly, in a 2010 collection of research and essays titled, *What is "College-Level Writing?,"* a concrete definition of college-level writing is not provided; rather, the editors state that by critically analyzing the writing and experiences of high school and college students, they "hope to begin a process of defining 'college-level writing' by example" (Sullivan, Tinberg, & Blau, 2010, p. 9). Furthermore, scholars have noted that how college-level writing is defined and enacted can vary significantly by institution and academic discipline (Brockman et al., 2010; Sullivan, 2006). The diversity of college-level writing thus raises a question: Even with the most rigorous preparation, is it possible for students to be "ready" for every writing situation they could encounter in college?

A second consideration that challenges a solely skill-based perception of college

readiness in writing is the link between readiness and development. One definition of readiness is "a developmental stage at which a child has the capacity to receive instruction at a given level of difficulty or to engage in a particular activity" (Dictionary.com Unabridged, 2017). However, limited research exists on writing development, particularly in terms of how writing development is impacted when individuals move across contexts (Bazerman et al., 2017). Yet, what research does exist is often not consulted when policies, standards, and curriculum for writing instruction are designed with a goal of college readiness (Adler-Kassner & Wardle, 2015; Applebee, 2013). Though there is a dearth of research on young adult writing development, various studies suggest that writing for new purposes and audiences (as when students transition from high school to college) is so challenging that even experienced adult "expert" writers may find themselves struggling when faced with an unfamiliar writing task (Anson, 2016; Sommers, 2008). It is for this reason that a cadre of leading experts in writing research (the Lifespan Writing Development Group) suggest that when students struggle to write effectively, "Teachers at more advanced levels should not be too quick to blame prior teaching and learning, when the real issue could be the time necessary to develop as a writer and unfamiliarity with new expectations" (Bazerman et al., 2017). Viewing writing as a developmental process, then, also challenges prevailing narratives of "readiness" for college writing.

Finally, much of what has been said about college readiness has come from college faculty and policy makers (Brockman et al., 2010; NGA & CCSSO, 2010). Although college faculty contribute an important perspective on the kinds of writing students will be asked to do in postsecondary contexts, standards and curriculum that purport to "prepare" high school students for college writing must account for the unique aspects of the high school context and the specific needs of students at this point in their development. These are areas in which high

school teachers and students could contribute valuable insights to our understandings of both writing development and what it means to be college ready (if indeed, this moniker is meaningful at all). Furthermore, implementing policies that focus on setting rigorous standards for students' writing do not necessarily ensure transfer—that is, students' ability to effectively apply their learning to a variety of new situations. As Wells (2011b) puts it, "As much as attempts are made to standardize what students learn in high school, once students leave our campuses, whether that's at the end of the day or at the end of their high school careers, the world that awaits them is highly unstandardized" (p. 57). Students may be able to demonstrate proficiency on a standardized assessment or on a performance task within a given class, but that does not mean they will be able to transfer what they've learned to new situations. In fact, researchers who study transfer in college writing often find that students report transferring little from their first-year composition class to their subsequent courses (Adler-Kassner, Majewski, & Koshnick, 2012; Blythe & Gonzales, 2016; Driscoll, 2011; Moore, 2012; Tinberg, 2015; Wardle, 2007). Thus, taking into account student perspectives on the high school to college transition is also important in order to understand if and how students transfer what they learn about writing from high school to college.

Students' Transition from High School to College Writing: The Current Study

This dissertation aims to contribute a comprehensive understanding of the transition from high school to college writing by examining the concept of college readiness in policy and curricular documents, the beliefs and practices of writing teachers within the high school context, and the ways in which students navigate the transition from high school and college writing at different institutions (e.g., community colleges, state colleges, universities). Findings from the dissertation can inform policies and practices on both sides of the high school/college divide as

various stakeholders continue to refine the writing expectations and practices that take place in both settings and anticipate where students might encounter challenges as they navigate the transition. To that end, this dissertation focuses on three interconnected research questions:

1. How is college readiness in writing represented in policy documents and curricular approaches at the high school and college level?
2. How do high school language arts instructors, using particular curricular approaches, teach writing and conceive of writing and college readiness?
3. How do student writers develop as they move from high school to college?

CHAPTER 1

Conceptual Framework

Writing is a complex act in that both cognitive and sociocultural components contribute to what happens when a writer undertakes a specific task. A number of processes occur during the act of writing, such as generating, organizing, monitoring, revising, and evaluating words and ideas (Flower & Hayes, 1981). At the same time, writing is socially, historically, and culturally situated (Englert, Mariage, & Dunsmore, 2006), which means that writing development is not only a matter of skills; rather, it is also influenced by social interactions, classroom instruction, an individual's identity, and many other factors (Schultz & Fecho, 2000). As a result, students' writing practices and attitudes may change when they move from one setting to another (McCarthy, 1986). Thus, in order to study students' transition from high school to college writing, I examined both students' individual perceptions of writing, as well as the nature of secondary and postsecondary writing contexts and the expectations that are present within them.

In both high school and college, students encounter a myriad of writing situations, and these situations are contextualized within particular genres, courses, disciplines, and institutions. Each of these contexts might be thought of as "a frame that surrounds the event being examined and provides resources for its appropriate interpretation" (Goodwin & Duranti, 1992, p. 3). This study is grounded in an ecological model of writing, as this approach attempts to take into account these various contexts that shape an individual's writing development over time. As Wardle and Roozen (2012) posit, "an ecological model understands an individual's writing abilities as developing across an expansive network that links together a broad range of literate experiences over lengthy periods of time" (p. 108). This study draws upon Bronfrenbrenner's (1976) ecological model of human development in order to situate the writing experiences of the

student and teacher participants within a larger "network." Bronfrenbrenner (1976) posits that learning in educational settings is dependent on two factors: 1) the relationship between students' individual characteristics and the environments in which they live (such as school, home, and work), and 2) the relationships that occur between these environments. Thus, in order to study these relationships and the learning that does (or does not) result from an individual's participation in multiple contexts, Bronfrenbrenner argues that several levels of an individual's environment must be considered. To create an ecological model of individuals' writing development, I drew upon work by Bronfrenbrenner (1976) and Rodby (1999) to depict environments that may shape students' writing (see Figure 1). Because the particular contexts that shape individual students' writing development will not necessarily be the same, the model reflects Adams's experiences writing as a twelfth-grader and includes some of the environments that may have proximal and distal impacts on his writing development.

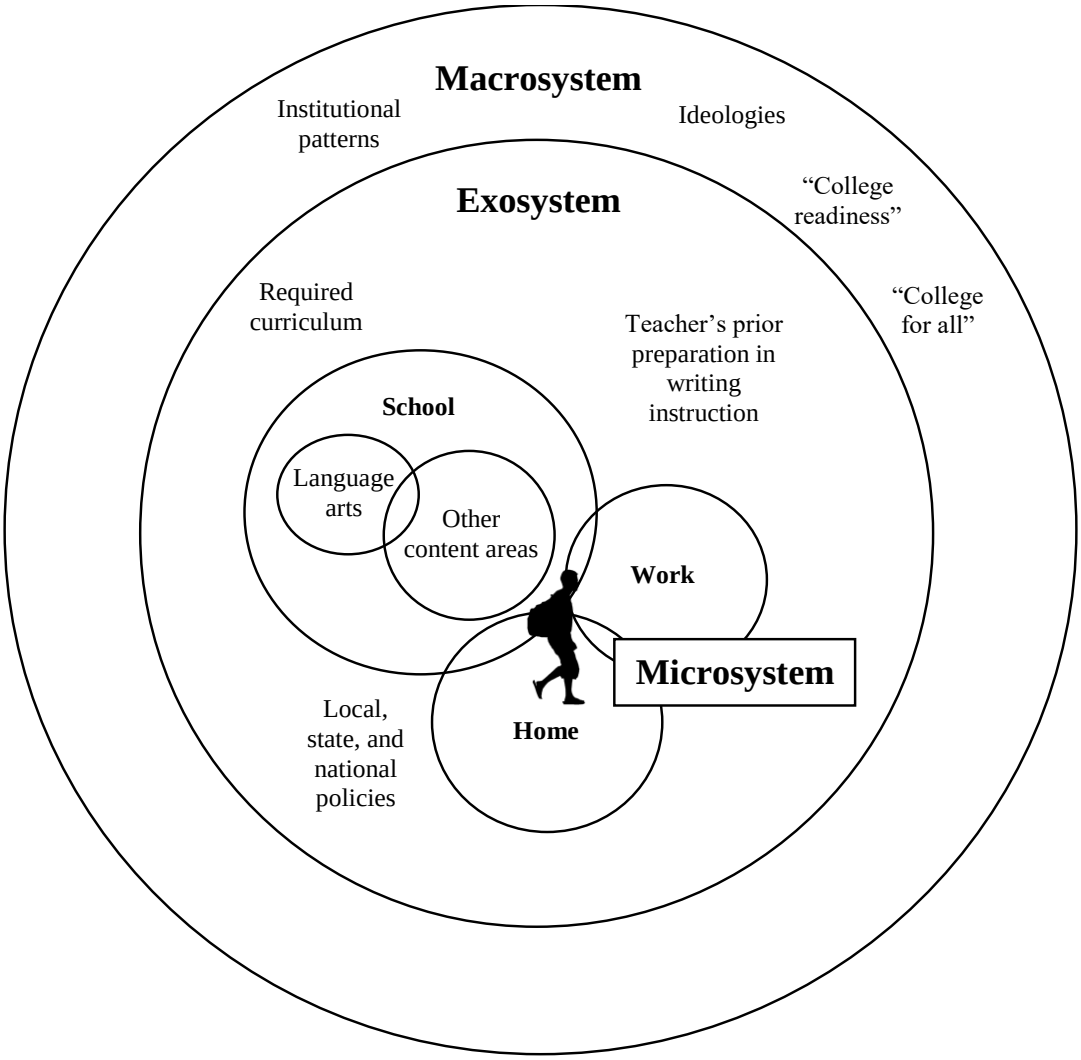

Figure 1. An ecological model of Adam's writing environments.

Note: The intersecting lines among the microsystems make up the mesosystem.

Microsystems

In the interior of the diagram are *microsystems*, which are settings that contain the individual, or for the purposes of this study, settings in which the individual might engage in writing. Bronfrenbrenner (1976) describes setting as "a *place* in which the occupants engage in particular *activities* in particular *roles* (e.g., parent, teacher, pupil, etc.) for particular periods of time" (p. 5, emphasis in original). Adolescents like Adam might write within a number of in-school and out-of-school environments and take on a variety of roles in that writing (e.g.,

student, employee, member of a peer group). For example, Adam described how he wrote "all about facts" in his high school AP Government class and interpretive responses to expository texts in his language arts class. Outside of school, he wrote text messages to communicate with his friends, cash register reports for his job at McDonalds, and e-mails to communicate with teachers.

Mesosystems

In some cases, there are connections among the microsystems in which an individual writes. For instance, a student might use a writing strategy learned in school when filling out an application for a job. Bronfrenbrenner (1976) calls these connections among microsystems the *mesosystem* (in the diagram, the mesosystem is represented by intersections among the microsystem circles). The mesosystem is a crucial layer in understanding students' transition from high school to college writing, as the extent to which students perceive connections among microsystems will influence their ability to transfer what they have learned from one setting to another. For instance, at the end of high school, Adam felt that he had some "pretty good essays in [his belt]," and he anticipated that he would be able to draw upon these essays and the knowledge he had acquired in high school to help him write in college.

Exosystems

The mesosystem extends into the *exosystem*, which includes "social structures, both formal and informal, that do not themselves contain the developing person but impinge upon or encompass the immediate settings in which that person is found, and therefore influence, delimit, or even determine what goes on there" (Bronfrenbrenner, 1977, p. 515). For example, though students generally do not help write local, state, and national policies, because these policies may impact the ways in which their teachers provide writing instruction, students' experiences of

writing will also be affected. Other exosystems that may bear upon the writing of students like Adam include school policies, curricular materials, teacher preparation programs, and parents' prior experiences and beliefs.

Macrosystems

Finally, *macrosystems* are the overarching institutions and ideologies of a culture. Bronfrenbrenner (1977) notes that these institutions and ideologies can be thought of as prototypes or blueprints "that set the pattern for the structures and activities occurring at the concrete level" (p. 515). For instance, although every classroom functions a little differently, one would expect to find some common elements, such as desks, computers, writing utensils, white boards, and a teacher facilitating various activities. Included within macrosystems, too, are notions of what schools should do. If the ideological underpinning of high schools is solely to help students learn academic skills that might be useful in college, then students' college readiness as measured by a skills-based assessment could be a logical outcome of high school. If high schools are imagined to serve other purposes, such as fostering "the development of a literate citizenry" as called for in the *Framework for Postsecondary Success*, a document authored by the leaders of three professional organizations, (Council of Writing Program Administrators, National Council of Teachers of English, & National Writing Project [CWPA, NCTE, & NWP], p. 2), then this ideology would perhaps dictate different kinds of policies and practices that ultimately shape the way that writing instruction looks in a particular classroom.

Strengths and Limitations of the Ecological Model

Admittedly, some important aspects of the contextual systems described cannot easily be captured in a pictorial representation but must be recognized in order to avoid an overly simplistic view of context. First of all, although the diagram gives the appearance of stability,

environments and the individuals within them are always changing (Bronfrenbrenner, 1977). This premise has important implications for the concept of college readiness and writing development. Because the actions and interactions of people within and outside postsecondary institutions causes these institutions to change (even slightly) over time, the concept of "college readiness" is, in some respects, aiming for a moving target. Secondly, slicing an environment into layers creates the impression that these layers are "nested" within one another, which is in fact how Bronfrenbrenner (1977) describes these layers. However, as Nolen, Horn, and Ward (2015) assert, "the layers of context that influence individual identity and learning are not simply nested like Russian dolls; instead, they are interwoven like a cloth, with threads that may strain more or less in different situations" (p. 241). Thus, while the ecological model of writing depicted in Figure 1 has visual limitations, Bronfrenbrenner's language provides a valuable way to name and situate the particular contextual strands that can impact writing development.

How does an ecological model help us understand an individual's development as they move from high school to college? First of all, ecological models draw attention to the multi-layered, situated nature of the contexts that shape an individual's development. This perspective is particularly useful for studying writing development, as it acknowledges that writing is not a universal skill that can be mastered and applied in all settings; rather, "learning to write is always ongoing, situational, and involve[es] cultural and ideological immersion" (Scott, 2015, p. 48). Secondly, ecological models move beyond a deficit view of students as "underprepared" for college writing by instead providing a lens for examining students' writing in multiple microsystems and the ways in which these systems connect or conflict with one another. That is to say, viewing high school and college writing as amalgamations of ever-changing, entangled contexts helps us to understand that "readiness" for any given writing task is contingent on

complex interactions between the students' prior experiences and the multiple systems that shape the specific task at hand. Finally, in studying students' transition from high school to college writing, an ecological model provides a tool for locating individual research studies within a wider network of research on writing.

This study focuses primarily on students' experiences writing within select school-based microsystems, while also attending to the connections that exist between them (mesosystems) and the curriculum and policy documents that might shape these settings (exosystems). Thus, although this study examines multiple contexts, it does not account for all of the interwoven factors that shape students' writing experiences. By acknowledging the contextual limitations of individual studies and piecing them together with research that examines other contexts and other systems, an ecological view of writing can lead us to a richer, more comprehensive vision of what it means for adolescents to develop as writers.

CHAPTER 2

Literature Review

Because this dissertation takes an ecological approach to students' writing development as they move from high school to college, I first turn to research that has focused on the various systems (macrosystems, exosystems, and microsystems) that shape the writing practices that often take place within high schools and colleges. Juxtaposing this context-focused research illuminates potential differences and similarities among high school and college writing practices, which in turn can help us identify factors that might be challenging for students as they move from secondary to postsecondary institutions. Then, using this literature on context as a backdrop, I examine research that focuses on students' perspectives on the (dis)connections among high school and college writing environments (mesosystems). This second strand of research suggests that students' viewpoints may challenge widely accepted beliefs on how high school and college writing differ. Throughout this review, I also consider the ways in which my dissertation study, which examines both students' perceptions of writing and the contexts in which their writing takes place, contributes to these two lines of research.

Writing Practices in High Schools and Colleges

Macrosystem factors.

To begin with a bird's eye view of writing in high schools and colleges, we might first consider the macrosystem that encompasses these institutions. That is, what do we expect high schools and colleges to look like and do, and how does writing fit into the purposes of these institutions? These institutional patterns and ideologies may not necessarily play out in a specific high school or college, and yet, they inform our national consciousness and have significant implications for the policies and practices that become normalized. Colleges and high

schools are both learning institutions (notably, though, some colleges are referred to as "research institutions" while others are "teaching institutions"—a duality that generally does not exist in high schools). In both contexts, one can find teachers, students, and tools/materials used to facilitate learning. The goals of this learning, however, differ in each context. High school education is often positioned as a way to prepare students for college and careers. Although high schools may be tasked with preparing students for both college and the work force, given that throughout the past few decades, a "college-for-all ideal" (Rosenbaum, Stephan, & Rosenbaum, 2010, p. 2) has become commonplace in the U.S. and undergraduate enrollment has increased over 30% since the year 2000 (U.S. Department of Education, 2016), it would seem that college preparation, rather than career preparation, may be the primary focus of many high schools.

Colleges, on the other hand, are often associated with career preparation, although the benefits of college completion extend far beyond access to particular professions. Postsecondary education has been linked to higher income levels; higher levels of civic engagement; healthier lifestyles; socioeconomic mobility; increased tax revenues for federal, state, and local governments; and a host of other benefits (Baum, Ma, & Payea, 2013). Thus, college matters not only for personal advancement, but also for the nation's prosperity and standing amongst other countries. The idea that increased college access and attainment benefits the nation, and in fact reflects the ideology of the American Dream, becomes important when we consider the role that local and national agencies play in these institutions, and ultimately, how teachers attempt to foster college readiness in writing. These points will be further examined in the next section in terms of how they are manifested within the exosystems that contextualize students' writing practices.

Exosystem factors.

Recalling that Bronfrenbrenner (1977) describes exosystems as formal and informal structures that do not contain the individual but nonetheless influence the settings that do contain the individual, I now examine three exosystems that have particular relevance for the writing experiences that students have in high school and college.

Policies.

At the high school level, the CCSS, which were originally adopted by 46 states, provide a vision of what students should know and be able to do by the time they graduate from high school. In the area of writing, these standards include the ability to gather information from multiple sources and use evidence to support a claim. Efforts have also been made to develop guidelines for college writing instruction. In 2011, the Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA), National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE), & National Writing Project (NWP) developed the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*, a document which "describes the rhetorical and twenty-first century skills as well as habits of mind and experiences that are critical for college success" (p. 1). The Council of Writing Program Administrators has also developed the WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, which aligns with the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* and "attempts to both represent and regularize writing programs' priorities for first-year composition" (CWPA, 2014, p. 1). Like the CCSS, the WPA Outcomes for First-Year Composition have had wide reaching influence, as these outcomes have been "adopted (or adapted) by hundreds of two- and four-year institutions nationwide" (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011, p. 5). Thus, at both the high school and college level, policy documents play an important role in establishing writing goals that are shared across institutions.

It is worth noting, however, that the organizations responsible for these policies that guide writing instruction in high schools and colleges differ. The sponsoring agencies who authored the CCSS are primarily made up of governors and state commissioners of education (the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers), while the sponsors of the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* and the WPA Outcomes are professional organizations primarily made up of writing instructors and researchers. The fact that the sponsors of these influential policy documents have very different affiliations is important, as it suggests that at the college level, writing professionals have a greater say in defining best practices, while at the high school level, state and national government agencies play a more significant role in shaping policy. Furthermore, as a result of national efforts to improve K-12 students' academic performance, high school teachers are often held accountable for their students' learning to a greater extent than what occurs at the college level. The pressure to ensure that students write well on high-stakes exams can shape high school teachers' writing instruction in ways that, ironically, may not serve students well when they enter college (Applebee & Langer, 2011, 2013; Crank, 2012; Scherff & Piazza, 2005), a point that will be explored further in the discussion of classrooms as microsystems.

Curricular approaches.

In response to widespread concerns about students' readiness for college writing that stem from the macrosystem level, several curricular approaches have been developed to increase the rigor of students' high school instruction. Curricular materials can be powerful agents of change since they provide teachers with tools they can use on a daily basis, and over time, the use of these materials can facilitate teacher learning (Grossman & Thompson, 2008). Thus, as Ball and Cohen (1996) assert, "The design and spread of curriculum material is one of the oldest

strategies for attempting to influence classroom instruction" (p. 6). However, what teachers learn from curricular materials can be problematic if they do not have the preparation, the time, or the choice to evaluate the materials they are given critically and use their judgment to decide which materials will best serve their students. For instance, in their study of three novice English instructors, Grossman and Thompson (2008) found that all three teachers utilized Jane Schaffer's multi-paragraph essay unit because it provided them with materials and a systematic approach to teaching essay writing. However, the participants did not critically consider the philosophies underlying this approach, such as the focus on form over content. To be sure, ideologies are not always obvious in curriculum materials, and developers often do not provide justification for the pedagogical practices they suggest (Ball & Cohen, 1996). Furthermore, teachers may be hesitant to challenge or modify curriculum materials when they are told that fidelity of implementation is important for their students' learning.

In California, two popular curricular approaches for twelfth-grade language arts are the Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC) and Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition (AP Literature), which are both courses and specific curricular approaches that have been designed to help students successfully navigate the reading and writing tasks they will encounter in college. Research that has examined the efficacy of these two approaches suggests that both programs are associated with improved student performance on a variety of measures (College Board, 2014; Fong et al., 2015). However, some scholars have questioned whether courses that allow students to earn college credit in high school, such as AP Literature, are in fact equivalent to similar classes that are offered at the postsecondary level (Hansen et al., 2006). Others have pointed out that even under the best conditions, a course that takes place in a high school will always differ in some ways from a college course because of differences in the

contexts, the cultures, and the maturity level of students (Tinberg & Nadeau, 2011). Thus, questions remain as to what kinds of curricular approaches are most appropriate and effective to prepare students for college writing. This is an area in which this dissertation study contributes to the literature, since it examines writing instruction and student experiences within two different college preparatory courses.

Teacher preparation.

Another exosystem that does not contain students but could significantly impact their writing development is the preparation that instructors receive (or do not receive) to teach writing. At the high school level, teachers may enter the profession with limited preparation for teaching writing (Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; National Commission on Writing, 2003). Kiuhara et al. (2009) found that among the high school science, social studies, and language arts teachers they surveyed, 71% indicated that during college, they had received minimal or no preparation to teach writing. Within language arts teachers, over 40% felt that their teacher education program had been inadequate in preparing them to teach writing. Research on effective practices for preparing preservice instructors to teach writing is also remarkably thin. Morgan and Pytash (2014) note that from 1990-2010, only 31 published studies were related to preparing preservice instructors to teach writing. The authors maintain, however, that the lack of research is reflective of the similar lack of focus on teaching writing in education programs. They assert, "Teacher educators cannot research what is not being taught and many have not made the teaching of writing a priority in their preparation programs" (Morgan & Pytash, 2014, p. 30).

At the college level, instructors are often similarly limited in their preparation for teaching writing. Within introductory first-year writing courses, which freshmen students are

typically required to take, it is common for most of the instructors to be graduate students or part-time instructors (Wardle, 2009). Though graduate students in the humanities may have had greater exposure to writing related research compared to high school instructors, they too often lack preparation in teaching writing, especially considering that many doctoral programs provide little or no instruction on teaching (Golde & Dore, 2001). These findings suggest that at both the high school and college levels, many instructors could feel challenged by the prospect of teaching writing. Indeed, without a toolbox of instructional strategies to draw upon, teachers may simply assign writing tasks to students while providing little direct instruction (Mikoda, 2013).

Microsystem factors.

Finally, I turn to literature that examines the microsystems in which students write. Although students typically write within a variety of microsystems (school, home, work, etc.), because this study focuses primarily on students' writing within their high school and college classes (with a particular focus on the writing they do in their high school language arts classes), I limit my review of the literature here to similarities and differences between classroom-level factors at secondary and postsecondary institutions.

Writing in high school and college classrooms.

Though the types of writing assignments that students typically encounter in high school and college are similar in many respects, they often differ in complexity. Fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions are common forms of writing in many high schools (Applebee & Langer, 2011), and in college, short answer questions are frequently used as well, particularly in exams (Melzer, 2009). Other forms of high school writing are less common in colleges. Kiuhara, Graham, and Hawken (2009) found that in addition to asking students to write short answer

responses, high school instructors frequently assigned lists, step-by-step instructions, and five paragraph essays. Because many high school teachers feel constrained by the demands of ensuring that their students write well on high-stakes exams, they sometimes overemphasize formulas for writing that may not be valued at the college level (Applebee & Langer, 2011, 2013; Crank, 2012; Scherff & Piazza, 2005). Furthermore, institutional constraints at the high school level, such as class load and an emphasis on test scores, may also play a role in the amount of extended writing that takes place. Applebee and Langer (2011) found that only 19% of the assignments in the high school classrooms they studied asked for extended writing of a paragraph or more; the rest of the assignments consisted primarily of fill-in-the-blank and short answer questions. In contrast, when Lunsford and Lunsford (2008) analyzed a random sample of over 800 papers collected from college composition classes in order to replicate Connors and Lunsford's (1988) study, they found that the average length of students' papers exceeded what had been reported in the prior study (an average of 1038 words per assignment in 2008, or 4.15 pages, compared to 422 words per assignment in 1986), leading the authors to conclude that "students are writing more than ever before" (p. 793).

In high schools, writing may play a greater role in some content areas than others. Though Applebee and Langer (2011) found that high school students "write more for their other subjects combined than they do for English" (p. 15), they observed that most writing takes place in English classes. Thus, although students are asked to write across disciplines, the additional time spent writing in English classes may shape their writing development in ways that align with what is valued within this discipline. For example, Kiuhara, Graham, and Hawken (2009) note that compared to social studies and science teachers, English instructors were more likely to ask students to write narratives and literary pieces (short stories, poems). At the college level,

narratives and other writing that serves an expressivist purpose is not frequently assigned (Melzer, 2009). The connection between reading and writing is particularly important at many universities. Brockman et al. (2010) report that professors often base writing assignments on assigned readings, with the goal of helping students to learn class material. Another difference between high school and college writing assignments concerns the role of research. In his study of over 2,000 undergraduate writing assignments from 100 postsecondary institutions, Melzer (2009) found that 83% of the assignments asked students to inform or persuade their audience, and students were often asked to use research to support their stance. In high schools, teachers tend to assign research papers only once a semester or once a year, though almost a third of science teachers reported never assigning research papers (Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009).

Finally, high school and college instructors may also assess writing assignments differently. In their study of teachers' writing feedback within the ePortfolio Project, a program which enabled high school students to receive feedback from both their high school English teacher and college professors, Acker and Halasek (2008) found that there were significant differences in the kinds of comments high school and college teachers wrote on students' papers. High school teachers tended to focus more on local concerns (such as conventions and word choice), whereas college teachers focused more on global concerns (such as the development of ideas). These differences in the kinds of feedback prioritized may reflect similar differences in the underlying values of high school and college teachers in regards to what they see as "good" writing.

Connected or Disconnected? The Role of the Mesosystem in Students' Transition from High School to College Writing

The literature reviewed thus far suggests that high school and college writing tasks may differ in a number of ways, including complexity and genres commonly assigned. Examining the mesosystem, the ways in which the microsystems of high school and college writing connect or disconnect, can help us understand why some students struggle with this transition while others do not. One explanation as to why students might find the transition from high school to college writing challenging is that writing tasks in college might be more cognitively demanding than writing tasks typically assigned in high schools (Applebee & Langer, 2011; Lunsford & Lunsford, 2008; Sullivan, 2014). The implication of this explanation would be that high school curriculum needs to be more rigorous in order for students to be ready for the cognitive demands of college. Another explanation is one of mismatch; that is, high schools and colleges may not always be well aligned in terms of the kinds of writing tasks they assign. This explanation would suggest that students need more practice in high school with tasks that are common at the college level, such as writing research papers (Melzer, 2009) or writing essays that are longer than five paragraphs (Fanetti, Bushrow, & DeWeese, 2010).

