

**Making Change, Changing Spaces:**  
**An Antiracist Writing Ecology for First-Generation College Students**

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**Abstract**

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In this dissertation, I build on scholarship on antiracist, culturally sustaining, translingual and ecological theories in composition studies to argue that equitable, accessible pedagogies affirm students' role as co-creators in producing knowledge alongside their peers and instructors and that antiracist ecological frameworks can aid writing programs in working toward equitable, student-centered courses.

Through a qualitative case study of a stretch writing program for first-generation college students and student athletes—primarily BIPOC students from low-income family backgrounds—at the University of Washington, I draw upon student, instructor, advisor, and administrator perspectives to capture the insights of actors throughout a writing ecology. During this project, the course was under revision to shift away from the common association in composition studies between stretch writing and remediation and toward community-driven

inquiry drawing upon students' cultural and linguistic experiences and capacities. My case study investigates students' goals, conceptions of themselves as writers, experiences in the writing classroom, and sense of belonging in the writing classroom and in the university more broadly given historical legacies of racism and classism in higher education.

I propose that writing programs can cultivate confidence and growth while resisting rhetorics of remediation by working across a writing ecology to learn from students, instructors, administrators, and campus support staff in the process of continually remaking a writing ecology that strives toward a more just and equitable future. This study offers local implications for continued antiracist ecologically oriented program revisions and for other institutions seeking to design or revise writing ecologies that foreground student voices and design spaces that center their lived experiences. Cultivating such programs can challenge and resist oppressive structures in higher education that exclude and marginalize first-generation, economically marginalized, and BIPOC students.

In Chapter 1, I situate my dissertation in the context of stretch writing studies, antiracist pedagogies, and ecological methodologies. In Chapter 2, I review the institutional context of the writing ecology, including the course's history and ongoing revision process. In Chapter 3, I draw on data from focus groups, interviews, and classroom observations to discuss the affordances and limitations of the stretch writing sequence. In Chapter 4, I present a curated teaching archive of documents developed by University of Washington writing instructors and frame these materials in the context of antiracist and culturally sustaining pedagogies. I conclude in Chapter 5 with takeaways and implications for writing programs.

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## Chapter 1: Re(defining) Access

Gabriel<sup>1</sup> sits across from me wearing a crisp ball cap, perhaps from the sports retail store he works at, at a small table in the bustling student union building in the middle of the University of Washington (UW)'s Seattle campus in February 2020. I have been observing Gabriel's first-year composition class for six weeks and heard his frequent and thoughtful contributions to class discussions. He muses on whether staying in college is worth it or if he should follow his dreams to start an artist collective. He tells me about the difficulties of being a commuter student and balancing academics, a part-time job, family responsibilities, and coaching his former high school's ultimate frisbee team. On most days, he doesn't have time to stay on campus after class to connect with other students. The hour-long commute on the light rail can be exhausting, but Gabriel looks forward to starting his day with first-year composition—his favorite class—and is typically the first one to arrive at 9:00, half an hour before class starts. He tells me about his parents' history as Mexican immigrants and, most of all, what it means to him to be a first-generation college student. Gabriel pursued his goal of attending UW in part for his parents, who emigrated from Mexico to the United States in part so their children would have the opportunity to pursue a higher education. But his dream became his own when he visited another local university in fifth grade and “realized that UW was gonna be the #1 place, that's what I'm shooting for. And no one's gonna stop me.” And no one did. But being a first-generation college student, as Gabriel speaks to below, has not been an easy journey:

That's rough. First-generation student. You're the first one. That's, that in and of itself is hard as heck. I had a really tough time [...] navigat[ing] how to even apply to college [...]

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<sup>1</sup> Student and instructor case study participants' names are all pseudonyms.

not having the ability to talk to a family member about that was, to be truthful, kinda tough. It's kinda sad. And there's also, like I said, twice, three times the pressure of okay, now you're here, next comes a degree, you've gotta graduate. This is the expectation. You've gotta meet it if not exceed it. Which, like I said, I'm still tryin' to manage. [...] I haven't really found a group or community myself of students that talk about that struggle. Like that's, that's hard. What does it mean to me? I'm very proud.

Gabriel is a student in English 109/110, the University of Washington's stretch writing sequence offered to students affiliated with Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity (OMA&D) programs and Student Athletics, and one of seven focal participants in my study of a stretch writing ecology and its students, instructors, administrators, advisers, campus resources, programmatic and archival documents, curricular materials, and more. Most students in 109/110 are first-generation college students (defined in this dissertation as students whose parents do not have a four-year college degree) from low-income family backgrounds (referred to as first-generation, economically marginalized, or FGEM,<sup>2</sup> throughout this dissertation), and many identify as BIPOC<sup>3</sup>.

In our conversations about identity, confidence, and belonging in the context of a college writing classroom, the seven focal student participants in this study shared triumphs and frustrations related to language ideologies they had internalized, the imposter syndrome they

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<sup>2</sup> I borrow this term from education studies to highlight the intersectionality of students' socioeconomic and family education background, which together inform how students encourage language ideologies and navigate higher education.

<sup>3</sup> I use this acronym for Black, Indigenous, and people of color in some places in this dissertation when speaking broadly about the demographics of the course in this case study. However, experiences are not uniform across any group. To avoid eliding differences within groups, I aim to be more specific when possible (e.g., when referring to Mexican American students specifically).

faced, and the growth they experienced as they discovered how to draw on their linguistic and cultural practices in the writing classroom. Historic inequities require many FGEM students, like Gabriel, to move mountains—participating in multiple school-sponsored college prep programs, enduring long commutes, and navigating standardized testing, seeking out scholarships, and completing college applications alone, among other barriers—to get into college while many middle class, continuing-generation white<sup>4</sup> students—like me<sup>5</sup>—had access to resources like tutoring, parental knowledge of how to navigate American higher education, and well-resourced schools to get into college. The currents of racism, classism, colonialism, and linguistic injustice that render education unequal for students on the basis of their cultures and identities are pervasive and daunting to challenge in the seemingly small context of a writing program, but shifts toward equity must start somewhere.

This dissertation is about how writing programs can better support BIPOC FGEM students ethically and equitably by affirming their linguistic and cultural resources and lived experiences as valuable sources of inquiry in the writing classroom, as well as how members of a writing ecology can drive institutional transformation that challenges systems, practices, and institutions in programs and universities that often uphold ideologies that reproduce linguistic hegemony, racism, classism, and colonialism. My case study investigates a stretch writing

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<sup>4</sup> I capitalize “Black” throughout this dissertation, following the practices of the majority of Black scholars in composition studies and education studies. I changed my mind many times about whether to capitalize “white.” Lowercase “white” can reproduce the idea that whiteness is a tacit and invisible norm, but capitalizing Black but not white emphasizes that “Black” is an ethnicity while “white” is not. I seek, too, to distance my scholarship from white supremacist groups who capitalize “White.” Finally, I follow the practices of Black scholars in composition studies who, by and large, capitalize “Black,” but not “white.”

<sup>5</sup> As a continuing-generation student and white researcher from an affluent family background, I often questioned my place in this study. I write in the coda of Chapter 5 about my positionality in relation to this writing ecology, underscoring the importance of including many voices—especially those who are most marginalized—beyond one researcher in the work of antiracist ecological praxis.

sequence (English 109/110) offered to (primarily BIPOC) FGEM students. I apply an antiracist ecological approach (Inoue; Rai et al.; Reiff et al.; Thu et al.) to study student, instructor, administrator, and campus support staff members' experiences within the university to trace how equity has been taken up through critical praxes that draw upon antiracist, culturally sustaining, anti-colonial, and translingual pedagogies. I examine the University of Washington's stretch model, which has been undergoing equity-driven revisions since 2018, to reimagine how the course sequence might foster equitable, student-driven learning in contrast with conceptions of access in composition studies and in our local writing ecology that tacitly reproduce rhetorics of remediation and underlying ideologies of linguistic injustice, racism, classism, and coloniality.

As opposed to many stretch writing courses, English 109/110 is offered to students in specific programs: the Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity (OMA&D)'s programs and Student Athletics. In those programs, students have the support of dedicated advisers, and exclusive access to tutoring (in the case of athletes), seminars, and events. Rather than merely standalone classes, the stretch writing sequence at UW is embedded in an ecology of campus partnerships. At the same time, students in these programs face systemic inequities. Most students in English 109/110 are Latin American, Asian, and/or Black. 109/110 is designed with FGEM students in mind and is disproportionately populated by BIPOC students relative to the university at large. Given the history of inequity and remediation that disproportionately affects students of color, this study foregrounds identity markers including first-generation status, language background, race as salient factors in defining and responding to students' needs and goals. I employ an ecological framework on the basis that a full writing ecology—including advisers; students; teachers; administrators; curricula; and mundane institutional genres, policies, and practices—must be scrutinized and transformed to more effectively cultivate spaces where

students can gain skills and confidence as college writers and scholars without compromising their home culture or values. “Equity” is often used as nebulous buzzword; I draw from, among the work of many other scholars in composition and education studies, Estela Mara Bensimmon’s definition of “equity-mindedness:”

The term “Equity-Mindedness” refers to the perspective or mode of thinking exhibited by practitioners who call attention to patterns of inequity in student outcomes. These practitioners are willing to take personal and institutional responsibility for the success of their students, and critically reassess their own practices. It also requires that practitioners are race-conscious and aware of the social and historical context of exclusionary practices in American Higher Education.

Bensimmon’s definition is rooted in action and engages with systemic inequities that play out on individual and institutional levels. As Bensimmon demonstrates, systemic inequities in higher education affect students in multiple spheres (e.g., through course placement, curricula, and classroom culture, to name a few sites of impact). An antiracist ecological methodology can help uncover how the tangled roots of institutional racism and linguistic injustice impact students in both subtle and explicit ways throughout their experience in college composition and more broadly in the university.

Composition programs participate in and often perpetuate—but also often push against—longstanding systems and values that privilege white, middle class forms of English at the expense of BIPOC, economically marginalized, and multilingual students. This case study explores possibilities for instituting change and fostering sites of resistance by challenging and transforming how writing ecologies take up access and equity to support students in navigating inequitable structures of power in higher education. In the early stages of this project, I referred

to 109/110 as an access-oriented program. Throughout this project, several of my mentors have posed the question: “What are we providing access to?” a query that has driven my study. “Granting access” may sound conducive to student success—especially for first-generation college students who may have fewer familial resources to help navigate the university—but some approaches to access can calcify racist ideologies by forcing students to uncritically assimilate to DAE<sup>6</sup> language practices and denying them the opportunity to draw upon personal linguistic and cultural knowledge and experiences as valid and valuable sources and testimonies in their writing. Historical conceptions of equity in the field of composition largely prioritize access to the university and careers via DAE predicated on a belief that higher education is a democratic equalizer (see: Bartholomae, among others) and fail to account for students’ goals and multiple literacies in its attempts to grant students access to the university’s homogenous linguistic culture, which often upholds racist ideologies and power structures. Such approaches to access-granting may superficially help students participate in the dominant culture of the university and code-switch to perform linguistic expectations in their classes. However, these practices can perpetuate the gatekeeping role of faculty and staff and uphold racist and classist language hierarchies by imagining access as mere inclusion, not equity, in inequitable, racist institutions without challenging, intervening in, or transforming them (see Baker-Bell; Guerra; Martinez; and Young; among others). This form of access, in other words, even if motivated by social justice-oriented intentions, is at odds with radical, ethical, student-centered systemic transformation. To make space without changing spaces merely camouflages students in a hostile institution instead of transforming the institution into one that is designed for all students. To deeply support students, a reimagined and rebuilt writing ecology—not one that grants access to

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<sup>6</sup> I use DAE as Paris and Alim do in *Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies* to emphasize the oppressive, marginalizing, and violent nature of hegemonic language politics.

what already exists—is necessary. By listening to students and other stakeholders in a writing ecology, faculty and staff can learn to intervene in systems of oppression—even in small ways—to transform writing classrooms and their surrounding ecologies into more just and equitable spaces.

At its core, this dissertation is driven by questions about cultivating writing ecologies driven by equity-minded, antiracist, linguistically-just praxes:

- How can individuals and organizations in positions of power in writing ecologies redefine access to account for the lived experiences, goals, and desires of students while challenging inequitable structures of power in higher education (as well as in broader societies and contexts)?
- In light of legacies of remediation and material, embodied classroom conditions and the complexities and paradoxes of the inequitable structures of power in stretch composition courses and higher education more broadly, how can stakeholders in a writing ecology work together to center students' experiences, needs, and goals?
- How can antiracist, networked approaches to studying changing writing ecologies contribute to institutional transformation that engages and reflects students' lived experiences, linguistic and cultural capacities, needs, goals, and knowledge?

To get at questions of how equity-minded pedagogies and program design can better serve FGEM students, I carried out a case study that included seven BIPOC FGEM students and two instructors in two sections of the second course (English 110) of the stretch writing sequence at UW to learn about how students, instructors, advisers, and administrators perceive students' goals, literacies, and sense of belonging in the university with the intent of co-creating strategies for writing programs, especially this local writing ecology, to more effectively meet students'

needs. This project is a case study of students within a broader writing program ecology. Through a qualitative case study, I investigated how students, administrators, instructors, advisers, and other campus stakeholders involved with 109/110 navigate the tension between expanding and contradictory conceptions of “access,” in its many meanings and forms and the stratification and gatekeeping that can manifest in courses perceived as remedial that primarily serve FGEM students of color. I sought to discover how, in light of legacies of remediation and racism, differing conceptions of equity, access, and justice can percolate through a writing program and how students, instructors, administrators, and advisers navigate inequitable structures of power in higher education. To some administrators and instructors, “equity” may mean teaching students to survive and persist in institutions that are often built on racist and ideologies that privilege DAE. Though driven by social justice aims, some approaches to equity incidentally require students to assimilate to norms that inadvertently exclude life experiences and linguistic practices beyond DAE as resources to draw on in the writing classroom while other approaches actively cultivate classroom environments built for students’ diverse array of languages, modes, and sources of knowledge (and of course, many conceptions of equity fall in between or outside of these two models). Guided by questions of antiracist and equity-minded programmatic and classroom practices, material realities of privilege and systemic oppression, and the possibilities for antiracist ecological approaches to contribute to ethical transformations in writing programs, I aim in this case study to contribute to local program assessment and transformation by providing snapshots of students’ lived experiences in relation to programmatic changes and practices in EWP that center antiracist, culturally sustaining pedagogies. My data also include interviews with writing program administrators, and advisers; notes from classroom observations; archival documents; and notes from teacher and adviser meetings. My aim in doing

this research was broadly to learn more about equity-oriented approaches that support historically marginalized students in composition courses. More specifically, I sought to learn more about the affordances of stretch writing courses to support BIPOC FGEM students in gaining confidence in their writing skills and a sense of belonging in the university through an antiracist writing ecology that engages students' linguistic and cultural knowledge and practices. I argue that composition programs that intend to challenge socioeconomic and racialized barriers best serve students when working as a cohesive ecology to explicitly affirm students as writers and scholars.

As an assistant director of the UW Expository Writing Program (EWP), I was part of a team working on a curricular and programmatic revision for the stretch writing course at UW from 2018-2020 (an initiative that is still in progress and is detailed further in Rai, Prihandita, and Ramsey, forthcoming) and in Thu, Malcolm, Rai, and Bawarshi. The writing program at UW, which includes the stretch model, is informed by translingual, intersectional, anticolonial, culturally sustaining and antiracist pedagogies in ways that adopt, adapt, and trouble these imperfect approaches to equity (see the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis in Appendix A). As Rai et al. state:

Our stretch composition program [at the University of Washington] and the ecology of campus stakeholders supporting it has continually served as a contested site for negotiating what access and what social, linguistic, and racial justice might mean in light of the ongoing legacies of discriminatory language ideologies and intersectional inequities endemic within our university.

The 109/110 revision project has been motivated in part by commitments to “developing antiracist and equitable pedagogical frameworks” by creating space in the university for students’ diverse literacies, knowledge, and experiences in contrast to pedagogies that ask students to conform to structures of power (EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis). The impetus of these revisions lies in the writing program’s values, which prioritize negotiation, process, and diverse literacy practices over prescriptive standards of “correctness.”