These two interpretations of prior research support the idea that students are academically underprepared for college writing (Achieve, 2005), and for some students, this may indeed be the case. However, research that has examined students' perspectives on the transition from high school to college writing suggests that the primary challenge for many students is not a lack of academic preparation, but rather, adapting to a new institutional culture and community. In other words, some students may perceive the contextual demands of college writing as being more challenging than the cognitive demands (Harklau, 2001; Wells, 2011a).

To that end, I briefly describe some of the contextual challenges of college writing that have been reported within the body of literature that examines student perspectives on the transition from high school to college writing. It is worth noting that many of these studies took place once students had begun college and therefore do not capture students' perspectives in high school (e.g., Curtis & Herrington, 2003; Driscoll, 2011; McCarthy, 1987; Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Sommers & Saltz, 2004; Waner, 2011). Furthermore, the few studies that utilize data collected in both high school and college are often in the form of doctoral dissertations (e.g., Mikoda, 2013; Tremain, 2015; Wells, 2011a; see Harklau, 2001, for a notable exception). There is clearly a need for more research in this vein to be conducted and disseminated, and this is an area in which this dissertation can contribute.

College culture and community.

Much of the research that focuses on students' experiences transitioning from high school to college writing looks at how students become a member of a particular college class or institution (e.g., Harklau, 2001; Sommers & Saltz, 2004; Sullivan, 2014; Waner, 2011), or what Lave and Wenger (1991) call a community of practice. As Lave and Wenger (1991) posit, "[L]earners inevitably participate in communities of practitioners and the mastery of knowledge and skill requires newcomers to move toward full participation in the sociocultural practices of a community" (p. 29). For "newcomers" to the world of college, moving towards full participation is a twofold process, which consists of learning how to be a college student at a particular institution while simultaneously learning to become a member of a particular discipline. We can see a clear example of how this process might occur in Haas's (1994) case study, which focused on the literacy practices of one college student, Eliza. As a freshman, Eliza's goals as a writer were focused on being able to prove her claims with evidence from books and other texts. As

Haas (1994) notes, “The book here was the ultimate authority—through which one received knowledge and by which one’s own contributions were judged” (p. 61). However, after participating in a wide variety of literacy practices throughout her college career, Eliza’s perception of herself began to change. During an interview her senior year, she used statements such as, “‘I’m learning to be a scientist,’ ‘I’m becoming a scientist’ and ‘I am a scientist’” (Haas, 1994, p. 77), all of which reflect shifts in her identity as a member of her discipline.

As high school students become college students within a particular institution and within their discipline, they must learn the language, or the Discourses, of these domains, which Gee (2001) defines as “ways of talking, listening, writing, reading, acting, interacting, believing, valuing, and feeling…in the service of enacting meaningful socially situated identities and activities” (p. 719). Gee makes a distinction between language (discourses) and social language (Discourses), the latter of which is important for understanding how students’ mesosystems of writing in high school and college might differ. For instance, Hannah and Saidy (2014) found that high school teachers and college teachers sometimes use different terms to talk about writing. An example they provide is the term “bellwork,” a “catch-all term used to describe short writing assignments that teachers use to begin class or that students should be doing when the bell rings” (Hannah & Saidy, 2014, p. 135). Although bellwork was a common genre within the particular high school studied, it was not a term that students encountered in college. Thus, Hannah and Saidy (2014) maintain that “two obstacles in the secondary to postsecondary transition are secondary students’ lack of familiarity with the language college teachers use to discuss writing and college teachers’ lack of familiarity with the language secondary school teachers and students use to discuss writing” (Hannah & Saidy, 2014, p. 121-122). Navigating

the differences in language about writing that occur between high school and college and across disciplines can thus be one source of contextual challenges for students.

Students might also find that the writing practices that are common in college differ in important ways from writing practices in high school. In high school, teachers often provide class time for students to write, whereas in college, students are generally required to work on their writing assignments outside of class (Harklau, 2001; Sullivan, 2014). Students (and sometimes their families) may be unaware of this shift in expectations, which can lead to problems if students work or have responsibilities at home that do not allow them sufficient time to complete writing assignments (Harklau, 2001). Researchers have also noted that students may perceive differences in high school and college teachers' expectations for particular writing tasks. The students in Wells's (2011a) study saw their college professors as being less clear about what they wanted students to do for each writing assignment, while the students in Harklau's (2001) study believed that their college professors were more explicit about communicating expectations than their high school teachers. A key difference between these two studies, however, is that the students in Wells's (2011a) study went to a college preparatory high school while the students in Harklau's (2001) study were primarily placed in low track high school classes due to their language minority status. These conflicting findings suggest that students' experiences in college may vary widely depending on their high school instruction, the type of postsecondary institution they attend, and their individual characteristics.

The "college mentality."

Whether students perceive (dis)connections between high school and college writing contexts may also depend on their attitudes towards writing. Students in Sullivan's (2014) study perceived a difference between having a "high school mentality" and a "college mentality." A

high school mentality consisted of behaviors such as procrastinating, relying on a five-paragraph essay format, and not completing required reading assignments. Although students' writing may have been deemed successful in high school despite these practices, in college, they often prevented students from meeting their goals. In contrast, a college mentality included the ability to be flexible, resilient, and adaptable to new situations. This idea of a "college mentality" is also reflected in the work of Sommers and Saltz (2004) and Reiff and Bawarshi (2011); both research teams make a distinction between students who hold fast to habits and beliefs they held in high school versus students who are willing to change.

Students' self-efficacy is another important factor that shapes students' ease of transition from high school to college writing (Tremain, 2015; Waner, 2013; Wells, 2011a). Tremain (2015) found that students who felt confident about themselves as writers were more likely to identify prior writing experiences that they could apply to their college writing tasks. Wells (2011a) also found that students' dispositions influenced the extent to which they were able to transfer both content knowledge and procedural knowledge from high school to college. Thus, the research suggests that students who believe that they will be able to succeed in college writing are likely to transition successfully (Waner, 2013), in part because of their ability to make connections between their high school and college writing experiences. Mesosystems, or the connections between high school and college writing contexts, may in fact be in the eye of the beholder. Though an outside observer may perceive similarities or differences between writing situations, it is the students' perception that ultimately influences whether or not they are able to transfer learning from one environment to another (McCarthy, 1987).

Conclusions and Contributions of the Current Study

Most studies that have examined high school and college writing practices focus on one setting or the other, and comparing these various studies gives the impression that high school and college writing are quite different. However, the limited research that describes students' experiences writing in both high school and college suggests that paths of writing development vary widely (Mikoda, 2013; Wells, 2011a), and in fact, some students may not see college writing as being much different from high school writing. Thus, research is needed to parse out why some students find college writing to be more difficult than high school writing while others do not. Furthermore, the extent to which students' writing experiences differ by institutional context has been relatively unexplored. By conducting interviews with twelve high school students and following them into their first semester of college at a variety of institutions, this study aims to address these gaps in the literature. This study also makes an important contribution in examining what kinds of writing instruction occur within two different curricular approaches (ERWC and AP Literature) and how these approaches may or may not impact students' feelings of readiness for college writing. Thus, this study can inform policies and practices that aim to improve students' ability to write effectively in both high school and college. I take into account multiple facets of college readiness by addressing the following research questions:

1. How is college readiness in writing represented in policy documents and curricular approaches at the high school and college level?
2. How do high school language arts instructors, using particular curricular approaches, teach writing and conceive of writing and college readiness?
3. How do student writers develop as they move from high school to college?

CHAPTER 3

Methods

The aim of this dissertation is to contribute an ecological, multi-layered perspective on how student writers develop as they become college-bound adults. By taking into account the role that multiple systems play in this development (exosystems, microsystems, and mesosystems), this study examines the interwoven contexts that shape writing and writing development. To that end, the three analysis chapters that follow this one each focus on a particular component of the transition from high school to college writing. In Chapter 4, I examine how writing and college readiness for writing are conceived in policy and curricular documents. Building on these analyses, Chapter 5 focuses on the instructional practices that occurred within two high school language arts classes and the ways in which the teachers' beliefs and practices reflect the ideologies present in the curricula they used. Finally, Chapter 6 examines the developmental trajectories of student writers as they moved out of their shared high school environment into a variety of postsecondary institutions. Although each chapter focuses on one component of high school and college writing, taken together, the three chapters demonstrate the ways in which each component contributes to beliefs and practices surrounding writing and college readiness. These intersections are discussed in Chapter 7. Before turning to the three resulting strands of the dissertation, in this chapter, I situate these strands by describing the context of the study, the participants, the data sources I collected, and the methods I used to analyze my data.

Context and Participants

Focal Classrooms and Teachers

In order to recruit students for the study and understand the role that high school instruction plays in students' writing development, I began my work within two twelfth-grade language arts classes. The teachers in these two focal classrooms were selected through our mutual involvement in the Pathway Project, a professional development program for secondary language arts teachers that emphasizes the use of cognitive strategies in reading and writing instruction (Kim et al., 2011; Olson et al., 2012; Olson et al., 2017). The program was developed by Carol Booth Olson at the University of California, Irvine (UCI) location of the National Writing Project, and in its twenty-year history, the program has been used in multiple school districts throughout California. Beginning in 2014, the Pathway Project was expanded to four additional school districts with support from an Investment in Innovation (i3) grant. One of these sites is a large urban school district located outside of Los Angeles. Because I had participated in this district's Pathway Project meetings in various roles (observer and co-presenter), I became acquainted with the participating teachers. One of the 2016-2017 Pathway Project participants from this district (Leslie) and one prior participant (Mark) were recruited for this study, and they both teach at West Valley High School. The two teachers' background characteristics are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Teacher Participant Demographics

Participant	Courses Taught	Years Teaching	Ethnicity	Education
Leslie	ERWC	11	White	Teaching credential Reading M.A. Educational Leadership Ed.D.
Mark	AP Literature ERWC	21	White	Teaching credential Literature M.A.

Because this study focuses on students' contextualized writing experiences, I limited my selection of focal classrooms so that I could more fully capture the writing practices that took place. Although writing also takes place in disciplines outside of language arts, I chose these two language arts classrooms because they use two distinct curricular approaches which both aim to prepare students for college writing. At the high school where Leslie and Mark teach, seniors have the option of taking either the Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC) or Advanced Placement English Literature and Composition (AP Literature). Since Leslie teaches ERWC and Mark teaches AP Literature and ERWC, this dissertation contributes a unique perspective on the strengths and limitations of using these approaches to teach writing.

Student Participants

The population of students that Leslie and Mark teach are primarily Latino/a in their ethnic background. The school's demographic information from the 2016-2017 school year was as follows: 87% Hispanic/Latino, 3.5% white, 3.4% black, 3% Fillipino, 2.4% Asian, and 0.7% other ethnicities (California Department of Education, 2017). 81.2% of students were eligible for free or reduced-price lunch. 10.2% of students were designated as English learners (EL), and 43.3% were designated fluent English proficient (FEP), which includes both students who were identified as initially fluent on their placement assessment and students who were redesignated as proficient during the prior year. Over 50% of the students had been deemed "not college ready" in English based on California State University's evaluation of their performance on an assessment given to them their junior year (California Department of Education, 2017).

Since one aim of this study was to examine potential differences in students' transition from secondary to postsecondary writing by institution type, it was important to recruit a diverse sample of student participants to interview about their experiences writing in high school and

college. Each student in the two focal classrooms was given a form to fill out if they were interested in potentially being interviewed, which asked for their name, age, whether they were planning to attend college, and if so, which school they were planning to attend. In Leslie's ERWC class, 14 students (out of 24) filled out the interest form, and in Mark's AP Literature class, 19 students (out of 30) filled out the form. To obtain a diverse sample of participants, the interest forms were first sorted within each class by gender and then by the type of institution students planned to attend (two-year college, four-year college). A random sample of students was drawn from these subgroups. Students were selected for participation in this way so that I could examine the extent to which students' writing experiences differ depending on the postsecondary institution they attend.

Twenty students were initially recruited from the two high school English courses, with ten students recruited from the ERWC course and ten students recruited from the AP Literature course. All of these students were interviewed at the end of their senior year of high school. Twelve students from the original sample completed follow-up interviews at the end of their first semester of college. In order to study students' writing development from high school to college, it was necessary to limit my analyses of student data to this subsample. In terms of demographic background, this group of twelve students shared some similarities to the overall demographics of students at West Valley High School (see Table 2). Two-thirds of the students identified as Hispanic/Latino[1], while the other third identified as Asian. The majority of the students speak two or more languages, and the majority of the students are first-generation college students. The group was evenly split in terms of gender and the type of English course

[1] Students' ethnicities are self-reported; some students chose to describe their ethnicity within broad categories (e.g., Hispanic, Asian), while other students used more specific terms to describe their ethnic background (e.g., Mexican, Sri Lankan).

they took during their senior year. This group of students was also unique in that all but one of the students chose a STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, or Math) related major. Additionally, most of the study participants attended four-year schools, whereas a school newspaper I collected during my observations reported that the majority of students at West Valley High School attend two-year schools. In my original sample of twenty students, about half of the students reported that they planned to attend a two-year school, but some of these students did not participate in the college interview. Thus, the experiences of students at four-year institutions are overrepresented in the final sample.

Table 2

Student Participant Demographics

Participant	12th Grade ELA	College Type[1]	Major	Ethnicity	Language(s) Spoken at Home	FGCS[2]
Kevin	AP Lit	UC	Computer science	Hispanic	Spanish	Yes
Farhan	AP Lit	UC	Biology	Asian	Nepali, Hindi	No
Raul	AP Lit	Private 4-Year	Biomedical engineering	Mexican	English, Spanish	Yes
Carine	AP Lit	UC	Mechanical engineering	Sri Lankan	Sinhalese	Yes
Crissy	AP Lit	UC	Biology	Vietnamese, Cambodian	Vietnamese, English	Yes
Marisol	AP Lit	UC	Biology	Latino	English, Spanish	Yes
Kristi	ERWC	CC	Psychology	Mexican	English	Yes
Oscar	ERWC	CC	Chemistry	Mexican	English, Spanish	No
Adam	ERWC	CC	Nursing	Filipino	Tagalog	No
Sandy	ERWC	CC	Veterinary studies	Hispanic	English	Yes
Becca	ERWC	CSU	Justice studies	Hispanic	English	Yes
Drake	ERWC	CSU	Communications journalism	Hispanic	Spanish, English	No

[1] According to the California Master Plan for Higher Education (UC Office of the President [UCOP], 2017), the three segments of public postsecondary education in California were established to serve particular purposes. The University of California system (UC) consists of research institutions which select from the top one-eighth of high school graduates. The primary focus of the California State University system (CSU) is undergraduate and graduate education, and these schools are to select from the top one-third of high school graduates. California Community Colleges provide academic and vocational instruction, and they admit "any student capable of benefitting from instruction" (UCOP, 2017, p. 1).

[2] First-generation college student

Data Sources

This study draws upon numerous data sources in order to take a multi-layered, ecological approach to students' transition from high school to college writing. Each data source is described briefly below. Figure 2 shows which data sources were used to answer each research question.

	Data Sources		
Research Questions	**Policy and Curriculum Documents**	**High School Data Sources**	**College Data Sources**
1. How is college readiness in writing represented in policy documents and curricular approaches at the high school and college level?	● The Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts ● WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition ● ERWC Teacher's Guide ● AP Literature Teacher's Guide		
2. How do high school language arts instructors, using particular curricular approaches, teach writing and conceive of writing and college readiness?		● Field notes ● Classroom artifacts ● Teacher interviews	
3. How do student writers develop as they move from high school to college?		● Student interviews ● Field notes	● Student interviews

Figure 2. Data sources and research questions.

Classroom Observations

Weekly observations in the two focal classrooms (ERWC and AP Literature) began in February of 2017. Observations consisted of writing detailed field notes which documented the activities that took place during the period, with a particular focus on the activities and conversations that centered on writing. An observation protocol was also used to help track the focus of each lesson and the writing activities that took place (see Appendix A). The field notes cover approximately 30 hours of observation, with slightly more time spent in Leslie's classroom than Mark's. The purpose of these observations was twofold, in that they provide information about the kind of writing instruction that takes place in high school classrooms utilizing the ERWC and AP Literature curricular approaches, and they also provide context for students' interview responses pertaining to the writing they do in language arts class.

Teacher Interviews

Interviews with the two high school teacher participants took place at the end of the school year. Each interview lasted approximately one hour. The interviews were semi-structured in nature. The teachers were both asked to respond to the same set of interview questions (see Appendix B); however, I also asked probing and follow-up questions that took into account the particular activities I observed in each classroom. The interviews were recorded and transcribed. This interview data allowed me to examine factors that influence each teacher's writing instruction and how they think about preparing students for college writing.

Classroom Artifacts

During classroom observations, any handouts that the teachers distributed during class were collected. These handouts primarily included writing prompts and texts (poems, short stories) that the teachers read aloud. The types of writing prompts and materials that the teachers

used most frequently are suggestive of their philosophies on teaching writing and college preparation, and therefore these artifacts contributed to the analyses found in Chapter 5.

Student Interviews

Interviews were conducted with student participants about their writing beliefs and practices during high school and college. The first set of interviews took place during the spring of 2017 (while the students were in their last semester of high school); the second set of interviews took place in December of 2017 (after the students completed their first quarter/semester of college). The interviews were semi-structured in nature; interview protocols (see Appendix C and Appendix D) were used with each student, but I also asked probing and follow-up questions based on their responses. The interviews ranged from 30 minutes to 50 minutes in length and were recorded and transcribed. The interview data contributes to my analyses in Chapter 6 of the dissertation, in which I examine how students developed as writers as they moved from high school to college.

Policy Documents

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) for English Language Arts.

Created in 2010 by the Council of Chief State School Officers and the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices, this document outlines the standards that students must master in order to be "college and career ready." Although the CCSS outline standards from kindergarten through grade twelve, my analysis is limited to the 11^{th}-12^{th} grade band of standards. Since this document has been widely adopted, understanding how college readiness is represented in this document allowed me to examine the extent to which these perceptions of college readiness are shared by the teachers in this study. I also used this

document as a point of comparison for how college readiness is represented in a postsecondary policy document.

Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition.

The Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition (WPA Outcomes Statement) was originally published in 1999 by the Council of Writing Program Administrators and has since undergone two revisions in 2008 and 2014. The latest version of the document was used in this study. According to the introduction of the document, its purpose is to describe "the writing knowledge, practices, and attitudes that undergraduate students develop in first-year composition" (p. 1). In Chapter 4, I compare this document with the Common Core State Standards to determine the extent to which the representation of college readiness in writing aligns in these policy documents.

Curriculum Guides

The Expository Reading and Writing Course teacher's guide.

The Expository Reading and Writing Course was initiated in 2003 by California State University (CSU) faculty to support students who had not demonstrated college readiness on the CSU's Early Assessment Program (EAP) (Fong et al., 2015). In my Chapter 4 analyses, I focus on the introduction to the ERWC teacher's guide, since it provides context for the ERWC program and gives insight into the ideologies of the developers, particularly in their conception of how best to prepare students for college-level writing.

The AP English Literature and Composition teacher's guide.

The AP program was introduced in the 1950's to address growing concerns after World War II regarding gaps in expectations between high schools and colleges (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003). An analysis of the introductory pages of the most recent AP

Literature and Composition teacher's guide provides another viewpoint of how college readiness is represented within a prevalent curricular approach, and in Chapter 4, I also compare this document to the ERWC teacher's guide.

Analytic Methods

Research question 1: How is writing and college readiness in writing represented in policy documents and curricular approaches at the high school and college level?

In this strand of the dissertation, I compare the explicit and implicit definitions of writing and college readiness in writing within two well-known, nationally aimed policy documents, the 11^{th}-12^{th} grade Common Core writing standards and the WPA Outcomes Statement, as well as within the particular curricular approaches that the high school teachers in my study used. As documents created at the state and national level, they create a backdrop for the practices that take place in specific institutions and classrooms. For my analytical approach, I first compared the Common Core State Standards to the WPA Outcomes Statement, then I analyzed similarities and differences among the ERWC and AP Literature teachers' guide, and finally I examined intersections among the policies and the curricular documents.

To compare the Common Core writing standards and the WPA Outcomes Statement, I first conducted a frequency count to determine which words were used most often in the two documents. Because both of the documents focus exclusively on writing, identifying the terms that are used most frequently can illuminate particular conceptualizations of writing that are present in the text, as well as components of writing that are deemed important by virtue of their emphasis. The frequency counts revealed terms that were used often in both documents, as well as terms that were used often in one document but little or not at all in the other document.

I then analyzed these texts from a critical discourse perspective as a way to examine ideologies—systems of ideas and ideals that are created through language. Critical discourse analysis is driven by the notion that "texts…are among the principal ways in which ideology is circulated and reproduced" (Johnstone, 2008, p. 53). As Gee (2014), argues, language is a political act because "social goods are always at stake" (p. 7). The authors of the policy documents I examined are indeed "stakeholders," in that they have particular reasons for wanting to develop policies and practices that they believe will improve students' college readiness in writing. Therefore, analyzing conceptions of writing and college readiness in writing from a critical discourse perspective allows for an examination of the politics of these language choices and what implications they have for teachers and students.

The analytic approach I used drew upon Gee's (2014) building task of "connections" as a lens for conducting discourse analysis. By "connections," Gee (2014) is referring to the ways in which "we use language to render certain things connected or relevant (or not) to other things, that is, to build connections of relevance" (p. 35). To analyze the discourse of writing within each document using connections as a lens, I examined how frequently used terms were used in context and identified words that were used in connection with these terms. I then examined how the frequently used terms and the words associated with them suggest particular ideologies of writing. Finally, I compared similarities and differences among the ideologies of writing I identified in the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement to determine the overall vision of writing and college readiness in writing suggested by each text and suggest implications of these visions.

To compare the introductory material from the ERWC and AP Literature teacher's guides, I used a slightly different approach. Because the purpose of the introduction is to provide

an overview of the curriculum, which includes a number of components besides writing, I first narrowed the focus of my analysis by identifying all of the passages in each document that referenced writing. In the introduction to the AP Literature teacher's guide, there were 16 passages that referred to writing, and there were 13 such passages in the ERWC introduction. For each passage, I used a typological coding approach (Hatch, 2002), in which I summarized what each statement said about the function of writing within the curriculum. Figure 3 shows an example of this coding approach. After coding each passage, I looked for patterns among the functions of writing both within and across the two curricular approaches. This step allowed me to identify writing functions that were shared by both approaches, as well as writing functions that were unique to ERWC or AP Literature. For instance, in the example shown in Figure 3, both of these passages reflect the idea that reading and writing need to be integrated, which emerged as a common theme among the two documents. I concluded my analyses by comparing the ideologies of writing found in the two policy documents to the ideologies I identified in the curricular approaches in order to examine the extent to which each curricular approach reflects prominent policies.

Passage	Function of Writing
AP Literature "Reading, understanding, interpreting, and writing should coexist in the AP English Literature and Composition course."	Writing coexists with reading, understanding, and interpreting.
ERWC Key Principles: The integration of interactive reading and writing processes	Writing processes and interactive reading are integrated in ERWC.

Figure 3. Coding approach for curricular documents.

Research question 2: How do high school language arts instructors, using particular curricular approaches, teach writing and conceive of college readiness?

To examine the writing instruction of the two teachers in my study, I first identified overall trends in the classroom activities that I observed by using the categories from my observation protocol to conduct frequency counts of the instructional approaches used to teach writing, the writing skills and strategies that were the focus of each lesson, the expected length of responses, the genres of writing the teachers assigned, and the ways in which writing was assessed. These frequency counts helped me to identify trends in each teacher's writing instruction and to compare their approaches to teaching writing.

Examining the relationship between the written curriculum and how teachers operationalized curriculum (Posner, 2004) was another component of addressing this research question. Since my first research question looks at the ideologies of writing within the curricula used by the two teachers in my study, I wanted to understand the extent to which these ideologies were also present in their classroom instruction and in their interviews. To analyze the intersections among the curricula and the teachers' beliefs and practices, I drew upon my fieldnotes, class handouts, and teacher interviews to identify moments where writing was discussed or practiced, breaking chunks of speech into macro-lines (Gee, 2014), that is, sections of discourse that function like a written sentence. Using the ideologies of writing I identified within the ERWC and AP Literature teacher's guides as a framework, I compared the teachers' talk and teaching around writing to the previously identified ideologies to determine how their beliefs and practices reflected, or didn't reflect, these themes. As with the previous research question, I used a typological coding approach (Hatch, 2002) to identify the main ideas of each passage and subsequently categorize these ideas using the framework generated from my

analysis of the written curricula. By triangulating multiple data sources (fieldnotes, interviews, handouts, and curricular texts), I was able to identify ideologies of writing present in the teachers' talk and teaching which were echoed in the written curriculum and examine how each teachers' personal background and teaching context may have influenced their operational curriculum.

Research question 3: How do student writers develop as they move from high school to college?

In order to analyze students' developmental trajectories in writing, it was first necessary to operationalize the term "development." To do so, I utilized the definition of writing development suggested by the Lifespan Writing Development Group (Bazerman et al., 2018): writing development is "a reorganization or realignment of previous experience that registers through writing or in a changed relationship to writing" (p. 7). Using this definition, I first identified general trends in terms of how students' writing developed from high school to college by comparing each students' high school interview to his/her college interview and noting any differences between the two in terms of students' writing beliefs and practices. Many of these differences were self-identified by the students, since in the college interview, I asked students to describe the extent to which their writing had changed since high school, what they had learned about writing in college, and what they saw as being similar or different between high school and college writing. I then compiled these shifts and, drawing upon the definition of writing development noted previously, sorted them according to whether they reflected a change in students' writing, or a change in students' relationship to writing or the writing context. I conducted frequency counts of each shift to document overall trends in students' writing development.

Then, to understand the kinds of developmental trajectories that resulted as students moved from high school to college, I used the individual shifts I identified to graph students' trajectories. Drawing upon Bazerman and colleague's (2018) definition of writing development, I hypothesized that students' developmental trajectories could take various forms, depending on whether they developed primarily in terms of their writing, their relationship to writing, both their writing and relationship to writing, or neither their writing or relationship to writing (see Figure 4). To test this hypothesis, I graphed students' trajectories on two axes. The horizonal axis represented the extent to which students' relationship to writing developed, while the vertical axis represented development in students' writing. In terms of determining whether the changes that occurred for students reflected more or less development, I considered more development to mean that students reorganized or realigned their previous experiences (Bazerman et al., 2018) in light of their experiences in the college context. For instance, some students stated in their interviews that they felt their writing had improved in college, yet when asked what they had learned about writing in college, they described primarily relying on knowledge and strategies from high school. While it is true that students' writing may indeed have improved despite not feeling that they had learned anything new, I did not consider this kind of development to be as substantial as instances in which students described specific changes in their beliefs and/or practices from high school. Graphing students' writing shifts revealed that students' trajectories reflected three of the four possibilities listed above, with none of the students demonstrating significant development in writing with little change in their relationship to writing.

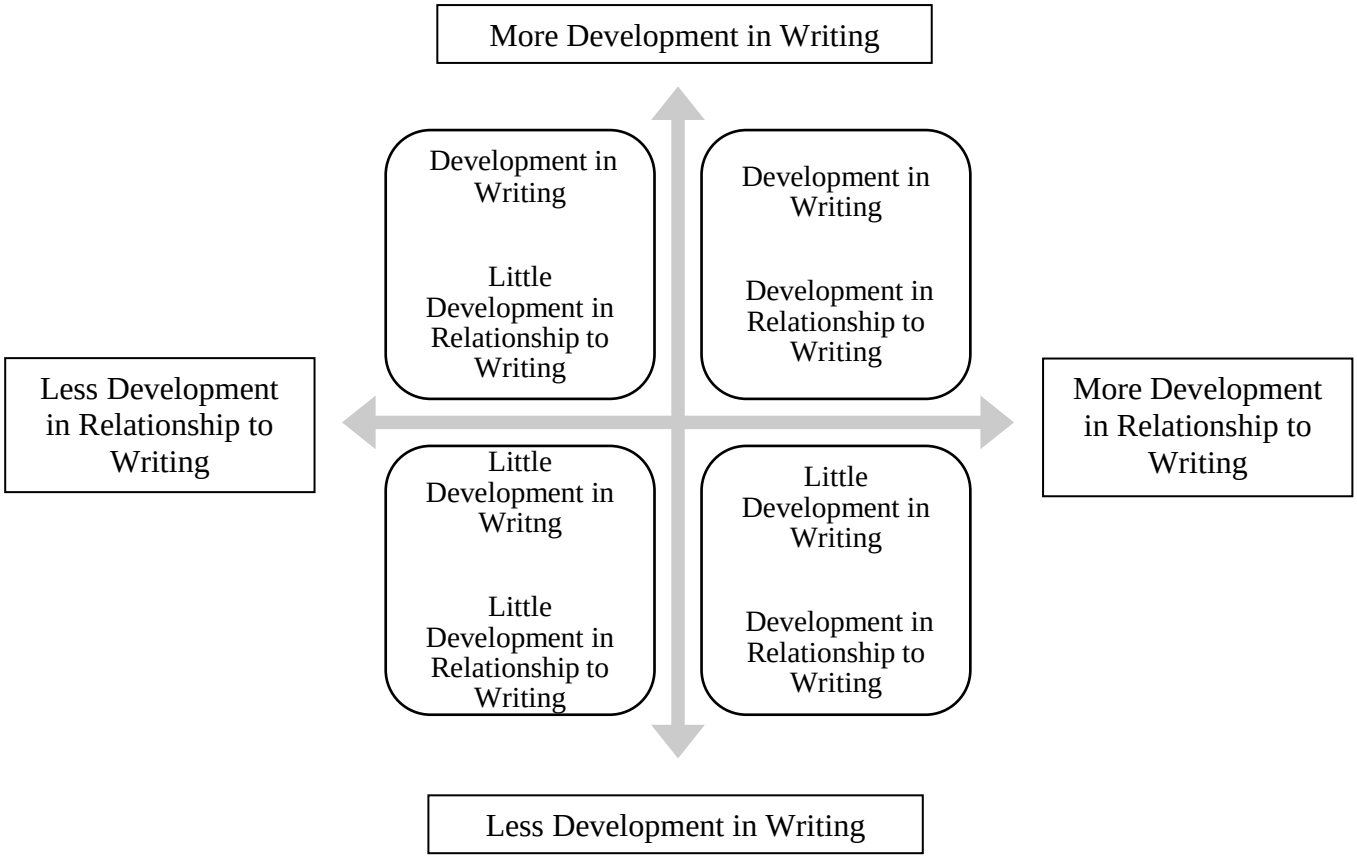

Figure 4. Students' potential writing trajectories.

To better understand how and why students' writing and relationship to writing developed across the three trajectories I identified, I used a case study approach (Yin, 2018) to examine the nature of the shifts that occurred and the contexts that these shifts occurred within. As Yin (2018) notes, case studies are particularly useful "when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident" (p. 15). Given that the types of writing situations students encounter in high school and college can depend on contextual factors (e.g., type of institution, curriculum used), and in turn, these experiences can have particular consequences for students' development as writers, a case study approach lends itself well to the contextualized nature of writing and writing development. Because my aim was to analyze the

three trajectories of writing I previously identified, the case studies represent trajectories of development, not cases of individual students. Rather, I drew upon the interview data from individual students to identify patterns and potential influencing factors within each of the three trajectories of development. Because I had previously identified the shifts that occurred for each student in terms of their writing and relationship to writing, I compared the kinds of shifts that occurred for students within each of the three groups. In all three groups, similarities emerged among the students' writing experiences which illuminate the nature of each trajectory and factors which may have shaped it.

CHAPTER 4

Exosystems of College Readiness in Writing: The Role of Policies and Curriculum

The purpose of this first layer of analysis is to determine how policy documents and the particular curricular approaches used by the teachers in this study contribute to the exosystem that surrounds students' writing development. In ecological models of development, the exosystem is conceived of as contexts that do not contain the developing individual, but nonetheless influence his/her development by impacting the settings that do contain the individual (Bronfrenbrenner, 1977). In other words, though students generally do not interact directly with policy and curricular documents, they are indirectly influenced by these texts through the ways in which their teachers interpret and take up (or resist) their ideologies. Therefore, identifying the ways in which writing is conceptualized in policies and curricular approaches is important for understanding how instructors teach writing in secondary and postsecondary contexts and how students' writing develops as they write within and across these contexts.

Ideologies of Writing—Theoretical and Analytic Understandings

In this chapter, I examine representations of writing, and more specifically, representations of readiness for college-level writing, within two policy documents and two curricular approaches. The policy documents I have chosen to analyze are the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in writing and the Writing Program Administrators' Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition, 3.0 (WPA Outcomes Statement). These two well-known, nationally aimed policy documents define the knowledge and skills students should demonstrate in their writing at the high school level (CCSS) and the college level (WPA Outcomes Statement). Comparing these documents sheds light on the ways in which college readiness and

college writing are conceptualized by different stakeholders, individuals and organizations who have particular kinds of investments in education. Differences between these conceptualizations are suggestive of challenges students may face as they move from writing in high school to writing in college. The curricular documents in this analysis have been taken from the respective teacher's guides provided for the two curricular approaches used by the teachers in my study, ERWC and AP Literature. Here too, comparing the ways in which developers conceptualize writing and college readiness is useful in understanding how these approaches align (or misalign) with the kinds of writing assignments and instruction students encounter in college.

Policy and curricular documents can have far reaching consequences. As Ball and Cohen (1996) assert, "The design and spread of curriculum material is one of the oldest strategies for attempting to influence classroom instruction" (p. 6). Policies and curriculum rely on language to communicate ideas about teaching and learning, and language consists of a series of choices about what to say and how to say it. As Johnstone (2008) asserts, these choices are "strategic, in the sense that every utterance has an epistemological agenda" (p. 54). Therefore, to analyze the four documents in this chapter, I take a critical discourse approach in order to examine the nature of language choices that surround the concept of writing. As described in Chapter 3, I used Gee's (2014) building task of "connections" as a lens for conducting discourse analysis. By "connections," Gee (2014) is referring to the ways in which "we use language to render certain things connected or relevant (or not) to other things, that is, to build connections of relevance" (p. 35). Examining how terms are connected can make clear the kinds of ideologies that are present in a text, that is, the system of ideas and ideals that is created through language. In my analyses of the selected policy and curricular documents, I identify and compare the terms that are used in each document to define and describe the function of writing. I then examine how

these terms are connected to each other and discuss what kinds of ideologies they suggest. Finally, I describe potential implications for students and teachers that result from the way writing is conceptualized within the policy and curricular documents analyzed here.

CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement

Background

The CCSS were created in 2010 and initiated by two organizations of public officials, the National Governors Association Center for Best Practices and the Council of Chief State School Officers. Currently being used in 42 states, the CCSS were designed with the intention to create a standardized framework for student proficiency, in contrast to the varied state-defined standards that existed prior to the CCSS (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2018). The WPA Outcomes Statement was originally published in 1999, and has since undergone two revisions in 2008 and 2014. The organization responsible for this document, the Council of Writing Program Administrators, is made up of "college and university faculty with professional responsibilities for (or interests in) directing writing programs" (Council of Writing Program Administrators, 2018). According to the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing*, the WPA Outcomes Statement has been adopted by "hundreds of institutions" (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011, p. 3). For the purposes of examining analogous texts for the analyses that follow, my analyses focus on the introduction to the CCSS for writing, as well as the 11th-12th grade writing standards. Writing standards are provided for all K-12 grades, but since this study examines the intersection between high school and college writing, the 11th-12th grade standards are of particular interest. I examined the WPA Outcomes Statement in its entirety, as it also contains an introduction followed by a description of what students should know and be able to do.

Similarities in the Documents

A frequency count was used to identify the terms that are used most often in the two documents. Comparing only the nouns, verbs, adjectives, and adverbs that relate to writing reveals a number of similarities between the documents. The following terms were frequently used in both documents (the number of references to each term are noted in parenthesis, with occurrences in the CCSS listed first): writing (19, 9), use (11, 10), research (8, 7), texts (8, 12), and develop (7, 8) (see Table 3 for frequency counts). Audience (7, 6) and knowledge (5, 7) were also frequently used, although the terms do not appear in both columns of the table given that seven is used as the cutoff point.

Table 3

Frequently Used Terms in the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement

CCSS	*n*	WPA Outcomes	*n*
Writing	19	Composing	17
Information	12	Conventions	16
Standards	12	Writer	15
Use	11	Students	13
Research	8	Texts	12
Write	8	Processes	11
Texts	8	Fields	10
Well	8	Use	10
Develop	7	Composition	9
Audience	7	Writing	9
Evidence	7	Develop	8
Claim	7	Learn	8
Analysis	7	Technologies	7
		Rhetorical	7
		Knowledge	7
		Research	7

Note. An *n* of 7 is used as the cutoff point, as terms at or above this point make up at least 0.5% of the document.

Overall, the similarities in frequency among some of the terms suggest that both documents do share a vision of writing that includes using different strategies and materials, researching a topic, creating and responding to texts, developing ideas, keeping audience in mind, and

demonstrating knowledge. These similarities suggest that there is some degree of alignment between how the CCSS conceptualizes college readiness in writing and what students are expected to demonstrate in a college-level composition class. However, though both documents emphasize some of the same skills, such as drawing upon research in writing and responding to written texts, their vision of writing, and even their use of the term "writing," differ in ways that may be consequential.

Differences in the Documents

Frequency counts also reveal that there are a number of terms that are used frequently in one document but little or not at all in the other (see Table 4). Three terms that were frequently used throughout the CCSS were used only once or twice in the WPA Outcomes Statement: information, standards, and write. In the WPA Outcomes Statement, eight of the frequently used terms were missing or rarely used in the CCSS: composing, conventions, writer, processes, fields, composition, learn, and rhetorical. Using Gee's (2014) building task of "connections" as an analytic lens, I identified the ways in which these frequently used terms related to other terms and concepts. These relationships are suggestive of how writing and writing instruction are conceived differently in each document. For each term used frequently in only one document, I looked to the other document for different words that seemed to be used in a similar manner. I then considered how these different word choices create conceptions of particular writing skills and practices that contribute to each documents' overall vision of writing.

Table 4

Terms Used with Different Frequencies in the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement

Term	CCSS *n*	WPA Outcomes *n*
Emphasis in CCSS		
Information	12	1
Standards	12	2
Write	8	1
Emphasis in WPA Outcomes		
Composing	0	17
Conventions	3	16
Writer	1	15
Processes	0	11
Fields	0	10
Composition	0	9
Learn	0	8
Rhetorical	0	7

Standards vs. outcomes.

Perhaps the most obvious difference between the two documents is the use of the term "standards" in the CCSS and "outcomes" in the WPA Outcomes Statement. The WPA Outcomes Statement makes clear that this rhetorical choice was intentional, as the text states that "[t]he setting of standards to measure students' achievement of these Outcomes has deliberately been left to local writing programs and their institutions" (p. 1). In contrast, the CCSS were not designed to take local concerns into account, but rather to establish a common set of expectations for students across the U.S. Additionally, the terms "standards" and "outcomes" as used in these documents seem to represent differences in scope. The CCSS state, "The grades 6-12 standards on the following pages define what students should understand and be able to do by the end of each grade" (p. 41). Thus, standards within the CCSS seem to encompass knowledge and skills. Outcomes, as conceived in the WPA Outcomes Statement, are defined in the first few lines of the document: "This Statement…describes the writing knowledge, practices, and attitudes that

undergraduate students develop in first-year composition" (p. 1). Thus, outcomes encompass not only knowledge, but also practices and attitudes that may not be easily assessed, but are nonetheless important for engaging in college-level writing. Notably, if we look outside the CCSS writing standards to the general introduction for the literacy standards, the CCSS does include what the authors call a "portrait" of students who are college and career ready, which includes qualities such as "they demonstrate independence" and "they value evidence." Though these qualities might be similar to the attitudes envisioned in the WPA Outcomes Statement, by focusing exclusively on "the skills and understandings that all students must demonstrate" (p. 41) within the CCSS writing standards, skills that are easily observed or measured are prioritized as indicators of readiness. Furthermore, the absence of attitudes within the description of the writing standards makes it unclear how specific standards help students develop attitudes that are reflective of growing expertise in writing. Overall, these differences between the use of the terms "standards" and "outcomes" are reflective of two different views of learning, one that is focused on the *demonstration* of knowledge and skills (a performance view of learning), and another that is focused on the *development* of knowledge, practices, and attitudes (a process view of learning).

Writing vs. composing.

Although the term "writing" is used in both documents, in the WPA Outcomes Statement, "composing" is used more frequently than "writing" to describe this practice, while the CCSS do not use the term "composing" at all. Both documents offer descriptions of the core practice that the document refers to ("writing" in the case of the CCSS and "composing" in the WPA Outcomes Statement). Comparing the definitions of writing and composing that are provided in the texts suggests that the two terms differ in what they connote.

The CCSS offers this statement to describe the function of writing: "For students, writing is a key means of asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject, and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought, and felt" (p. 41). This statement suggests that the CCSS sees writing as having three functions for students: as a tool for argument, as a demonstration of learning, and as a means of personal expression. These purposes correspond with the three text types outlined by the CCSS: argumentative texts, informative/explanatory texts, and narrative texts. The inclusion of informational texts in the CCSS is also reflected in the frequency counts above, wherein "information" appears 12 times in the CCSS, but only once in the WPA Outcomes Statement.

The WPA Outcomes Statement defines composing in this way: "In this Statement, 'composing' refers broadly to complex writing processes that are increasingly reliant on the use of digital technologies. Writers also attend to elements of design, incorporating images and graphical elements into texts intended for screens as well as printed pages" (p. 1). In this definition, writing is conceived of as a component of composition—the term "broadly" suggests that "composing" refers to more than just the production of written text, but rather multiple modalities of production. Composing is not necessarily limited to producing words on a page, but rather can include artistry in terms of how "images and graphical elements," as well as "digital technologies," might be incorporated into a given text or product. Significant, too, in this definition, is that writing is modified by the term "complex," suggesting that composing entails more than the act of putting thoughts into written words, but instead must reflect a certain level of complexity at the college level.

The key differences between the concept of writing in the CCSS and composing in the WPA Outcomes Statement are illuminated by looking at the ways in which they are connected to

other ideas. In the CCSS, writing is described "as a key means of," implying that it is tool used to accomplish a particular goal or task. In the WPA Outcomes Statement, composing is described as "complex writing processes," implying that it is a set of actions that one undertakes. The distinction here is that the definition of writing provided by the CCSS focuses on what *writing* does, while the definition of composing in the WPA Outcomes Statement focuses on what *writers* do. Thus, in the latter definition, what matters is not only what writing is able to accomplish, but also how particular processes allow writers to achieve their goals.

Students vs. writers.

The term "writer" is used 15 times in the WPA Outcomes Statement, but only once in the CCSS 11-12 writing standards and introduction. In the CCSS, the sole reference to the term "writer" appears in the introduction: "To be college- and career- ready writers, students must take task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information, structures, and formats deliberately" (p. 41). This sentence implies that being considered a college and career ready writer is contingent on attaining a certain set of skills. By equating college and career readiness with the term "writer," the term is conceptualized as a status that one reaches, rather than a term for students who engage in the act of writing, but perhaps have not mastered particular skills. In the introduction to the WPA Outcomes Statement, the term "writer" is first used within a definition of composition, as mentioned in the previous section. The next reference to "writer" in the introduction occurs in this statement: "As students move beyond first-year composition, their writing abilities do not merely improve. Rather, their abilities will diversify along disciplinary, professional, and civic lines as these writers move into new settings where expected outcomes expand, multiply, and diverge" (p. 1). In this passage, the reference to "students" in the first sentence is replaced and renamed in the second sentence with

the term "these writers." This re-positioning is associated with the particular disciplinary and professional communities that students will become a part of in college, and although the term "abilities" is mentioned here as well, its use seems different from the CCSS in that abilities are described as diversifying rather than simply improving.

The way that the language in the WPA Outcomes Statement repositions students as writers may also be reflective of an orientation to learning, or learning attitudes, expected in college. In college, students may be encouraged to re-position themselves as contributors to knowledge rather than just receivers of knowledge, since they are expected to engage in the ongoing conversations within their given discipline (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011). In the CCSS, "writer" was associated with being ready to participate in particular contexts (colleges and careers). Within the WPA Outcomes Statement, "writer" seems to be associated with participation in particular communities, or what might be called a discourse community (Nystrand, 1982; Swales, 1987), a network of people who share common goals and particular norms of communication. The mismatch between the frequency of the term "writer" in the two documents comes from the use of "writer" in the WPA Outcomes Statement to describe the practices and processes that writers engage in and how the outcomes for first-year composition are linked to that concept. For example, the section titled "Processes" begins, "Writers use multiple strategies, or *composing processes*, to conceptualize, develop, and finalize projects" (p. 2, emphasis in original). After additional description about how writers use processes, two bulleted lists summarize what outcomes students should demonstrate ("By the end of first-year composition, students should…" [p. 2]) and how instructors can support this learning ("Faculty in all programs and departments can build on this preparation by helping students learn…" [p. 3]). In sum, the key difference between the two terms is that in the CCSS, students become

college-ready writers through their ability to fulfill certain expectations, whereas in the WPA Outcomes Statements, students become writers when they engage in the act of composition, particularly within disciplinary communities. As we saw in the previous sections on standards versus outcomes and writing versus composing, the two documents seem to reflect different orientations towards learning, which becomes even clearer when we examine the next set of differing terms.

Product vs. process.

The term "process" is used 11 times within the WPA Outcomes Statement, but not at all in the introduction to the CCSS writing standards or the 11-12th grade standards. A related term, "learn," is used 8 times in the WPA Outcomes Statement and is also absent within the CCSS writing standards. As noted earlier, an entire section of the WPA Outcomes Statement describes how writers rely on multiple processes to compose, and it outlines outcomes that specify what kinds of writing processes students should develop throughout first-year composition. Rather than using the term "process," the CCSS seem to rely instead on the term "produce" (used six times within my analytical sample) to talk about students' composing. For instance, in the introduction to the writing standards, the text states,

> [Students] must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality first draft text under a tight deadline as well as the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it. (p. 41)

In this passage, the idea that writing involves processes is present. That students need to be able to make revisions across multiple drafts suggests that writing is a process and not a one-and-done procedure. However, the decision to foreground terminology of production over process could

potentially undermine a process-orientation to teaching writing. Indeed, Applebee (2013) has also noted that the way in which the CCSS list the desired features of student writing could lead to an emphasis on the formulaic rather than the processes that writers engage in.

Outside of the writing standards, the introduction to the CCSS literacy standards explains why the CCSS focus on results:

> By emphasizing required achievements, the Standards leave room for teachers, curriculum developers, and states to determine how those goals should be reached and what additional topics should be addressed. Thus, the Standards do not mandate such things as a particular writing process… (p. 4)

Though local agency seems to be the goal behind a focus on products rather than processes, an unintended consequence may be that curriculum and instruction at the secondary level that attempts to be aligned with the CCSS might place less of a premium on supporting students' development of a variety of composing processes. Since processes factor heavily into the WPA Outcomes Statement, it may be that students' ability to learn and use multiple writing processes is just as key to college readiness as their ability to produce particular kinds of writing.

Rhetoric, conventions, and fields.

Finally, three seemingly interrelated terms were used frequently in the WPA Outcomes Statement but little or not at all in the CCSS writing standards: rhetoric, conventions, and fields. An entire section of the WPA Outcomes Statement is devoted to rhetorical knowledge. In this section, the definition and importance of rhetoric is described as follows: "*Rhetorical knowledge* is the ability to analyze contexts and audiences and then to act on that analysis in comprehending and creating texts. Rhetorical knowledge is the basis of composing" (p. 1, emphasis in original). The term rhetoric does appear in the 11th-12th grade Common Core

standards for reading, as well as speaking and listening. In these sections of the standards, students are expected to be able to analyze an author or speaker's use of rhetoric. However, rhetoric is not mentioned at all in the writing standards. As Rives and Olsen (2015) have noted, this difference between the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement could point to a potential disconnect between how writing is conceptualized and taught within high schools and colleges. The emphasis on rhetoric within the WPA Outcomes Statement may be an acknowledgment of the differentiation of writing that occurs when students start to enter their disciplinary field of study. Indeed, the terms "conventions" and "fields" are also used in the WPA Outcomes Statement to make this point. For instance, in the section titled "Rhetorical Knowledge," the document notes that faculty should help students to learn "the expectations of readers in their field," "the main features of genres in their fields," and "the main purposes of composing in their fields" (p. 2). The term "conventions" in the WPA Outcomes Statement is also related to the ideas of rhetoric and fields. "Conventions arise from a history of use and facilitate reading by invoking common expectations between writers and readers" (p. 3), the document states, and it goes on to describe how conventions can vary according to genre, discipline, and occasion. The term "conventions" does appear three times in the 11th-12th grade CCSS writing standards, but compared to the 16 uses of "conventions" in the WPA Outcomes Statements, the concept is clearly less of a focus in the CCSS. Two of the references in the CCSS are related to students' ability to "attend to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing" (p. 45), while the other reference states that students must be apply to use knowledge of conventions for the purpose of editing their writing. This definition of conventions is further emphasized in the CCSS language standards, where "Conventions of Standard English" is one of the three categories used to organize the standards.

Overall, the WPA Outcomes Statement seems to conceptualize both rhetoric and conventions in different ways than the CCSS. Rhetoric in the WPA Outcomes Statement entails an analytic lens that can be used to inform both the production and comprehension texts, whereas in the CCSS, rhetoric primarily entails identifying how an author/speaker uses rhetoric to create their message. In the former conceptualization, students might be expected to develop a rhetorical attitude towards writing, while in the latter, rhetoric is a component that can contribute to the effectiveness of a product. Similarly, the term "conventions" in the WPA Outcomes Statement refers to expectations of genres, disciplines, and occasions, whereas in the CCSS, "conventions" mostly refers to the ability to write using standard English. If these differences are reflected in classroom instruction, students may have to expand their understanding of rhetoric and conventions when they enter college composition.

Implications for Students' Transition from High School to College Writing

Individual teachers and institutions will vary in the extent to which they take up the principles espoused in documents like the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement. However, research suggests that widely adopted policies do have some degree of influence on classroom instruction (Edgerton, Polikoff, & Desimone, 2017), which means that differences between secondary and postsecondary policies could have consequences for students as they write within both contexts. Each of the differences described above has potential implications for what students may find challenging as they begin writing at the college level (see Table 5).

Table 5

Differences Between the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement

Differences	Implications for Students at the College Level
Standards vs. outcomes	To achieve learning outcomes rather than standards, students may be expected to develop particular attitudes and practices.
Writing vs. composing	Students may be asked to see writing as part of a broader process (composing) that includes visual elements.
Students vs. writers	Students may be challenged to re-position themselves as writers and members of a disciplinary community.
Product vs. process	Students may be challenged to see writing as a complex, nonlinear process, rather than as a set of steps leading to a product.
Rhetoric, conventions, and fields	Students may be unfamiliar with the idea of writing rhetorically, and they may associate the term "conventions" primarily with grammar.

The first difference seen in the two documents was the use of the terms standards (in the CCSS) and outcomes (in the WPA Outcomes Statement). Because these terms are reflective of different orientations to learning, with the term "standards" emphasizing demonstration of knowledge and "outcomes" emphasizing development of knowledge, students may have different learning experiences when they are asked to write in high school and college. For instance, determining student proficiency in writing through the use of standards-based, on-demand writing tasks is a common practice at the high school level. In these kinds of writing situations, it does not matter how students arrived at their final written product, whereas the WPA Outcomes Statement suggests that by the end of college composition, students should develop not only an ability to produce effective writing, but also learn to adopt particular writing practices and attitudes.

Similarly, the use of the terms "writing" and "composing" in the two documents reveals that in the CCSS, writing is seen as a tool that accomplishes specific purposes, whereas in the WPA Outcomes Statement, composing focuses on writing processes, which can include the production of not only text but also visual components. These differences suggest that when students enter college, they may be challenged to change or broaden how they think about writing. Specifically, the emphasis on "students" in the CCSS and "writers" in the WPA Outcomes Statement implies that at the college-level, students are also writers who contribute to the production of knowledge within disciplines. "Writer" implies a level of legitimacy different from the term "student," which parallels the process of re-positioning that students must undergo as they become members of their fields.

Overall, the primary divide between the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement relates to the visions of writing that they create. In the CCSS, the primary focus is on the skills students need to be able to demonstrate in their written products, while the WPA Outcomes Statement focuses on the processes that students will learn throughout their first-year composition course. Like the differences implied through the use of the terms "writing" and "composing," students who have developed a product-oriented view of writing may be challenged to rethink this understanding in college. Furthermore, the WPA Outcomes Statement emphasizes the idea of writing rhetorically, which entails analyzing contexts and audiences, as well as attending to genre conventions, to inform the creation of texts. Since rhetoric is not mentioned in the CCSS writing standards and conventions are primarily conceived as the ability to write using standard English, the concept of writing rhetorically may be new to students when they enter college.

Analyzing differences in the language used within the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement illuminates areas in which students' secondary and postsecondary writing experiences

may diverge. Being cognizant of these policy differences could be helpful for instructors within both domains in providing instruction that seeks to bridge some of these differences. However, these differences also raise questions about what kinds of skills and processes should be taught in each domain. For instance, though high school instructors could certainly introduce their students to the concept of writing rhetorically, perhaps the concept becomes more meaningful after students have had the experience of navigating a new school environment and writing within one's chosen discipline. A question remains, then, as to how the development of writing might work in tandem with the other kinds of development (e.g., cognitive and social) that occur as students move from high school to college.

ERWC and AP Literature

Background

The Expository Reading and Writing Course (ERWC) was developed in 2003 by a committee consisting of California State University (CSU) faculty, high school teachers, and administrators. The course was created to support high school students who had not demonstrated college readiness on the CSU's Early Assessment Program (EAP) (Fong et al., 2015). According to the ERWC teacher's guide, the curriculum has now been adopted by nearly half of the high schools in California.

The Advanced Placement (AP) program was introduced in the 1950's by the College Board to address growing concerns after World War II regarding gaps in expectations between high schools and colleges (College Entrance Examination Board, 2003). AP Literature and Composition is typically offered to twelfth graders, though it is not specifically intended to be a twelfth-grade curriculum, and as of 2017, 14,019 U.S. schools offered an AP Literature course (College Board, 2017). Policies surrounding the course are determined by the AP English

Literature Development Committee which consists of six members, half representing high schools and half representing colleges. Though AP Literature is often viewed as a course intended for high-achieving students, the teacher's guide states that "any student willing and ready to do the work should be considered for an AP course" (p. viii), and the College Board discourages teachers from using gatekeeping devices such as grade point average to determine which students should be allowed to take the course[2].

For the purposes of this analysis, I focused exclusively on how writing is described and defined within the introduction section of both the ERWC and AP Literature teacher's guides. Although it's likely that many teachers skip over the introduction as they peruse the teacher's guide, as a textual component that often provides context for what follows, introductions may provide insight into the ideologies of the developers and how they imagine the curriculum should be taken up by teachers. Both the ERWC and AP Literature introductions are approximately the same length: the ERWC introduction is five pages long, and the AP English preface is just over five pages long. This component of the ERWC teacher's guide is titled "Introduction," while in the AP Literature teacher's guide, it is titled, "About AP English Literature and Composition." At the end of the ERWC introduction, the author is identified as John R. Edlund, Chair, CSU Expository Reading and Writing Course Advisory Committee. The author of the first section of the AP Literature introduction is identified as Heather Murray, Associate Professor of English at the University of Toronto. On the front cover of the AP Literature teacher's guide, Ellen Greenblatt is named as the author, so presumably she is the author of the rest of the introduction. Her credentials as "a consultant for the College Board and ETS" and "a veteran teacher and accomplished author" (xiii) are provided after the preface. In the sections that follow, I identify

[2] This open access policy was the approach taken at my research site, West Valley High, and will be discussed in Chapter 5.

similarities and differences among the two curricular approaches that emerged as a result of the typological coding approach (Hatch, 2002) I described in Chapter 3.