Part of this dissertation, then, extends the work of my EWP colleagues and involves telling the story of the program’s history and recent revisions and synthesizing the archival and institutional documents and conversations with on-the-ground student and instructor experiences. Composition scholarship can benefit from ecologically-grounded research on courses that specifically serve BIPOC FGEM students because what happens in the classroom cannot be extricated from university-level policies, student support offices, curriculum design, and instructor training—to name some of the many parts of this writing ecology. Students who have been historically marginalized by parts of this ecology are likely to be least well-served by it and may benefit most from a strong, student-centered ecology that combats the systemic inequities embedded in education. My colleagues, Candice Rai, Anselma Widha Prihandita, and Nolie Ramsey write, regarding the revision of English 109/110: “In our case, critical ecological methodologies help us better understand and transform the conditions that reproduce racial and linguistic inequity within our writing program.” My project contributes research on equity-oriented stretch writing courses that specifically support FGEM students, building on the work of scholars on stretch writing, such as Davila and Elder, who put linguistic diversity in conversation with stretch writing, and the numerous scholars in the field who have written on equity-oriented

pedagogies in mainstream writing courses. I apply a qualitative, holistic, and antiracist ecological approach to understanding equity in writing courses that connects the stories, goals, and contributions of stakeholders; identifies bureaucratic barriers that writing program administrators face in program revision; and proposes methods to cultivate change by learning from students and other stakeholders to shape institutional contexts to better support students' needs, goals, lived experiences, meaning-making practices, knowledge, and expertise. Based on the stories that students, instructors, and administrators shared with me, I offer approaches to program evaluation and revision for other equity-minded writing programs seeking to better facilitate student-centered learning informed by antiracist (Ahmed; Baker-Bell, Bensimmon; Gilyard; Inoue; Rai et al.; Thu et al.; Villanueva; Young), anticolonial (Grande; Tuck), culturally sustaining values and pedagogies (Alim and Paris; Guerra; Wong and Pena) that can help students combat feelings of imposter syndrome and remediation, which are deeply rooted in societal structures of oppression, and support confidence-building by centering students' linguistic and cultural resources in the writing classroom. Ultimately, I make a case for student-driven pedagogies and conceptions of access and equity designed to support students who are most marginalized by universities and that drive equity-minded change in academic institutions. In what follows throughout this chapter, I outline histories of remediation and stretch writing models in composition to establish the history of progressive leanings in tension with practices that can simultaneously support and marginalize students. I then outline antiracist praxes with a focus on linguistic justice scholarship that I draw upon to inform equitable practices proposed in this dissertation.

## **Histories of Remediation and Stretch Writing Models**

Stretch writing models, which include an additional course relative to mainstream writing models, can reinforce stratification and remediation—especially for BIPOC FGEM students already often marginalized by higher education systems—but they can also cultivate spaces for students who have often been excluded from higher education. The UW stretch writing model is designed to create space for deep inquiry that is not possible in a one-term course while cultivating community in a small class environment, often with the same teacher and classmates together across the two terms. As students have shared with me, community can be especially important for those who feel alienated in the larger university due to their minoritized identities. The University of Washington’s stretch writing model (English 109/110) is unique in that it is offered exclusively to students affiliated with the Office of Minority and Diversity Affairs (OMA&D),<sup>7</sup> and/or Student-Athlete Academic Services (SAAS).<sup>8</sup> UW’s stretch writing sequence is designed to foster community, assist students in navigating the university, and engage students’ diverse linguistic and cultural resources, among other goals, as they practice public-facing writing in a variety of genres. This study explores how students’ goals, needs, and resources are taken up by various stakeholders—students, instructors, writing program administrators, and advisers, among others—in the shifting ecology of the University of Washington’s stretch writing series. The course sequence offers smaller classes (15 students

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<sup>7</sup> OMA&D includes Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), College Assistance Migrant Program (CAMP), and TRIO. According to their websites, OMA&D programs “promot[e] academic success and graduation for under-represented ethnic minorities, economically disadvantaged and first generation college students” (EOP), “students from migrant and seasonal farmwork families” (CAMP), and “low-income, first-generation students and/or students with disabilities” (TRIO).

<sup>8</sup> SAAS is a campus unit through which learning specialists work closely with student athletes on study skills and academic progress. Though this study focuses on OMA&D students, many SAAS students also identify as BIPOC, first-generation, and or low-income and thus experience many similar linguistic and cultural ideologies while navigating education.

versus 23 in mainstream courses) that can potentially provide additional resources and a greater sense of community for students who are members of groups that have historically faced systemic barriers to higher education. Most students enrolled in 109/110 are Latin American, Black, and Asian first-generation college students from low-income family backgrounds. Many are children of immigrants, some of whom are undocumented. Many are bilingual or multilingual and speak languages other than English with their families. Students' raciolinguistic identities inevitably influence how they are perceived and perceive themselves as writers.

While English 109/110 is not meant to be remedial, tacit and overt perceptions of the course as remedial have persisted throughout the course's history among various stakeholder groups, including students, instructors, and advisers, through placement methods, curriculum design, teacher training, biases, and internal and external documents about the course sequence despite writing program administrators' active resistance to these perceptions (See Chapter 2 for more discussion of institutional history). The perception of remediation in a course populated primarily by BIPOC FGEM students can exacerbate centuries of discrimination and remediation targeting minority students in colleges and universities despite intentions informed by equitable praxes (Otte and Mlynarczyk; Stanley). While the UW stretch writing covers the same learning outcomes as other 100-level writing courses and is credit-bearing, many advisers and students shared in interviews that they perceived the course as remedial: an easier, slower version of the mainstream course for writers who are less prepared. Because the course is often perceived to be remedial, much in the same way as many basic writing courses, the historical and current context

of stretch and basic writing courses offers important context to understanding the relationship between English 109/110 and rhetorics of remediation.

Basic writing<sup>9</sup> programs, including many including stretch writing models, have historically been sites for both gatekeeping and opportunity. The definition of basic writing varies depending on the local context but is often implicitly predicated on “*stratification*, the classification and division of students’ abilities as they align—or misalign—with the values and objectives of the particular institution” (Ritter 17). Many stretch writing models across the nation began as an alternative to remedial basic writing courses, offering “[s]tudents who would otherwise be placed into a traditional developmental writing course” the option to enter the mainstream composition course “with more time and support” (Hassel et al.). The open admissions movement alongside the Civil Rights Movement, the Vietnam War, the GI Bill, and the Open Admissions movement in 1960s and ‘70s brought changes in the demographics<sup>10</sup> of composition students as well as intensified prejudices against them, labeling basic writing courses with derisive monikers such as “Bonehead English,” a name that *Newsweek* bestowed on UC Berkeley’s basic writing course in 1975 (Stanley 15). University and writing program administrators were tasked with determining where the influx of “underprepared” writers should go. In response to negative perceptions of students (disproportionately BIPOC and FGEM) deemed unprepared for college writing, Mina Shaughnessy wrote *Errors and Expectations* in 1977, arguing that “basic writers” are not less intelligent or capable; instead, they are simply inexperienced. Shaughnessy also posited that basic writers are “strangers to academia,” implying

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<sup>9</sup> For the purpose of this project, I define developmental and basic writing courses as those that are often non-credit-bearing and considered to be prerequisites to mainstream coursework.

<sup>10</sup> For example, “Between 1960 and 1970, the median years of school completed by black males, 25 to 29 years old,” for instance, “rose from 10.5 to 12.2” (National Center for Education Statistics 9).

that students' home communities (often marginalized on the basis socioeconomic status, language, and/or race) are in need of remediation (Shaughnessy qtd. in Ritter 15).

Scholars have since critiqued Shaughnessy, saying that students do not have equal access to academia; students who do not embody identity groups privileged in academia must give up more than those who do in order to be accepted as members of the academic discourse community. Min-Zhan Lu, for example, responded to Shaughnessy by challenging the notion of linguistic innocence, arguing that subject position and privilege impact students unequally as they exchange their home literacies with school literacies. She says that granting students "access" to the language of academia (usually DAE) requires more labor and sacrifices from some students than others: those who do not embody identity groups privileged in academia (i.e., white, upper-class) must give up more, such as fluency in home languages and connections to their cultures, relative to their peers in order to be accepted as members of the academic discourse community. Donna LeCourt raises similar critiques about barriers to access related to socioeconomic class, challenging the notion reflected in Shaughnessy's work that working class students must reject their roots in order to gain access to academia. LeCourt offers a more nuanced conceptualization of class identity by calling on educators to incorporate working-class identity in academic writing and to create spaces for students to make the academic community their own without sacrificing their home identities (49).

Concurrently with the open-access movement, rhetorics of remediation, and *Errors and Expectations*, compositionists engaged in "months of intense scholarly work and political struggle" to discern how composition as a field should treat DAE in relation to students' additional linguistic capacities (Smitherman 22). The resulting document (SRTOL), published in 1974, affirmed students' right to use their home literacies but also asserted the utility of learning

DAE in academic and professional settings. In the decades following STROL and *Errors and Expectations*, scholars have argued for new approaches to equity and access that cultivate a more expansive space for students' linguistic and cultural knowledge. Critiques of SRTOL bring into tension two forms of access promoted in SRTOL: access to the academy via adopting DAE versus unmitigated access to a student's own language regardless of the setting. Ann Berthoff and William Clark have critiqued SRTOL for being progressive only in theory in that it asks educators to invite students' home literacies into the classroom while still "see[ing] to it that they write like white folks" by upholding DAE as a preferable (perhaps even necessary) discourse for success in some academic settings (123).

Despite critiques of remediation in basic writing, many contemporary stretch models reinforce rhetorics of remediation through their placement methods and curricula. One of the most widely discussed stretch writing models, the Arizona State University program, began in 1992<sup>11</sup> to provide "basic writers" extended time to practice writing. This intervention replaced a previous model that sent basic writers to two-year colleges to enroll in non-credit composition courses. Like most stretch models, the ASU sequence covers the same content as accelerated composition courses over a longer period of time. In other words, it is a slowed down version of mainstream composition. Gregory Glau describes the purpose of the ASU model as "acclimating students, particularly nontraditional or first-generation college students, to the unfamiliar expectations, workload, and discourse conventions of the university." ("Stretch Courses" 1). This model, then, is intended, at least in part, to orient students to the academic conventions of higher education. Glau notes that the course outcomes correlate with pass rates and college persistence. These correlations could be attributed to the benefits of deeper inquiry and closer relationships

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<sup>11</sup> The UW program, in comparison, began at least a decade earlier. According to archival records, discussions about whether to count the stretch courses for credit began in 1982.

with instructors and peers that may not be possible in one-term courses—outcomes that proved to be beneficial to students in my study. If, on the other hand, the remedial stretch model at ASU benefits students because they are deemed academically behind their peers, this poses a question of what it means to separate students into remedial (in some programs, not for credit) courses while mainstreaming others. To do so implies that stretch writing are in some way deficient—often in their performance of DAE or fluency in navigating university genres. However, the same students may be proficient in genres and linguistic forms in which their historically privileged peers may not be fluent. All students are “deficient” in their mastery of some linguistic forms and genres; the sticking point is the question of why and how certain capacities are reified as necessary for academic success while others are ignored or even actively discouraged. The division between academic and home communities and literacies elevates the experiences of students who fit the mold of the academy, which serves the so-called “traditional”<sup>12</sup> student: white, middle class, aged 18-22, without dependents, able-bodied, neurotypical, attending full-time, working part-time or not at all, living on or near campus, and supported by one or more parents.

So, what does it mean to grant access to inequitable institutions? Instead of exchanging their home literacies to adopt school-sponsored literacies, I argue that equitable, access-oriented pedagogies must affirm students’ role as co-creators in producing knowledge alongside their peers and instructors (Alim and Paris; Baker-Bell; Freire; Guerra; Lu; Martinez; Thu et al.; Wong and Pena). Centering home literacies can engage students’ communities and life experiences as a core part of their education and valuable source of knowledge, endorsing

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<sup>12</sup> As of Fall 2017, 34% of undergraduates were under 18 or over 24, and 38% were part-time students (National Center for Education Statistics, List of 2018 tables). At two-year colleges, the median student age is 24. 63% of students attend part-time, and 17% are single parents (American Association of Community Colleges).

students as collaborators and knowers who have something to contribute to their learning community rather than merely being transformed by it. In sum, the scholarship I have discussed argues for definitions of access and equity that center students' knowledge and refute pedagogies that require students to assimilate to dominant linguistic and culture composition practices. This scholarship informs how I define and approach accessible and equitable praxis in this study. I argue that such praxes can be enacted impactfully and effectively by surveying the space of a composition course through an antiracist ecological lens to learn about student, instructor, administrator, and staff perspectives (among the many other people, documents, and practices that comprise a writing ecology) and continually re-create a writing ecology that centers students and accounts for the needs and perspectives of stakeholders at multiple levels.

### **Antiracist Approaches to Writing Pedagogy**

In this section, I delve into antiracist praxes that offer theoretical and practical approaches to creating a more equitable writing ecology in line with the above ideologies. I build on the ongoing work of my writing program colleagues to reimagine how the UW stretch writing program and other similar programs might foster writing ecologies that foreground resistance to white supremacy, colonial, and racial injustice to foster students' goals, literacies, and experiences rather than a remedial model for underprepared students. Given my interest in challenging and transforming inequitable systems that impact and are perpetuated by writing ecologies, I draw on antiracist, intersectional, culturally sustaining, and translingual theories and other approaches that respond to the unequal power structures embedded within writing ecologies. Like equity-mindedness (Bensimmon, discussed on page 5), terms like "antiracist" can be nebulous and, at times, vacuous. While there is no single perfect definition of antiracism,

I hold two tenets at the core of antiracism as applied in this dissertation that together draw upon critical praxes in composition and education studies.

### **Antiracist Praxis: Resistance**

The first of these two tenets is the explicit naming of and resistance to Eurocentric norms, texts, and practices. Tension around the explicit naming of and resistance to antiracism in composition studies dates back decades. Victor Villanueva, for instance, noted in 1993 and again in 2006, that it never seems to be the “right moment” to confront racism in our discipline (according to those who would rather not address the issue). This statement rings true nearly two decades years later amidst police violence and a public resurgence of white supremacy. In response to many scholars’ resistance to recognizing and intervening in white supremacy in our field, Diab et al. argue that “Working to end racism also entails a willingness to be disturbed—that is, a willingness to cultivate a tireless investment in reflection, openness, and hope for a better, more fulfilling future for us all” (2). These places of discomfort, Diab et al. say, “are productive places from which we can more clearly articulate and act from our commitments” (3). It is perhaps this necessary discomfort that has prevented compositionists from taking up Villanueva’s call systemically. However, in the last decade, scholars have increasingly initiated discourse on and proposed responses to inequities by sitting in generative discomfort that is rooted in both local and systemic change. In his 2019 Conference on College Composition and Communication Keynote address, Asao B. Inoue called upon composition scholars to challenge “white language supremacy” standards that uphold an unequal system that inherently benefits some students at the expense of others. Inoue refers to a “white racial habitus” that reproduces and values unspoken ways of being that uphold whiteness as a standard to work toward in the classrooms and work to devalue the language practices and experiences of marginalized students.

Jay Dolmage, like Inoue, argues that linguistic standards inherently create in-groups and out-groups and that “to impose linguistic standards, we define mistakes in terms of difference and divergence that are at once about writing ‘wrong’ but also imply the nonnormalcy of the body of the writer” (111). Grammar rules, imposed organizational structures for assignments, and even the classrooms in which students learn are typically designed for historically privileged students. Instead of focusing on the “nonnormalcy” of students’ literacy practices, we must center “*racial hierarchies* rather than *individual practices*” (Flores and Rosa 155). It is not students or their practices that are errant; it is the standards of white linguistic habitus that Inoue speaks of that foment inequity and bar a richer array of languaging in the writing classroom.

To be an antiracist educator is to name invisible norms around race, language, and intersecting identities and collaboratively challenge these norms alongside students, reimagining what texts read and written in the composition classroom and more broadly in academic and public settings can look like. The pervasiveness of whiteness in college writing classrooms and underlying ideologies are issues that drove both the English 109/110 course revision initiative and my own study. We sought, in both cases, to challenge and resist practices that elevate Eurocentric texts, linguistic practices, and research methodologies and instead foreground a wider array of meaning-making that better represents the global majority and refutes hegemonic ways of knowing that often guide praxes in American universities. Contextualizing composition research within frameworks of race and whiteness can illuminate how the Mills’ often-tacit racial contract is upheld in our field—including through the research undertaken by white scholars like myself taking up space in the classroom and asking personal questions of students of color. Many writing instructors embody a white racial habitus and implicitly require their students to do the same through their rubrics, grading standards, and assignment structures. Naming and

challenging the role of a white racial habitus in the composition classroom is central to understanding, if not also transforming, universities and what we imagine students are gaining access to. The university site of my study, like many, on the whole, upholds a white racial habitus and white language supremacy—standards to which students are held based on their perceived identity markers regardless of their language practices even as there are many within the university actively resisting this racist institutional ecology (Davila; Flores and Rosa). Thus, even when administrators and instructors strive toward an antiracist writing program that centers students’ lived experiences and linguistic and cultural practices, such efforts are often met with the realities of an institution that demands more broadly (i.e., in classes outside of composition) the performance of DAE and other manifestations of a white racial habitus through both “internalized racial superiority” and “internalized racial inferiority”—subconscious beliefs by white people and people of color, respectively, that implicitly endorse the logic of white supremacy (Condon and Young 14). An antiracist lens requires resistance through both individual reflection and systemic intervention because racism “is everyday and local while systemic and institutional” (Diab, et al.).