Similarities in the Approaches

Integration of reading and writing.

As suggested by the full titles of the two courses (Advanced Placement Literature and Composition and the Expository Reading and Writing Course), both programs take an integrated approach to reading and writing. The AP Literature teacher's guide states that "reading, understanding, interpreting, and writing should coexist," and it contains "suggestions for creating a writing curriculum that both informs and is informed by what your students are reading and discussing" (p. 6). Thus, in AP Literature, reading, writing, and discussion are conceived as reciprocal processes that should be taught in tandem. Similarly, the ERWC teacher's guide includes as one of its five key principles "the integration of interactive reading and writing processes" (p. xv). In ERWC, this integration occurs by taking a "a rhetorical approach that fosters critical thinking and engagement through a relentless focus on the text" (p. xv). This "relentless focus on the text" is intended to ensure that students are "fully engaged with the text at hand and the issues it raises, not with exercises and drills" (p. xv). Writing instruction that reflects this approach would take place within the context of reading, and indeed, the ERWC curriculum is organized into modules that include reading and writing activities centered around a set of thematically linked texts.

A focus on text-based, analytical writing.

A second similarity between the two approaches is their exclusive focus on text-based, analytical writing, as opposed to other forms of writing such as narrative or creative fiction. Both teacher's guides suggest that the value of writing is in its ability to reflect students'

understanding and analysis of texts. For instance, the AP Literature teacher's guide states, "Close, attentive, and appreciative reading is at the base of all we do, expressed through discussion and debate, performance, and especially through critical writing" (p. 2). In this passage, the importance of close reading is foregrounded, while writing is positioned as a vehicle for expressing students' attention to and appreciation of the text. Likewise, when the development of ERWC is described in the teacher's guide, Edlund writes that initially, the program was intended to be a collection of best practices from developmental (remedial) college courses, but members of the curriculum development committee who worked in high schools argued that "the real problem was critical reading, not writing" (p. xiii). The "problem" mentioned in this statement is hitherto unmentioned, but presumably Edlund is referring to problems that students encounter as they transition from high school to college. Both documents also highlight the importance of drawing upon texts to support written analysis. For instance, the AP Literature teacher's guide states that by the end of the course, "students should be able to approach a poem, a prose work, and a play and—proceeding beyond visceral and emotional reactions—respond to it analytically and critically, both orally and in writing" (p. 4). Examining the form and structure of texts, rather than providing personal responses, seems to be the ultimate goal of students' literary analysis. Furthermore, students are expected to move from knowledge telling (summarizing) to knowledge transformation (analyzing) (Scardamalia & Bereiter, 1987) by using "literary terms and key concepts to illuminate insights rather than simply to show [their] familiarity" (p. 4). In ERWC as well, students are to learn how to "analyze both the content and the rhetorical structures [of texts], and properly use materials from the texts they read in supporting their own written arguments" (p. xvi). Thus, in both courses, writing acts as a tool to

analyze texts, and strong writing is a reflection of close, critical reading skills and the use of textual materials to support analysis.

Differences in the Approaches

Conceptions of college readiness.

One difference between the ERWC and AP Literature teacher's guides is how the programs are connected to the idea of college readiness. In the introduction to the teacher's guide, ERWC is explicitly linked to the CCSS, and Edlund states that preparation for college was the motivation for creating the course: "The original Expository Reading and Writing Task Force was charged with creating a course to help prepare students for the reading and writing demands of the first year in college" (p. xiii). The initial impetus for the formation of this course is not identified—the reader is not told who "charged" the task force with creating this curriculum, and the CCSS did not exist in 2003, the year that development of the course began. However, Edlund explains that when the course was revamped beginning in 2011, "the new template and all of the modules [were] aligned with the Common Core State Standards" (p. xiv).

In contrast, in the introduction to the AP Literature teacher's guide, the term "college" is only mentioned in reference to the College Board and the policies that postsecondary institutions have in place for determining how students' AP Literature exam score will translate into credits and/or placement. Other sections of the teacher's guide discuss AP Literature's relationship to college readiness more explicitly, and an entire research report generated by the College Board describes the extent to which the CCSS align with AP courses, as well as how the CCSS prepare students for AP courses (Hart, Carman, Luisier, & Vasavada, 2011). However, in the introduction section, the aim of AP Literature is expressed only in terms of what skills students should be able to demonstrate by the end of the course: "read, write, and discuss works critically

and with energy and imagination" (p. 3). The inclusion of "energy and imagination" seems significant here, in that AP Literature defines not only what literacy skills students will develop, but also *how* students should engage in these practices. Since ERWC is more explicitly aligned with the CCSS, its aim to "prepare students for the reading and writing demands of the first year in college" (p. xiii) more closely reflects the idea of college and career readiness associated with the CCSS.

Since students can potentially earn college credit for taking AP Literature, another way in which it conceptualizes college readiness is through students' ability to pass the AP Literature exam. However, "teaching to the test" as a way to prepare students for the exam is not encouraged. Teachers are advised that "if we teach a rich, varied, and interesting curriculum and require writing that demands interpretation and evaluation, the exam (with a bit of practice to ensure that students are test-wise) will take care of itself" (p. 4). Thus, even though earning college credit by passing the AP exam is an outcome that indicates college readiness, this statement suggests that teachers should aim to create an interesting curriculum and demanding writing tasks, rather than focusing on getting students ready to take the AP test.

That the two documents frame their outcomes differently and have different points of connection with the CCSS suggests that the extent to which they reflect the ideologies of writing found in the CCSS may also differ. Since curricular materials can have a significant influence on daily classroom instruction (Ball & Cohen, 1996), the extent to which these materials reflect educational policies plays an important role in whether the ideals espoused in policy will be realized in practice. This is a point that I will return to at the end of this chapter, as I examine the ways in which the ERWC and AP Literature documents reflect the ideologies of writing I identified within the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement.

Responding to literary and expository texts.

Another difference between the two approaches concerns the kinds of texts students are asked to respond to in their writing. As its name suggests, the Expository Reading and Writing Course focuses primarily on expository texts. Although nonfiction, informational texts are commonly associated with the term "expository," Edlund explains that "ERWC has always defined the term 'expository' in a broad way that includes all types of informational and persuasive text and has always contained creative literature as well" (p. xv). The majority of the texts found in the ERWC modules are essays and articles, but the teacher's guide specifies that two full-length works (*Into the Wild* and a dystopian novel) are also included. In asking students to read and respond to these literary texts, ERWC still places its primary focus on text-based, analytical writing. Edlund states, "Our emphasis even in reading literary texts tends to be on debating important ideas and analyzing the effects of stylistic choices on readers. In other words, we approach the literary text as a rhetorical act rather than an aesthetic artifact" (p. xv).

In AP Literature, students are asked to write in response to fiction texts, and by the end of the course, students should be able to analyze and write critically about "a poem, a prose work, and a play" (p. 4). The teacher's guide suggests that to do this kind of analytical writing, students must be provided with complex texts that lend themselves to multiple interpretations, texts "that can bear close examination and re-examination" (p. 3). Like ERWC, a rhetorical approach to analyzing texts is emphasized, although rather than using the term "rhetorical," the AP Literature teacher's guide notes that "students should understand that form follows function, that *how* authors write is inextricably linked to *what* they are writing about" (p. 4). However, because ERWC focuses on expository texts, students are asked to use different kinds of tools to analyze texts compared to AP Literature. In ERWC, students are asked to "analyze both the

content and rhetorical structures" (p. xvi) of texts, while in AP Literature, students are to use literary terms and elements of style (diction, tone, syntax) to examine texts. These differences suggest that students' experiences in ERWC and AP Literature could lead to familiarity with different kinds of analytical tools. In analyzing expository texts, students might focus primarily on how an author crafts an argument and to what extent that argument is persuasive, whereas in analyzing literary texts, students might focus on how literary and stylistic devices contribute to the overall theme.

The high school teacher's role in curricular planning

Finally, perhaps the greatest difference between ERWC and AP Literature is the extent to which the teacher is given agency to make decisions about which texts to teach, how many texts to teach, and how to assess writing. As the ERWC teacher's guide explains, the curriculum consists of 12 modules, "from which the teacher is required to choose 8-10 to complete the course" (p. xvi). The modules consist of "several different forms of informal writing, [and] move from prereading activities, though reading and postreading activities, to more formal writing assignments" (p. xvi). In contrast, AP Literature has no such requirements, as the teacher's guide states that "while there are core skills (attentive reading and analytical writing), there need be no core curriculum" (p. 1). AP Literature teachers are charged with choosing which texts they want to teach, while keeping in mind the advice that "the importance of getting to know a few works well cannot be overstated" (p. 3). Furthermore, the AP Literature teacher's guide raises a number of questions about assigning and assessing writing, but leaves the answers to these questions in the hands of instructors:

> And what about writing? How much is enough? Can students write imaginatively as well as analytically and critically?...You will see, just from the sample syllabi in chapter 3,

> that successful approaches to teaching AP English Literature and Composition take many forms. (p. 3).

Thus, the ERWC teacher's guide implies that teachers must closely follow the curricular activities as they have been designed and cover a particular number of modules, whereas the AP Literature teacher's guide implies that there are a variety of ways to teach reading and writing effectively, and teachers are empowered to make these curricular decisions themselves.

The ERWC and AP Literature teacher's guides seem to offer two different visions of the role that high school English teachers will play in these courses. In one vision, teachers play a supporting role as implementers of curriculum (ERWC); in the other, teachers play a leading role as designers of curriculum (AP Literature). These differing visions raise an important question: What role *should* high school English teachers play in preparing students for the reading and writing demands of college? On the one hand, college faculty may be in a better position to determine what kinds of reading and writing skills students will need in order to be successful in postsecondary education. On the other hand, in order for college preparation curriculum to be appropriate for high school students, it needs to take into account the unique aspects of this context and the specific needs of students at this point in their development, which are areas in which high school teachers likely have more expertise. The extent to which high school instruction is developmentally appropriate *and* reflects the kinds of writing practices that are common at the college level will impact students' writing experiences as they move from one context to the next.

Implications for Students' Transition from High School to College Writing

Comparing the introductory material in the ERWC and AP Literature teachers' guides suggests that there are some differences in the ways in which the curriculum developers conceive

of writing instruction, and these differences can have implications for students as they transition from high school to college (see Table 6). The first difference between the two documents lies in how the curriculum is intended to prepare students for college. The ERWC teacher's guide explains that ERWC is aligned with the CCSS. While AP Literature's alignment with the CCSS is described in a report created by the College Board (Hart et al., 2011), this alignment is not mentioned in the teacher's guide. Since students will take the AP Literature exam at the end of the course and can potentially earn college credit if they pass, this test arguably serves as an assessment of college readiness (I say "arguably" here as there is some debate as to whether any course offered in the high school context can in fact be equivalent to a college course—see Tinberg & Nadeau, 2011). In addition, ERWC focuses primarily on skills and strategies that will lead to college success, whereas AP Literature also seems to value cultivating student interest in literacy practices by creating a "rich, varied, and interesting curriculum" (p. 4). The extent to which students enjoy writing could impact their motivation, persistence, and achievement, which all matter in terms of students' success in college.

Table 6

Differences Between ERWC and AP Literature

Differences	Implications for Students at the College Level
Conceptualization of college readiness	ERWC primarily focuses on the skills students will need to be college ready, while AP Literature also mentions the importance of fostering students' interest in reading and writing about literature. The extent to which students enjoy reading and writing could impact their ability to overcome challenges in these domains as they enter college.
Genres emphasized	Students' gain familiarity with particular kinds of analytical tools; in ERWC, these tools are focused on evaluating arguments, while in AP Literature, these tools are focused on evaluating themes. The extent to which these tools are also commonly used in college could impact the ease of students' transition.
Teacher's role in curricular planning	Students are likely to have different learning experiences in classrooms where teachers design the curriculum compared to classrooms in which teachers are expected to implement a set number of curriculum modules. The extent to which teachers foster student engagement and customize their curriculum to meet the learning needs of their particular students will impact students' writing development.

The second difference between the two approaches are the genres of reading and writing that are emphasized. ERWC primarily focuses on expository texts, which means that when students write in response to these texts, they will be analyzing the structure and effectiveness of the arguments that authors create. AP Literature focuses on literary texts (novels, short stories, plays, and poems); when students respond to these texts, their focus is on analyzing author's craft, style, and elements that contribute to overall themes. Students who are exposed to these different curricular approaches will develop familiarity reading and writing within particular genres, and they will start to develop expertise using the analytic tools that are specific to these genres. The skills, strategies, and attitudes that students gain from these experiences could potentially be different, and the extent to which their learning can be transferred to the writing

situations they encounter at their postsecondary institutions and within their majors will impact how they perceive the transition from high school to college writing.

Finally, the two approaches envision different roles for high school instructors. In ERWC, the teacher is expected to implement eight to ten of the ERWC modules, while in AP Literature, there is no set curriculum, and teachers are responsible for selecting which texts they will teach and designing learning activities to accompany them. ERWC thus offers high school teachers less autonomy in determining what kinds of reading and writing experiences will be most effective for their students. Although the ERWC teacher's guide notes that instructors are encouraged to customize the material to meet their students' needs, the fact that teachers are "required to choose 8-10 [modules] to complete the course" (p. xvi) and modules "should be taught in the order they appear in the binder" (xvi) implies that teachers are expected to closely follow the ERWC curriculum as it has been designed. There is a potential danger here, in that if high school teachers feel obliged to engage in wholesale implementation, the curriculum may not at times be suitable for their students' needs, because the texts and activities curriculum developers suggest are based on assumptions about what students already know and are able to do. This could result in frustration or disengagement on the part of students, attitudes which are likely not helpful in ensuring a successful transition from high school to college writing. Likewise, while AP Literature allows teachers to make their own curricular decisions, there is no guarantee that all teachers will have the resources and experiences to create an effective curriculum.

Intersections Between Policy and Curriculum

In analyzing the four texts in this chapter, it is worth considering not only how these policies and curricular documents compare to one another, but also how policies might be

realized (or not) through the learning activities and materials that constitute a curriculum. That is to say, policies such as the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement may influence classroom instruction indirectly through the extent to which a given curricular approach reflects the standards, outcomes, and/or ideologies that are present in the policies. As noted above, both ERWC and AP Literature focus on text-based, analytical writing and take an integrated approach to the teaching of reading and writing. These focal areas are well aligned with the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement, which both emphasize the term "texts" and students' ability to read and respond to a variety of genres. However, the differences previously outlined between ERWC and AP Literature point to some ways in which each curricular approach is differently aligned with the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement.

The ERWC teacher's guide introduction states that each module has been aligned with the CCSS (p. xiv). This alignment is emphasized elsewhere in the text as well, such as in the second key principle, "A rhetorical approach that fosters critical thinking and engagement through a relentless focus on the text" (p. xv). The phrase "relentless focus on the text" seems to refer to a particular kind of close reading that is also emphasized in the CCSS, in which readers are expected to stay within the boundaries of the text rather than drawing upon their own experiences to interpret, an approach similar to the literary theory of New Criticism (Katz, 2014). However, what is interesting about this principle is that it frontloads the concept of a "rhetorical approach," which seems more aligned with the priorities outlined in the WPA Outcomes Statement. These connections to both the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement might be viewed as a bridging of the concepts contained in each document. On the other hand, because rhetoric seems to have a different function in the CCSS compared to the WPA Outcomes Statement, one might also wonder whether there is an inherent contradiction in the idea of taking

a rhetorical approach while also relentlessly focusing on the text. If rhetoric includes considerations of purpose, audience, context, and conventions, as it is defined in the WPA Outcomes Statement, then it would seem that focusing *only* on the text would limit students' ability to read and write rhetorically. ERWC's alignment with elements from both the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement raises questions about whether it is possible for an instructional approach to merge the ideologies of writing that are contained within each policy document, or if the conceptions of writing are different enough that a coherent curriculum would need to adopt one lens or the other.

The AP Literature teachers' guide is also problematic in the extent to which it aligns with the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement. As previously mentioned, the College Board has produced a report that compares the alignment between AP Literature and the CCSS, as well as describes how the CCSS prepares students for participation in AP Literature (Hart et al., 2011). This report notes that there is substantial alignment between the CCSS reading standards and AP Literature, and less alignment between the writing standards and AP Literature. This discrepancy stems in part from the CCSS's inclusion of three different text types, while AP Literature focuses exclusively on reading and responding to literature. Because of this focus on fiction in AP Literature, there is also some misalignment in terms of research being a key concept in both the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement, but not in AP Literature. Because AP Literature is intended to reflect the experience students would have in a college course, it is perhaps to be expected that the CCSS's aims and conceptualizations of writing will differ in some important ways from those reflected in the AP Literature teacher's guide. However, AP Literature also differs from the WPA Outcomes Statement in some respects. For instance, though the AP Literature teacher's guide stresses the importance of students understanding that

"*how* authors write is inextricably linked to *what* they are writing about" (p. 4), which alludes to the idea of reading and writing rhetorically, it doesn't specifically use the term "rhetoric," which is a key concept in the WPA Outcomes Statement. Furthermore, the AP Literature teacher's guide places some emphasis on the importance of cultivating students' enjoyment of reading and writing; for example, it states, "If students' knowledge and love of literature grows, you can leave them thinking, feeling, and inspired to read more" (p. 3). This inclusion of enjoyment as an instructional objective seems absent from both the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement, although the introduction to the CCSS literacy standards does state that "students who meet the Standards readily undertake the close, attentive reading that is at the heart of understanding and enjoying complex works of literature" (p. 3). This conceptualization of enjoyment, though, seems to suggest that enjoyment is contingent upon meeting the standards, whereas in AP Literature, the logic seems to be that enjoyment can be fostered by what the teacher does ("*you* can leave them thinking, feeling, and inspired to read more," emphasis added), and this enjoyment begets growth in students' thinking and motivation.

Overall, ERWC and AP Literature seem to reflect some concepts from both the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement, though both sets of curricular documents also seem to include ideas that are potentially contradictory or different from those espoused in the two policy documents. Perhaps these misalignments point to the limitation of what one year of instruction within one discipline can do in terms of supporting students' transition to college writing. As I argued in Chapter 1, "college writing" can be many different things, depending on the kind of postsecondary institution students attend, their academic major, the genres of writing their professors assign, and so forth. Therefore, it is perhaps unrealistic to expect that one curriculum can fully reflect either the CCSS or the WPA Outcomes Statement, let alone prepare students for

the wide variety of writing they will encounter in college. Furthermore, the language used in policies and curricular documents is interpreted and taken up by individual teachers, who have their own conceptions about writing and instruction. Policies and curricular documents may appear to do one thing on paper but quite another when they are taken up in the classroom. Thus, the next chapter examines the nature of writing instruction within one ERWC and one AP Literature classroom, and it explores how the two teachers' perceptions of the curriculum, as well as their own beliefs and experiences, informed their teaching practices.

CHAPTER 5

Microsystems of College Preparation: Two Diverging Roads in Language Arts Instruction

In the previous chapter, I focused on the ecological layer of the exosystem and examined the role that policy documents and curricular approaches might play in students' writing development as they move from high school to college. Although analyzing how writing and readiness for college writing is conceptualized in these documents can help us understand the ideologies of writing that stakeholders envision, it is important to keep in mind that these documents impact students' writing indirectly, in that they are mediated by the ways in which teachers enact them. In essence, it is not only the written curriculum that matters, but also the operational curriculum. The operational curriculum includes all of the activities that occur within a classroom, and it "may differ significantly from the official curriculum because teachers tend to interpret it in the light of their own knowledge, beliefs, and attitudes" (Posner, 2004, p. 13). Therefore, in this chapter, I examine two contexts of language arts instruction in order to understand how the approaches examined in the previous chapter, ERWC and AP Literature, are enacted in two high school classrooms. These two classroom contexts can be understood as microsystems, which Bronfrenbrenner (1976) defines as "a *place* in which the occupants engage in particular *activities* in particular *roles* (e.g., parent, teacher, pupil, etc.) for particular periods of time" (p. 5, emphasis in original). Understanding how writing is taught and how readiness for college writing is conceived in high school microsystems can thus provide insights as to how and why students' writing develops in particular ways as they transition from high school to college.

In the sections that follow, I describe the nature of the instruction that I observed within the two twelfth-grade language arts courses from which I recruited my student participants, an ERWC class and an AP Literature class. Drawing upon teacher observations and interviews, I

then examine the extent to which teachers' instruction reflects the ideologies of writing present in the ERWC and AP Literature curricular documents I analyzed in the previous chapter. Finally, I offer a discussion about similarities and differences between the two teachers' approaches and the factors that influenced their thinking about writing instruction. I also identify what implications their instructional approaches have for students' writing development as they transition from high school to college.

Background on Observations

I began my classroom observations in Leslie's ERWC class at the beginning of February 2017 and continued through the end of May 2017 when school ended for the year. After I started my observations in Leslie's class, she suggested that Mark's AP Literature classroom might serve as an interesting counterpart for my study, so my observations in his class started slightly later, at the end of February. I visited each classroom once or twice a week over the four-month period and conducted a total of 15 observations in Leslie's class and 11 observations in Mark's class. Each class period was 58 minutes in length, although from the beginning of April through the middle of May, the school adopted a modified schedule to accommodate for AP exams and SBAC testing (Common Core-aligned tests created by the Smarter Balanced Assessment Consortium). This resulted in two late start days in which classes were 40 minutes long, as well as two weeks in which classes were structured in block format and thus met every other day for two-hour periods. There was also a week-long spring break in the middle of April.

During the observations, I sat in empty student desks and tried to vary my position in the room from week to week in order to talk with different students. I took handwritten notes and also used an observation protocol to help track the focus of each lesson and the writing activities that took place (see Appendix A). I also collected a copy of any handouts that were distributed

during the period. I drew upon these data sources, as well as the interviews I conducted with each teacher, in order to examine the nature of these two microsystems, with a specific focus on the writing activities that took place and how each teachers' experiences and beliefs informed their instruction.

Writing in ERWC

The ERWC class that I observed was taught by Leslie, who was in her 11th year of teaching language arts, all at West Valley High. In addition to her teaching credential, Leslie had a master's degree in reading and an Ed.D. in educational leadership. Because the ERWC curriculum is structured by modules, which are a set of texts and accompanying activities centered around a particular topic, Leslie's instructional units were primarily organized around these modules. During my time observing, I saw Leslie teach three units. The first unit was the ERWC module titled "Language, Culture, Gender, and Identity." Following this unit, Leslie asked students to write a research paper based on one of the four topics, and the instructional activities Leslie facilitated to guide students through the process of writing the paper became another instructional unit. Leslie concluded the school year with a unit centered on dystopian fiction, in which students had four novels to choose from and met in literature circles.

Daily lessons typically consisted of two to four activities which were outlined on the board under the heading "agenda." Each class period generally began with a warm-up activity, such as students completing a rhetorical grammar exercise from the ERWC book or writing a journal entry in response to a prompt related to ERWC texts. Independent reading was also a core component of Leslie's class, and students were expected to read self-selected books and complete book talks. On Monday, Wednesday, and Friday, the warm-up activity consisted of 20 minutes of independent reading time. After the warm-up activity, the rest of the period typically

included one or more of the following components: reading and discussing a text as a class, small-group discussion of a text, annotating a text, discussing and applying a reading or writing strategy, writing in response to a text, and/or revising writing. The lesson activities that appeared most frequently during my observations were writing independently (12x), direct instruction in writing (8x), reading independently (8x), discussing writing (7x), and discussing reading (7x). Each of these activities was observed in approximately 50% or more of my classroom visits (see Table 7).

Table 7

Frequency of Instructional Activities in ERWC

ERWC Lesson Components	Frequency
Direct instruction in writing	53% (8)
Practicing writing skills or strategies	40% (6)
Writing independently	80% (12)
Discussing writing	47% (7)
Direct instruction in reading	0% (0)
Practicing reading skills or strategies	27% (4)
Reading independently	53% (8)
Close reading	40% (6)
Collaborating to produce a written or visual product	30% (5)
Discussing reading	47% (7)
Grammar	20% (3)
Vocabulary	27% (4)

Note. Numbers and percentages reflect the number of observations in which the activity was observed.

Over the course of my 15 classroom observations, I observed 18 instances in which students were asked to produce a written product. The majority of these writing tasks would be considered writing to learn activities, in that the purpose of these tasks was often to help increase student comprehension of texts. Seven of the writing activities I observed required students to write just a few sentences; these tasks consisted of brief reflections on one's writing, a self-evaluation, annotations, generating a list, and creating a learning chart. Six writing activities required students to write a paragraph or two, which included five journal entries (the most

frequently observed writing task), along with a rhetorical precis. There were five instances of extended writing that took place, which included four tasks in which students wrote one to two pages (letter to an author, two in-class essays, and an extended brainstorming prompt), with the longest piece of extended writing being a four to five-page research essay.

Leslie used a variety of instructional approaches to teach writing. The techniques I observed that were used most frequently included modeling (5x), scaffolding the prompt (4x), looking at examples of student work (3x), and guided brainstorming (3x). For example, during one class period, Leslie read aloud "Prelude: The Barbershop" by Vershawn Ashanti Young, which is included in the ERWC module, "Language, Gender, Identity, and Culture." After Leslie read the text aloud and asked students to respond to numerous parts of the text throughout the process, she asked students the question, "What's the most important message in 'The Barbershop'?" and she gave the students a sentence starter to structure their response: "The most important message is _____ because _____." This activity was used as a scaffold to help students write a journal entry that addressed the following prompt: "Write a paragraph explaining Young's claim and whether you agree or disagree with it." As students prepared to write their entry, Leslie directed them to look at an example response she had written on chart paper, and she showed the students how this response included a TAG—a reference to the title of the piece, the author, and the genre. In this way, Leslie also provided modeling for students to help reinforce the structure she expected to see in their journal entries.

Leslie assessed students' essays using a rubric included within the ERWC curriculum, which is based on the CSU English placement test scoring guide. The rubric includes the following categories: response to the topic; understanding and use of the passage; quality and clarity of thought; organization, development, and support; sentence structure and command of

language; and grammar, usage, and mechanics. Short writing tasks were often assessed informally, such as by having students share their reading responses with a partner, or they were awarded completion credit. For instance, during class time allocated to journal writing, Leslie would stamp students' entries upon completion. She also collected students' journals every few weeks for grading.

Written Curriculum, Operational Curriculum, and College Readiness in ERWC

In the last chapter, I analyzed a section of the ERWC teacher's guide in order to identify ideologies of writing present within that text. These ideologies presented in the written curriculum provide a point of comparison to the ideologies of writing present in the operational curriculum. By operational curriculum, I am referring to all of the activities that took place in Leslie's classroom, which includes her uptake of ERWC along with other activities she chose to use which were not a part of the written curriculum. In this section, I examine the extent to which Leslie's instruction reflects the ideologies of writing present in ERWC. To do so, I extended the analyses from the previous section by examining the nature of the activities that Leslie frequently used in her classroom. Drawing upon my fieldnotes and my interview with Leslie, I looked at the language Leslie used to talk to her students about writing, as well as how she explained her approach to writing in the interview. I then looked to my prior analyses of ERWC to determine ways in which Leslie's ideologies of writing and writing instruction reflect the ideologies present in the ERWC teacher's guide. By triangulating the interview responses, my fieldnotes, and the ERWC analyses, I was able to identify three ideologies present in Leslie's discourse around writing that are echoed in the ERWC written curriculum. By making connections among Leslie's language and the language used in the ERWC, I am not suggesting that her ideologies of writing have necessarily resulted from her understanding of this

curriculum. Rather, linking these ideologies allows for a nuanced look at how these shared concepts reflect an individual teachers' use and interpretation of the written curriculum, which may be informed by a variety of factors.

Based on my analysis of the ERWC written curriculum in Chapter 4, five key ideologies of writing and writing instruction emerged:

- Writing and reading are integrated
- Writing is text-based and analytical
- Writing allows students to analyze the content and rhetorical structures of texts
- Writing instruction should cover 8-10 modules which include informal and formal writing assignments
- Being a college-ready writer means meeting the CCSS

Overall, these ideologies suggest that the ERWC is a rigorous, rhetorically based approach that entails teachers implementing modules. When I compared these ideologies to Leslie's instruction and language surrounding writing, it appeared that many of Leslie's conceptions of writing and writing instruction pertained to the ideals of writing instruction outlined in the ERWC; namely, that the modules had been designed in a purposeful way, and therefore, covering 8-10 modules is important for ensuring that students meet the CCSS and emerge from the course prepared for college writing. In the sections that follow, I describe three ideologies of writing that emerged from my field notes and interview with Leslie which reflect ideologies also present in the ERWC curriculum guide. For each of these ideologies, I show how these concepts are discussed in ERWC, and I describe how Leslie's interpretations of the curriculum, her beliefs, and her prior experiences informed her understandings of these concepts.

Students Must Engage in Both Formal and Informal Writing

As noted in Chapter 4, the ERWC modules consist of a series of activities. The ERWC teacher's guide describes the modules as follows: "The modules, many of which include several different forms of informal writing, move from prereading activities, through reading and postreading activities, to more formal writing assignments" (p. xvi). This idea that students must have both informal and formal writing experiences was reflected in Leslie's instruction and in the way she talked about writing. In my prior analysis of the activities that were most frequent in Leslie's classroom, I noted that students engaged in independent writing in 80% of my classroom observations. The most frequent genre was journal entries, which typically required students to analyze and/or evaluate a text they had read. Leslie stated in her interview that this focus on writing was intentional:

> I want my students to write as much as possible, even if it's not a formal write. Getting thoughts onto paper, I think it's important, and there's research about comprehension. After you read a certain amount, then you should write. So I just try and be mindful of having them write every day, whether it's on the text or in their journal, that they're constantly practicing it.

A couple of conceptions of writing are worth noting here. First of all, Leslie primarily describes the importance of writing in terms of how it relates to reading comprehension. That writing and reading are integrated is listed as one of the "Key Principles" in the ERWC teacher's guide, but for Leslie, her emphasis on the integrated nature of reading and writing may have also been influenced by her prior experiences. Leslie has a master's degree in reading, she teaches a developmental reading course at a local community college, and she also reported being more interested in reading in general. For instance, in her interview she said, "I like to read journal

articles, and I always read the ones about reading. I never find myself interested in wanting to learn writing strategies or new practices just because that's not an area that I'm interested in."

Secondly, Leslie's emphasis on having students "write as much as possible, even if it's not a formal write, also reflects a conception in which writing is related to the dichotomy of formal and informal. A distinction between formal and informal writing is made in the ERWC teacher's guide, which describes students engaging in informal and formal writing activities throughout the course of a module. For Leslie, the difference between formal and informal writing seemed to stem in part from her background in reading and her lack of personal interest in writing. She admitted in her interview that "the formal writing is what I don't like teaching. I feel like we do writing often, but the formal writing experiences, I don't like taking the students through the process, and I don't like grading them." Thus, for Leslie, formal writing is writing that involves a process, and it can be laborious for her in terms of guiding students through that process and then grading the finished products.

In her instruction, Leslie's conception of formal writing seemed to suggest that for her, what makes writing "formal" primarily depends on the kind of language it uses. For example, when students were working on writing research papers, Leslie reminded the class that since she is the audience for the paper, they need to use a formal academic tone. In another lesson focused on writing the opening to an introduction (a "hook"), Leslie asked the class to brainstorm different kinds of hooks, then asked, "What kinds of hooks don't have the right tone?" She then crossed off question, personal story, opinion, and humor from the list the class generated and noted that these might be too informal for an academic essay. Towards the end of the semester, Leslie asked the class what makes a formal essay, and students responded with MLA format, no use of "I," no contractions, and it's not about what you think, it's about the author's purpose. In

each of these examples, formal writing is associated with having the "right" kind of tone and language, and students seemed to have internalized a view of formal writing as being structured a particular way (MLA format, no contractions) and being written with an element of detachment on the writer's part (no "I," it's not about what you think).

Formal writing also seemed to be tied to the completion of a process. Leslie's use of the term *through* when she states, "I don't like taking the students through the process," is telling. *Through* can suggest movement from one point to another, or continuation towards a final goal. This kind of linear conception of engaging in the writing process was also evident in her instruction. When students were asked to write a rhetorical precis in class one day, which was an activity included in the ERWC unit they were working on, she remarked that "the packet tells you exactly what to do," but she then explained to students what they would need to do for each sentence and wrote these directions on the board, so that the board read as follows:

Sentence 1: TAG + rhetorically accurate verb + claim

Sentence 2: supporting examples

Sentence 3: statement of author's purpose

Ex: Lorde's purpose is _____ in order to _____.

Sentence 4: identify who the audience is and the author's connection to the audience

This step-by-step approach to writing was reflected in other moments as well. For example, when students were working on their research papers, Leslie reminded the class that what they were doing is working through the research process together and then added, "You're not just starting with a question and then writing the whole paper." Instead, Leslie provided the students with brainstorming activities, graphic organizers, and specific models for how to

structure the paper. When students wrote the first draft of the paper, Leslie wrote the following guidelines for body paragraphs on the whiteboard:

1. Topic sentence=introduces problem
2. Transition/set up context of quote—who, when, where
3. Quote/evidence with citation
4. Commentary (x2 minimum)
5. Transition/set up
6. Quote/evidence
7. Commentary (x2)
8. Transition/set up
9. Quote/evidence
10. Commentary (x2)
11. Concluding sentence

Like her approach to explaining the rhetorical precis assignment, Leslie's instruction included scaffolds that guided students through a sequence of steps, not unlike the sequencing of the ERWC modules in which students "move from prereading activities, through reading and postreading activities, to more formal writing assignments" (p. xvi).

Leslie's conception of the writing process also seemed to be informed by her own experiences as a writer. During my interview with Leslie, I asked her if there were particular experiences that influenced her writing instruction, and one of the experiences she mentioned was writing her master's thesis and her doctoral dissertation:

> When I am writing myself, it's easier to take them through the process… I think it helped because it was more of me going through the process with them and authentically going,

> not just modeling writing for them, but, "Hey, I'm really doing this," or I could pull out my notes of when I was structuring my writing or when I was thinking about it or this is the process that I went through. So I think it was a little more real because they could see this is what I did and then here's my final product, the article that I wrote or what I did. And, then, I think it also caused me to get rid of some of the activities that were a little more fluffy or, I don't know, not as beneficial for them in the long run, kind of pare it down to producing the best product.

Leslie's reference to "authentically going [through the process], not just modeling for them," seems to suggest that she views teaching writing by modeling as being inauthentic, compared to when she was engaging in "real" writing herself. In the second part of the passage, she says that doing her own writing helped to identify instructional activities "that were a little more fluffy." The implication here is that when Leslie wrote for authentic purposes, she realized that some of the activities she had used before were perhaps disconnected from the way that people write when they are not being guided through the process by a teacher.

Overall, Leslie's distinction between formal and informal writing seems to reflect not only the ERWC curriculum, but her own background as a reader and writer. Writing to comprehend is what she knows and enjoys, whereas formal writing is less comfortable for her and less enjoyable, perhaps in part because she conceives of formal writing as being tied to a set of rules (must use a formal academic tone, can only utilize certain kinds of hooks, etc.).

Rigorous Instruction is Following the ERWC Modules

Another ideology that emerged in both the ERWC documents and Leslie's instruction is the idea that the ERWC course needs to be rigorous. In the ERWC teacher's guide, rigor comes from teachers taking students through a variety of activities within a module, and teachers are

"required to choose 8-10 [modules] to complete the course" (p. xvi). In addition, rigor is manifested by introducing students to more difficult texts and reducing scaffolds. The teacher's guide notes that, "The modules have been sequenced according to the difficulty of the texts and assignments they contain and the amount of scaffolding they provide. Whatever modules are selected, they should be taught in the order they appear in the binder" (p. xvi).

Given that I did not conduct classroom observations with Leslie during the first semester of ERWC, it is unclear whether she did, in fact, reduce scaffolds second semester as the ERWC curriculum guide suggests, although it appeared that students continued to receive extensive scaffolding on their writing assignments through the end of the school year. However, the idea that rigor is related to coverage of a set number of modules and activities was present in both Leslie's instruction and her interview. When Leslie asked students to write in class, which she did often (80% of my classroom observations), she always told students how long they had to write, and then she would use an egg timer to set the time. Once the timer went off, Leslie would sometimes give students additional time to finish if needed, but generally they were either expected to discuss what they wrote, turn it in, or finish it on their own time. This sense of urgency was present in other activities as well. For instance, during one of my observations, Leslie read aloud a text from an ERWC module and stopped occasionally to ask students questions or have them discuss a particular passage with a partner. At one point in the text, Leslie asked the students to write down their ideas about a statement the author had made, and then she asked for volunteers to share their responses with the class. After calling on a couple of students, a number of other students still had their hands raised, but Leslie said, "We don't have time to discuss it further. We need to get through this."

Wanting her students to "write as much as possible" meant that much of the writing that took place in Leslie's class was completed in a short period of time. In her interview, she used the word "quick" 7 times in reference to students' writing; for instance, she noted that the kind of writing she does most often in her class are "quick writes" and that when students write essays in class, they benefit from making a quick outline. It is possible that this push to get students to write quickly and often stemmed from Leslie's attempt to reconcile the requirement of ERWC to implement 8-10 units while personally not feeling enjoyment about taking students through the writing process. She noted in her interview that she was aware of the research study about ERWC that had been conducted by WestEd (Fong et al., 2015), and according to Leslie, the article stated that it was important for teachers to do one activity from each strand within a module in order to get the best results. She said,

> There's this one strand I never do, and it's one of the writing ones because I tend to think that those activities take too much time and that they don't produce large enough effects for me to use that class time for it. So I tended to go quicker through the writing portions. But I try and be mindful and do as much as I can.

Here again, Leslie expresses a sense of conflict; although she believes that certain activities are not very effective, she also went on to say that she feels "bound to teaching it, as we're supposed to be teaching with fidelity to the program."

Maintaining her ideology of what it means to deliver rigorous instruction also meant that Leslie had to reconcile her interpretation of fidelity of implementation with other teachers' perceptions and students' needs. This tension was evident when she explained,

> I wrestle with dumbing down the class or slowing things down or requiring less or one of those options. But, in the end, this is the class that I teach. Even if they [students] are

> going to community college, they should benefit from some of the rigor of this class, so I think it's good for them. But it's just been tough that quite a few students fail.

Leslie's resistance to "dumbing down the class or slowing things down" seems to be tied to her ideology of what it means to be rigorous, and she believes that students will benefit from this rigor, even if some end up failing the course. She also noted that other teachers would sometimes contact her when students had an F in her class to advocate on their behalf. Here too, Leslie expressed feeling beholden to maintain her ideology of rigor:

> I don't think other teachers on campus realize what this class is. They think that I'm super-strict, but they don't realize that I'm following the guidelines, and I feel that it's the ethical thing to do to follow what I said that I would follow in teaching this course. I believe that these are good strategies and skills and that my students will benefit from it, so I'm going to try and get as many as I can through it and help them out, but this class is not designed for the average student.

For Leslie, maintaining what she believes to be the standards set forth in the ERWC curriculum is not only about maintaining rigor, but it also about being ethical. To not maintain the fidelity of the course is to cheat both the students and herself. Her repetition of the word "follow" also suggests that Leslie sees herself as having limited agency in teaching the course. To "follow what I said that I would follow" means putting one's faith in the curriculum as it was designed, even though this design didn't match what Leslie envisioned as being appropriate for "the average student."

College-Ready Writers Use Academic Language and Strategies

The ERWC teacher's guide states that the reason the course was created was to "help prepare students for the reading and writing demands of the first year in college," and the "real

problem" for most students is "critical reading, not writing" (p. xiii). Leslie also believed that critical reading was a problem for many of her students. When I asked her what she believed students struggled with, she said,

> The text itself, but they're not particularly long. I think it's the fact that maybe they're non-fiction and they're not that familiar with it, that they could have unknown vocabulary. I don't know. It's the vocabulary. It's the concepts…So I do a lot with being an active reader and using the reading process.

Leslie focused on vocabulary often in her instruction. As students were working on their research essays, she remarked, "When I read through the first drafts of your essays, one thing I noticed is that there were a lot of dead words." She went on to tell the class that it's important to use more academic language, so for their rhetorical grammar warm-up that day, the students worked on replacing dead words. About two weeks later, Leslie told the class that she was correcting the research essays they turned in, and she had noticed that students were still having trouble with academic language. She then gave the class a passage to revise that used informal language. In both of these examples, Leslie emphasized the importance of sounding formal and academic, because as she told her class, "You are smart about your topics, and so you need to sound like 12th graders when you write."

Leslie's conception of what it means to prepare students for college reading and writing tasks also included a focus on strategies. In one of the lessons I observed, Leslie asked students to make a list of all of the strategies they used throughout the school year to make sense of complex texts, and then she asked students to share these strategies as she made a list on the board. After writing 17 items on the board, which included strategies such as writing a gist statement and discussing with the class, Leslie said,

> Talking and writing are really going to help you get those ideas in your mind. Next year in college, you're not always going to have that background knowledge, that connection to the text, and you're going to need to use some of these strategies.

Leslie's statement suggests that she believes the texts students will be asked to read in college may not always be centered around topics that are familiar to them, so having a repository of strategies to draw upon will serve students well. In her interview, Leslie also noted that even though students may be asked to read texts that are different from the kinds of texts they read in ERWC, the strategies can be used in a variety of situations. She noted, "The strategies, that they can break down the prompt or they can make an outline, that they can do all those things, then that will help. Those should be transferrable, I guess."

Focusing on academic language and transferable strategies also seemed in line with Leslie's view of the kinds of writing situations she needed to prepare students for. In her interview, she explained,

> ERWC focuses a lot on argument and analyzing text... And that there's a big push - since all of our students take the SAT - to prepare them for the SAT. And, so, that came together better this year than previous years with the SAT changing their essay prompt, the Common Core standards, ERWC. It all made sense. It wasn't so disjointed, like, "We're going to practice this genre, and then we're going to practice this genre, and then a new one and a new one." So streamlining things, and it just made everything feel a little more cohesive, not like, "We're going to pause and practice SAT strategies for a month." No, it all clung together.

Perceiving alignment among ERWC, the SAT, and the CCSS affirmed for Leslie the efficacy of focusing on argument and analyzing text in order to prepare students for the writing demands of

both high school (the SAT) and college. Instead of asking students to practice writing within many different genres, which Leslie perceived as being a "disjointed" approach, streamlining genre instruction to focus on argument writing helped Leslie feel that her instruction was "more cohesive." Thus, emphasizing academic language and strategy use could be viewed as a way to teach both SAT strategies and college writing skills while also staying true to the ERWC curriculum.

Discussion: Ideologies of Writing in Leslie's ERWC Course

As I discussed in the previous sections, Leslie's ideologies of writing instruction centered around three principles. In her interview, Leslie talked about the importance of having students engage in both formal and informal writing. Leslie seemed to have a preference for facilitating informal writing situations, as these types of tasks often served as a way to increase reading comprehension, an area in which she had expertise and which she personally enjoyed. In contrast, Leslie admitted that she did not enjoy "taking the students through the process" of formal writing, which in her classroom often consisted of a sequence of steps and requirements. Leslie's view of formal writing seems to imply a liner conception of the writing process. This conception of writing as moving from point A to B, which Applebee (2013) has argued is also implied in the CCSS, could be problematic in terms of preparing students for the ways in which college writers are expected to engage in the writing process. For instance, the WPA Outcomes statement seems to envision writing as being more iterative and consisting of multiple, flexible processes. Leslie's conception of the writing process might also be different from how expert writers think about process. Downs (2015) explains, "To create the best possible writing, writers work iteratively, composing in a number of versions, with time between each for reflection, reader feedback, and/or collaborator development" (Downs, 2015, p. 66). Time is the key word

here, as it suggests that in order to help students understand writing as an iterative process, there must be adequate time for reflection, feedback, and revision.

However, this link between writing and time directly conflicts with another one of Leslie's ideologies, rigorous instruction is following the ERWC modules. Implementing eight to ten modules, which is required in ERWC, means that time is of the essence, and when pressed, teachers may need to make choices about the extent to which they will follow the curriculum "with fidelity." Time becomes an even greater constraint when school schedules need to accommodate testing. At West Valley High school, teachers' daily schedules were impacted for a month and a half due to SBAC and AP testing, which meant shortened class periods on some days and two-hour block classes on other days. A sense of urgency was evident in Leslie's instruction, particularly through her daily use of an egg timer so that she could get students to "write as much as possible" while still aiming to cover at least eight ERWC modules (although she noted that she was only able to cover six modules by the end of the year). However, by emphasizing academic language and strategies for reading and writing, Leslie maintained the focus on argumentative reading and writing skills called for in ERWC while feeling that these skills also addressed the CCSS and would serve students well on the SAT. What is clear across Leslie's ideologies of writing instruction are the many influences she needed to navigate and reconcile, for instance, maintaining fidelity to the ERWC curriculum, addressing students' individual needs, responding to the expectations of other teachers, and drawing upon her own interests and areas of expertise. Ultimately, not all of these goals could be fully reconciled, and as a result, Leslie commented several times in her interview that it had been "a rough year." To a large extent, Leslie's instructional practices did reflect the ideologies of writing I identified in the ERWC teacher's guide, though in terms of her beliefs about writing, using ERWC prompted

some uneasy tensions between what Leslie believed she had a "responsibility" to do versus what she believed her students might need.

Writing in AP Literature

AP Literature was taught by Mark, who was in his 21st year of teaching. Mark taught at another high school for four years and a continuation school for one year before starting at West Valley High. He earned his teaching credential at the same institution as Leslie, and he also earned a master's degree in literature. Mark's curriculum was organized around texts. During the time I observed, students read and discussed two core texts, the novel *The Bluest Eye* by Toni Morrison, and the play *Fences* by August Wilson. Mark also provided instruction around supplementary texts, including short stories, poems, and song lyrics, which were thematically linked to the core texts. Students wrote in-class essays that asked them to draw upon core texts in order to respond to prompts that were modeled after the kinds of prompts typical on the AP Literature exam. At the end of the school year, students worked in small groups to do class presentations that would serve as preparation for the AP Literature exam.

Most lessons began with a question or short prompt that required students to analyze the reading they had completed as homework for that day's class. For instance, the day after the students had finished reading the novel *The Bluest Eye*, the opening question was, "What is the silver lining in this novel?" Sometimes, students wrote independently in response to the question and then shared with a small group, while other times Mark would instruct students to "turn and talk," which meant that students would turn their desks around or move closer to their neighbors so that they could discuss the question. After students had an opportunity to talk with each other about the prompt, Mark would typically ask some groups to share their thinking, and other groups could add additional ideas. From there, Mark would ask the class to discuss additional

questions or sections of the text that he believed were important. When students completed their assigned reading outside of class, they were also usually required to note five significant quotes from the text and provide responses to them. Class discussions frequently centered on these responses as well, and Mark often gave students an opportunity to share their reading responses with each other and the rest of the class. The activities I observed most frequently in Mark's classroom (approximately 50% or more observations) included discussing reading, which occurred in every class session I observed (11x), as well as close reading (7x) and writing independently (5x) (see Table 8).

Table 8

Frequency of Instructional Activities in AP Literature

AP Literature Lesson Components	Frequency
Direct instruction in writing	18% (2)
Practicing writing skills or strategies	0% (0)
Writing independently	45% (5)
Discussing writing	27% (3)
Direct instruction in reading	18% (2)
Practicing reading skills or strategies	27% (3)
Reading independently	0% (0)
Close reading	64% (7)
Collaborating to produce a written or visual product	36% (4)
Discussing reading	100% (11)
Grammar	9% (1)
Vocabulary	0% (0)

Note. Numbers and percentages reflect the number of observations in which the activity was observed.

During my 11 observations, I noted 14 instances in which students were asked to produce a written product. As Table 8 shows, writing independently took place in just five of the periods I observed, and the majority of the writing I saw discussed in class had taken place outside of class or on days that I was not observing. In fact, Mark advised me not to observe on days when students would be writing in-class essays, as they would be writing for the whole period in order to acclimate to the similar time constraints that take place during the AP Literature exam. Of the

writing assignments I saw, the majority (nine) of the assignments took the form of short responses, in which students wrote a minimum of a few sentences up to a few paragraphs. These short response writing tasks primarily took the form of quotes and responses, which students were often asked to do as homework while they completed a reading assignment, but also included annotations, a self-reflection, a synthesis paragraph, and a response to class discussion. Four assignments were extended writing tasks and included three AP style, in-class essays and one assignment in which students revised an essay and provided commentary about what they changed and why. Students also wrote in order to create a 20-minute Powerpoint presentation, which they created with a small group and shared with the rest of the class to review for the AP exam.

In keeping with the assessment procedures used on the AP Literature exam, students' essays were graded holistically on a scale from 1-9, where a 5 is considered just passing. Each score is intended to take into account content, style, and mechanics (College Board, 2017). During the time that I observed, there were only two instances in which Mark provided direct instruction in writing. In his interview, Mark reported doing "a lot of modeling," including having students compare essays that would have earned a 5 with essays that earned a 9. However, he noted, "I don't know if you saw much of that, 'cause I do a lot more of that at the beginning [of the year]." The instances of writing instruction I did observe consisted of a discussion Mark facilitated about common mistakes he saw students making in their essays and how to avoid them, as well as looking at sample essays and workshopping some of the sentences. For the latter activity, Mark displayed sentences that he had pulled from student essays and asked, "How can you improve the grammar, diction, clarity, and economy of these sentences?" Students worked in pairs to construct improved versions of the sentences and then shared these

revised versions with the rest of the class while Mark offered oral feedback. He also offered his own suggestions as to how some of the sentences could be modified and explained where he saw areas in which the diction could be improved.

Written Curriculum, Operational Curriculum, and College Readiness in AP Literature

Mark's interview and classroom observations shed light on the ways in which he operationalized the AP Literature curriculum and the extent to which his ideologies of writing parallel those found in the AP Literature teachers' guide. Based on my analysis of the AP Literature curriculum in the previous chapter, six ideologies of writing emerged:

- Writing and reading are integrated
- Writing is text-based and analytical (close reading, critical writing)
- Writing is a vehicle for expressing students' attention to and appreciation of the text
- Writing should demonstrate how form follows function
- Writing instruction should include core skills, but no set curriculum
- Being a college-ready writer means being able to write critically and with energy and imagination

The first two ideologies are shared by ERWC and AP Literature. Both curricular approaches emphasize the importance of taking an integrated approach to the teaching of reading and writing, and they also both privilege text-based, analytical writing over other forms. AP Literature differs from ERWC, though, in that it does not include a set curriculum (compared to ERWC's modules), and its mention of appreciation, energy, and imagination suggest that an outcome of the course is not only skills and strategies, but also particular attitudes towards reading and writing. As was the case with Leslie, the ideologies of writing that were expressed through Mark's instruction and interview intersect in important ways with some of the ideologies

suggested in the AP Literature teacher's guide. Unlike Leslie, who only taught ERWC, Mark taught both AP Literature and some sections of ERWC. Although I only conducted observations in Mark's AP Literature class, he mentioned the ERWC curriculum multiple times throughout his interview. Therefore, in the sections that follow, I examine not only how Mark's ideologies of writing and writing instruction intersected with the AP Literature curriculum, but also how he perceived the ERWC curriculum in comparison to AP Literature.

Teacher Choice is Necessary to Foster Student Engagement

The AP Literature teacher's guide emphasized the importance of teacher choice at the very start of the introduction, stating that, "The AP English Literature and Composition Exam assumes that, while there are core skills (attentive reading and analytical writing), there need be no core curriculum (p. 1)." In his interview, Mark talked about teacher choice in terms of being "free." He said that when he first attended a professional development workshop for new AP English teachers, one of the facilitators said to the group, "You teach what you love, and make sure it's of literary merit," and Mark remarked that teaching AP Literature "has been incredibly freeing because of that." In contrast, he saw the ERWC curriculum as "a piece of crap" and explained,

> A lot of it's not engaging. We need to be free to choose. That's been a continual fight for me, ever since I started. To me, that's one, you gotta engage them in the ideas first. If we can't do that, then we're dead Fred. Never gonna happen.

Similarly, Mark remarked that one of the biggest challenges for him in teaching writing is that "kids don't usually want to write. I mean, I don't know what to say about that. It helps to be free to choose literature to teach. If I'm not, then it's much, much harder." These statements suggest that for Mark, teacher choice and student engagement are linked. He seems to believe that in

order for students to improve their literacy skills, they need to first be engaged in the ideas present in the texts they are reading and responding to, and the key to making curriculum engaging is for teachers to be "free to choose" what they want to teach. Because Mark embraced the idea of teacher choice, he resisted curricular approaches that require teachers to follow highly-structured lessons, such as ERWC.

Mark's linking of teacher choice, student engagement, and student learning is also present in the AP Literature teacher's guide, which states, "If students' knowledge and love of literature grows, you can leave them thinking, feeling, and inspired to read more" (p. 3). This statement seems to imply that not only can increasing students' knowledge and love of literature contribute to their ability to think critically, but it can also inspire them and motivate them to continue to pursue reading. Thinking, feeling, and inspiration were three concepts that Mark also connected in his interview when he spoke at length about using difficult texts in his classroom:

> I do believe in difficult text. We did that with "American Purgatory." That was hard. That was really hard. The kids knew it was hard, and they were willing to dive into it…You can drag in a few difficult things as long as they're inspired to do it or they have an interest in it. I used to do "The Metamorphosis" every once in a while. That's hard to read. It's very difficult. "Bartleby the Scrivener" by Melville. That's really hard to read, but it's really engaging once you get into it. You can have really good discussions. I've never been afraid of teaching hard things, as long as I know that the kids want to do it.

What is evident in this passage is Mark's belief that students can handle difficult texts, as long as they are "willing," "inspired," "have interest," and "want to do it." The implication, then, is that if teachers don't get to choose what they teach, students might be less engaged, and if students

are less engaged, they will be less willing to take on the work required to read and write about difficult texts. Therefore, Mark's line of reasoning about teacher choice and student engagement also implicates the rigor of the course, the topic of the next section.

Rigorous Instruction Means Keeping Expectations High for All Students

Because AP Literature can potentially replace a college course if students pass the exam, AP Literature is intended to have the kind of rigor found in a college course. However, because at many schools, all students have the option to take AP courses (and in fact, the College Board discourages teachers and administrators from using gatekeeping devices, such as GPA, for these courses), the AP Literature teacher's guide notes that this dynamic can cause challenges for teachers:

> Teachers like you meet students with a wide range of skills and nurture them to the level of excellence that the AP English Literature and Composition course demands. In the best of situations, AP teachers share ideas and strategies with colleagues who teach younger grades and develop an integrated curriculum that offers many students, including those who had not thought it an option, the possibility of taking AP English Literature and Composition. But even with such a multiyear preparatory strategy…the AP teacher faces a challenging task (p. 2).

This tension between maintaining "the level of excellence that the course demands" while acknowledging that students have a diverse range of skills was a concept that Mark also discussed in his interview. Mark said that a few years ago, the principal at his school wanted to increase the number of students taking AP classes. Up to that point, there had been "gentle barriers or hoops to jump through," but, in time, the district moved to an open-enrollment policy for AP course participation. Mark remarked that when he first starting teaching in the district,

there was only one AP Literature course, while currently there were four sections offered. Although Mark stated that he wasn't "against" open-enrollment, he also felt that the policy had impacted the quality of some of the AP courses: "I don't think all the AP courses have rigor. There's a couple that are famously not rigorous. To the point where the not-AP kids are probably getting more out of it."