### **Antiracist Praxis: Joy**

The second tenet of antiracist pedagogy I hold at the core of this study is the cultivation of joy and freedom of expression (as defined by students). I draw on the work of anticolonial and culturally sustaining praxes to emphasize students’ creativity, joy, goals, and desires rather than merely their struggles. Django Paris, who coined the term culturally sustaining pedagogies, and Samy Alim state that they

are committed to envisioning and enacting pedagogies that are not filtered through a lens of contempt and pity (e.g., the “achievement gap”) but, rather, are centered on contending

in complex ways with the rich and innovative linguistic, literate, and cultural practices of Indigenous American, African American, Latina/o, Asian American, Pacific Islander, and other youth and communities of color (86).

In this dissertation, I draw on Paris and Alim's praxis by emphasizing opportunities for students to engage with their communities and bring in diverse language practices (if they choose to do so) and foster new communities by learning and sharing with their peers in the composition classroom. A culturally sustaining approach is a crucial part of antiracist praxis that aims to resist rhetorics of despair and pity toward students who have been seen as deficient in their previous schooling, language practices, or ability to succeed in the university. Eve Tuck similarly advocates in her anticolonial praxis for a "desire-based framework," arguing that "even when communities are broken and conquered, they are so much more than that—so much more than this incomplete story is an act of aggression" (416). Though it is important to name and resist oppressive frameworks, focusing solely on forces of oppression decenters the depth and humanity of individuals and communities who have desires, gifts, and identities that are not defined by oppression. Wong and Pena advocate, in the same vein, for culturally sustaining practices where students "are not defined solely, or overwhelmingly, by their marginalization" and instead "provide spaces for young people to extend and imagine joy to experience and theorize happiness for the sake of happiness" (132). The students in my study dream of becoming poets and researchers and doctors. They talk about being role models for younger siblings and finding community on campus in Greek Life and student organizations. Their goals and dreams are inseparable from their writing practices and classroom communities and are thus centered throughout this study.

Translingual approaches to teaching composition offer one avenue to centering students' wider variety of literacies, goals, and joys while disrupting and resisting DAE, and challenging a white racial habitus. Translingual approaches can encourage dialogic feedback that account for the overlapping, dynamic nature of language that requires negotiation as interlocutors "shuttle" between overlapping codes in an effort to make meaning together through assemblage, localization, and the constant rebuilding of knowledge (Bou Ayash; Canagarajah; Guerra; Horner; Young). Linguistic diversity is viewed as an asset: it is "difference," not sameness, that is the norm (Canagarajah 17). In this way, language is always up for interpretation and negotiation. Rather than perceiving syntactical difference as error, instructors are encouraged to talk with students and understand the meaning of what might otherwise be perceived as ungrammatical constructions. When applying translingualism to my project, I turn to scholars such as Gilyard, Guerra Lee, and Matsuda, and Thu, et al., among others, who have called for a deeper intervention into how structures of oppression factor into acts of meaning-making. Jerry Won Lee argues that translingualism does not sufficiently challenge the teacher-student power dynamic because no matter how much negotiation takes place in the writing process, instructors ultimately make the decision about how to evaluate student writing. Lee critiques Min-Zhan Lu's widely cited example of translingualism, in which a student negotiates the meaning of "can able to," noting that the student ultimately defers to Lu by omitting the phrase in her final draft, demonstrating that "[t]he 'success' or even 'innovativeness' of a particular 'translingual' usage appears to always be contingent on the teacher's judgement" (183). Keith Gilyard argues that translingualism may even profess a form of colorblindness that elides the fact that brown and Black students' language practices are more likely to be deemed unacceptable in academic settings due to the embodied subject positions of their speakers. The limitations of

translingualism demonstrate the complicated, imperfect, and evolving nature of equity in composition. Despite these limitations, translingualism can offer strategies to resist institutional norms that reify DAE and enforce prescriptive logics. Though translingualism can, if applied uncritically, essentialize students' identities and writing practices, it can also open opportunities for students to choose the modes and codes through which they prefer to communicate for specific audiences and purposes. Building on Gilyard's work, Thu et al. respond to the problems and affordances that translingualism can pose in "Antiracist Translingual Praxis in Writing Ecologies," in which they discuss some of the recent changes in the UW writing program. Their approach "addresses translingualism's unintentional bind of flattening language difference [that] Gilyard and others have critiqued" by applying antiracist praxes through a programmatic praxis statement (207). Specifically, they include a call for instructors to "resist Eurocentric and White US-centric curricula" by highlighting a wider array of "voices, knowledges, and experiences from marginalized authors and discourse traditions" (EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis). Action guided by ideas within documents like the aforementioned praxis statement are necessary to address the dichotomy posed by some approaches, like translingualism, that are meant to be student-centered but can have mixed, unanticipated results in practice. Thu et al. illustrate how change at an institutional level (e.g., teacher trainings and program-wide praxis documents) can drive change throughout a writing ecology. In conjunction with the invaluable contributions of my colleagues, including Thu et al., I seek to connect layers of the English 109/110 writing ecology, such as teaching artifacts and student voices, to further the work of enacting antiracist praxes.

## **Antiracist Ecological Methodologies**

At its core, this dissertation is an investigation of how an equity-minded, student-centered writing ecology can challenge and transform unjust structures of white supremacy and racism, classism, linguistic injustice, and colonialism. Topics such as race, teacher positionality, and barriers to accessibility are ingrained in complex, overlapping systems that are always in motion. Ecological frameworks offer methodologies that can capture the complexity and depth of the experiences of first-generation students in a particular writing ecology and how they are affected by local factors (learning environments, advising, instructors, course material, classmates, program design) and broader systemic structures such as racism, classism, cultural capital, and white supremacy that are reinforced and embedded within educational institutions. Ecological theories of teaching writing, first theorized by Marilyn Cooper in 1986, grow out of a belief that “writing is an activity through which a person is continually engaged with a variety of socially constituted systems” (367). For the purpose of this study, I define ecological approaches as ones that conceive of writing and writers as inextricable from their environments and from the systems that constitute their educational setting. An ecological approach can account for how individuals and institutions conceive of access and the programmatic barriers and affordances for change that percolate through those networks. In studying student writing, it is not only the student or the text that matters, but also objects, physical spaces, individuals, and institutions, which all come into contact with the process of writing (Barnett and Boyle; Gries and Brooks; Lynch and Rivers; Ryan; Shipka). Writing ecologies are about connection, overlap, ebbs and flows, collaboration, and dissent. They are necessarily messy spaces of “interconnectedness,” “fluctuation,” “complexity,” and “emergence” (Reiff et al. 4-6). Action, change, and

communication all occur through and because of a full system of actors—not just the individual perceived to be at the end of this networked chain.

An ecological framework can more fully illuminate the structures of power, conflicting interests and goals, and barriers to programmatic change that impact first-year composition students from historically marginalized backgrounds. As Rai et al. note in their forthcoming article about revisions to UW's stretch writing program, "valuing storytelling as a vital way to illuminate complexities and possibilities for doing transformational equity work" can be a powerful methodology employed to

trace ongoing shifts (to policy, program practices, curricula, teacher training) within a writing partnership [English 109/110] designed to support first-generation, poverty-impacted, and BIPOC students as they navigate issues of equity and access at the University of Washington, a predominantly white institution.

I draw on ecological approaches that can reveal not only the networks embedded in a stretch writing course, but also how those networks are enmeshed in larger structures of privilege and oppression that are reinforced and/or resisted in classrooms, writing programs, and broader university contexts. I turn to ecological approaches that can help me look at writing "in practice," i.e., in the context of its full, networked ecology (Boyle 204-205). Approaching writing ecologies critically, as Rai et al. say,

prompts us to imagine ways to listen across difference; to resist easy solutions; to sit with/in ambivalence, complexity, contradictions, incommensurability, and multiplicity; and to acknowledge our inescapable complicity, while also sustaining ongoing co-laboring towards a future that might be otherwise (more equitable, just, ethical) and one that we may never see/can never be fully realized.

Such methodologies are inherently recursive, tangled, and often frustrating: as the above excerpt notes, this work does not end, and the goalposts for a better future may keep moving as we learn how to be more equitable and just educators and move toward what we hope will be increasingly equitable futures beyond our time. But these methods are worthwhile in that they invite a deep, interconnected institutional approach to studying writing that accounts for the layers of individuals, groups, texts, and policies that together impact the lives of student writers in the composition classroom and beyond. Equity, access, and antiracist praxes pose systems-level questions; barriers to equity and access are intertwined with the ever-changing elements of a writing ecology including its texts, policies, individuals, interactions, and institutions. Studying these elements on the individual level overlooks Flores and Rosa's call to focus on racist systems rather than individuals in those systems. The complex, localized, and situational nature of equity in practices such as course placement, class descriptions, curricular design, and assessment (among other parts of a writing ecology) necessitates methods that can account for the nuanced variables implicated in changing systems of power and privilege that cannot be fully captured by studying only individuals, curricula, or policies in isolation.

An ecological methodology also underscores students' and instructors' embodied, multidimensional experiences by accounting for the systems that individuals navigate and the ideologies that shape the world around them. Learning to understand the lived experiences of students and how they engage with and are changed by their environments can help educators and administrators deconstruct the idea of a normate white, middle class, able-bodied first-language student who, on the whole, benefits from the status quo. Inoue's work on antiracist writing ecologies challenges the idea that students should strive toward a white racial habitus because they are inherently advantaged if they are perceived as writing and speaking a particular

way due to their perceived race and class. EWP administrators and instructors are working to shift the 109/110 ecology and broader writing program toward one that actively recognizes and resists the expectations of students to perform Eurocentric, white, middle class ways of communicating and being in the world (See Guerra; Rai et al.; Thu et al.). Such praxes must foreground students' whole selves: their support network both at home and on campus, their relationships with teachers and advisers, the course texts and prompts, the programmatic structures, mundane practices, and outcomes of courses. antiracist methodologies launch critiques of invisible norms and propose alternate structures that account for the interconnectedness of stakeholders and the pervasiveness of power and privilege in acts of writing. Inoue's antiracist writing ecologies interface with "interconnectedness [...] without denying or eliding linguistic, cultural, or racial diversity, and the politics inherent in all uneven social formations" (77). An antiracist ecological approach maintains that embodiment and a disruption of normativity is critical to understanding more about students' needs, goals, and experiences as writers and as people.

To facilitate critical, antiracist change in a writing ecology, writing program administrators can ask:

- How do harmful ideologies travel through this writing ecology, and how can we disrupt them? In particular, what specific, tangible policies, descriptions, course names, placement methods, etc. could be made better by honestly confronting racism, classism, ableism, sexism, coloniality, linguistic discrimination, etc.?
- What work is already being done to shift the ecology toward critical praxis, and how can members of the ecology learn from each other's work to build on what already exists?

- How can the members of this ecology—the people, texts, and more—connect more deeply with one another to more effectively communicate about their goals and values for critical praxis in the ecology?
- What practices can we implement to facilitate productive recursivity without reinventing the wheel?

These questions guide my research and can extend beyond to other ecologies, bearing in mind the unique complexities of localization. No one method can be applied universally, but the above questions get at the connectivity, recursivity, communication, and reflection that are needed to foster a critical writing ecology.

While critical approaches to the intersections of race, class, and language are the primary lenses of critical pedagogy and theory I focus on, they cannot be separated from other identity markers. As Villanueva says, “as priorities go, racism seems to have the greatest depth of trouble, cuts across many other bigotries, is imbricated with most other bigotries, and also stands alone, has the greatest number of layers” (“On the Rhetoric and Precedents of Racism” 648). Recent conceptions of equity that resist DAE draw upon intersectional antiracist theories in efforts to challenge and transform structures of oppression by engaging student agency and amplifying a wider array of literacies beyond DAE. I take an intersectional approach to this project that acknowledges and confronts how multiple forms of oppression and discrimination based on race, gender, and socioeconomic status, among other factors, simultaneously impact students. Legal studies scholar and Black feminist Kimberlé Crenshaw originated the term “intersectionality” in her 1989 essay “Demarginalizing the Intersection of Race and Sex,” proposing an alternative to the “single-axis framework” through which many discrimination cases are tried. The “single axis framework,” as Crenshaw describes it, is the tendency for

stakeholders in legal case to focus on “the most privileged group members” among “those who are multiply-burdened” (e.g., poor white defendants tend to fare better than poor Black defendants in lawsuits related to class discrimination) (139-140). Considering identity markers—especially markers associated with marginalized groups—in isolation does not reflect reality and can erase people’s lived experiences. As Crenshaw states, “the intersectional experience is greater than the sum of racism and sexism, [and] any analysis that does not take intersectionality into account cannot sufficiently address the particular manner in which Black women are subordinated” (141). What this means for my study is that, when interviewing, observing, and writing about students, I strive to portray their conceptions of and lived experiences in relation to their multiply marginalized identities (including class, race, immigration status, and language background, among other factors) as intersectional, overlapping, inter-constitutive, and inseparable, as opposed to discrete identity markers. I often talk about students in this study as first-generation, economically marginalized students (FGEM) because their identification with one of those categories alone does not wholly represent their experience of being either first-generation or economically marginalized without accounting for the intersections of these factors. I often talk, too, about students racial and linguistic identities in conjunction with their FGEM identities, again, because any single identifier on its own does not accurately represent a student’s embodied and lived experiences. While there are many other intersecting identities that inform students' experiences (e.g., disability, sexual orientation, gender), I focus primarily on intersecting factors of race, socioeconomic class, family education, and linguistic practices because those aspects of identity are most closely tied to the writing ecology of English 109/110 and the most salient in the stories shared by participants.

In addition to intersectional, antiracist praxes, the ecological approaches I apply are informed by feminist methodologies that seek to cultivate mutual trust and generosity and engage in rhetorical listening to mitigate the potentially high stakes of vulnerability when studying equity. Critical feminist research methodologies offer a “theoretical stance [...] anchored in hope” that “offers ways to disidentify with hegemonic rhetoric, with the dominant rhetorical histories, theories, and practices articulated in Western culture” (Glenn 4). As one way to “anchor in hope,” I draw on Eve Tuck’s theory of “desire-based” research, conveying stories of joy and hope rather than “oppression singularly defin[ing] a community” (what Tuck calls a “damage-based” approach) (413). As discussed in the earlier section on antiracist praxis and joy, FGEM students are often portrayed in terms of deficits or as helpless and struggling in ways that are often “used to justify inequality in higher education outcomes” (Bensimmon and Gray). Consequently, I designed my interviews to emphasize students’ holistic experiences, especially moments when they found a sense of belonging and achievement through the writing classroom, instead of focusing solely or primarily on their struggles. To effectively listen to students’ stories, I turn to scholars who exercise care and generosity in their student-centered praxis.

## **Methods and Participants**

I am inspired by deep qualitative work that foregrounds relationships and human elements of data. In her narrative monograph on race, colonialism, and teacher positionality, Suhanthie Motha engages in vulnerable reciprocity, storytelling, and generosity over tea with her participants to facilitate mutual trust and generosity, eliciting full and authentic narrative accounts. Instead of adopting a detached ethos to observe her subjects, Motha embraces her evolving personal relationships with these teachers and, in doing so, humanizes them and expresses their nuanced insights on English teaching and race. Drawing upon Motha’s model, I

held group interviews with students, often over coffee or tea, in spaces on or near campus, engaging with and enacting the importance of community and belonging in the university as students and writers—themes that carry across my dissertation. In order to capture multiple perspectives within a writing ecology in motion, I used qualitative methods, including semi-structured interviews (see Appendix C for the first student interview protocol and Appendix D for the first instructor interview protocol)<sup>13</sup> and observations, informed by institutional ethnography to better understand the experiences of students enrolled in a UW stretch course as well as conversations with other stakeholders, including instructors, administrators, and advisers, in the broader context of a writing ecology.

While there are many avenues into studying institutions, systems, and ecologies, I have chosen to study individuals and their experiences as one focal point into these systems. As Jonathan Tummons puts it:

Institutional ethnographers [...] start from the point of view of the people who are enfolded within them. That is not because we are necessarily looking to write rich biographies of them and their lives as tutors or students, but because we are looking to explore those forces that make them act, more or less willingly and with varying degrees of compliance, in the ways that they do (355).

Capturing snippets of student, teacher, and administrator perspectives offers a window into the ideologies and artifacts that inform their lived experiences within a broader ecology. In seeking to understand an equity-minded writing ecology in revision, I sought to understand why and how

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<sup>13</sup> To accurately and deeply learn about students' experiences, I tailored the second and third rounds of interviews to individuals based on their previous responses. Due to the volume and personal nature of these interview protocols, I chose not to include them in this study's appendix.

things happen and how they are taken up from different perspectives in that system. As Michelle LaFrance and Melissa Nicolas say:

Institutional ethnography's concern for how things happen—that is, how practices are taken up and for what reasons—enables us to think through how the discourses of educational sites bind individuals to particular workplace and educational philosophies, coordinating their actions and organizing their daily lives around key notions of the value of labor, access, and institutional mission (133).

To better understand how things happen in this writing ecology, I needed to first understand what things were happening according to different stakeholders in that ecology. In gaining this understanding, I was able to more effectively synthesize the experiences of individuals with the texts (e.g., archival documents, learning outcomes, course descriptions, praxis statements, teaching artifacts) and ideologies that together with individuals (among other innumerable variables) make up a writing ecology.