For Mark, maintaining rigor meant keeping expectations high and trusting that students with lower achievement levels would rise to the challenge. In his interview, he pointed out that he has had a number of students who struggled at the start of the year but improved as the class went on:

> The two girls that sat over here, they're special-ed kids. They were doing a really great job in there. It doesn't matter. Last year, I had kids that, they just got sucked up. I had really high-level kids last year. There's these kids, I just was looking like, I don't think they're gonna pass. They did. They just got sucked up in it. I see the benefits, actually, when they open-enrolled it, my scores were going up.

Mark's repetition of the phrase "sucked up" seems to suggest a conception of rigor that entails creating an engaging, intellectually challenging environment where students performing at lower levels can be lifted to new heights of achievement through their participation and interaction with higher performing peers. As mentioned in the last section, Mark expressed a belief that when students are engaged and interested, they can have good discussions around difficult texts. At the same time, although Mark believed that maintaining rigor in his course was important, he didn't see AP Literature as being a replacement for a college writing course:

> I always tell the kids I don't think that any AP test is gonna replace a good English 100 course. So, it doesn't matter if you pass or not. I mean, I don't say it that way, but I think they should take that class.

For Mark, having students earn college credit for their participation in AP Literature was not necessarily the goal of maintaining a rigorous environment; rather, his aim seemed to be focused on getting students to make thoughtful arguments about literature through discussion and writing.

College-Ready Writers Can Develop Ideas to Create an Effective Argument

The AP Literature teacher's guide makes multiple references to the importance of helping students develop their ability to create effective arguments; for instance, "The ability to construct mature arguments and analyses using a variety of sentences is at the heart of what students should be able to do when they finish the course" (p. 6). This emphasis on effective arguments was also evident in Mark's instruction and interview responses. Mark typically asked students to discuss their reading responses in small groups and then share out in a whole class format. During these whole group discussions, Mark would often let students talk about their ideas and respond to one another for a bit, and then he would challenge them to find specific passages to support their ideas. For instance, during one class discussion centered on Toni Morrison's novel *The Bluest Eye*, Mark asked students to think about how the term "funk" functions in the book. After some students shared explanations, Mark said, "Go back to the paragraph and pull out some key diction." During another class, students were talking about the setting in the play *Fences* by August Wilson, and one student said that the house is crappy. Mark playfully asked for "evidence of crapiness." In both of these examples, Mark pushed students to carefully attend

to the texts they were reading, reflecting a statement made in the AP Literature teacher's guide that "close, attentive, and appreciative reading is at the base of all we do" (p. 2).

In addition to challenging students to draw upon textual evidence during class discussions, Mark also pushed students to use evidence effectively in their essays. During his interview, Mark stressed that one of the most challenging aspects of writing for his students was creating a cohesive, well-developed argument:

> They'll just come up with the same argument over and over again. It's like that larger development and synthesis at the end, I guess. That's a big one. I think they get caught up in minutia. Whether it's minutia within a sentence or a paragraph, but they don't see the interconnection of ideas on a larger scale.

During one of my classroom observations in which Mark was talking to the class about how they had done on one of their essays, he asked the students to discuss what it means to have "generalizations without evidence" and "evidence without generalizations." While he noted that the first scenario was more common, he also saw some students getting caught up in details from the text without making broader conclusions. This discussion seemed to address Mark's concern that students do not always use evidence effectively to synthesize ideas and develop a strong argument. I also heard him tell a student that she had received a score of five on her essay because the analysis was good, but it took too long for her to get to the analysis. "You don't need a fancy hook," he said. Since the objective of the AP Literature course, according to the teacher's guide, is for students to be able to "approach a poem, a prose work, and a play and—proceeding beyond visceral and emotional reactions—respond to it analytically and critically, both orally and in writing (p. 4)," being able to demonstrate a close reading of a text through writing is key, and Mark's approach to assessing writing seemed to reflect this ideology.

For Mark, creating an effective argument also entailed addressing the writing prompt, not only in terms of responding to each component of the prompt, but also in being strategic in choosing characters and texts to write about. Mark mentioned in his interview that he often uses a strategy called the do-what chart to help students understand what the prompt is asking. The strategy entails circling each verb in the writing prompt (the "do") and underlining the information that follows the verb (the "what"). I also saw him use this strategy during one of my observations as he talked to the class about their performance on one of their essays. During this lesson, Mark said that some people had fused together characters in their essays, or they had talked about characters that really weren't good choices in terms of being able to fully answer the prompt. Mark advised the students to choose "the path of least resistance" when it comes to the AP test, in that it's better to write about characters who obviously fit the prompt rather than "trying to fit a square peg in a round hole." Mark's mention of the AP test here highlights the dual purpose of writing in his class. Writing served as a way for students to demonstrate their ability to critically engage with the texts they read, but each essay also served as practice for the AP test. In order to write effectively, students needed to not only keep in mind Mark as their audience, but also the scorers from the College Board they would eventually encounter. Avoiding fancy hooks, using the do-what chart, and taking "the path of least resistance" when choosing characters to write about were intended to help students write a particular kind of argument, one that would be written in a timed, on-demand setting and evaluated by scorers who will be looking for some key components within the essay. Thus, an effective argument was one that meets the demands of the AP Literature essay genre, and in Mark's class, these were the only kinds of arguments I observed students writing.

Discussion: Ideologies of Writing in Mark's AP Literature Course

One of the key ideologies of Mark's writing instruction is that teacher choice is necessary for fostering student engagement. Linked to that is his belief that students are willing to grapple with difficult texts if they are engaged, and thus Mark also saw a connection between engagement and rigor. Mark believed that by using texts he deemed to be engaging, he could keep expectations high for all students, and even lower performing students could become "sucked up" in the high-level conversations cultivated by interesting texts. Interestingly, Mark's emphasis on teacher choice did not necessarily translate to student choice. Occasionally students were provided multiple essay prompts to choose from, but given that their essays had to draw upon texts they had read in class, their choices were bound to the curricular choices Mark made.

Like Leslie, Mark's instructional choices also depended on the ways in which he negotiated competing influences. Mark taught sections of both AP Literature and ERWC, and given their different stances in terms of teacher agency, Mark saw the two approaches as being diametrically opposed. Because Mark embraced AP Literature's philosophy of "core skills, but no set curriculum," and because he believed that teacher choice was key to student engagement and achievement, he felt justified in modifying the ERWC curriculum. Although the ERWC curriculum claims to be aligned with the CCSS, Mark interpreted ERWC as being contradictory to the CCSS. He asserted that the CCSS "says you should be free to choose the literature that you feel is best for the kids and then challenge them in all those other ways. The ERWC in some ways is counteractive, or counterintuitive from that." Therefore, Mark described his approach in both AP Literature and ERWC as focused on supporting students' ability to craft effective arguments rather than being tied to particular texts. Indeed, during class discussions, which took place in every lesson I observed, Mark constantly pushed students to provide evidence for their

assertions. His emphasis on discussion suggests that Mark viewed class discussions as a key means for helping students develop their ability to create well-reasoned arguments, and this skillset was formally assessed when students wrote essays in response to prompts modeled after those on the AP exam.

Cross-Classroom Comparisons and Implications

Although I observed Leslie and Mark using two different curricular approaches, ERWC and AP Literature, their teaching approaches nonetheless shared some similarities. Both instructors focused on helping their students create strong arguments, and this skillset was emphasized in the curriculum they used as well. Both teachers also voiced frustrations about the ERWC curriculum. Finally, Leslie and Mark shared an unclear understanding of the kinds of writing their students would encounter in college. Though they would occasionally hear from students who came back from college to visit their teachers, their general knowledge of the kinds of writing assignments that are typical in college was limited. Given that Leslie teaches a course at a local community college, I had assumed that her understanding of college writing might differ from Mark's. However, she noted that the remedial reading class she teaches does not require much writing, and "there's no coming together" with other instructors. She went on to explain, "So many instructors there are part-time, and I don't know what they're doing. I can only use my own experiences and try and put it out there and help [students]." For both teachers, then, preparing students for college writing meant primarily relying on their own beliefs and experiences about what college writing might entail.

Despite these similarities, there were also significant differences across the two teachers' instructional approaches. Though both teachers focused on argumentative writing, Leslie seemed to place a greater emphasis on helping students develop strategies for writing, whereas

Mark's instruction focused more on developing a logical line of thinking. These areas of focus are reflected in the frequency of particular lesson components in my classroom observations (see Table 9). Compared to Mark, Leslie devoted more of her instruction to direct instruction in writing, practicing writing skills and strategies, writing independently, discussing writing, grammar, and vocabulary. In contrast, Mark primarily emphasized close reading and discussion of readings (which is one reason why my above analyses of his writing instruction are less extensive than Leslie's). Taken together, these lesson components also suggest that Leslie's course focused more on writing, while Mark's class focused more on reading. The only exception to that difference was that Leslie's students spent more time reading independently in class, as she often used class time to give students an opportunity to read self-selected books. In my observations, Mark did not provide any class time for students to read their assigned texts nor self-selected books.

Table 9

Lesson Components in Leslie's ERWC Course and Mark's AP Literature Course

Lesson Components	ERWC	AP Literature
Direct instruction in writing	53% (8)	18% (2)
Practicing writing skills or strategies	40% (6)	0% (0)
Writing independently	80% (12)	45% (5)
Discussing writing	47% (7)	27% (3)
Direct instruction in reading	0% (0)	18% (2)
Practicing reading skills or strategies	27% (4)	27% (3)
Reading independently	53% (8)	0% (0)
Close reading	40% (6)	64% (7)
Collaborating to produce a written or visual product	30% (5)	36% (4)
Discussing reading	47% (7)	100% (11)
Grammar	20% (3)	9% (1)
Vocabulary	27% (4)	0% (0)

Note. Numbers and percentages reflect the number of observations in which the activity was observed.

Additionally, though both teachers had some critiques of the ERWC curriculum, their responses to the curriculum were very different. Leslie believed that ERWC was "not designed for the average student" and that covering eight to ten modules a year is "too much for [students] to do." Yet, despite stating at one point in her interview that the curriculum "should be slowed down to go in-depth," by the end of her interview, she reflected, "I need to think about what I might do differently for this class to get more units in, to get the eight units in, but also make it more approachable for the non-four-year college bound student." Though Leslie had doubts about the extent to which ERWC met the needs of the students she taught, she found the research on ERWC compelling and felt that fulfilling the course requirements was a matter of ethics. Therefore, rather than modifying the curriculum, she had advocated to the school's administration to establish a third twelfth-grade language arts class that would be geared for students attending community colleges. In the meantime, she planned to continue aiming for the ERWC requirements while somehow also making the course more accessible.

In contrast, Mark felt empowered to modify the ERWC curriculum based on his view that some of the texts were "dumb." Perhaps because of his experience teaching AP Literature, Mark felt strongly that teachers should have autonomy in choosing texts to teach, and therefore he did not "buy-in" to the ERWC curriculum to the same extent that Leslie did. It is also possible that the teachers' sense of self-efficacy played a role in their decision-making. On numerous occasions, Leslie commented that teaching writing was not her strong suit, whereas Mark did not make any comments about his teaching ability. Mark had also been teaching twice as long as Leslie, so his additional years of experience may have contributed to his confidence in his own judgments and his belief that he should be able to design curriculum as he saw fit.

Regardless of which factors may have been most influential in terms of Leslie and Mark's instructional approaches, what is clear is that policies and curricular materials which aim to contribute to students' college-readiness will only fulfill these aims if teachers accept the ideologies behind them and make instructional decisions in line with these ideologies. Even with teacher buy-in, the power of curriculum to impact students' college-readiness is limited by its lack of context specificity. For instance, although Leslie believed in the efficacy of the ERWC curriculum, in part because it had been validated by research, a number of her students failed the course, and Leslie wrestled with her decision to stay true to the curriculum rather than making modifications to meet her students' needs.

Ultimately, the intersections between written curriculum and operational curriculum matter for students, in that the kinds of genres and skills that are emphasized in school will impact students' writing development in particular ways (Bazerman et al., 2017). Furthermore, language arts classrooms are especially important environments for influencing students' writing development, as research suggests that although high school students generally write across all of their courses, more writing occurs in English classes (Applebee & Langer, 2011). Therefore, examining both *how* high school language arts instructors teach writing, and *why* they teach writing in particular ways, are important components in understanding how students transition from high school to college writing, as well as how high school instruction might support this transition. Keeping in mind the high school experiences of the twelve student participants in this study, in the next chapter, I examine the role that these experiences played in their development as writers as they moved from high school to college.

CHAPTER 6

Moving Across Contexts: Patterns of Writing Development from High School to College

This chapter examines how students develop as writers as they move from high school to college microsystems. As we saw in the previous chapter, the school-based microsystems that surround students' writing can vary in terms of the instructional practices that are used to teach writing and what kinds of writing are emphasized. These differences are influenced by factors such as the curricular approaches that are used and teachers' prior knowledge and experiences. Likewise, high school and college writing contexts may look different from one another, and as a result, students' writing will develop in particular ways that reflect how they perceive and respond to changes in context (Bazerman et al., 2017). For instance, prior literature suggests that in comparison to high school writing, college writing may be longer, more research focused, assessed differently, produced under different conditions, taught using different approaches, and accompanied by different genre expectations (Acker and Halasek, 2008; Applebee & Langer, 2011; Hannah & Saidy, 2014; Harklau, 2001; Kiuhara, Graham, & Hawken, 2009; Melzer, 2009; Reiff & Bawarshi, 2011; Sullivan, 2014; Wells, 2011). Although these characteristics of college writing provide some insight into how students' writing may shift as they transition from high school to college, college writing is not a discrete phenomenon, as writing conditions and expectations can vary depending on an institution's goals, the population they serve, the fields of study that students pursue, and so forth (Brockman et al., 2010; Sullivan, 2006). Furthermore, writing development is not always linear, and in the face of a new writing context, students may regress before they progress (Haswell, 2000; Sternglass, 1997). Therefore, although the students in this study attended the same high school, variation in the high school classes students took, the kinds of postsecondary institutions they attended, their chosen fields of studies, and their

individual histories and characteristics would suggest that their writing trajectories would also vary widely.

In order to study students' developmental trajectories in writing, it was first necessary to operationalize the term "development." To do so, I utilized the definition of writing development provided by the Lifespan Writing Development Group (Bazerman et al., 2018): writing development is "a reorganization or realignment of previous experience that registers through writing or in a changed relationship to writing" (p. 7). This definition provided me with a lens to identify how students' writing developed from high school to college and to describe patterns across the trajectories that emerged. In the sections that follow, I first describe overall trends in the shifts that occurred as students moved from writing in high school to writing in college. Then, I utilize a case study approach to document three writing trajectories that emerged among the students in this study. Finally, I examine factors which may help to account for differences in students' writing trajectories.

Overall Shifts from High School to College Writing

As I described in Chapter 3, to examine students' transition from high school to college writing, I conducted interviews with students at the end of their twelfth-grade year and at the end of their first quarter or semester of college. Twelve students completed both the high school and college interviews. Half of the students took ERWC as their twelfth-grade language arts course, while the other half took AP Literature. The majority of the students (8) attended a four-year university. Most of these students (5) attended a school within the University of California system, while two students attended a school within the California State University system, and one student attended a private research university. The remaining four students attended a community college.

During both the high school and college interviews, I asked students to tell me about the classes they were taking and the kinds of writing they were assigned within these classes. Comparing the genres that students named at each time point revealed some differences between high school and college writing tasks. Table 10 lists the writing tasks students mentioned in their interviews, as well as the number of students who reported being assigned each task. It should be noted that these numbers do not necessarily reflect the actual frequency of each task. For instance, five students mentioned note-taking in their interviews, but when I conducted classroom observations in the ERWC and AP Literature classes, I observed nearly all of the students taking notes. Therefore, the frequency counts should be interpreted as a reflection of the writing tasks that were most salient to students, rather than an accurate count of actual practices. Comparing the writing tasks that students named in high school and college does suggest some trends, however. First of all, nearly all of the students named essays and free-response questions (FRQs) as being genres that were assigned to them in high school. The FRQ is a genre particular to AP classes, and students reported being assigned FRQs in AP Government, AP Biology, and AP Human Geography. Students described FRQs as being "straight to the point," where the emphasis was on demonstrating one's knowledge of facts rather than one's ability to write well. Essays were commonly assigned in both ERWC and AP Literature. In college, essays continued to be a genre that students frequently reported being assigned, but what is striking is the extent to which the genres students encountered diversified in college. In the high school interviews, there were five writing tasks that were mentioned by just one student, whereas in college, there were 17 writing tasks mentioned by just one student. This shift suggests that in high school, students shared a common set of writing experiences, while in

college, writing tasks varied more widely. In addition to essays, a number of other genres were shared among both the high school and college context (e.g., research papers, lab reports, reading responses); however, a number of other genres were unique to high school (e.g., FRQs, worksheets) or college (e.g., personal narrative, partner/group essay).

Table 10

Writing Genres Reported by Students in High School and College

High School	College
Essays (10)	Essay (6)
FRQs [free-response questions] (10)*	Research paper (4)
Notes (5)	Final test (3)*
Short answer responses (5)	Lab report (3)
Reading responses (3)	Personal narrative (3)*
Research paper (3)	Applying concepts (2)*
Self-assessment (3)*	Journal entries (2)*
Summary (3)	Partner/group essay (2)*
Explanation of answers (2)*	Reading response (2)
Lab report (2)	Reflection (2)
News articles (2)*	Rhetorical analysis (2)*
Personal reflection (2)	Book work (1)*
Personal statement (2)	Coding (1)
Report (2)	Concept map (1)*
Worksheets (2)*	Event response (1)*
Coding (1)	Free writes (1)*
Project write-up (1)	List (1)*
Quotes and responses (1)*	Notes (1)
Reading logs (1)*	Online discussion posts (1)*
Vocabulary flashcards (1)*	Personal statement (1)
	Portfolio (1)*
	Project write-up (1)
	Report (1)
	Script (1)*
	Short answer responses (1)
	Surveys (1)*
	Summary (1)
	Vocabulary definitions (1)

*Writing tasks that were named at only one of the two timepoints

In order to identify general trends in terms of how students' writing developed from high school to college, I first compared each students' high school interview to his/her college

interview and marked any differences between the two in terms of students' writing beliefs and practices. Many of these differences were self-identified by the students, since I asked them in the college interview to what extent their writing had changed since high school, what they had learned about writing in college, and what they saw as being similar or different between high school and college writing. I then compiled these shifts and, drawing upon the definition of writing development noted previously, sorted them according to whether they reflected a change in students' writing, or a change in students' relationship to writing or the writing context (see Table 11).

Table 11

Overall Shifts in Student Writing from High School to College

Changes in Writing	Changes in Relationship to Writing/Context
Writing longer papers (6)	Relationship with instructors less personal (6)
Expanded conception of genres (5)	Enjoyment of writing increased (4)
Change in process/time management (4)	Less feedback in college (4)
Performance initially worse because of summer break (3)	Believe that expectations are higher (4)
Working with others to produce a written product (3)	Confidence dropped (3)
Responding to research in writing (3)	Writing felt easier (3)
Writing independently (3)	More specific feedback in college (1)
Using APA (2)	
Using different vocabulary (2)	

The frequency counts for each shift demonstrate that the most prevalent changes for students occurred in terms of length, conceptions of genres, relationships with instructors, enjoyment of

writing, and amount of feedback. These shifts presented challenges for some participants but not for others. For instance, three students encountered challenges in writing longer papers, while another three students did not find this change to be challenging. Therefore, the changes detailed above had different consequences for students' individual writing development. The particular trajectories that resulted as students crossed the boundary from high school to college, and the ways in which the shifts detailed above were present in particular trajectories, will be detailed in the case studies that follow.

Case Studies of Writing Development

Each individual students' path of writing development is unique; however, identifying the extent to which students reported changes in their writing and/or changes in their relationship to writing revealed patterns across the twelve study participants. Drawing upon Bazerman and colleague's (2018) definition of writing development, I graphed students' trajectories on two axes. The horizonal axis represented the extent to which students' relationship to writing developed, while the vertical axis represents development in students' writing (see Figure 5).

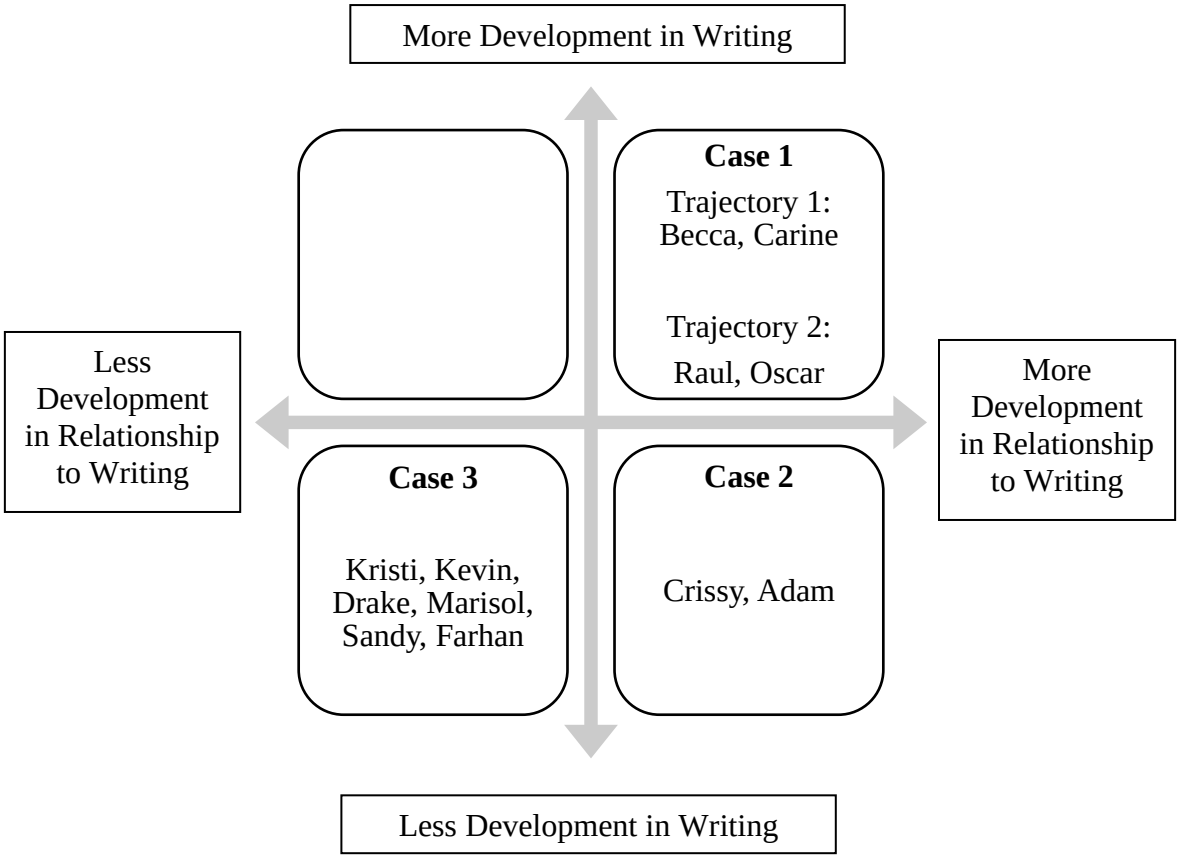

Figure 5. Student writing trajectories.

In graphing the amount of student writing development that occurred across these two axes, three groups emerged. The upper right quadrant (Case 1) contains four students who reported changes that occurred in terms of their writing and their relationship to writing. The students in this quadrant are further divided into two subgroups, because I identified parallels within the experiences of Becca and Carine, as well as Raul and Oscar. In the lower right quadrant (Case 2) are two students who reported few changes in their writing but shifts that occurred in their relationship to writing. Both Crissy and Adam were able to continue using high school writing practices successfully in college; however, their interactions with peers demonstrated how they had changed in terms of their perceptions of how they saw themselves as writers. Finally,

students who reported few changes in their writing or in their relationship to writing are contained within the lower left quadrant (Case 3). Within this group, some students felt that their writing had improved a bit since high school, while others believed that their writing had gotten worse. However, none of these students encountered writing situations that prompted them to reorganize or realign their previous learning; in other words, their writing and relationship to writing was mostly a continuation of what they reported in high school. No students reported significant changes in writing with less development in their relationship to writing (the top left quadrant). In the sections that follow, I describe students' experiences within each of the three trajectories, focusing primarily on the kinds of writing development that were shared among the participants in each of the three groups.

Case 1: Diving into the Deep End

As noted previously, the four students who reported development in their writing and relationship to writing seemed to fall into two subgroups. Becca and Carine made up the first subgroup and both encountered new writing experiences that prompted them to view college writing as a sink or swim situation, in which one must either adapt or face failure. Oscar and Raul's transition was less intense, and both encountered situations that led them to rethink their conceptions of academic writing. In both subgroups, the students adopted beliefs and practices that marked a shift from their high school experiences, particularly in terms of how they wrote about research.

Trajectory 1: Sink or swim.

Out of the twelve study participants, Becca and Carine attended colleges that were farthest away from their high school. While the other ten participants attended postsecondary institutions that were within a one-hour driving radius from their hometown in Southern

California, Becca and Carine both attended four-year universities in Northern California. Both encountered friction points they needed to navigate in the course of their college writing assignments. Despite these challenges, Becca reported a more positive relationship to writing in college than in high school, whereas for Carine, changing her writing practices felt hard and overwhelming at times.

Becca took ERWC as her twelfth-grade language arts class because she thought it would be easier than AP Literature. Though she expected that college writing would be more difficult than high school writing, she felt ready to meet the challenges as long as she could maintain her work ethic: "I feel ready. I'm just, I don't know if scared is the right word, I don't know, maybe I'll get lazy. That's what I'm worried about the most." In her college interview, Becca returned to this idea of being lazy to talk about her perception of college writing expectations. She said,

> I feel like it's a lot more work and you have to put in a lot more effort into your writing, because they can tell when you're being lazy…[In high school] I think you could've really just turned in like okay work and you would've gotten by, but I feel like in college, you definitely have to put a lot of effort into your writing and go to the office hours and get it checked multiple times because the first time is definitely not the best.

In addition to feeling that college writing required more effort, Becca was asked to use APA formatting and scholarly sources in the research papers she wrote for her anthropology and humanities courses, two requirements that were new to her. Becca said she felt she could have been better prepared for these requirements, since in high school she had only been introduced to MLA formatting and it wasn't necessary to use scholarly sources, as long as the articles she found weren't "too bad." Using Google and the campus writing center helped her to navigate the new expectations she encountered. Though Becca saw these areas as gaps in her prior learning,

she also felt that there were skills that she gained in high school which had deteriorated leading up to college:

> I was kind of lost when I wrote my first college paper, because one of the things I got was, "You could have organized it better." And I feel like I was really good at organizing my writing in high school, just because we were constantly doing it, so I feel like that break from high school to college just kinda made me forget a lot of the things that I was taught.

Though college writing presented some challenges for Becca, overall, she found writing to be more enjoyable than it had been in high school. This change in her relationship to writing seemed to be a result of the choices she had in college in terms of the classes she was taking as well as the kinds of topics she was able to write about. She stated, "I think I enjoy it [writing] more now just because of the classes I was taking. They're not like mandatory classes like it was in high school, and I think in college they give you more freedom to write about what you wanna write about." By the end of the semester, Becca felt that her writing had improved and that she had a better sense of what college professors expect.

Carine took AP Literature her twelfth-grade year, in part because she felt it was expected of her: "I kinda like have to take Honors and AP classes because that's just the way life is for me and my family." Outside of school, Carine enjoyed writing poetry, and she often "used writing like an escape" when she encountered difficult situations. Carine felt that her experience writing poems made it easier for her to interpret and respond to texts in her AP Literature class. She reported that "language arts is kind of like home for me," and when she wrote essays in AP Literature, she admitted, "I don't have to think about it. It's just automatic for me. Just do it and it comes out the way I want it to." She also saw herself as having perfectionist tendencies, and

when she had the opportunity to write essays at home for AP Literature rather than in class, she noted that the writing "needs to be like perfect before I submit it." Because she identified writing as a strength, Carine said that she felt ready for college-level writing.

College writing proved to be much more challenging than Carine had expected. Carine attended a prestigious research university where she was expected to write 15 to 20-page essays for her English class, which were far longer than the two to three-page essays she wrote in her twelfth-grade English class. Carine ended up failing her first English essay because she didn't meet the fifteen-page length requirement. This was the first time she had failed a writing assignment, and she commented that "it was pretty scary for me." Carine also encountered challenges in her humanities class. She said,

> My humanities class was actually one of the hardest, because [the professor] had us do group essays, and I didn't like that at all. It was me in a group with six other people, and it's so hard to try to open up to other people and their writing, when you have your own style of doing it. That was hard. In the end, it did help, because some people were better, so when I couldn't think of the word, they would think it up for me, and it would be perfect sometimes.

In this passage, and throughout the rest of her college interview, Carine frequently used the term "hard" to talk about her college writing experience. What seemed to be hard for Carine was not only the shifts in expectations, but also having to become more flexible when she wrote with other people. In contrast to her high school essays, which she wanted to be "perfect" before she submitted them, Carine judged the writing in her humanities essays to be "perfect sometimes," perhaps because her own style of writing was compromised. She noted feeling irritated when she wrote group essays; specifically, she mentioned that "there was this one person I kept butting

heads with, because she was just like me." The two of them kept changing each other's words on the shared Google Doc and had to find a way to, as Carine put it, "merge our writing styles together." Although Carine continued to enjoy writing in college, the writing situations she encountered changed her perception of herself as a writer. In order to be successful as a college writer, Carine believed that, like it or not, she needed to adapt some of her writing practices:

> I had to change my writing, and it was hard to do that, because I had been writing the same way for so long. I guess that was how college was, and I had to mold myself into that college life. Yeah, even if I didn't like it, I had to find a way to change my writing, and make it work.

Both Becca and Carine encountered college writing situations that prompted them to acquire skills that they had not experienced in high school, such as using APA format and writing essays with other people. Both students also reassessed their writing abilities in the face of these new expectations. Becca stated that she felt her writing "kinda lacked in some areas, but now I feel like I definitely know what I need to improve on and I feel like now it's better but when I first got to college it was kind of ... I kinda wasn't that great." Likewise, Carine stated, "I thought that at high school I was already at my peak, and I was good, but it's not. When I got into college, I just thought, 'Wow, I need to change. I'm not as good as I thought I was.'"

Furthermore, Becca and Carine characterized their initial college writing experiences in remarkably similar ways. Both students saw college writing as a sink or swim situation in which one either quickly adapts or fails. For instance, Becca remarked,

> It definitely feels like the first semester of college prepares you better than high school does… I think it was just the feedback I got from my professors and them just saying, this

> isn't gonna work with your professors later on in the future, so you need to learn this now. They said to learn this now or fail.

Similarly, Carine said, "I just kind of realized, that, okay, this isn't gonna work the way I've been doing it like I used to. Change, or else I'm just gonna get an F again." Because Becca and Carine perceived college writing as a high-stakes situation, they quickly changed some of their prior practices when these practices seemed to no longer serve them well. For example, Carine recalled that in her twelfth-grade AP Literature class, it was usually possible for her to write an essay in a day, whereas in college, she started to write essays across multiple days so that she wouldn't feel "overwhelmed" in meeting the increased length requirements. Although learning to write over an extended period of time might be viewed as a positive form of adaptation, other adaptations were more problematic. Carine noted that for her humanities group essay, two group members did not contribute at all to the writing, and she didn't say anything about it. She said,

> I'm kinda surprised at myself, 'cause I was okay with that, because I just ... I was kind of seeing it as, okay, it's my- it's kinda- it's not my essay, but it's my essay, so I don't want ... I need a good grade, and I don't want it to be messed up.

Here, Carine seems to be wrestling with the consequences of shared ownership of writing ("it's not my essay, but it's my essay") and reconciles these tensions by suggesting that the need for a good grade is a greater priority than addressing the ethical dilemma. Thus, we might wonder about the consequences of "self-actualized" writing development compared to "resignation to externally imposed expectations" (Bazerman et al., 2018, p. 7). That is to say, if grades serve as the primary impetus for students' writing development, there might be potentially problematic consequences in terms of how students try to avoid failure. Overall, though, both Becca and

Carine believed that the challenges they encountered had helped them become better writers, and both felt more confident about their ability to meet professors' expectations moving forward.

Trajectory 2: Adjusting goggles.

Becca and Carine's sink or swim writing trajectories differed from the trajectories that occurred for the other two participants who experienced development in writing and in their relationship to writing. Raul and Oscar's writing development seemed to stem from their experiences writing argumentative papers in college, which prompted them to re-envision what these texts might look like. Like Becca and Carine's experiences, a number of parallels existed between Raul and Oscar's trajectories, despite the fact that they took different English classes during twelfth-grade and went on to attend different types of postsecondary institutions.

Oscar took ERWC in high school because he thought it would involve less homework than AP Literature. Although he reported enjoying writing for the most part, he noted that "sometimes you just get tired of it after a while and you just want to get it over with and just turn it in." Interestingly, though, Oscar felt that taking ERWC had potentially put him at a disadvantage in terms of his readiness for college writing:

> I feel like I've been taught well throughout high school like in order to move on to the next stage which is college, but then I also feel like at the same time I feel like I'm not going to be as good as the other students are in language arts…The people in AP, I feel like they've had more experience in writing than other sections.

Despite feeling as though he may have had less writing experience compared to students in AP Literature, Oscar felt that he had been taught important writing skills in his AVID classes (a college readiness program which stands for Advancement Via Individual Determination) and in his tenth-grade pre-AP English course. Specifically, he reported learning "how to write formal

essays" and use pathos, logos, and ethos in order to "get into the reader's head, so they could think a certain way."

When I asked Oscar how he felt about college writing after his first semester, he said, "I feel like I was ready for the writing stuff, but I wasn't ready for the... I was ready more for organized, structural essays, and I didn't think it was going to be more about putting my opinion into them." By "structural essays," Oscar seems to be referring to the specific requirements that generally accompanied the writing situations he encountered in his high school classes. As noted in the previous chapter, Oscar's ERWC instructor, Leslie, typically gave students outlines to follow and required particular elements to be included in an essay in a specific order. In contrast, Oscar saw college writing as being "more laid back," whereas in high school, he felt that his ERWC teacher "was always strict on what we had to use." He stated, "In college, they don't require the intro, body, and conclusion. They told me, 'Use how many paragraphs you want to use, as long as you get your idea through.'" Though Oscar perceived college writing as being less prescriptive than high school writing, he was expected to meet a minimum page requirement on some of his assignments, and he mentioned losing points on one of his assignments because he didn't meet the requirement. In addition to seeing differences in terms of essay organization, Oscar also saw differences in the kind of stance he was expected to take when he wrote. He said, "In high school, we would put an intro, and she [his ERWC teacher] would try to take our opinion out of it, and she would just try to put facts in it. Then, in college, it was more about what we thought, just not in the first person." Being able to include his own thoughts in writing and have choices about the topics he wrote about changed Oscar's writing and his relationship to writing. Oscar said that he felt his writing had improved because he was able to "go more into depth now than in high school." He said, "In high school, they [teachers] would choose our

topics for us, but now that I'm in college, they let us choose our topics. So I feel like if I talk about what I know more, it's easier to write it out." When I asked Oscar what stood out to him about college writing, he replied, "I just liked how it was better. It was easier. It was more fun than at high school." For Oscar, choice and more flexible structural requirements seemed to contribute to his changing perceptions of writing.

When I interviewed Raul in his twelfth-grade AP Literature class, he had mixed feelings about himself as a writer and his readiness for college writing. He stated, "Once it comes to writing I'm still not completely confident in my abilities. Even though other people tell me I'm a pretty good writer, I'm pretty fair. It's like, I still don't see it. So, maybe I am prepared, I just don't realize it." Raul's uncertainty about his writing and his ability to meet the expectations of college writing may have stemmed in part from general uncertainty about what to expect in college. Like many of the other students in this study, Raul is the first member of his family to attend college, and he talked about what influenced his decision to go to college in his high school interview. During his freshman year of high school, Raul's mother was diagnosed with a rare disease called Multifocal Motor Neuropathy, and Raul said that after his mother got sick, he started to work harder in school so that he could go to college. He remarked,

> She's the one that wants me to go to college, so I'm kinda doing it for her. Like, I push myself a lot harder…I didn't come into high school thinking I was gonna try. Because, like my sisters, they went to [a continuation school], they didn't get in ... They really didn't try. I honestly feel like if she didn't get sick, and she wasn't there as a constant reminder to push me, I probably woulda just ended up like them.

Although Raul believed that his mother's illness played a major role in his decision to go to college, his motivation for going had shifted a bit over time. Initially, he felt as though his

mother was “guilting me into going to college. But, now I want to. It's gotten to the point where I'm excited for it. I'm scared, but I'm excited.”

Raul went on to attend a private, prestigious research university. Though in high school he described himself as not being “completely confident” in his writing abilities, being in a competitive college environment seemed to lead to a further waning in Raul’s confidence. He stated, “Once I got here I'm no longer smart, I'm average, so that was a big hit. My ego was suffering.” Like Oscar, the shifts that Raul reported in his writing primarily stemmed from seeing genres in a new way. Raul did not have a writing class first semester, but one of his general education courses, Theater and Therapy, required him to write frequently and to take a different type of stance than what he had experienced in high school. He noted that the course was

> really different than I was used to because in high school, they kind of taught us not to make anything personal, so no use of first person or second person, just stay in the third person. But specifically with this [course] it was asking ... It was Theater and Therapy, so it was asking for our input on it. It was something I just had to really get used to and get over to actually succeed.

Raul emphasized this idea of getting used to new norms multiple times throughout his interview, frequently using the term “weird” to describe moments that challenged his conception of writing. For instance, he explained that the research paper he was asked to write for his Theater and Therapy class was “really weird.” He remarked,

> [The professor] called it a research paper, but then he said make it personal. And I was like, "That's not a research paper." But anyways. He said he wanted the first paragraph to be our narrative on why we're picking it, and I was like, "Okay, that's gonna be a good

> intro." But then during the research paper he wanted us to still include our input and relate back to the research. So I thought that was just weird cause I've never written a research paper like that.

Raul's comments suggest that prior to this class, he believed that one's personal take might be used in the introduction of a research paper, but not throughout the rest of the paper. Thus, Raul was challenged to reconceive what counts as a research paper, and this not only changed the way that he wrote, but also his relationship to writing. He noted that his writing had become "a little less formal" because he was now writing in first-person more frequently, and he also enjoyed writing more for this reason. He felt that using "I" in his writing "makes it a lot easier," and he also felt he was able to "engage in the prompt more." Like Becca, Raul felt that the first semester had given him a better sense of what to expect in his subsequent courses. "Because I've been exposed to a college environment and I've really picked up on how professors in general grade and how they teach, I think I'm even more prepared than I was to take the writing course next semester," he said.

Overall, Oscar and Raul's writing trajectories shared a number of characteristics, including reconsidering their understanding of academic writing and using a less formal tone. Both students talked about how being given more freedom to write about topics of their choice and having structural flexibility increased their enjoyment of writing. Additionally, Oscar and Raul faced similar challenges in adjusting to their new writing contexts. Both of them commented on the shift from being directed by others in high school to being self-directed in college. As Raul put it in his college interview, "You have to be a lot more responsible here. You're responsible for yourself now, and that's something to get used to. It's fun, but it's dangerous." This "danger" of freedom was a concern that some of the students (such as Becca)

mentioned in their high school interview, and indeed, Oscar admitted that because he wasn't told to go to school anymore, he had missed a few classes. However, he eventually found ways to overcome the temptation of not completing his writing. He stated, "I kind of tricked myself into doing it, like I would go to school early and I would work in the computer lab on my essays."

For both Oscar and Raul, the shift towards becoming more self-directed also stemmed from the changed nature of their relationship to their instructors. Oscar commented that professors weren't "bugging" him to complete his work, as his high school teachers did, and Raul remarked that professors "are not like teachers. Teachers want you to talk to them and come to them after school and stuff like that to get help, and here it's a lot more intimidating but they respect you more if you do. It's weird. It's still technically the same dynamic, but it's harder." For Raul, the main difference between teachers and professors seems to relate to accessibility. In the high school interviews, many of the students commented that they would stay after school to get additional assistance from their teachers, whereas in college, what might be more "intimidating" and "harder" is that professors can generally be accessed only at particular times and particular places. While students often meet with their high school teachers within the classroom space that they both occupy, in college, instructors typically must be visited outside of class time in an office space apart from the classroom. Thus, as Raul described it, although the dynamic between students and teachers in high school and college is "technically the same," the limited time and space that students and professors share in the college environment can make it "harder" for students to seek assistance, thereby prompting a shift towards self-directedness that may promote positive development for some students, but potentially negative consequences for students who are too intimidated to seek assistance when needed.

Case 2: Wading In

Adam and Crissy's experiences reflect a second course of development, one in which students' writing did not undergo extensive shifts, but their relationship to writing changed in important ways. Adam and Crissy's transitions took place within different contexts—Adam took ERWC in high school and attended a community college, while Crissy took AP Literature and attended a four-year, research intensive university. However, both students were able to successfully rely on what they learned in high school in their writing intensive college courses, but their relationship to writing changed as a result of their interactions with peers and their perceptions of college writing expectations.

As a high school senior, Adam felt that his writing was still "progressing." He stated, "I wouldn't consider my writing perfect. I mean I get B's and C's on my writing, but it was better than when I was getting 30's out of 100 'cause I didn't know how to write." Adam moved to the U.S. from the Philippines with his family when he was five years old, so much of the challenge of writing stemmed from his limited proficiency in the English language. For Adam, the challenges of learning English were formative not only in terms of his literacy skills, but also in terms of how he perceived his position within the school system. He remarked, "If you're weird in a way or you're just off the way the school looks at you, you're kind of left behind…I was in that position when I was young 'cause I didn't know how to speak English." Adam perceived literacy and belonging as being intertwined; to not know the language was to be "weird in a way" and consequently "left behind." Adam's writing and perceptions of himself as a writer reached a turning point during his eleventh grade AP Composition class. When asked what was significant about the course, Adam pointed to the influence of his teacher, saying, "You just wanted to be engaged in her class." His AP Composition teacher had worked as a writer before

becoming a teacher, and Adam described her as “life goals when it comes to writing” (“life goals” is an expression, often used within the context of social media, to identify someone as an aspirational figure). Although he said that his grades initially remained low at the start of AP Composition, he recalled a time when he got an essay back and the teacher had written, “Adam, you have potential.” “From that point on, I felt like that’s when my writing changed,” Adam recalled. “Even though it was a high school class, it was like getting ready for college.” By the end of his senior year, Adam felt ready for college writing, and he attributed that feeling of readiness to what he had learned in high school: “I think I have some pretty good essays in my belt, and the tools I was able to ... All the stuff the teachers taught me. I was able to acquire some of it.”

In college, Adam continued to rely on what he had learned in high school and found that his learning translated well to the college environment. “I remember in high school, all I’d get is C's,” he said. “I'd be happy if I got a B in high school. Now I'm getting B's and A's.” Adam attributed his success to what he had been taught by his eleventh grade and twelfth grade English teachers. He reflected, “I want to go back to them, I want to be like, ‘Hey, guys, I just want to say thank you. Writing class, my English class was a breeze 'cause of you guys.’” What seemed to translate particularly well were some of the handouts he had kept from his eleventh grade AP Composition course. He recalled his thinking when these materials had been given to him in high school:

> My AP Comp teacher, she was like, "You guys should save this for college, because trust me, you guys will use it for college." At the time, I was like, man, don't even trip, like it's just going to accumulate space in my room. But no, she was on point, 'cause oh my god, those became so useful. It's like, her handouts are actually in my actual college folder.

Indeed, Adam pulled out some of the handouts from his folder to show me during the interview, which included lists of transition words and verbs to use when writing a rhetorical analysis. In addition to feeling satisfied with his high school preparation, Adam also believed that his attitude towards college played a role in his positive experience first semester. He remarked that his writing class shared some similarities to his AP Composition class, "But this time, I'm more motivated. The way I view education now from then in high school is kind of different. I'm trying a lot harder." The writing that Adam encountered in college did not seem to require a reorganization or realignment of his prior learning; rather, Adam's writing development was seemingly influenced more by the change in his relationship to writing in terms of his motivation, confidence, and enjoyment of writing. While in high school, Adam sometimes relied on Sparknotes to help him complete essays about texts that weren't interesting to him; in college, he was asked to respond to texts written by Malcolm X and other authors who challenged what it means to get an education, a topic that resonated with Adam. "I think that was the best essay I wrote," Adam remarked, "just 'cause I was so very intrigued into it." He explained further,

> In high school, I felt like [writing] was a chore. I feel like I have to do it because my grade, I have to graduate. I have to get a good grade. But now actually I do like writing…'Cause the stuff we read was actually pretty cool.

Adam's increased interest and motivation in writing seemed to bolster a change in his confidence as a writer. Comparing his writing with the writing of his college peers affirmed Adam's new sense of himself as a writer: "I've met a couple friends in college in those classes, I can kind of see their grades and see mine, and like the editing, theirs is marked up like mine was in high school. I've actually helped some of my friends on their writing process." Thus, seeing his

former writing embodied in the writing of his friends provided Adam with further validation of his growth.

Peer comparisons also played a significant role in Crissy's writing development as she transitioned from high school to college. As a twelfth-grade AP Literature student, Crissy felt confident in her ability to write for her English class. Crissy had been a voracious reader since she was a child, and she felt that her love for reading continued to have a positive influence on her writing. "Because I liked reading when I was younger, I developed a love for words in a way; I remember I wanted to be a writer," she remarked. "Because of reading a lot when I was younger, English isn't hard to me as compared to other students." In looking ahead to college, Crissy felt that she already had a good idea about what college writing might look like, since she had been told that "AP would be a good standard for that." However, she also noted some insecurity about whether her writing would fulfill her professors' expectations:

> I always end up getting really wordy and I'm just kind of nervous, like, what if that's not what my professor's looking for? Then they'll criticize me on that. I feel I may have to change a lot of what I do to fit what they want.

Crissy's fears about college writing seemed to stem primarily from a desire to give her instructors "what they want" and not be criticized. In college, Crissy's writing seemed to "fit" the new environment without requiring significant changes, and she said she didn't "really see much of a difference in [her] writing from high school to college." Though she didn't have a writing class first semester, she did have a writing intensive elective, but she felt that the writing required was "a calling back" to what she encountered in her eleventh grade AP Composition class. She did go to the campus writing center to get assistance on one of her papers, but that experience also affirmed the adequacy of her high school learning. She commented that she

learned from the writing tutor “you could also include graphs in your research essays, and I didn't know that. That's something new I learned, but yeah, otherwise, no gaps.”

Despite having “no gaps” in her preparation for college writing and a successful first semester, Crissy did not feel confident about her ability to meet college writing expectations. Crissy’s lack of confidence seemed to result from conversations she had with friends about their college writing experiences. She shared,

> I'm actually still kind of nervous to write in college. I've talked to my roommates who actually have, their classes have more writing focus, like mythology and movie analysis classes, and from what they've told me ... one of my roommates, she was particularly struggling with how she was writing.

Crissy and her roommates often gave each other feedback on their writing, and through this process, Crissy began to question her perceptions of good writing. Although she believed that her roommate was a good writer, her roommate ended up getting a C on one of her essays. Crissy remarked, “As I read her paper, I feel like it wasn't that bad to deserve a C, but then again, I don't know. Writing’s very subjective.” What seemed to be particularly troubling for Crissy concerning the subjective nature of writing was that teaching assistants (TAs) often graded papers, which meant that the professor’s expectations for writing were communicated largely through the TAs. Crissy thus perceived TAs as being brokers of knowledge who may or may not pass along their knowledge to students. She commented, “Some of my friends have other TAs, they don't have ... they don't give us as much information as my TA would, concerning the final exam and what not. I don't know. I guess it's just up to luck.” Crissy’s comment suggests that in her view, being able to meet expectations for college writing is not only a matter of skill, but also a matter of luck. In high school, Crissy “wasn’t particularly anxious” about her writing because

she “had kind of a formula” she used, and her writing approach was generally met with success. In contrast, Crissy perceived the college writing environment as being fraught with unknowns, and she repeatedly used the phrase “I don’t know” in her college interview, which she had not done when I interviewed her in high school. For instance, she remarked, “I just realize that with college, especially with TAs and stuff, that grading is not always as simple as it seems according to the person. Their rubric, their expectations of you, can, I don't know, seem pretty unfair.” This unfairness Crissy perceived seemed to relate to her feeling that even assessment tools like rubrics could be misleading in determining writing expectations. “I feel like the rubric is completely up to the person,” she said, “so it's more often like, you have to go there and be like, ‘Okay, so what is it exactly that you would like on this paper?’” Overall, though Crissy believed that her writing had not changed much from high school to college, her relationship to writing did change in the way that she perceived good writing and expectations for writing, so that despite the fact that her writing had been received positively thus far, she did not feel confident about her ability to continue to meet writing expectations in the future.

Adam and Crissy’s trajectories suggest that peers can play an important role in student writers’ development. Viewing the writing of their peers provided Adam and Crissy with a way to assess their own writing to a greater degree than what they were able to do with their instructors’ feedback alone. For instance, Adam noticed that his college friends were receiving more markup on their papers than he was, which contributed to Adam’s view that his writing had improved since high school (as his papers used to be marked up to a greater extent) and that college writing was going well for him. In contrast, Crissy believed that her roommate’s writing “wasn’t that bad,” and when she saw that her roommate had received a C on an essay, she became worried that her own writing might be viewed less positively in her future classes,

despite the fact that her first quarter of college went well. Thus, although neither Adam nor Crissy believed that their writing had changed much since high school, their relationship to writing changed as a result of the way they perceived instructors' expectations, as well as how they assessed their writing in comparison to their peers.

Case 3: Just Another Lap

The last trajectory that emerged among students in this study was one in which students reported little development in either their writing or relationship to writing as they moved from high school to college. Six students' writing trajectories fit into this category. Three of these students took ERWC in high school (Kristi, Drake, and Sandy), while the other three took AP Literature their twelfth-grade year (Kevin, Marisol, and Farhan). Two of the students attended community colleges (Kristi and Sandy), and the rest attended four-year schools. Overall, the students in this group perceived college writing to be much like high school writing. For instance, Kristi commented that college writing "felt like a part two of ERWC. It didn't feel like it was any more complex or anything, it was just longer." One of the reasons why some students may have experienced less development in their writing is because they had fewer opportunities to write compared to high school. Sandy, Kevin, and Marisol did not have a writing course their first quarter/semester, though they all noted that they would be taking a writing course later in the year. All three of these students still had writing requirements for the classes they took, but they didn't perceive these requirements to be particularly challenging, in part because they received little instruction in writing. For instance, Kevin was asked to complete multiple writing assignments for his college computer science courses, but he noted that his instructors "don't give any instructions on how to write these papers. It's all based on what we've already known." Likewise, Marisol was required to do some writing for her psychology and biology classes, but

without having a writing class, she believed that her writing was "not as good as it used to be. Cause of the lack of practice." Sandy compared her college writing experience to what she encountered in her eleventh grade AP Composition class, remarking that her high school teacher "had us do a lot of writing, and the prompts she'd give us were really diverse. I had to put so much stuff in them compared to the ones in college where it's just not even complicated. It was just easy."

Although Kristi, Drake, and Farhan did take writing classes their first semester, they also felt that their writing had not developed very much since starting college. In talking about her writing class, Kristi commented, "I don't feel like the professor I have now taught me any more than the teachers I had in high school. I feel like they're both very similar." Likewise, when I asked Farhan if he had learned any new writing techniques in college, he responded, "Not really, because it seems repetitive. It's just the amount of detail and the types of detail provided is different." Both Kristi and Farhan's views echo Drake's comment, that college was "like high school." Drake ended up dropping out before the end of the first semester due to financial issues, so if he had stayed, it is possible that he may have encountered events that would have influenced his writing development. After completing his initial writing assignments, though, Drake felt that he had been well prepared for college writing, and he noted that we had received a B on his last essay. While Kristi and Drake felt that they had maintained their high school writing skills, Farhan, like Marisol, felt that his writing may have declined since high school. He said, "I feel like my writing went down because in 12th grade, I was improving a bit. Now I just dropped down again. It's not at that level again…It's probably because it's a three-month gap." Contributing to Farhan's perception that his writing "went down" was his belief that expectations

for writing were higher in college. He commented, “The grading scale being higher here, I feel like I’m getting lower grades.”

Though the students in this group mostly saw similarities between their high school and college writing contexts, one area in which they did note some differences was how professors related to students compared to the relationships they had with their high school teachers. Kristi believed that in college, the dynamic between instructors and students was much more distant than in high school:

> I think other than my writing professor it was intriguing to see professors not really care about their students. Because like with my reading and my math class, my professors wouldn't even, at times, tell us that they weren't having class. They wouldn't email us. You just show up to class and then 10 minutes later find out you did not have class that day. Or the engagement that they have. It wasn't like ... usually in high school you have some kind of relationship with your teacher whether it was good or bad. But in college it’s like, you go, you learn and that's it.

Farhan also commented on the ways in which college professors engaged with students. Specifically, Farhan felt that his writing class operated much differently than his twelfth grade English class, where the teacher would “ask questions and people were just answering and jumping off of one another's ideas.” In contrast, Farhan remarked that his college composition professor “just gives us the assignment and just starts talking about that assignment and gives us the definite—what is expected.” He elaborated on this point further as he described his interactions with the instructor for his composition class:

> My instructor did not really engage with the students when giving us assignments and the notes on how to do stuff. She would just be like, "Here it is. Do this, this, and this." That's

> it. So we really wouldn't have time in class to ask questions on how to do stuff or if doing something was possible or not. Even for office hours, I tried going like five times…She wasn't there twice. That made it difficult for me, too.

In addition to both perceiving college instructors as being less engaged than high school teachers, Farhan and Kristi's comments also allude to moments of absence when college instructors didn't come to class or couldn't be reached during office hours. In terms of students' relationship to writing and the writing context, this perception of instructor absence could be consequential. As Marisol pointed out in her interview, being less connected with one's instructors means that students have to rely more on themselves for validation. She remarked,

> It's really easy to get discouraged just because…well, obviously you're not in high school anymore so you don't have that close of a relationship with your teacher. So I think you really have to be your own cheerleader in a sense.

What Kristi, Farhan, and Marisol's comments suggest is that the shift from high school to college writing contexts is not only marked by increasing independence, but also by shifts in interpersonal relationships. During the high school interviews, many of the students commented that their writing changed over time because of what they had learned, but also because of the relationships they formed with particular teachers who helped them to see their potential. Thus, it may be the case that feeling less connected with one's instructors could contribute to feelings of stagnation in one's writing, or, as Marisol's quote suggests, feelings of discouragement. Apart from this difference in the nature of their interpersonal relationships in college, by and large, the six students in this group saw college as being a continuation of high school, or perhaps even easier than high school.

Discussion

As the analyses above demonstrate, students' individual writing trajectories differed as they moved from high school to college, yet clear patterns emerged among the participants in terms of how their writing and/or relationship to writing developed. These differential paths beg the question of why these different trajectories emerged and what factors influenced students' development. Because many in-school and out-of-school factors can influence writing development, and because the analyses above are based on interview data collected at two timepoints, it is difficult to make causal claims about what factors were most influential in students' writing development. However, comparing the experiences of students within and across the three case groups suggests that four factors may have played a role.