My interview protocols were driven by ecological thinking; though I asked about individuals' experiences, I situated them in the broader context of the processes, ideologies, and systems that they navigate. When I asked about how students chose to take the class, I wanted to learn not just about their own preferences and goals, but also the placement conversations and processes that affect students on a programmatic level. In asking “How, if at all, does 109/110 make space for your knowledge, expertise, and experience,” I sought to discover more about the ideologies that travel through the curricula and are taken up by students. By asking about students' sense of community and belonging in the classroom and on campus, I was able to learn about how the writing ecology cultivated spaces of affirmation and resistance within the broader structure of the university. In the first instructor interview, I asked about participants' concepts of

access, community and belonging, inequity, and resistance in relation to English 109/110.

Though data from two teachers does not represent the entire writing ecology, this question helped me understand some of the ideologies circulating through the ecology.

I recruited two English 109/110 teachers to participate in my project in the winter quarter of 2020, when they were teaching English 110. The two instructors who participated in my study have contrasting life experiences and identities as well as dispositions as instructors. They also have a different amount of experience teaching this course and participation in the new teacher orientation in different years. Their contrasting experiences shed light on complex interactions and nuances within the shifting writing ecology of this stretch writing sequence. **Taylor** (they/them) was a third-year graduate student at the time of the study and is from the northeastern United States. This was Taylor's second year teaching 109/110 and third year teaching college writing. Taylor shared that they conceptualize 109/110 "as a particular opening in which to contest and argue and agitate for more resources for students, whether that be smaller class sizes, [or] more direct attention, like redistribution of educational resources to students who need it most." Taylor is privileged as a white educator, but they also share marginalized identities with their students as a first-generation student who grew up in a working-class family and described graduate school as their way out of the cycle of poverty. They regularly talk to Gabriel, the sole commuter student in my study, about their personal experience balancing work, life, school, and commuting as an undergraduate. In addition to teaching 109/110, Taylor tutors student athletes and has a close working relationship with the athletics advisers working with student athletes in English 109/110.

**Dita** (she/her) was a second-year international graduate student at the time of the study and is from Southeast Asia. This was her first-year teaching 109/110 after having taught the

mainstream one-term course the previous year. She was part of the first group of instructors to take part in the revised orientation, which emphasized positionality and critical pedagogies.

Beyond this orientation, Dita sought out coursework, trainings, and leadership roles to further her antiracist and anticolonial praxis. Speaking about her experience teaching in stretch prior to the writing program's transformation work, in which she later took part as an assistant director in the program, she stated that, as a teacher, it previously felt "like [the writing program] created this course for minority [students], but they don't tell us what to do with these minority students or how exactly a space reserved for this population of students should function for them." But she also stated that the additional quarter makes space for students and instructors to critique systems that affect them and that the process of these critiques "can be really beneficial" for students.

Dita, a petite woman of color, reported experiencing discrimination and disrespect from white male students in English 109/110. In class, I witnessed students talking over her and having loud, off-task conversations during group work. Unlike Taylor, who did not experience those behaviors, Dita set course norms at the beginning of 110, specifically to preempt racist and sexist behavior she experienced in English 109.

I recruited seven student volunteers who signed up when I visited the two classes that I observed throughout the ten-week Winter 2020 term. I met with most participants three times<sup>14</sup> throughout the ten-week quarter. Interviews occurred in a mix of individual and group configurations based on interview protocol (i.e., whether the questions were tailored toward individuals or applicable to all participants), students' comfort, and availability. We discussed

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<sup>14</sup> I had planned to meet with participants as a full group at the end of the quarter to reflect collectively on their experiences in English 110, but the COVID-19 pandemic suddenly caused classes to shift online during the final week of the quarter (when the fourth interview was originally scheduled). While I hoped to follow up with students in the future, I did not want to burden them on top of online classes, a pandemic, and police violence that disproportionately affects people of color.

students' goals and experiences in regard to belonging and community in the university as students, community members, writers, and scholars. Except for Rachel, who is Indigenous, all participants are Mexican American children of immigrants. Some students were born in Mexico while others were born in the United States. All six of those students speak both Spanish (to varying degrees) as well as English. All were first-year, first-generation college students aged 18-19 years old at the time of this study. Below I offer a short biography of each focal student, which I build on in Chapter 3 when I discuss students' self-reported experiences in English 109/110 as they relate to my research questions about linguistic justice, antiracist praxis, community, and belonging.

When asked what his goals are in 109/110, **Gabriel**, who is part of the TRIO program and one of two focal students from Taylor's class in my study, stated that he wants to learn from others in the class "to just become a writer and become a better thinker and a better person." As a poet who incorporated spoken word into his English assignments, Gabriel enjoys English 109/110 and values the class as an opportunity to grow as a writer planning to major in communications and hoping to take creative writing courses. He lives in South Seattle with his family and commutes to campus via bus and light rail, often arriving to class a half hour early despite the hour-long commute. He participates actively in class discussions and says he wishes more of his peers would do the same. Gabriel has a close bond with his teacher, often talking with them before and after class about their passions for poetry and social justice and shared experiences as first-generation college students. However, commuting and working have left him little time to engage in campus life, and he reports struggling with loneliness and finding community. In addition to school and commuting, he works a retail job for about 10 hours a week and helps coach ultimate frisbee at his former high school.

**Elena** is part of the EOP program and is one of two focal students in Taylor’s class. While she does not speak up often during class discussions, she talks to a friend whom she met in English 109 and becomes animated and talkative in individual conversations. She is close to her family and talks to her mom and baby sister often, visiting her family home, a few hours away in Central Washington, monthly via bus. At UW, she has found community through church, which she attends multiple times a week, and Leadership without Borders, an organization that supports and advocates for undocumented students. Inspired by her young sister, Elena strives to be a role model and hopes to find a passion in college, perhaps studying child psychology. In early high school, Elena did not plan to apply to college because she was worried that her parents would not be able to afford it. But, she says, “at some point, I was like, why am I really letting this hold me back? [...] I’m not letting this hold me back. Like, let’s go.” She received a financial aid package—but not a full ride—and was able to attend UW.

**Andrea** (pronounced Ahn-DRAY-uh) is part of the Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) and TRIO Student Support Services programs and grew up in a residential neighborhood on the outskirts of Seattle. Before and during class, Andrea reports that she values the community of the English 109/110 classroom frequently speaks in English and Spanish with peers, participating actively and often taking on a leader role in group discussions. She is interested in pursuing a degree in a science field and a career in research, possibly attending graduate school, and enrolled in 109/110 to improve her research skills. English 109/110 has “taught [her] a little bit [about] how minorities are represented in research,” and she applied this knowledge in another course and a study abroad application for an ethnography-based program in Spain. Set on attending university from a young age, she participated in many college prep programs in high school and is now involved in Chicanos/Latinx for Community Medicine at

UW and spends time every quarter searching for and applying to scholarships. Hearing stories from her three older siblings, who did not attend college, motivates her to take advantage of opportunities in her life.

**Antonio** is part of the College Assistance Migrant Program for children from “migrant and seasonal farmworker families” (CAMP website) and grew up in a small town near the Canadian border. During the summer, he works two jobs to pay for college and personal expenses like food and housing, sharing that it is difficult at times to meet his basic needs and that he sometimes skips or delays meals if he cannot afford groceries. Antonio enrolled in 109/110 for the small classroom environment and because he “didn't think [he] was that great at English, and [his adviser] said this was a slower-paced class.” However, after taking the course, he says that it is too slow and wishes that he had taken a one-quarter course (which he believed to be faster and more advanced). He is goal-oriented and focused on completing his degree, going to medical school, and getting a job as a psychiatrist. As a kid, it was “the coolest thing looking up to [his brother],” who went to UW and is now completing a postdoctoral research position in biology.

**Marco** is part of the EOP and TRIO programs and grew up in a suburb about 30 minutes from Seattle. He took English 109/110 because he believed that the course load was lighter than other composition courses and because he felt an “easier” class would help him develop his writing. While Marco gets along with peers in class and participates actively during group work, he doesn't volunteer to share out or be the leader and expresses that he feels lonely in college, especially as a Latin American, Spanish-speaking student. At the time of our interviews, he was seeking out community by pledging a Latino fraternity. Marco is proud to be a first-generation college student, stating, “I think it's incredible [for first-gen students] to go against the odds,

finally doing something for yourself and something bigger like your family. And that's what it means to be like a first- gen student."

**Steven**, who is part of the EOP and TRIO programs, is from Central Washington where he attended college during his last two years of high school through the Running Start program. He planned to finish college at his local state school, but his professors encouraged him to apply to UW to pursue what they said would be a more rigorous education. He chose English 109/110 because he thought it would be "a nice transition class" that would help him develop "academic writing" practices that his previous instructors said he needed to further develop to be ready for college writing. His goal to "get a better-sounding paper that is formal in tone and looks academic" is motivated by the messages he has received in his previous education as well as his preparation for the business major application, which, in part, evaluates students on their grammar in a timed writing assessment. However, despite the feedback he heard from previous teachers that his papers were "unacademic," Steven learned in English 109/110 "that sometimes, academic writing doesn't need all that formality."

**Rachel** is an EOP and TRIO student from a mid-size town an hour south of Seattle. She is Indigenous and the only student participant whose parents are not immigrants. Proud of her culture, Rachel spoke with peers in class about how her tattoos and several of the stickers on her laptop are related to her heritage. She shared that she found a sense of community and belonging both in English 109/110 and outside of the classroom in her sorority. She is friends with several student athletes in her English 110 section and tends to speak up in group discussions, gaining more confidence to do so across the two terms of the class, which has helped her feel "more confident as a person and as a student" to "speak freely" in group discussions in the environment

of a small class in which students “became closer together” and would greet each other on campus and walk to classes together.

In addition to student and instructor participants, I spoke with two learning specialists in Athletics, the director of the Educational Opportunity program (part of OMA&D), and three writing program administrators. These data, in conjunction with student and instructor interviews, classroom observations, and my own participation in the early stages of the course revision process were essential pieces of studying this writing ecology and learning how studying a writing ecology can inform how the members of a writing ecology can collaboratively impactfully enact equitable, antiracist pedagogies that cultivate confidence and a sense of belonging for FGEM students in the writing classroom.

## **Chapter Overview**

Throughout this dissertation, I engage with questions of remediation in relation to the embodied realities that BIPOC FGEM students face and the inequitable structures of power in education. Through a qualitative case study, I investigate how intersectional antiracist, culturally sustaining, translingual, and feminist ecological praxes can drive institutional transformation in stretch writing models to center the knowledge and experiences of students in a course sequence designed for FGEM students. I argue that a recursive ecological approach—work that does not end but instead continues to percolate knowledge throughout a system—that synthesizes collaborative programmatic revision work, student voices, and instructors’ course materials can move an ecology closer to an equitable, antiracist praxis. The following overview describes the various parts of the English 109/110 writing ecology that I focus on in each chapter of this dissertation.

In **Chapter 2**, I detail the history and present state of the stretch writing model at the University of Washington. I set the stage of the institutional context on a broad scale while telling stories about how racist ideologies are both reproduced and resisted in the English 109/110 ecology. This chapter draws on collaborative data collected by writing program staff during our stretch model revision project from 2018-2020, which I was part of, and subsequent work enacted by my colleagues from 2020-2022. Those data include student focus group interviews, archival research, adviser interviews, and instructor interviews. These data inform the shifting stretch (and broader) writing ecology at UW. My writing program colleagues and I have worked on an ongoing course revision that has been motivated by equity-minded pedagogies including translingual, antiracist, anticolonial, and culturally sustaining approaches. I draw on the work of my colleagues to establish the institutional history and revision process of English 109/110. My colleagues' archival work uncovered a long history of English 109/110 administrators advocating for critical pedagogies while reiterating rhetorics of remediation in course descriptions and curricula. In these documents, they found that the recursive process of revision started at the course's beginnings and has continued (on and off) to the present day—throughout, encountering bureaucratic barriers to change that are inevitable when shifting a system. Knowledge of these archives establishes the basis for both revision methodologies and the strengths (striving toward critical pedagogies) and weaknesses (tension between “support” and remediation) of the English 109/110 ecology. To establish a fuller picture of the 109/110 ecology, I discuss the interconnections and stoppages in the network of administrators, instructors, students, and advisers, which help portray the barriers to institutional change that we encountered during the revision project: even when stakeholders share goals and intentions, change is difficult and incremental.

Building on the institutional knowledge of the history and revisions of English 109/110, I discuss student's self-reported experiences with the stretch writing sequence in **Chapter 3**, aiming to better understand how students have experienced stretch composition at UW in relation to their identities, ideologies, and goals. I explore, too, what possibilities might exist for resisting traditional notions of access that focus on imparting knowledge and literacies that uphold DAE and seek to help students gain access to the university—often asking them to give up home literacies as a result—in favor of praxes that foreground students' goals. In relation to larger questions, this chapter explains how students' backgrounds as Latin American and/or Indigenous first-generation students from low-income family backgrounds informs what they are looking for in a college writing class (such as confidence, connections to resources, a comfortable community where they can share their ideas without fear of judgment) and how 109/110 delivers some of what students are looking in terms of affirmation and community despite lingering perceptions of remediation harbored by stakeholders across the writing ecology. To get at questions of how this class transforms and/or reinforces conceptions of “granting access” to the university for historically marginalized students, I analyze student focus group and interview data to learn about students' shared and individual experiences and backgrounds and why this particular class as it is currently designed is meaningful to them in terms of building confidence, combatting imposter syndrome, and honing writing skills. Throughout, I connect to scholarly conversations on linguistic justice and antiracist, anticolonial, culturally sustaining pedagogies. Some big-picture observations are that students appreciate what they call a “slower transition” (coded language that can mean “remedial”) into college and college writing, but they also become more comfortable as writers, learners, and college students throughout the class.

In **Chapter 4**, I synthesize the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis with students' perspectives from Chapter 3, institutional context from Chapter 2, composition scholarship, and instructors' teaching artifacts. I curated a teaching archive of materials created by English 109/110 instructors and connected these texts with tenets of EWP's praxis statement. I chose a non-traditional approach for this chapter to make the efforts and contributions of my participants, my colleagues, and myself tangible and ongoing in the process of shifting a writing ecology toward equitable antiracist, anticolonial, un-grading, culturally sustaining praxes. This chapter is a living document and a "group project" in that it represents the teaching philosophies and practices of instructors teaching 109/110 and other composition courses and invites space for future instructors to contribute to and adapt artifacts from the archive. In the spirit of recursive and critical ecological methodologies, this archive will be shared with program administrators and instructors with the hope that they will draw upon and add to the archive as a living collaborative document. My intent is for this chapter to synthesize, enact, and acknowledge the collective efforts toward equitable pedagogies in our writing ecology and give back something tangible to the administrators, instructors, and students in that ecology. I situate the teaching artifacts in Chapter 4 engage within the context of critical praxes informed by translingualism (Bawarshi; Bou Ayash; Canagarajah; Gilyard; Guerra; Lee; Lu; Matsuda; Motha; Young), culturally sustaining pedagogies (Alim and Paris; Guerra; Wong and Pena), anticolonial pedagogies (Grande; Tuck), and antiracist praxes (Ahmed; Baker-Bell; Bensimmon; Inoue; Rai et al; Thu et al.; Villanueva). I frame the teaching artifacts (syllabus excerpts, prompts, worksheets, and assessment tools) around four themes from the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis and developed teacher-facing framing to make this archive accessible and approachable for instructors to browse quickly if needed.

Given the hopes, successes, and barriers to defining—let alone redefining—equity in stretch writing, how can we make changes that support students more effectively? In **Chapter 5**, I discuss, given my findings and the possibilities for our local stretch writing sequence at UW as well as the field of composition more broadly to implement change through recursive, ecological curricular and program design and revisions to better support students who are most marginalized in higher education. I also discuss the difficulty of making the changes we want to see on both local and field-wide levels. I aim, in this chapter, to offer suggestions for how student-centered access can contribute to the institutional work of transforming racist structures.

In sum, I aim in this dissertation to discover and convey how the members of a writing ecology can resist and challenge embodied conditions that inequitably impact FGEM and BIPOC students. In doing so, I apply ecological methods to holistically learn from students, instructors, administrators, and advisers about their dreams and goals for equitable pedagogies that authentically invite students' experiences and knowledge as an essential part of the writing curriculum. In what follows you will hear the stories of program transformation from many stakeholders which reveal multiple meanings of equity and access in a writing program which intersect, conflict, and synthesize into an ongoing shifting ecology that can keep moving closer to enacting a more equitable praxis by continually revisiting and hearing from stakeholders throughout the writing ecology and undergoing the unending and recursive—but essential—work of ecological transformation.

## Chapter 2

### Making Change: A Writing Ecology in Process

In October 2018, four UW Expository Writing Program (EWP) administrators—program director Candice Rai; program coordinator Jacob Huebsch; and Matthew Hitchman, and I, who were both assistant directors gathered in Candice’s office, huddled around a large sticky note covering the back of the door. We quickly filled the page with phrases and ideas—big dreams beginning to form the shape of the unwieldy project of reimagining English 109/110, the stretch writing course offered to students affiliated with the Office of Minority Affairs & Diversity (OMA&D) programs or Student Athletics. We wrote that we wanted to respond to students’ needs, add clarity and structure for instructors on the course purpose and curriculum, create public-facing research opportunities for students, better enact commitments from the new antiracist praxis statement, and guide revisions with recent scholarship on critical pedagogies in composition studies. Concurrently, writing program director Candice Rai and assistant directors Emily George and Sumyat Thu formed a subcommittee to author a program-wide antiracist praxis statement that would guide ongoing changes in English 109/110 and beyond in answering questions, following the spike in racist ideologies and actions after the 2016 US presidential election. As described in Thu et al, writing program stakeholders asked:

How we can actively change the material conditions and ideological vectors that guide our praxis, practices, and policies to be more equitable on a systemic level? How can we shift our ecology so certain sorts of questions, conversations, habits of mind, policies, curricula, investments, and practices (about racial injustice and linguistic, cultural, and economic differences in our institution) become more possible or to ensure others are less possible)? How might we nurture individual and collective capacities for ongoing

transformation in our program rooted in our various embodied positionalities and experiences? (Thu et al. 205).

Four years later, after the labor of many instructors and administrators in both of the aforementioned subcommittees and beyond, early imaginings have led to transformative work in progress that felt idealistic and lofty a few years prior (see Thu et al. for Sumyat Thu, Candice Rai, Anis Bawarshi, and Katie Malcolm's reflections on and contributions to the antiracist ecological work of Thu, Rai, and George's subcommittee as well as the labor of Bawarshi, Malcolm, and other UW teacher-scholars).

This chapter builds upon my project's driving questions—about reshaping what access and equity mean in institutional contexts to better reflect students' lived experiences, learning goals, and cultural and linguistic capacities—by establishing the institutional framework of the writing ecology by telling the story of the stretch composition program's history in relation to its stakeholders (students, instructors, administrators, advisers). This foundation informs the subsequent two chapters, which focus on student and instructors' engagement with this ecology in ways that remake and/or resist hegemonic, normative structures of power that are omnipresent but often made invisible in higher education. Critical ecological methodologies in stretch composition (see Rai et al.), which can challenge the assumption that all students are equally privileged and have similar access to resources in the writing classroom and in the university more broadly, drive both programmatic changes and my approach in this dissertation. I argue, in concurrence with other 109/110 instructors and administrators, that writing programs should be driven by critical, ecological frameworks that draw upon recent moves in composition studies from antiracist pedagogy and assessment (Inoue; Martinez), anticolonial pedagogies (Grande; Tuck), translingualism (Bou Ayash; Canagarajah; Horner; Lu; Matsuda; Young), disability

studies (Dolmage; Kerschbaum), and feminist frameworks (Stenberg; Glenn). At the crux of this project is an intention to explore ways to design the UW stretch composition ecology (and others like it at other institutions) more intentionally antiracist, anticolonial, and student-centered.

Therefore, an orientation toward critical theories grounds this conception of a writing ecology in a more antiracist and universally accessible context. I situate the local ecology (both the 109/110 context and the broader university context) in this framework.

I intend for this dissertation to contribute not only to change in the writing program at the University of Washington, but also to a growing body of research on stretch writing programs that can, collectively, help program administrators more effectively communicate across stakeholders to prioritize and enact equity-oriented, student-centered applications of access in writing programs. Writing programs are complex systems including many stakeholders. In the case of English 109/110, those stakeholders include WPAs, gWPAs, students, instructors, and advisers. The stakeholders connected to English 109/110 tend to share antiracist, anticolonial, student-centered values but face—and at times perpetuate—bureaucratic barriers to facilitating changes that reflect those values. The university itself also shapes the writing ecology of English 109/110 by affecting students' ability to access resources and the placement structure of courses. To better understand how various stakeholders perceive and respond to student needs in this writing ecology, I must first establish and discuss who these stakeholders are and how they impact English 109/110 before delving into students' uptake of these conceptions of access in the subsequent chapter. A large part of this project is telling the story of the program's history and recent revisions, synthesizing the archival and institutional documents and conversations with on-the-ground student experiences from case study interviews and class observations.

In this chapter, I discuss the history of writing ecology frameworks to give context for how composition scholars conceive of writing ecologies. The core of this chapter is introducing the writing ecology, including prominent stakeholders whose relationships I study in this project. I discuss the 109/110 revision project, which, in addition to my experience teaching the course sequence, provided the initial framework for my work within this writing ecology. I also give brief context about the ecology of the university as a whole, in which the writing ecology is situated. In concluding this chapter, I explain how the institutional context is a framework through which the following chapters about students' testimonies and instructors' teaching practices must be viewed to holistically represent the full ecology of English 109/110.

### **Stretch Writing at the University of Washington**

In this section, I introduce the foundation of the UW stretch writing ecology: the university itself and the course's past, present, and future. A critical ecological lens requires institutional context to fully unpack the complexities of a programmatic change and varying stakes that can be overlapping or conflicting. I start by introducing the racial demographics of the university, city, and nation to illustrate the underrepresentation of 109/110 students in the broader university. I then review the complicated history of English 109/110, beginning in the 1960s, to comprehensively set the stage for the next section, in which I discuss the ongoing changes to the program.

The University of Washington-Seattle (UW) is a large public research university in an urban setting in the Pacific Northwest. Approximately 60% of students—including all of the students in my study—come from within Washington state (Office of Admissions). Many students aspire to careers in business or STEM; computer science is particularly popular. While

many students intend to pursue these majors, most are not admitted into them directly and must compete and apply to get in. The undergraduate population is primarily white and Asian with few Black, Indigenous, and Latin American students. Six of my seven case study participants—and many other students in 109/110—are Latin American, a demographic that is severely underrepresented in both Seattle and at UW (see table).

	UW Spring 2022 <sup>15</sup>	Seattle 2021 <sup>16</sup>	America 2021
African American/Black	4.6%	7.1%	13.4%
American Indian	1.1%	0.5%	1.3%
Hispanic/Latin American	8.8%	7.1%	18.5%
White	38.4%	65.8%*	76.3%*
Asian	27.3%	16.3%	5.9%
Hawai’ian/Pacific Islander	1.0%	0.3%	0.2%
2+ races	No data	7.6%	2.8%
* Not Hispanic/Latino			

The University of Washington Expository Writing Program (EWP) houses 100-, 200-, and 300- level courses in college writing, all of which fulfill the required “C” (composition)

<sup>15</sup> See UW Student Data. These data include undergraduate and graduate students. “International” students comprised 16.0% of the population, but their race is not indicated. 2.9% of students chose not to indicate their race.

<sup>16</sup> See United States Census Bureau for Seattle and national data.

credit. EWP offers around 230 “C” credit courses<sup>17</sup> to approximately 5,000 students annually. The program is driven by antiracist, anticolonial, multimodal, and translingual pedagogies, though individual instructors have a lot of free rein in designing their courses. The majority of instructors teaching in the program are graduate students in English and other humanities departments, but approximately 15-20% of instructors are post-graduate part-time lecturers.

The Expository Writing Program’s learning outcomes (Appendix B) emphasize rhetorical knowledge, genre, critical engagement with texts, ethical communication, persuasion, and revision. As the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis states,

We in the Expository Writing Program—program directors, instructors, and staff—approach the teaching of writing as consequential social action and ethical communication and we understand language as political and tied to identity, culture, and power. In our role as educators, we commit to reflect on the communities to which we are accountable and the language practices we are sustaining. We further commit to work against the various forms of systemic oppression emanating from racial capitalism and white supremacy that shape the social conditions of teaching, learning, and living in the university, in our social institutions, and in our everyday lives.

The above commitments have been taken up through changes to the new instructor orientation and practicum to emphasize positionality and antiracist and translingual pedagogies and assessment practices and the creation of the Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis Statement among other initiatives further detailed in Thu et al. (204-209). Such commitments are especially important to English 109/110 since the students identify overwhelmingly as BIPOC

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<sup>17</sup> To earn the “C” credit, students must complete one of the following courses: 109 and 110 (both must be completed to receive credit), 131 (the most commonly taken “mainstream” composition course), 182 (multimodal composition), 111 (composition through literature), or 121 (composition through service learning).

and first-generation, economically marginalized (FGEM) students. The course is available to students affiliated with EOP (Educational Opportunity Program) (“for under-represented ethnic minority, economically disadvantaged and first generation college students”), TRIO SSS (Department of Education-funded program for students from low-income family backgrounds and/or students with disabilities), Champions (for former foster children), CAMP (College Assistant Migrant Program), and/or Student Athletics (see OMA&D Academic Counseling Services for program descriptions). The students in this study are affiliated with EOP, TRIO, and/or CAMP. Typically, there are 3-6 sections of 109 and/or 110 offered each quarter. Ideally, students remain with their 109 teacher in 110, but oftentimes due to scheduling and other variables, about half of the students end up in a different section. To increase one-on-one and tailored student support, 109/110 is capped at 15 students while the other 100-level courses are capped at 23.

Unlike many stretch courses at other universities, 109/110 is not positioned as remedial. Instead, its goal is to foster community and provide additional resources through a closer community of peers and teachers. However, this does not always come across. For instance, prior to 2021 when the program revised the course title and description (as I discuss later in this chapter), the official time schedule labeled English 109 and 110 “Introductory Composition” while 131 is called “Composition: Exposition.” The course sequence was designed in the late 1968 as a non-remedial stretch writing course. As Rai, Prihandita, and Ramsey (my EWP colleagues) note in “Towards Critical Ecological Methodologies,” 1968 was

a significant year in the Civil Rights Movement—MLK was assassinated, the Fair Housing Act was signed, and student-led movements erupted at universities nationwide urgently demanding social justice for poverty-impacted, Black, Indigenous, Latin

American, and other marginalized students and faculty.

The stretch writing sequence at UW emerged, at least in part, in an attempt to meet the needs of students who had long been ignored or oppressed by the university. Yet, the program has, in the decades since, balanced fostering community for marginalized students and facing the reality that a course of self-identified “less experienced student writers” *sounds* like a remedial course. While the course has always been branded as non-remedial, the framing sends mixed messages. In one archival document from 1985, which was analyzed through EWP archival research conducted by Jacob Huebsch, Matthew Hitchman, and Candice Rai,

Victor Villanueva, Mary Louise Buley-Meissner, and Virginia Chappell wrote to Charles Schuster (the EWP Director at the time) saying, “since 1968 composition courses here designed for minority students have been structured to meet or surpass the standards of so-called regular classes. English 104-105 was never intended as a pre-181 course. It is, rather, intended to provide less experienced student writers with intensive academic writing practice in a coherent, ethnically sensitive curriculum.” They also explain that there are different rhetorical modes, “181 aiming at more expressive modes, 105 at the more academic.”

In referencing archival research and writing conducted by Candice Rai, who served as EWP Director during the period of this study, I learned that another letter from the same year written by the Dean of Arts and Sciences to EOP and EWP expressed a contrasting disposition: “...any course intended expressly for EOP students is, by definition, remedial. Indeed, its remedial nature is its only educational justification. [...] These courses are intended for [...] students who lack adequate preparation for university-level study.” As Rai’s notes illuminate, this exchange is part of a larger battle, led by “EOP and EWP leadership who opposed this logic” of remediation,

for 109/110 to achieve equivalency status with other “C”-credit courses. These two excerpts, while both noting concern for students’ preparedness and academic success, highlight the dichotomy between remediation and culturally affirming support that have been woven into 109/110s fabric since its origins. Given the challenges of shifting an ecology and its many, often entrenched layers, ideologies, and practices, the vestiges of the former still linger, but recent revision efforts have shifted the course toward more ethical, supportive pedagogies that diverge from the often-remedial stretch courses of peer institutions.

## **Program Assessment and Course Revision**

My dissertation builds on my work as an EWP Assistant Director (AD): as an AD, I worked with writing program colleagues Candice Rai (program director); Jacob Huebsch (program coordinator); and Matthew Hitchman, Patrick McGowan, and Nanya Jhingran (assistant directors) on the curriculum revision of 109/110. The program revision work beginning in 2018 “builds on longstanding commitments in our program to antiracist and equity-oriented writing practices and language policies and in urgent response to the movement for Black lives and protests against racial and systemic injustice” as well as programmatic shifts toward antiracist and translingual approaches beginning in the mid-2010s (Thu et al. 197). Exigent antiracist, student-centered program design was and is at the core of the programmatic revision: to evaluate and revise English 109/110 responsively, we first sought to learn about how the stakeholders—primarily students, instructors, administrators, and advisers—were experiencing the course. We wanted to get the lay of the land of all possible resources to best support students through cross-campus community-building. EWP Coordinator, Jacob Huebsch, and EWP Director, Candice Rai, conceived, co-wrote, and received a grant for the initial research study,

which the initial research team thought would be a straightforward assessment and revision focused on the curriculum. What we found went much deeper than we had expected and revealed a complex bureaucratic network within this course's ecology.

What we initially identified as problems at the start of our study included a disconnect between 109 and 110: because there is not a standardized curriculum, instructors cover dissimilar materials in each of the two courses, resulting in learning gaps or redundancies for students who have different instructors for each course. We wanted ways to connect stakeholders in the ecology without monitoring and sharing students' every move. As part of our research, we met with and interviewed campus partners and student services staff about the purpose of the course and the underlying impressions students might bring into placement conversations. This is essential to affirming students' linguistic resources and ensuring that they are choosing to take English 109/110 intentionally because they are excited about what the course offers instead of feeling like they are unqualified for any other options. The need for new language to talk about the course, driven by antiracist and translingual pedagogies, became clear not only through conversations with instructors but also when speaking to academic advisers during our pilot study, as well as from reflection on our own various assumptions and program practices, documents, curricula, and teacher trainings.

Throughout the course revision process, writing program staff members worked to disentangle and contend with histories of remediation in course placement methods, course descriptions, and student perceptions. In the fall of 2018, EWP staff members met for our first committee meeting for the 109/110 revision project. Our team<sup>18</sup> was composed of graduate students, staff members, and administrators, each with differing power, privilege, and

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<sup>18</sup>Director Candice Rai; program coordinator Jacob Huebsch; and graduate student assistant directors Matthew Hitchman, Nanya Jhingran, Patrick McGowan, and I.

vulnerability. Our investments overlapped in our desire to shift this course toward a more antiracist, translingual, community-oriented design. Our own positionalities and pedagogical dispositions meant that we all reflected our shared values in a variety of ways. We identified the problem that instructors emphasized different topics and skills across sections, which made it difficult to transition students from 109 to 110 with a different teacher. We also wanted to combat the narrative that this course is somehow remedial because it takes longer. Our initial objectives, discussed in Autumn 2018 included:

- To develop culturally sustaining pedagogies that respond to students' goals and needs.
- To clarify the relationship between 109 and 110 as well as the structure of each course across sections.
- To cohere with recent scholarship and best practices in composition studies on stretch models.
- To strengthen partnerships between administrators, instructors, advisers, and campus resources.
- To actively name and resist linguistic discrimination, racism, classism, and colonialism, among other biases and forms of oppression that manifest throughout a writing ecology.

In summary, we sought to clarify the course's goals, align them with students' learning goals, and lean into translingual, anticolonial, public-facing, multimodal, antiracist approaches. While this curriculum revision project initially seemed as straightforward as interviewing students and implementing best practices based on focus group data and composition scholarship, it quickly grew far more complicated as we dove into archival texts, spoke with more stakeholders, interrogated program documents and practices, and reflected on our own biases. As we learned,

you can't change a course without changing its surrounding ecology—teacher training, curricula, communications with advisers, administrative processes, and more.

In our revision project, we spoke with advisers from both OMA&D and SAAS about placement into the course. We learned from SAAS that advisers place students based in part on their success in the summer LEAP bridge program (a month-long transition course and orientation for student athletes during the summer prior to their first year at UW) and their standardized test scores. During LEAP, advisers and instructors observe student engagement in class and with instructors and then evaluate whether students would benefit from a smaller, community-oriented class like English 109/110. At our meeting with Educational Opportunity Program (EOP) advisers (part of OMA&D to which most 109/110 students belong), we learned that advisers were placing students with little student input based primarily on test scores. Part of the rationale of placement in the course was that English 131, the most commonly taken course, is often full when EOP students register. Previously, students were “strongly encouraged” to take 109/110 if their English SAT was below 490. It is worth noting that EOP advisers have much larger caseloads and less access to their students compared to SAAS advisers, which indicates a broader systemic dynamic at play.

Many students in the focus groups described the class as “slower” than 131.<sup>19</sup> We learned that many felt that the course was remedial based on placement conversations with advisers and misperceptions that other composition courses were more difficult.<sup>20</sup> Stretch writing models have historically been offered as alternatives to remedial basic writing courses for “Students who

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<sup>19</sup> Students in English 109/110 are advised by either Student Athlete Academic Services or the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity (OMA&D). Most 109/110 students are OMA&D students, but there are usually several athletes in each class.