Presence or Absence of a Writing Course

One factor that seemed to influence students' writing development was the extent to which they were asked to write within their classes and whether they took a course devoted specifically to writing (freshman composition, humanities, etc.). As noted above, three students did not have a writing intensive course their first quarter/semester, and all three of these students felt that their writing and their relationship to writing had changed very little since high school. It may seem obvious that the absence of a writing course first semester would be accompanied by less writing development; however, this finding does raise questions about whether the timing of a first-year writing class can be consequential. For instance, because of the writing challenges they immediately encountered in their writing courses, Becca and Carine quickly changed their writing practices to avoid failure. In contrast, Raul and Crissy both took a writing-intensive course but not a course on writing, and neither of them encountered significant challenges in their writing, although Raul did start to rethink what a research paper can look like. However,

both of them reported that their initial writing experiences, and hearing about their friends' experiences, gave them a better idea of what to expect the next semester during their writing course. Thus, it is possible that Raul and Crissy's reactions to what they encounter in their college writing courses could differ from those of Becca and Carine, given that they have already had some exposure to college writing expectations.

Self-Efficacy in Writing

Secondly, changes in students' relationship to writing seemed to be related to a combination of their self-efficacy and the ways in which they judged their writing performance in relationship to their peers. Three of the six students who took AP Literature in high school (Carine, Crissy, and Raul) reported feeling less confident about their writing in college. Carine and Crissy had been particularly successful in their writing for AP Literature, which they attributed to their out of school reading and writing practices, as well as figuring out certain approaches and formulas that served them well. As Crissy put it, AP can be viewed as a "good standard" for college writing expectations, and therefore, experiencing success in an AP course might suggest readiness for college writing. However, attending prestigious research universities that are ranked among the top colleges in the U.S. challenged Carine, Crissy, and Raul's sense of confidence in their writing abilities. In these contexts, writing that was considered "good" in high school was not necessarily judged similarly in college, thereby leading Carine to conclude, "I'm not as good as I thought," and Raul to comment, "Once I got here I'm no longer smart, I'm average." In contrast, Farhan also took AP Literature in high school and attended a research university, but his feelings about his writing abilities did not seem to change across these contexts. In high school, Farhan said that after his introduction, the rest of his essay "just falls apart"; likewise, in college, he said that introductions continued to be a strength, whereas

everything else in the essay gets "scrambled." Unlike some of the other students who took AP Literature, Farhan did not feel successful in his writing in high school, and he continued to feel this way in college. Thus, the type of postsecondary institution that students attended and the high school language arts class they took did not necessarily determine their path of their development, as students at both two-year and four-year schools were included within each trajectory, as well as students who took ERWC and AP Literature. However, students' perceptions of the difficulty of writing expectations within these different environments, as well as how they assessed their ability to meet those expectations, mattered in terms of their trajectories as writers.

Interpretation and Value of Grades

How students interpreted grades and the extent to which they valued grades may have also influenced their writing development. When I asked students whether their writing had improved or changed in college, most of the students referred to their grades as a way to describe their progress. For instance, Adam and Kevin received better grades on their writing in college than in high school, so both concluded that their writing had improved since high school. Interestingly, though, they both continued to rely primarily on the skills and strategies they had learned in high school and didn't feel they had learned any new writing approaches in college. While it's possible that their writing did still improve due to practice or other factors, it is also possible that the expectations for writing they encountered were less rigorous than what they experienced in high school, and therefore their writing was viewed more favorably than it had been before. By and large, students who attended a community college and/or did not have a writing-specific course first semester were more likely to feel that the writing expectations in college were not necessarily more rigorous than what they experienced in high school. Feeling

that one's writing has improved can lead to higher self-efficacy, thus prompting a shift in one's relationship to writing that is not necessarily tied to changes in one's writing practices.

The value that students placed on grades also mattered in terms of how they approached new writing tasks. For example, Kevin and Carine both took AP Literature in high school, went to a four-year research university, and were asked to write a group or partner essay for the first time in college. This experience proved to be difficult and consequential for Carine's development as a writer, but not for Kevin. Though Carine was a strong writer, her prior history suggests that she placed a greater emphasis on grades than Kevin, who shared in his high school interview that he only started to care about his performance in school around the eighth grade. Additionally, Carine wanted her group's essay to reflect her own vision of writing, whereas Kevin stated that he and his partner were open to changing each other's writing. Thus, it is possible that students who are less concerned about grades will be more open to taking risks and experimenting in their writing, whereas students who place a high value on grades may be more risk-adverse.

Choice and Interest

Finally, choice and interest also seemed to play a role in students' development as writers as they moved from high school to college. A number of students reported that they had more freedom to write about topics of their choice in college, and some felt that having choices changed their relationship to writing and/or their writing performance. For instance, Oscar said that it was easier for him to write about topics he already knew something about, and thus being able to choose topics of interest made writing "easier" and "more fun than at high school." Adam talked about how the college essay he wrote in response to authors who challenged what it means to get an education was one of the best essays he had ever written because he was "so

very intrigued" by the topic. Choosing a major and having some choices in terms of course selection also played a role in students' development as writers. Becca stated that she enjoyed writing more in college because of the classes she took, especially because "they're not like mandatory classes like it was in high school." Overall, then, having choice in terms of topic selection and courses, as well as being more interested in assigned readings, had a positive influence on student writers' development.

Implications for High Schools and Colleges

The types of shifts that students in this study experienced as they moved from high school to college writing suggest a number of ways that high schools and colleges might support students across this time point. First of all, the presence or absence of a writing course first quarter/semester (such as first-year composition or humanities) seemed to play a large role in the extent to which students felt their writing had changed from high school to college. Although some students, such as Becca and Carine, experienced growth in their writing in terms of being able to write longer papers, use APA formatting, and cite scholarly sources, this growth was sometimes also accompanied by anxiety in the face of high stakes class policies. Four of the students mentioned taking a writing course in which not making the minimum length requirement for a paper would result in a letter grade deduction or an automatic F. If we accept the premise that writing in new contexts presents challenges, even for experienced writers, (Anson, 2016; Bazerman et al., 2018; Sommers, 2008), then high stakes policies like these do not seem to reflect a developmental view of writing. Although some may argue that "sink or swim" policies rightly reflect the rigorous nature of college, at the same time, some students may already have had "swimming lessons" in the form of social and cultural capital that enable them to more easily navigate these kinds of policies than other students. Given that two-thirds of the

students in this study are first-generation college students, we might wonder whether high stakes policies serve them well. Furthermore, half of the students in the study noted that their relationships with their college professors were more distant than what they experienced with their high school teachers. As I suggested previously, differences in the structure of the college context may contribute to these feelings (e.g., the lack of afterschool drop-in hours), yet, efforts might be made at the high school-level to help students navigate these changes in interpersonal relationships, and at the college-level to provide additional support.

Another consideration is the ways in which students' feelings of writing self-efficacy influenced their development as writers. For some of the students who took high school courses that were viewed as being "advanced," no longer being seen as a top-performing student within the college environment was challenging. In particular, students who had developed ways of writing that consistently worked well within specific high school genres (e.g., AP-style essays) sometimes found it difficult to adapt to the demands of college genres that were less predictable. One strategy that might help support students' ability to write within a variety of genres is to focus on the development of rhetorical flexibility at the high school level. Rhetorical flexibility entails being able "to move from the familiar, assess an academic situation, and write successfully in the genre that each situation requires" (Johns, 2009, p. 204). To foster rhetorical flexibility, the authors of the *Framework for Success in Postsecondary Writing* (CWPA, NCTE, & NWP, 2011) suggest that teachers might ask students to write and analyze a variety of texts, as well as write for different purposes and audiences. A number of the students came to college with fixed ideas of genres that were challenged (e.g., the idea that "I" can't be used in a research paper), perhaps in part because in high school, the most common forms of writing were essays and free response questions that required particular kinds of structures. However, once in

college, the types of genres that students were asked to write within diversified according to their academic major and the institution they attended. Thus, allowing students to experience a wide variety of genres, rather than placing the primary emphasis on argumentative writing, may help them to develop flexibility in their writing processes that will benefit them in college. In particular, asking students to engage in various forms of writing across disciplines may help support their transition from high school to college writing, since some of the challenges that participants in this study encountered were tied to disciplinary expectations (e.g., using APA formatting).

CHAPTER 7

Implications and Conclusions

The aim of this dissertation was to present a nuanced view on the issue of college readiness in writing by examining three strands: policy and curriculum, classroom instruction, and student experiences. In the previous chapters, I presented analyses within each of these strands, and I pointed to ways in which the findings might have implications for classroom instruction and students' development as they move from high school to college. While these findings and implications may have applicability to the policies and practices that surround high school and college writing, examining the ways in which these strands intersect can provide us with a better understanding of how multiple systems work in tandem to influence instruction and writer development. Here, I briefly summarize highlights from each chapter, and then looking across these chapters, I comment on the ways in which they work together to implicate policy and practice.

Key Findings

In Chapter 4, I examined how writing and college readiness in writing is represented in policy documents (the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement) and curricular approaches (ERWC and AP Literature). By conducting word frequency counts and discourse analysis, I found that the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement share some similarities in terms of defining what student writers should be able to do, such as using different strategies and materials, researching a topic, responding to written texts, and keeping the audience in mind. However, a number of differences also emerged in terms of words that were emphasized in one document and not the other, which suggest some important differences between the two documents. For instance, the terms rhetoric, conventions, and fields were included as key

concepts within the WPA Outcomes Statement, but not in the CCSS. The CCSS primarily refers to the kinds of writing students should be able to produce, while the WPA Outcomes Statement talks about composing processes. Writing production and composing processes suggest two different visions of writing, with the CCSS emphasizing the *demonstration* of writing knowledge, and the WPA Outcomes Statement emphasizing the *development* of writing knowledge. Furthermore, whereas the WPA Outcomes statement charges local writing programs with the setting of standards, the intention of the CCSS is to create a national vision of student achievement. The differences between the two policy documents, if translated into classroom practice, could have consequences for student writers' development as they move from high school to college. For instance, if students conceptualize writing as a linear process, or if they are unfamiliar with the idea of writing rhetorically, then college composition may present challenges for students. At the same time, composition is a specific academic discipline which emphasizes the study of writing, writing instruction, and rhetoric, while language arts is typically used as an umbrella term within K-12 schools and can include the development of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills, as well as engaging with literary, expository, and informational texts. Therefore, given that the WPA Outcomes Statement is concerned with college-level composition, while the CCSS concern high school language arts, these disciplinary and contextual differences may mean that "gaps" between the two policies are inevitable and useful. After all, if the CCSS and the WPA Outcomes Statement were closely aligned in terms of their expectations for student writing, we might wonder whether there is space for students to grow as writers between the end of high school and their completion of college composition. However, while some gaps between high school and college writing practices may be useful, as they provide students with an opportunity for learning, it is not clear at what point policy gaps

become problematic in terms of students' college readiness. For instance, some scholars believe that the CCSS adequately addresses the concept of rhetoric in writing, despite the absence of that term in the standards (Collin, 2013), while others believe that a greater emphasis on rhetoric is needed in order for students to be college-ready (Rives & Olsen, 2015).

Comparing the ERWC and AP Literature teacher's guides also raises questions about what skills and strategies should be emphasized to promote students' college readiness in writing. While both ERWC and AP Literature take an integrated approach to reading and writing with a specific focus on text-based, analytical writing, the curricula are distinct in the kinds of texts they emphasize and the agency they afford to high school instructors. In ERWC, teachers are to implement eight to ten modules throughout the school year and included in the modules are a variety of texts, primarily expository in nature. In contrast, AP Literature prioritizes literary texts, and the AP Literature curriculum does not include specific texts, such that teachers are responsible for making their own curricular decisions. Because the two approaches rely on exposing students to either expository or literary texts, in analyzing and writing about these texts, students will develop different kinds of skills, which in turn may impact their experiences writing in college. Additionally, given that teachers are granted more agency in AP Literature compared to ERWC, students will likely have different learning experiences in each course. Finally, differences emerged in terms of how ERWC and AP Literature align with the visions of writing set forth in the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement. While ERWC is intended to be aligned with the CCSS, its emphasis on rhetoric reflects a core component of the WPA Outcomes Statement. AP Literature also has some degree of alignment with both policies, but its exclusive focus on literary texts makes it distinct from the CCSS and WPA Outcomes Statement, which both emphasize multiple text types. Overall, then, the extent

to which the policies analyzed here impact writing instruction and, in turn, student writing will depend upon how teachers enact them through their instructional practices, including (but not exclusive to) their take-up of written curriculum.

Chapter 5 examines this intersection of curriculum and instruction by examining how two high school teachers who use ERWC and AP Literature teach writing and conceive of writing and college readiness. Leslie, who taught ERWC, strove to implement the curriculum with fidelity by covering as many of the ERWC modules as she could. This was often a challenge for Leslie, as she believed that the curriculum was too difficult for some of her students, she didn't enjoy teaching formal writing, and she didn't feel completely confident in her ability to teach writing well. Mark strongly embraced the concept of teacher choice, and the AP Literature curriculum was well aligned with his belief that teachers need to be free to choose the texts they use with students. For Mark, ERWC ran counter to the concept of teacher agency, and, therefore, he felt justified in modifying the curriculum. Leslie and Mark's interpretations of the written curriculum, as well as their beliefs and prior experiences, resulted in classroom activities that shared some similarities but differed in focus. Leslie seemed to place a greater emphasis on writing, and she spent more time providing direct instruction in writing, as well as having students write in class. Mark's classes relied heavily on discussion and close reading of texts, and I observed little instruction in writing (though Mark noted he provided more instruction at the beginning of the school year). Because of these different emphases, Leslie's students may have come away with a greater understanding of writing strategies, whereas Mark's students may have developed more in their understanding of logical reasoning. Though each of these skillsets are important, it is possible that some skills are more transferable to college writing situations.

The differences between the two classrooms also point to the ways in which teachers reconcile multiple instructional influences. For instance, Leslie was concerned about preparing students for college (and therefore implemented as much of the ERWC curriculum as she could), preparing students for the SAT test, and meeting the CCSS, while at the same time feeling pressure to pass students so that they could graduate from high school, participating in a professional development program, and contributing to a committee working to re-evaluate the twelfth-grade course offerings. In seeking to address all of these influences, Leslie's instruction often reflected a sense of urgency, whereas in Mark's class, long (sometimes meandering) discussions were normal. Because Mark believed strongly in his own autonomy as a teacher, he did not feel obliged to enact initiatives that were contrary to his instructional beliefs. Leslie and Mark's different responses to their curriculum thus raises questions about what it means to be rigorous. In Leslie's view, rigor meant covering more of the ERWC curriculum, whereas in Mark's view, rigor meant going in-depth with just a few pieces of literature. Calls for more rigor at the high school level are common within policy documents pertaining to college readiness (e.g., Achieve, 2005), yet, rigor can be a problematic concept in terms of what teachers perceive as "rigor," as well as whether teachers have the experiences and resources necessary to make their instruction rigorous while at the same time attending to the particular needs of the students they serve.

Finally, Chapter 6 examined how twelve student writers developed as they moved from high school to college. A number of shifts occurred for students across this transition, particularly in relation to page requirements, conceptions of genre, time management, relationships with instructors, feedback, and enjoyment of writing. The kinds of writing situations students encountered varied widely depending on their institution and major, and thus

the kinds of genres students were assigned in college covered a wider spectrum in comparison to the genres they reported in high school. To examine students' individual trajectories, I looked at how students developed in terms of both their writing and their relationship to writing. Three different trajectories emerged.

Within Case 1, "Diving into the Deep End," students reported shifts in both their writing and relationship to writing. For two of these students, Carine and Becca, college felt like a sink or swim situation, in which they needed to either quickly adapt to new writing demands or fail. For the other two students within this group, Raul and Oscar, college writing primarily prompted them to adjust their notion of what it means to write a research paper, in terms of both the structure of the paper and the stance that one might take in relation to the topic. Case 2, "Wading In," captured the experiences of two students, Crissy and Adam, who both developed in terms of their relationship to writing but felt as though their writing itself had not changed much since high school. Through interactions with peers, Crissy came to understand college writing as being unpredictable, and she developed some anxiety in terms of her ability to meet professors' expectations. In contrast, Adam's interactions with his peers bolstered his confidence as a writer, and he felt that his high school classes had prepared him well for college writing. Case 3, "Just Another Lap," consisted of six students who felt they had not developed much in terms of their writing or their relationship to writing. For some of these students, not taking a writing class during their first semester led them to believe that their writing had stagnated or even declined since high school. For others who did have a writing class, college felt similar to high school. Though the page requirements were typically greater than what they had encountered in high school, these students felt that college writing was otherwise not any more challenging than high school.

Overall, four components seemed to play a role in the kinds of trajectories that emerged: the presence or absence of a writing course first semester, students' self-efficacy in writing, interpretation and value of grades, and choice and interest. These components suggest areas in which high schools and colleges might consider implementing practices that will help support students during this transition period. For instance, having choices about topics for writing seemed to have a positive impact on writers' development, while high-stakes writing situations led some students to feel anxious and resigned. Thus, taking a developmental view on classroom instruction at both the high school and college level might mean considering ways to address not only academics but also the socioemotional aspects of writing and navigating new writing situations. Socioemotional skills can include areas such as coping with conflict, navigating interpersonal relationships, and managing emotions (Puerta, Velerio, & Bernal, 2016). Research has shown that socioemotional factors can impact the extent to which students will transfer learning from one writing task or another (Driscoll & Powell, 2016; Driscoll & Wells, 2012), as well as their ability to adapt to new writing situations (Wells, 2011a). Therefore, classroom instruction that addresses these areas may be particularly beneficial in supporting students' transition from high school to college.

What Does It Mean to Be College Ready?

Looking across the three strands of the dissertation, a number of themes emerged which problematize the concept of college readiness. Because this study considers the experiences of student writers in high school and college, as well as the instruction that took place within two different curricular approaches, one might ask, Which students were college ready and which ones weren't? Which curricular approach helped students to be more college ready? Unfortunately, these questions are not easily answerable. Determining who was the most

"ready" for college at the end of high school is a murky pursuit, because as Porter and Polikoff (2012) point out, "There is no commonly accepted definition of 'college readiness,' and many researchers simply choose not to define it at all" (p. 396). However, traditionally measures such as grade point average and SAT/ACT test scores have been viewed as indicators of college readiness. I did not ask participants to provide this information, but most of the students who took AP Literature in high school mentioned in their college interview whether or not they had passed the exam. As Burke (2018) argues, AP English classes might be viewed as an "institutional representation of both preparedness and college-level writing" (p. 126), such that those students who pass the exam are deemed college-ready by virtue of the college credit they earn.

Following this logic, then, we might expect that a student who passes the exam is more college ready in writing, and thus will find college writing to be less challenging than a student who does not pass the exam. However, this was not the case. Carine, Raul, and Crissy all reported passing the AP exam, and of the three, Carine and Crissy appeared to be particularly college ready based on their high school interviews. Both students had strong literacy practices outside of school, which they felt had positively influenced their performance on school-based writing assignments. Both students also felt that writing was generally easy for them, as they had both developed writing approaches that consistently garnered them positive feedback on their essays. Interestingly, Carine and Crissy both felt less confident about their writing abilities after their first semester of college, and Carine arguably encountered the most dramatic challenges in her writing out of all of the students in the study. In contrast, some students who perhaps appeared less college ready in high school did not find their initial foray into college writing to be particularly challenging. For instance, in high school, Adam described himself as

typically getting B's and C's on his writing, and he sometimes used Sparknotes to help him write essays. In college, though, Adam was consistently getting A's on his writing, and he felt that his high school education had been a major contributing factor in his success. Given that Adam took ERWC in high school, one might assume that ERWC fosters college readiness, and perhaps Carine's struggles were due in part to gaps between her AP Literature experience and what she encountered in college. Complicating that theory, though, is that Becca, like Adam, took ERWC in high school, but unlike Adam, she felt that she could have been better prepared for college writing.

What these examples suggest was that for the students in this study, "college readiness" was not necessarily directly related to their high school academic performance (as measured by the AP exam), nor by the language arts course they took in high school. Granted, by "college readiness," I am referring to the students' own accounts of their struggles and successes in college, which may or may not reflect how their professors view their preparedness and performance. Additionally, this study only captures students' college experiences midway through their first year, and so it may be the case that students who initially reported few challenges will later encounter some setbacks, and vice versa. However, these findings seem to challenge the view that policies and curriculum can completely ameliorate the struggles that students might have as they transition from high school to college. Only one of the twelve students (Becca) reported not feeling fully prepared by her high school education. While the rest of the students viewed their high school education favorably, many still found college to be challenging.

Overall, the challenges that students encountered seemed to stem more from the contextual demands of college than the cognitive demands. For instance, one of the challenges

that was reported by half of the students in the study was adjusting to the way college instructors interact with students and determining what college instructors expect. Students who were not able to ascertain professors' expectations, or whose writing habits prevented them from meeting expectations (e.g., procrastinating), experienced setbacks, such as Carine failing her first essay. Thus, even students who might be academically ready for college might encounter challenges because of nonacademic factors (Porter & Polikoff, 2012). The interpersonal components of learning and transitioning from one learning context to another can play an important role in students' writing development. In the high school interviews, many of the students talked about how changes in their writing were not only the result of something they had learned, but also because of their relationship with a teacher. For some students, pivotal moments in their writing development occurred when they felt that a teacher cared about them and believed in their ability to do well. One problem, then, with the concept of college-readiness is that in documents like the CCSS, college-readiness is conceived as an attribute that students are to attain through the skills which they acquire. In college, students are expected to adapt to the demands that they encounter, or as Carine aptly put it, "mold myself into that college life." This orientation means that the onus is on students to be college-ready, rather than for colleges to be student-ready. As Gale and Parker (2014) contend,

> The current dominant conceptions of student transition into HE [higher education] tend to lead to policy, research, and practice that are largely system-driven and system-serving. University students are expected to make the transition into HE while conforming to existing institutional requirements. The possibility of broader systemic or structural change to meet the needs of a diverse student population tends to be marginal. (p. 747)

Overall, what is perhaps most valuable about studying the writing development of twelve diverse students as they transitioned from high school to college, as well as the policies, curriculum, and instruction that surrounded their development as writers, is less about what these trajectories tell us (or don't tell us) about college readiness in writing. Rather, understanding students' experiences and the many factors that shape those experiences may help us to design policies, practices, and institutional spaces that take students' individual needs into account.

Contributions, Limitations, and Future Research

This study contributes to our understanding of students' transition from high school to college writing in three main ways. First of all, it contributes to the body of work that has examined the writing instruction that students receive in high school and college. Because this study has a particular focus on students' experiences writing within ERWC and AP Literature, two courses designed to increase college readiness, it provides insight into how students' perceptions of writing in high school and their perceptions of the transition from high school to college writing were shaped by different curricular approaches. Secondly, this study addresses the current gap in the research on how students experience writing while they are in high school and in college. Although there have been some studies that look at students' perceptions across high school and college, this study contributes an examination of the similarities and differences in students' writing experiences across a variety of postsecondary institutions. Findings from this strand of the research might inform the practices that are used to support students' writing transition within particular institutional settings. Finally, this study contributes an ecological, multi-layered perspective on how students' writing develops as they become college-bound adults. By taking into account the role that multiple systems play in this development (exosystems, microsystems, and mesosystems), this study aims to present a nuanced view on the

interwoven contexts that shape writing, and it also contributes to our theoretical understandings of writing development.

This study is limited by the geographical context in which it takes place and the backgrounds of the participants. The participants' ethnicity, language status, and location shapes their experiences in particular ways; thus, future research is needed to explore the experiences of students in other geographical regions with other demographic backgrounds. Since all of the participants attended college in California, future research might also examine whether attending an out-of-state postsecondary institution shapes students' perceptions of the transition from high school to college writing in different ways. This study concentrates on students' experiences writing in school, but research on how students' writing practices outside of school shape their development as they transition to college would contribute an important perspective as well.

Conclusion

The transition from high school and college is an important turning point for students, as they are in the process of becoming adults, college students, and members of a particular discipline. Writing plays a crucial role in students' development within each of these domains. Some students, like Adam, grew more confident in both their writing and their feelings about college. Other students, like Crissy, felt less sure of themselves as they encountered unfamiliar writing situations or realized that their college professors may have different expectations, and different ways of interacting with students, than what they had experienced in high school. Identifying the range of students' experiences as they navigate the transition from high school to college writing is an important step in identifying policies and practices that will best support their writing growth and ultimately help them as they write in college and beyond.

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APPENDIX A

Classroom Observation Protocol

Lesson components	
Skills, strategies, habits of mind emphasized	
Instructional approaches used to teach writing	
Writing prompts used (formal and informal)	
Genre of prompts	
Expected length of response	
In-class/out-of-class writing components	
Revision expected (Y/N)	
Assessment procedures	
Explanations/justifications for writing activities, role in college prep	

APPENDIX B

Teacher Interview Questions

1. How long have you been teaching high school language arts?
2. What motivated you to become a language arts teacher?
3. Where did you earn your undergraduate degree and teaching credential/masters?
4. Do you feel that you were adequately prepared you to teach language arts? If not, in what areas would you have liked additional instruction? (Potential follow-up topics: contributions of credential program and/or professional development)
5. What is most challenging for you about teaching writing?
6. How would you describe your approach to teaching writing?
7. What experiences have shaped the way that you teach writing?
8. What skills and strategies do you try to emphasize when you teach writing?
9. How often do you collaborate with other teachers within your department and across other departments?
10. What kinds of writing do you think your students will encounter after they graduate?
11. How do you try to prepare students for these types of writing?
12. What are your students' strengths in writing?
13. What aspects of writing are challenging for your students?
14. Is there anything else you'd like me to know?

APPENDIX C

Student Interview Protocol—End of High School

1. Can you tell me a bit about the classes you're taking right now and the kinds of writing you're asked to do for each class? (potential follow-up topics: how often writing occurs in each class, how common is timed writing)

2. How much writing are you asked to do in each of your classes (in terms of time and length)?

3. Do you write differently in classes outside English? Why or why not?

4. Do you do any writing outside of school?

5. Let's take a look at some of the writing you've done in your English class. What did you have to do for each piece of writing, and how did it go?

6. Do you use any particular strategies when you write (for planning, revising, etc.)? If so, what are they?

7. Do you enjoy writing? Why or why not?

8. What do you think you do well when you write?

9. What do you find challenging when you write?

10. Has your writing improved or changed throughout high school? If so, in what ways?

11. What do you think led you to change/improve your writing?

12. Seniors can take either AP English or ERWC. Why did you choose AP/ERWC?

13. What do you plan to do after you graduate from high school?

14. What kinds of writing do you think you will need to do after you graduate (in college and/or for work)?

15. Do you feel ready for the writing you think you'll do in the future? Why or why not?

16. Is there anything else you'd like me to know?

APPENDIX D

Student Interview Protocol—End of First Quarter/Semester of College

1. When I interviewed you earlier this year, you said you were planning to major in _____ and attend _____. Have your plans stayed the same or changed?

2. Can you tell me a bit about the classes you're taking right now and the kinds of writing you're asked to do for each class?

3. How much writing are you asked to do in your classes?

4. To what extent is the writing that you're doing now similar to what you did in high school? To what extent is it different?

5. Has your writing improved or changed since graduating from high school? If so, in what ways?

6. What do you think led you to change/improve your writing?

7. Are there any writing techniques you learned in high school that you are still able to use now (for planning, revising, etc.)? If so, what are they? Have you been able to use anything you learned from AP Literature/ERWC?

8. Have you learned any new writing techniques since graduating from high school? If so, what are they?

9. Overall, what are your thoughts on going from writing in high school to writing in college? To what extent has this transition been challenging for you? Have you found anything else about college to be challenging?

10. Do you do any writing outside of school?

11. Do you enjoy writing? Why or why not?

12. What do you think you do well when you write?

13. What do you find challenging when you write?

14. When I interviewed you earlier this year, you said you felt _____ about college writing. How do you feel now?

15. Is there anything else you'd like me to know?