<sup>20</sup> I heard similar, though less heavily remedial, rhetoric from students in my case study who took 109/110 after some revisions had been implemented.

would otherwise be placed into a traditional developmental [i.e., remedial] writing course” the option to enter the mainstream writing course “with more time and support” (Sullivan et al.). The association of remediation with stretch writing courses echoes even through courses like 109/110 that are not predicated on remediation. We learned that, like SAAS advisers, OMA&D advisers used SAT and ACT test scores as a primary placement method for 109/110 until 2019 (following conversations with EWP during the revision process) and largely perceived the course to be remedial. When our conversations with these campus stakeholders began around placement, how the course was perceived, and how it was described to students, we discovered that no one knew the origin of using test scores to place students. These placement practices were not a formal policy or codified practice, nor were they written up anywhere we could find. Some OMA&D advisers thought it was our policy in EWP, yet we were unaware of and resisted the practice. When it came to this and other 109/110 practices, almost no one in the room held the institutional history of when practices began, who created or was responsible for them, or exactly why they were created. This was an eye-opening realization for us and speaks to how institutions reproduce themselves ecologically through everyday mundane relationships and recursive processes.

Testing-based placement methods tend to advantage privileged white, middle class students and place students of color, especially Black and Latin American students, disproportionately in remedial courses despite equal ability to succeed in writing courses across demographic groups (Bernstein; Toth; TYCA). These methods often perpetuate what Asao Inoue refers to as a “white [middle class] racial habitus,” which values unspoken ways of being that uphold whiteness as a standard in the classroom and devalue the language practices and experiences of marginalized students. EWP administrators have advocated for agentive

placement measures, such as directed self-placement (DSP), which more effectively account for the reality of students' varied and valuable experiences beyond the quantitative, test-based parameters in the ACT and SAT that emphasize DAE and cultivate a sense of remediation in a course primarily serving low-income students of color (Royer & Gilles; TYCA; Sullivan et al.). Course placement methods illustrate one salient way in which access-oriented courses may implicitly segregate students.

Though this dissertation focuses primarily on the experiences of OMA&D students, who make up the vast majority of English 109/110 students, we gleaned insights from conversations with Student Athletics learning specialists (who also advise students in course placement) that apply more broadly to the fuller 109/110 ecology. We learned through our conversations with Student Athlete Academic Affairs (SAAS) that due to close ties with EWP, staff tended to understand the basis of the course, but these close ties also incited complications in communication between advisers and instructors. Some 109/110 instructors are also SAAS tutors and thus already have a working relationship with SAAS—in fact, so much so, that it can be hard to separate tutor roles from teacher roles. Commonly, 109/110 assistant directors have been SAAS tutors; 2020 was the first year when that has not been the case in five years. While SAAS learning specialists and tutors know the intention behind communication, other instructors sometimes view these interactions as surveillance. For example, when a student is in crisis, SAAS cannot report that but may email an instructor to check in on a student, a behavior that some instructors expressed felt crossed a line (such as concerns about a student falling asleep as linked to a possible concussion). We learned through meeting with SAAS that the intention of student support and cultivating community sometimes gets lost in translation, but the impact is, at times, a breakdown of communication between instructors and athletics advisers. Through

these conversations, we developed new protocols for communication and resource-sharing between EWP and SAAS to better align with the shifting goals in the writing ecology. For instance, Student Athletics sends a mid-quarter survey<sup>21</sup> to instructors asking how student athletes are doing, what their estimated GPA is, and whether they are in danger of failing (we see something similar with the OMA&D CAMP program). These reports are optional, but most instructors (including myself) believed that Student Athletics required these forms.

In addition to the Student Athletics report, English 109/110 instructors filled out a mid-quarter and end-of-quarter report on student progress and circulated it to students and advisors. However, we learned that OMA&D advisers did not use the mid-quarter and end quarter progress reports in their interactions with students. We wanted to find ways to navigate providing extra support without surveilling students. The mid-quarter report, like the placement practices described above, had no known origins among the stakeholders. We thought OMA&D needed it; OMA&D thought it was EWP's. It was only through archival research, conducted by Rai, Prihandita, and Ramsey, that we learned that the form (one that is circulated by EWP instructors separately from the Student Athletics form discussed above) originated in 1995 and was designed by EOP and EWP stakeholders with equity-oriented intentions to address systemic inequities that students face by connecting stakeholders across the writing ecology, but the form had barely been revised in the past thirty years and was not doing its intended work<sup>22</sup>. As Rai et al. say, "Many of us found the form troublesome because of the way it prompted us to record and circulate students' 'performance' to counselors and other program stakeholders." Though communicating with advisers could "activate a network of support for students who showed

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<sup>21</sup> To all instructors of student athletes, not only those teaching English 109/110.

<sup>22</sup> Read more about this history in Rai et al., forthcoming.

signs of distress,” it could also serve as a form of surveillance that historically privileged students do not face in other courses (Rai et al.) In 2019, program administrators replaced the mid-quarter report with a student-driven goal setting and meta-reflection exercise and new protocols for communication with advisers addressing concerns about both support and surveillance. These forms are one of many changes that center student goals and agentic practices.

In addition to shifting from teacher-initiated progress reports to student-authored reflections, EWP revised course descriptions to better reflect the theoretical underpinnings of the EWP’s ethos. The original description shared by English 109 and 110 read:

#### ENGL 109 and 110 Introductory Composition

Development of writing skills: sentence strategies and paragraph structures. Expository, critical, and persuasive essay techniques based on analysis of selected readings. For Educational Opportunity Program students only, upon recommendation by the Office of Minority Affairs.

The revised descriptions—written distinctly for each course to emphasize the value of the stretch model—went into effect in Fall 2021:

#### ENGL 109—Critical Composition I: Inquiry

This course understands writing as social action and language as tied to identity, culture, and power. Centering students’ diverse language resources, knowledges, and goals, this course builds rhetorical capacities and skills for composing ethically, critically, and impactfully across different contexts, audiences, and genres within and beyond the

university. This is the first course in a two-quarter sequence that fulfills the “C,” “DIV,” and “W” requirements.

### ENGL 110–Critical Composition II: Research

Students approach writing as social action and language as tied to identity, culture, and power. Centering diverse language resources and discourse traditions, the course builds rhetorical capacities for composing ethically, critically, and impactfully across different contexts, audiences, genres, and goals in the university and beyond.

While the original description of English 109 emphasized grammar, usage, and structure—skills positions as prerequisites for or tangential to other writing courses in the program—the revised descriptions do away with language that students, advisers, or instructors may interpret as remedial or preparatory for other composition courses. Instead, the new descriptions emphasize linguistic and cultural diversity and student-centered inquiry, and links between language, power, and ethical communication practices. English 109 moved toward discovery, investigation, inquiry, and students' own resources, interests, and investments. Students were to articulate a project at the end of 109 that they might continue through deeper research in 110. The course revisions had a soft launch in the fall of 2019 and went into full effect in the fall of 2020.<sup>23</sup> In efforts to further center agentive, student-centered practices, inquiry, and community-building, the EWP piloted writing and research clusters that students worked collaboratively in throughout the quarter. In 2022, the students presented their research at the first-ever English 110 research symposium, an event where they presented their quarter-long project to members of the UW community via Zoom and subsequently displayed their research posters at the library. To

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<sup>23</sup> The students in my case study took English 110 in Winter 2019 and thus experienced only some of the programmatic revisions.

incentivize students to take 109 and address the financial burden of taking classes that do not count toward general education or major requirements, the EWP has received permission to grant a “W” writing credit and a “DIV” diversity credit, both of which students need for graduation, for English 109. As a continuation of the visions imagined in 2018, the courses are shifting toward connecting students with campus resources and shifting toward civic engagement with audiences outside the university and as a model that is not only *not* remedial, but also doing more than would be possible in a one-quarter composition course. Through this stretch model, the EWP can more impactfully meet their equity-minded goals and exigencies around linguistic justice and culturally sustaining pedagogies than what is possible in a one-term course. In this way, part of our collective aim was to create a course sequence that could become a bellwether for driving change and set a higher standard for the rest of the 100-level composition curriculum. As discussed in Chapters 3-4, these initiatives speak to the goals and needs of students and instructors.

In Fall 2020, I was part of a group of English 109/110 administrators and instructors who read Sandra Grande and Asao Inoue’s anticolonial and antiracist work, reflected on our positionalities, and brainstormed ways to effect change in the writing program, starting with English 109/110. We talked about Grande’s anticolonial theories of “justice as refusal” in contrast with “justice as recognition” and taking up these ideologies. When navigating the landscape of DAE with the intention of challenging its status as the “best” or most “correct” mode of communication toward which students should strive, we must name and unveil “standard English” as a hegemonic, oppressive, and deliberately instituted force rather than an unquestioned norm (Grande). Taylor, one of the focal instructors in this study, suggested at this meeting that we might resist the framework of the university by resisting structures that have

historically marginalized FGEM and BIPOC students. In building a framework of resistance, instructors collectively agreed on the importance of naming and unveiling “standard English” or DAE in the composition classroom by, for example, teaching with translanguaging approaches and discussing citation politics with students. These changes are an application of the tenet of the EWP Statement on Antiracist Pedagogy and Program Praxis that encourages instructors to “integrate language justice work as part of writing courses in which we examine how systemic racism is often encoded in practices that uphold ‘academic language’ or ‘Standard English.’”

Subsequently, program administrators transformed the new teacher orientation “to emphasize culturally sustaining and antiracist pedagogies and explicitly reframed the courses as a space for [instructors] to think critically about the university and negotiate their place in it as historically marginalized students” (Rai et al.). The new training aligns with the tenets of the EWP Antiracist Praxis Statement (discussed in Chapter 4) to integrate “explicit discussions that question the university and how its Eurocentrism, racism, and coloniality structure teaching and learning” into the classroom while “encouraging the development of culturally sustaining and critical curricula” (Rai et al.). Beginning in 2021, new teachers of 109/110 discussed readings on antiracist, anticolonial, and culturally sustaining pedagogies and reflected on their critical pedagogies, teaching philosophies, and personal pedagogical commitments to equity while workshopping teaching artifacts (see Chapter 4 for examples) that put those commitments into action.

## **Conclusion**

Despite the substantial changes and accomplishments implemented, administrators and instructors inevitably faced barriers to the institutional change of an ecology. Some of the

barriers to change include the need to reproduce conversations and protocols through frequent staff turnover. ADs serve 2-years terms, and WPAs typically serve six-year terms. There is no overlap where both 109/110 ADs are on duty working as administrators during the same quarter. It is challenging to maintain the history of changes while keeping the momentum going. Further, while upper advising leadership in OMA&D is excited to see changes to the course, some advisers are still billing the course as remedial. EWP staff also encountered the problem that advisers do not place students primarily by test scores, advisers do not have alternate placement methods for 109/110, so the courses have become under-enrolled.<sup>24</sup> Further, the question of “why these students in this class” continues to resurface. One student in the focus groups raised the question of why a class of primarily Latin American, Black, and Asian students seems to be learning about race more than students in other composition courses. And while race is a common topic in composition courses, it is often even more of a focus in these courses. The course is supposed to address historical inequities, but how and who decides who faces the most inequities and how to rectify those with the little two writing courses can do to intervene in systemic oppression. EWP administrators intend for the changes to more deliberately and thoughtfully center equity in 109/110 to percolate throughout the 100-level courses through upcoming revisions. Changes to a writing ecology are necessarily incremental, and critical ecological methodologies call for an ongoing re-evaluating of pedagogies and praxes in response to the needs of students situated in an ever-changing writing program, university, and larger societal exigencies.

The institutional context discussed in this chapter establishes the work started by my colleagues and I in the Expository Writing Program to shift the writing ecology of 109/110 and

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<sup>24</sup> EWP staff have been working on language for advisers to help differentiate between the different “C” credit courses to guide student placement and course selection.

other courses toward a more equitable praxis that centers student knowledge and experiences. This shifting ecology captures conceptions of access that design courses with students in mind instead of bringing students into an environment in which they must change, adapt, or assimilate to gain access to the university. To build on the institutional context and ongoing labor of my colleagues, I designed and executed a case study to learn more about what access and equity mean to students, instructors, administrators, and staff across the university—a project through which I sought to better understand what students want and need in a classroom environment and how those ideas align with the views, work, and intentions of other stakeholders in the writing ecology. By examining the experiences of individual writers, I sought to learn about their embodied positionalities and lived experiences in order to better understand how ideologies and curricula, among other factors, influence students' perceptions, thoughts, and actions as they navigate a writing ecology that is embedded in larger systems of oppression as well as equity-minded efforts to resist those systems. In Chapter 3, I delve into interview and focus group data from students that demonstrates their language practices, insecurities, goals, dreams, and accomplishments in relation to their journey as writers in English 109/110 and beyond. Yet, the following chapters, taken alone without institutional context, would miss the ways in which larger systems of power, both locally and more broadly, impact curricula and student experiences in the writing classroom.

### **Chapter 3**

## **Making Space for Student Voices and Experiences: Confidence and Belonging in and beyond the Writing Classroom**

Belonging, agency and well-being are essential for promoting academic achievement and cultural continuity (Flint and Jagers 261).

[H]aving the small class size especially your freshman year just getting into college really helped me feeling confident and having a closer setting with other students and my teacher. I think having the same teacher for 109 and 110 is also a really big deal. [...] I think you just feel closer with your classmates, it's easier to talk to them even if you're not as scared to say different things out loud (Rachel, English 110 student).

In the above epigraph, Rachel, one of this study's participants, expresses that two of the cornerstones of English 109/110, the small class size and the opportunity to have the same teacher and some of the same classmates for two quarters, helped her feel more comfortable contributing to class discussions. Other students shared these sentiments alongside their appreciation of other pedagogical tenets of 109/110, such as commitments to linguistic justice and antiracist, anticolonial pedagogies, and culturally sustaining pedagogies. A sense of belonging and comfort at the university fostered by a familiarity with classmates was a refrain shared by many of the English 110 students I interviewed. Sharing parts of their identities with classmates helped them feel more comfortable than they do in other classes at UW where they might be one of only a few Latin American, Indigenous, and/or first-generation students. Rachel notes: "we talk a lot about diversity [in English 109/110]. And I think that just like plays a role because we've all dealt with similar experiences, and I think we all enjoy reading about it and talking about it and writing about it since it's something that we all have a feeling about." Students found community among peers in 109/110 who share parts of their identity as first-generation students from working class families, many of whom are people of color and children of immigrants. Students report gaining confidence, connections to resources, and a community

where they can share their ideas without fear of judgment. As Seeley Flint and Jagers argue in this chapter's epigraph, academic success depends not just on hard work and smart study practices, but also critically relies on a student's sense of belonging—of being legitimate members of the university community who are comfortable, welcome, and valued in academic and social environments on campus.

In this chapter, I focus on student voices and experiences as a touchstone in the English 109/110 writing ecology. Despite broader harmful contexts—policies, ideologies, teacher trainings—I spend this chapter focusing on students because all of those contexts live in them. I center students as a method for redefining access by understanding points of dis/juncture between what students feel they are gaining access to in relation to conceptions of access in the documents, policies, and ideologies that originate elsewhere in the writing ecology and impact student experiences. In other words, this case study is an ecological approach to understanding and situating student experiences in antiracist ways. Students' embodied experiences tell us about curricula; policies; documents; teacher trainings; and ideologies of remediation, access, and linguistic discrimination through students' narratives about their experiences in and beyond the writing classrooms. We can learn, for example, about the parts of teacher trainings that transformed the content, skills, and lessons by hearing what stood out to students—what changed how they think about themselves and their communities. We can learn, too, about how placement policies, or lack thereof, are taken up when we hear students' recollection of their conversations with advisers. Student interview and observation data do not, on their own, capture a full ecology. But they include linkages throughout that reveal the impact points, the coming-together of ideas, people, and choices through what we say matters most: guiding students through the activity of writing in ways we hope are ethical and equitable.

I juxtapose the ideas of confidence and belonging against the complicated notion of “belonging” as writers, students, and people in oppressive institutions of higher education. I investigate how competing definitions of access can play out in a writing ecology and how embodied student experiences and legacies of remediation can be addressed while fostering sites of resistance in institutions that reinforce the privilege of wealthy, white students while often marginalizing first-generation college students of color. I talk about students' impressions going into college that they were not prepared for academic writing and their apprehension about their writing skills, which are views that are often rooted in system linguistic injustices. Yet, I also talk about the pride that students cultivate throughout 109/110 as writers and as first-generation students. I talk about culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) that can guide students to excel and gain confidence as writers without sacrificing their cultural and linguistic backgrounds and lived experiences. As Alim and Paris state, culturally sustaining pedagogies, are “responding to the many ways that schools continue to function as part of the colonial project,” offering an alternative for resisting those ideologies and “sustaining the cultural ways of being of communities of color rather than eradicating them” (2). In this project, CSP can help members of a writing ecology resist assimilation-based approaches to access and equity by offering praxes that instead critique norms of whiteness and center students' lived experiences and array of literacies. In conversation with scholarship on critical pedagogies, I analyze qualitative data from student interviews to explore questions of how writing courses can reject oppressive raciolinguistic ideologies and replace them with additive, culturally sustaining pedagogies through which FGEM BIPOC students see a place for themselves as writers at the university.

All seven students I interviewed, except Rachel who is Indigenous, are Mexican American<sup>25</sup> and born to immigrant parents. Many stories emerged about what it means for participants to be FGEMs, Latin American, and children of immigrants. In particular, themes emerged related to students' confidence in themselves and a sense of belonging (or lack thereof) at the university and the role that their writing class played in ameliorating imposter syndrome. Students in this study experience the university and the writing classroom as Mexican American or Indigenous FGEM students, intersections that vary across individual experiences and are also distinct from racialized or socioeconomically marginalized experiences. White first-generation students and continuing-generation BIPOC students face overlapping challenges with FGEM BIPOC students, but the experiences of students in this study cannot be considered as a conglomeration of those two identities. Intersectional theories (pioneered by Kimberlé Crenshaw and taken up by many others) are particularly important to this study because each individual's experience is defined by their simultaneous experience of class and race (among other identities), two variables that are pivotal to this study of access and equity in higher education. Studying class and race separately elides the nuances of students' embodied, lived experiences. To be multiply marginalized, as Crenshaw (and many others subsequently) have written, is unique to the multiple identities of individuals. In this chapter, I often describe student participants as FGEM Latin American, Indigenous, or BIPOC students to emphasize their positionality as people navigating a predominantly white institution that marginalizes BIPOC students, first-generation students, the children of immigrants, multilingual students, and students from low-

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<sup>25</sup> While there is a large population of Latin American students in English 109/110, this group is overrepresented in my study. The racial demographics of English 109/110 are diverse, especially in relation to the university, with many Black and Asian students and some white and Indigenous students in addition to Latin American students. I did not choose students based on demographics. I invited all students in Dita and Taylor's classes to participate in the case study and included all seven students who volunteered.

income family backgrounds. Students' identities are not simply an equation or a summation of multiple marginalized identities; they are uniquely situated in their own composite positionalities. Other identities such as gender, disability, and sexual orientation inform students' positionalities but did not come up in conversation during this study and thus are not the foci of my discussions. However, all of these factors and more inform students' identities and ways of navigating the world. To sharpen my focus on equity for BIPOC FGEM students and answer questions on resistance to oppressive educational and societal forces in the writing classroom, I draw on critical race theory and anticolonial perspectives from writing studies, sociology, and education to unpack the internalized racism and individualism that can accompany the "American Dream" and the problematic narratives of DAE that inform the university's expectations of FGEM and BIPOC students to assimilate to a white, wealthy institution.

The vexed concept of "belonging" within a racist, classist university appears throughout my interview and observation data. Sandy Grande notes, referencing Robin D. G. Kelley's "Black Study, Black Struggle," that working toward "desires to belong—to *be of* the university" are misplaced (49). While initiatives to help students feel like they belong on campus are well-intentioned, they can, in practice, ask or require students to assimilate to what Inoue calls a white racial habitus. Instead of helping students feel like they can navigate the university and blend in with their peers, antiracist praxis works to transform institutions—starting with the writing classroom—to displace the systems to which students seek to belong and build structures that intentionally center historically marginalized students without assimilation. A writing course that enacts antiracist, culturally sustaining pedagogies would demonstrate that instructors and administrators value students' language practices, experiences, and identities and support them in moving through other university spaces confidently without sacrificing their identities—drawing,

perhaps, on what Grande calls “a *commit[ment] to collectivity*”—a rejection of individualist narratives—which could instead create new spaces that foster community rather than isolating students (61). An actively antiracist writing classroom must be designed intentionally to decenter privileged perspectives and create space for an expansive array of linguistic and cultural composition practices, exigencies, and genres. To disrupt structures of oppression, we must not only create spaces where all voices can be heard, but also reimagine what it means to design an antiracist, student-centered writing ecology and how silenced voices might instead productively disrupt what our classrooms and writing programs have looked like for decades. In this chapter, I look to student voices to learn about when and how they have felt heard and silenced in writing classrooms and at the university. While one writing class may not make a sizable dent in the deep-rooted systemic inequities in American higher education, it may be able to intervene in local institutional transformation to help students feel a sense of confidence that they belong and are valued in the writing classroom and more broadly in the university. Antiracist writing ecologies can send ripples through campus partnerships to transform a corner of the university to become more equitable. Cultivating student confidence in the writing classroom could help combat the racist ethos of higher education that communicates to BIPOC FGEM students that they are unprepared for or not worthy of university-level work or a scholarly community.

Through observations and interviews, I sought to learn about how this course is furthering antiracist goals of decentering Eurocentric texts and ways of being in the classroom while upholding tenets of linguistic justice and how it might become more effective in doing so. Chronologically, the interview data discussed in this chapter fall between the revision project launched during the 2018-19 academic year and the majority of the programmatic changes, which were implemented in the 2020-22 academic years. Some changes, such as initial

discussions and meetings with advisers on placement methods had taken place prior to my data collection in response to focus groups with students and instructors facilitated by administrators (including me). Other changes, such as revisions of five-week report to focus on self-reflection and goal setting, the addition of the “W” (writing) and DIV (diversity) credits for English 109, and the finalization of a new course description, and revisions to the instructor orientation to center culturally sustainable, anticolonial, antiracist writing pedagogies, were not implemented until after these case study data were gathered. I analyze student interview data to learn about students’ shared experiences and backgrounds and how this course sequence does or could engage their identities, goals, lived experiences, language resources, and values to transform spaces to foreground community and belonging for students whose identities are often erased or marginalized by the broader structure of the university. Building on the institutional framework and context of the stretch courses and writing program in Chapter 2, in this chapter, I zoom in on the experiences of several students who were enrolled in the second course in the stretch writing sequence (English 110) and contextualize their experiences within the context of the course and its goals (discussed further in Chapter 2), including foregrounding students’ goals and needs, establishing and strengthening support networks across campus units, and actively naming and resisting biases and forms of oppression that manifest throughout a writing ecology. In this chapter, I draw on student narratives, focusing on themes of confidence, self-advocacy, and belonging in the writing classroom and beyond while contributing to conversations that question oppressive classist and racist environments in the university and disrupt remedial rhetorics. Those environments and their underlying ideologies are daunting: as Schreiber et al. say:

Despite [linguistic justice-oriented] theory-building, writing classrooms and other

campus spaces are still dominated by a deficit and racist perspective toward language-minoritized students [...that] echo a legacy of policies and beliefs which instantiate universities as white, monolingual spaces (Wan, forthcoming), even as universities claim to desire and value linguistic and cultural diversity (Tardy, 2015) (Schreiber et al. 1).

Universities reflect the broader cultural context and are thus inseparable from and contribute to the reproduction of sociolinguistic and racial injustices. While these ideologies cannot be fully rectified, even in the context of one writing program, members of a writing ecology can explicate and challenge those ideologies and begin to build sites of resistance. In conversation with big-picture visions of cultivating pockets of resistance, I discuss moments when students express their sense of writing (un)preparedness coming into 109/110 and how that changed during 109/110.

The purpose of analyzing these data is to learn from students how the course is or is not aligning with its intended goals, such as those put forth in the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis, including intentions to

center different forms of intersecting marginalizations as well as the power relations among race, class, gender, and other social, political, and cultural identities and experiences that may manifest in texts that we read and write, in students' and teachers' experiences, and in classrooms as well as broader social dynamics.

In addition to program-wide goals voiced in the above excerpt that aim to challenge oppressive dominant cultural narratives and ideologies through antiracist praxis, I focus on goals and initiatives specific to the English 109/110 stretch course, such as commitments to “*actively* enact culturally sustaining pedagogy” on the basis that “If our writing program was not actively resisting the assimilative dynamics that come with accessing the university then the course

[English 109/110] may unwittingly sustain the white Eurocentric norm of the university” (Rai et al.). On the whole, the drivers of the shifting ecology of English 109/110 have sought to center students’ identities and experiences while naming and resisting harmful dominant cultural narratives. In practice, these intentions and approaches impact, as I learned from conversations with participants, students’ confidence in their language practices, sense of community and belonging as writers and members of the university community, and increasingly expansive conceptions of what writing and writers can look and sound like. At the core of this work, I ask what it would mean for a writing ecology to support FGEM BIPOC students’ whole selves as they develop tools for self-expression and advocacy.

In relation to my larger research questions about re-conceptualizing writing courses and the definition of access to challenge structures of power and center the needs of FGEMs and BIPOC students, this chapter explains how students self-identify multiple forms of capital (beyond what the university values) and how they draw on those resources to gain confidence in themselves as writers and students and navigate the university with skills they practice in English 109/110. I argue that English 109/110 fosters an affirming and culturally sustaining enclave for many FGEM students of color within the context of an inequitable, oppressive institution that, reflecting larger cultural politics, systemically excludes some groups while further privileging the already privileged. Still, the course can lean further into culturally sustaining, additive, antiracist pedagogies. Students report gaining confidence through the environment of 109/110 while participating in class discussions and in practicing and reflecting on their skills as writers, but this does not remedy the fact that many students and some advisers perceive the course as easier than other composition courses offered at the university. How can students’ desire for a transitional course that builds confidence and “gives a lot of help to help you figure out how to

go along,” as one participant, Elena, says, be reconciled with the reality that students perceive the course as easier, echoing rhetorics of remediation? What kind of support do students want? To what extent are internalized prejudices about race, class, and/or language at play in students’ choice to enroll in a class that they perceive to be easier than their other options? How can we resist remediation while supporting students’ learning goals to build their confidence? Administrators and instructors grappled with these questions in the course revision process, imagining how to not only better support students, but also how to do more than is possible in one-quarter courses.<sup>26</sup>

As discussed in the previous chapter, the course revisions attached additional accreditations to English 109 and deepened a commitment to inquiry in 110, adding a public research conference for students to present the culmination of two terms of academic research. Changes in the course description and teacher training further strengthened goals of engaging students’ linguistic capacities and life experiences, building confidence, and helping students navigate campus while resisting the white racial habitus of the university. I talk about how these themes manifest and how administrative changes to this course sequence can address these issues to combat perceptions of remediation while supporting students’ learning goals as they transition to college as first-generation students. Tensions around access explored in this chapter get at understanding students’ conception of and desires around access in the writing classroom. Multiple students shared that they were seeking a transitional class that “helps you figure out things” and a “pretty easy introduction” that is less intimidating than “immediately jumping into” the (in reality, equally rigorous) mainstream course. These desires for skill-building and transitional support can reinforce remedial ideologies, especially considering the often-hostile

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<sup>26</sup> Equity-oriented changes to English 109/110 have informed transformations of the one-term courses as well.

environment universities and the demographics of the course (FGEM, students of color, and children of immigrants), which overlap with populations historically funneled into remedial courses and most impacted by linguistic injustice and systemic racism, classism, and colonialism. How might the English department continue to offer courses like these to historically marginalized students who are not confident in their writing skills while at the same time affirming that these students are not deficient, unqualified, or imposters?

From here, I offer a discussion of remediation, a theme entrenched in racism and classism that percolates from systemic structures of linguistic hegemony into students' personal, internalized ideologies about their language practices and preparedness as FGEMs. Four student vignettes give perspectives on how students felt othered for their language practices before college and how 109/110 helped them value their lived experiences and language practices as part of scholarly discourse. The third section contrasts deficit-based and culturally sustaining asset-based pedagogies and how those approaches can affect FGEM students and children of immigrants. Students share deficit-based attitudes toward themselves as students in relation to their competency, feelings of not belonging and being isolated, and pressure to assimilate to a university that is centered on white and wealthy student populations. They also share stories of pride in their persistence as FGEM students—complicated stories that reproduce themes of rugged individualism while simultaneously celebrating students' success and identities and the sense of belonging they find in 109/110 and other identity-focused spaces on campus. The student voices in this chapter lead into Chapter 4, which connects these anecdotes with programmatic goals and teaching artifacts.

## Notions of Remediation

At first, I liked the idea of...109/110 being 131 [the mainstream composition course] that is slowed down so that people have more time to absorb the materials but then that is I've been hearing people say that's problematic because it assumes that the people who are in 109/110 are not able to get the materials at the same pace as 131 normal students. But then yeah, I think the stretch course will also allow us to learn more—not like, slower, but just more (Dita, English 109/110 instructor).

I didn't think I was that great at English, and [my adviser] said this was a slower- paced class, so I decided to take it over the 131 [course] (Marco, English 110 student).

In this section, I draw on data from student focus groups and interviews to unpack themes of remediation in their self-reported perceptions of English 109/110, confidence as writers and students, and experiences navigating the university. Some students expressed a belief that, as FGEMs, they “might need extra help or a different course to take” to catch up to the literacy skills of their continuing-generation peers (Marco). These perceptions are significant because historically, FGEM, BIPOC students are disproportionately placed in remedial courses. The demographic makeup of English 109/110 (primarily students of color from low-income family backgrounds) aligning with the demographics of students who historically have been placed in remedial classes, compounds and reinforces students' beliefs in the course as remedial. As Jane Stanley says, “the university's ability to label a group of students ‘remedial’ is a powerful rhetorical tool” that can affect students' confidence in themselves as writers (6). While students may not know the history of racialized factors in course placement, they still have likely experienced racialized interactions in their school lives that reinforce these connections and feelings of imposter syndrome influenced by “the unrelenting imposition of a monolingual set of expectations in every writing classroom” in their K-12 education (Guerra, “An Embodied History” 32).

Stratification in courses that are perceived to be remedial can, as Kelly Ritter writes, “further delineate the college experience as only for certain types of students, relegating those on the margins to specialized curricula marking them as deficient” (18). Though the UW writing program does not intend to relegate marginalized students to remedial courses, students and advisers at times perceive otherwise. English 109/110 administrators and instructors seek to foster a classroom space where students feel that they belong and that their lived experiences and linguistic resources are welcome and valued as they work toward personal goals as writers. WPAs’ and instructors’ vision for 109/110 is not remediation, but rather a course sequence that centers students’ life experiences, personal goals, and linguistic resources; connects FGEM students with campus resources (including the advising and events offered exclusively to OMA&D and the tutoring offered to athletes) such as study centers, clubs and organizations, advising, scholarship offices, and mental health support; and gives students the opportunity to build community and dive into deeper inquiry across two quarters.

However, WPAs<sup>27</sup> discovered through the 2019 pilot study in the writing program that many students associated 109/110 with remediation even as they also saw it as a space for inclusion and belonging. These findings informed subsequent revisions to the courses (discussed in Chapter 2), including the revision of the five-week report, the addition of the “DIV” and “W” credits, and changes to the new instructor orientation that emphasize antiracist and anticolonial pedagogies. Internalized linguistic discrimination combined with vestiges of 109/110’s complex<sup>28</sup> and, in part, remedial origins—through adviser messaging and course descriptions—

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<sup>27</sup> Taiko Aoki-Marcial, Matthew Hitchman, Jake Huebsch, Nanya Jhingran, Patrick McGowan, Anselma Prihandita, Candice Rai, Nolie Ramsey, and I worked on various stages of the pilot study, archival research, and programmatic revisions. I extend my gratitude to my colleagues and their labor.

<sup>28</sup> My colleagues learned through archival research that 109/110 originated in part from protests in 1968 led by Black students and faculty demanding more institutional support. However, the course was taken

can reinforce students' impression that they need a remedial course and that 109/110 will prepare them for academic research writing that they could otherwise not produce at the same level of their peers. The sense of remediation that some students internalize can reproduce harmful structures of racial oppression. My colleagues and I heard from students in focus groups that they perceived the course as "slow" and easier than other composition courses offered at UW. When I interviewed students for my case study, they did not directly say that the course was easier than others—perhaps a change driven in part by changes in placement methods and instructor training—but used softened language such as "starter class" or "transition class" and the perception some students had that the course was a prerequisite for other equivalent 100-level composition courses, which it is not, indicated that some students still harbored a sense of remediation. Many students in my study said that they believe that 109/110 is remedial and conflate "more time" with a "slow start" (Antonio, a case study participant in Dita's class). The difference between stretch courses that expand composition into multiple terms and courses that remediate students is complex and, in some ways, unique to the University of Washington. As discussed in Chapter 1, many, if not most, stretch models at American colleges and universities are remedial courses for students deemed unprepared for mainstream composition courses. For example, Arizona State's stretch writing model, which is widely cited as one of the first models of its type (though other models, including UW's preceded it), was noted in 2007 by Gregory Glau to be for "a subset of students [who] could use more directed writing experience, so they would not only write more but also receive more feedback and revision suggestions along the way" (31). The goals of additional feedback and suggestions are in line with the goals of English

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up by administrators and instructors at various points in history as a remedial course serving "unprepared" students of color. Historically, there has always been a contingent of writing stakeholders in EWP, including Victor Villanueva, Juan Guerra, and others, who have actively resisted these perceptions.

109/110, but the placement methods (directed self-placement<sup>29</sup> rather than test-based placement) differ.

Part of the muddiness of English 109/110 is due to its evolution from remedial roots. English 109/110 began as a remedial course (English 104/105) in 1968. During the archival research my colleagues did in 2018, they discovered an archival letter written in 1985 from Victor Villanueva, Mary Louise Buley-Meissner, and Virginia Chappell to Charles Schuster, a university administrator, discussing the purpose of 104/105, which they said was to “provide less experienced student writers with intensive academic writing practice in a coherent, ethnically sensitive curriculum” for “minority students” that is focused more on “academic” writing as opposed to the expressive writing emphasized in the mainstream course. Yet, they emphasize in their letter that these courses are not remedial and are “structured to meet or surpass the standards of so-called regular classes.” They do not explain why minority students in particular need to focus more on academic writing as opposed to expressive genres. Some of notions of remediation creep into teachers’ and administrators’ rhetoric around the course: Dita recalls that a new instructor was “asking if 109/110 is a remedial course because [...] sometimes it’s talked about that way: ‘109/110 is like 131 slowed down.’” She notes that in her orientation in 2019, assistant directors running the training used language like “slower” in comparing the course to other composition classes at the university. While instructors and administrators are working to shift language around that course, “it slips sometimes still,” says Dita.

Students also seem to both resist and reproduce rhetorics of remediation when describing this course. For example, one student, Elena, said that English 109/110 is “I don’t want to say an easy class, but it’s like a starting class in a way.” Students share that they appreciate what they

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<sup>29</sup> See Chapter 1.

call a “slower transition” but also that they would not be prepared for one-quarter courses, which they see as more rigorous because their advisers described 109/110 as “slower” or “an easier start into college,” with “smaller assignments,” or for students who “might need extra help.” Writing program staff were surprised to hear echoes of these narratives in conversations with advisers— the concept of remediation, slowness, or ease runs counter to the writing program’s intended purpose and outcomes for the course, which center students’ lived experiences and aims to cultivate self-advocacy that enables students to draw upon their linguistic resources as assets rather than deficits. After EWP staff met with advisers in 2018 to clarify the purpose of the course as a community oriented, critically informed class rather than a remedial one, advisers shifted the emphasis away from test scores as a placement measure, but some continued to use coded language, as Dita notes in this section’s epigraph, to place students based on perceived skill. Language such as “slow” and “easy” that students used to define the course in interviews can imply that 109/110 is meant for students who are deficient in writing and reading. Other students described the class as a transition point “for EOP students to ease their way into college” and “the work ethic at the university,” which encapsulates the legitimate concerns of first-generation students in knowing what to expect at college but also conflates unpreparedness to handle college-level work with FGEM status. While some of these feelings of inferiority and imposter developed before students entered college, the placement conversations between students and advisers may have also played a part in students’ self-conceptions as unprepared.

## Student Voices

In a self-perpetuating cycle, the reification of “standard” English and a Linguistic Justice on Campus homogenous group of speakers (white, middle-class, male) as the idealized form and speaker of communication has been used as a way to determine what our students need to succeed in educational settings (Baker-Bell, 2020; Davila, 2016; Inoue, 2015) (Schreiber et al. 4-5).

Even after meetings with advisers shifted the needle on placement away from remediation, remnants of sentence-level evaluation and language discrimination crept up in my dissertation interview data a year later through mentions of “academic English.” Students expressed being under-confident in their writing whether from imposter syndrome or previous teachers. Several students expressed that they enrolled in 109/110 because they believed it is easier than other 100-level English courses at UW, such as English 131, the most common composition class offered. Steven, for example, said that he didn't “want to go directly into [English] 131” and wanted to “transition into it, learning how to write academically, learning how to write with a more formal tone.” He seems to believe that 131 is a more difficult class involving formal, academic writing, which he positions as more difficult than other modes of writing. He implies that 109/110 is a class that leads into 131, but in reality, students cannot get a second composition credit for 131 after completing 110; the course sequence counts for equivalent credits (in fact, as of fall 2021, students also fulfill diversity and writing credits for 109, which they do not fulfill from 131). Another student, Marco, described 109/110 as “a slower version of 131” and said that his friends taking 131 had more long papers due more frequently, expressing a belief that 131 is a more advanced course that sequentially follows 109/110. Scaffolded, small assignments are used throughout the writing program beyond 109/110, but students largely believed that the most common composition course, English 131, required much more and longer papers with a faster turnaround. English 109 does tend to have

lower page requirements for papers than English 131 (e.g., 4-6 pages rather than 5-7 pages for a major assignment), but the pace of the course tends to be similar, and page requirements in English 110 tend to match other 100-level composition courses.

Apart from potentially reaffirming students' low confidence in their writing abilities, statements about the relative ease of 109/110 compared to other composition courses belie more sinister implications about racism and classism: a class populated primarily by BIPOC students who are first-generation college students from low-income family backgrounds is perceived by some students and advisers to be a course that focuses on grammar and low-order concerns rather than higher-level, purportedly more sophisticated, "academic" writing that they believe to be the focus of the other 100-level composition courses. The implication that 109/110 focuses on sentence-level concerns while 131 requires prerequisite knowledge of "academic" English, which are largely unfounded in how the courses are conceived of and taught, echoes notions of racialized remediation rooted in a history of language discrimination against students of color that often focuses on DAE. As Flores and Rosa note, it is often impossible for students of color (particularly multilingual and immigrant students) to "pass" as DAE speakers because they are judged based on their raciolinguistic identities rather than their actual language practices and measured against what Audre Lorde calls the "mythical norm" of the white, cisgender, heterosexual, abled, wealthy, male individual. In response to oppressive linguistic discourses, instructors like Dita call for educators to "ensure that students are not learning dominant discourses from a place of shame"—a sentiment echoed by many composition theorists including Vershawn Ashanti Young, Asao Inoue, and Aja Martinez, among many others.

Prior to course revisions, students participating in a 2018 writing program focus group cited their SAT scores, ESL background, or a general need to "strengthen English" as reasons

why their advisers recommended English 109/110. The course sequence, like all of the 100-level “C” credit courses, emphasizes grammar as rhetorically situated rather than teaching prescribed mechanics. However, multiple focus group participants cited grammar instruction such as “punctuation lessons” as one of the most valuable skills they learned in 109/110. As discussed in the student vignettes that follow, participants in my case study expressed views that, while perhaps more muted than those shared in the focus groups, echoed DAE-centric ideologies and ideas about what “formal” and “academic” English should look like. All of the students in this case study speak English fluently, and most of them speak it as their first language, but their perceived and/or actual raciolinguistic identities as FGEM, BIPOC, and multilingual students impact how their writing is taken up at the university and beyond. While focal students did not explicate their linguistic background as a factor that influenced their confidence as writers, they noted that they felt unprepared for “academic” and “research” writing as well as formal writing conventions of DAE. As the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis states above, the language practices and experiences “of minoritized and historically underrepresented peoples,” such as Latin American FGEM students, are “delegitimized and often penalized” both implicitly and explicitly through English-only policies, DAE standards in educational systems, and racist biases, which may be internalized by students, instructors, and others in the ecology. While students do not name raciolinguistic discrimination in their interviews, the aforementioned structures of oppression have more likely than not impacted their identities as writers and their confidence in their composition skills, especially those that are often part of gatekeeping structures—namely, academic research and sentence-level “errors.” Translingual and antiracist approaches are central to the philosophy of English 109/110, and EWP more broadly (as discussed in Chapters 2 and 4), but even if instructors were to perfectly

cultivate an inclusive classroom environment, students harbor and internalize discriminatory perceptions from outside the classroom that impact their confidence as learners in the writing classroom.

Multiple students talked about feeling as though they were bad writers until their teacher told them they were not. Students talked about coming into the course with low confidence in their writing and gaining confidence through feedback and conversations with instructors. Discussions with teachers, especially those who share identities such as being FGEMs (Taylor)<sup>30</sup> or multilingual BIPOC (Dita) resonated with students who talked about teachers as approachable mentors in addition to instructors. Praise and encouragement from instructors made a significant difference in how students perceive their writing: “[Dita] helped me understand that my writing isn’t as bad as I thought it was, which made me feel better about my writing,” said Antonio. Other students similarly noted that teacher feedback, especially in conferences, helped them feel more confident as writers. A student in Taylor’s class, Elena, says that she was “wary about writing” in high school but that the extra quarter has helped her “[get] the hang of it” and “feel a lot better” about her writing in English 110. Students’ sense that their linguistic resources and experiences matter leads to a greater sense of comfort and, in turn, increased participation in the classroom. Elena reports that “109 helped me get that courage to start coming out of my comfort zone” when speaking with peers in both the writing classroom and in her other courses. Several other students reported similar shifts in confidence regarding sharing their opinions in class due to feeling comfortable around their peers. Andrea said that because the class is “small,” it’s

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<sup>30</sup> Taylor talks about their FGEM background and their family connections to the course readings and theme of prison abolition that they chose for their course, saying: “people have to choose between prison and killing people in the military. It’s a choice people in my family have had to make.” They also talk individually with students like Gabriel during office hours about the difficulties of being a commuter student and balancing a job with schoolwork.

“really easy to get to know each other” and participate in discussion as opposed to large lecture halls where students, especially first-generation students who are experiencing imposter syndrome (as almost all of my participants reported), might feel anxious about making their voices heard. Rachel, whose quotation on class size and comfort opened this chapter, expresses that she and her classmates have opened up in class discussions over the last two quarters, describing the shift as one from fear to excitement that extends beyond English 109/110: “Now that I’ve taken this class, I feel more comfortable talking in my classes that are like hundreds of people. So, I think that our group discussions help everyone feel comfortable with talking about the readings.” While not all students transferred their confidence from 109/110 to other campus settings, most expressed that the course was a small haven within a community that is not always welcoming.

In the stories that follow, I recount the experiences of three of Dita’s students, Andrea, Marco, and Steven and one of Taylor’s students, Elena, with a particular focus on themes of imposter syndrome and linguistic discrimination, which came up in conversations with each of these focal students, who internalized feelings that their writing was not appropriate for “formal” and “academic” genres before taking English 109/110. While students expressed perceptions that academic writing does not include space for their voices, their views shifted throughout English 109/110 to beliefs that there is a place for their voices in academic genres and, beyond that, deconstructing and expanding ideas about what so-called “academic” genres can look and sound like. Curricular shifts that model translingual, multimodal, and genre-bending texts helped students find entry points into writing as they grew comfortable sharing their voices. Changes to English 109/110 such as revisions to programmatic texts (e.g., the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis) and teacher training (e.g., reading about and discussing

antiracist and anticolonial pedagogies and reflecting on teacher positionalities) established a foundation for instructors to enact culturally sustaining, antiracist, and anticolonial pedagogies that center student knowledge and voices through assignments that emphasize community-based research, reflection, and positionality.

### **Andrea: Becoming a “Scholarly Writer”**

Andrea is a first-year student who hopes to study a STEM field and pursue a career in research. Her academic goals align not only with her interests, but also with her ability to pay for college; one of her scholarships is dependent on her studying in a STEM field. She initially wanted to study medicine and became involved in Chicanos/Latinx for Community Medicine, but now she has decided that she wants to study a different science field (possibly biology) instead. Across her work in different classes including English 110, Andrea expresses a passion for changing “how minorities are represented in [research],” including the STEM fields she is interested in. She plans to attend graduate school after completing her degree. She has always planned to attend college, motivated in part by her three older siblings, who dropped out of high school and encouraged Andrea to continue her schooling. Watching their path, she said, “I’m not gonna make the same mistake you did, so that’s when it became personal for me, like, oh, I’m doing this for me, not for my parents anymore.” She participated in several pre-college programs to achieve her goal of attending college. In high school, Andrea was in an IB program that required rigorous research assignments in multiple disciplines. She completed an Upward Bound<sup>31</sup> program at UW for two summers and took courses, including English, with UW professors. Additionally, she participated in TRIO and College Access Now (CAN). She reports

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<sup>31</sup> Upward Bound is a federally funded college preparation program for FGEM students. The program’s goal is to increase college enrollment and completion for historically marginalized students.

that at college, “everything I’m seeing, I already expected.” Despite all this preparation, Andrea almost didn’t apply to UW Seattle: “I just didn’t think I was gonna get accepted, so I was like, [...] why did I waste my time.” Her CAN mentor encouraged her to apply with two hours remaining until the application deadline. Despite her determination and preparation, Andrea did not see a place for herself at UW Seattle until she was accepted. That imposter syndrome is reflected in her views of her writing.

Andrea told me that she doesn’t like her writing because “I had this mindset about how the vocabulary I should use should be academically higher” but juxtaposes “academic” writing with her authentic voice, recounting: “last time I wrote an essay [...] with big words, and when I tried to read it back, I was like, ‘I don’t even know what I wrote’ ‘cause I didn’t understand.” When she was meeting with her adviser to register for her fall writing course, Andrea mentioned that she “wanted to maybe pursue a career in research” and “needed help with writing, and [the adviser] recommended this class [109/110].” Andrea’s assertion that she needs “help” with research despite succeeding in high school coursework and being involved in numerous college preparation programs reflects language ideologies that keep Mexican American FGEM students like Andrea along with other students from marginalized backgrounds out of academic research despite equal skills and qualifications compared to white, affluent, and/or continuing-generation peers. The ideologies that Andrea echoes link the remediation of academic and research writing skills with 109/110 in opposition to English 131 students, who are deemed (by this logic) prepared to write research papers and enter scholarly communities.

During a class discussion on the characteristics of an essay, Andrea shared that her high school “teacher made us use formal vocabulary.” Her instructor, Dita, paraphrases this sentiment as a requirement to use “big words, academic jargon”—concepts that often gatekeep students

who don't see themselves represented in academic writing. In contrast with her high school experience, Andrea shares that English 110 "encourages you to put in your personal examples" in research essays. Dita affirms Andrea's statement: "it's good that you feel there are many ways to express yourself through essays. [...] It's okay to have your own voice in writing even though it's not 'very academic.'" Though Andrea says she still doesn't like her writing all the time, she now says, "I think I guess my writing is good. Not that bad." While her statement might not sound like a strong vote of confidence, it marks a major shift from her feelings of unpreparedness for research writing. Now she has found a place in that genre where she can integrate her personal experiences and create work that she assesses as "not bad." This class has helped students like Andrea reframe what academic research writing can look like and how their experiences and voice have a place in that genre.

### **Marco: Finding a Voice**

Unlike Andrea, Marco came into college feeling "like [he] didn't know what to expect." Though his cousin, who is a senior at UW, and his best friend, who also attends UW, have helped him acclimate to campus, he reports feeling lonely and struggling to find community. His path to college was less linear than Andrea's. He says:

If you probably saw me freshman year [of high school], you're like, man, this kid's not goin' nowhere. [...] I was really bad, like I was a really bad student, like, getting kicked out of class every day, you know, and getting detention and stuff, so I was a pretty bad student, but I kind of matured in the way that I had friends who also had the same dream as me.

He reports that throughout school, he was placed in advanced courses but got in trouble for what he calls "obnoxious" behavior. Later in high school, Marco became involved in the College

Success Foundation and saw his older peers graduate and enroll in college. His mentors and teachers “were very involved in [his] life” as they supported him throughout the college and scholarship application process. He applied to schools throughout the state but, like Andrea, did not think he would be accepted to UW Seattle. He speaks of his pride in being a first-generation student: “I think it’s incredible to go against the odds and finally doing something for yourself and something bigger like your family. And that’s what it means to be a first- gen student.” But despite his pride in his accomplishments, Marco did not initially see a place for himself at UW and thought of academic writing as something that he could not authentically participate in. Many students, like Marco, who are not part of the aforementioned white, middle class identity have been made to feel—both implicitly and explicitly—throughout their educational careers that their voices do not belong in the writing classroom.

Marco came into college with the idea that academic writing is a uniform, standardized genre in which he didn’t always see a place for his voice. He contrasted the way that high school writing “focuses on one format” and “the idea that writing should be the one way that everyone else writes” but that he learned in Dita’s class “that there’s a lot of other ways” to write that are equally valid. Marco recalls reflecting before his first writing conference<sup>32</sup> with Dita that he wasn’t “a good writer,” causing him to “understand that my writing isn’t as bad as I thought it was.” After gaining confidence from conferences and written instructor feedback, Marco reports that he is “comfortable” with his writing but concedes that “there are things I really need to improve on.” This sentiment reflects the impact that 109/110 has had for many students: a vast transformation in their confidence in their writing skills and place in academic communities but

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<sup>32</sup> Students meet one-on-one with instructors twice per quarter in each 100-level writing class (not just 109/110) to check in about their progress, questions, and goals.

still room for them to be further supported in self-advocacy and finding their voices within the broader institutional context.

### **Steven: Navigating “Formal Writing”**

Steven first completed a two-course composition sequence at another state school through Running Start, Washington state’s dual enrollment program for high school students. The credits from Steven’s courses, “Academic Writing I: Critical Reading and Responding” and “Academic Writing II: Reasoning and Research on Social Justice” did not count for equivalent composition credits at UW despite many overlapping learning outcomes. Steven says that some skills in English 109/110, like writing research papers, were familiar to him while others, like writing a literature review, were new. Despite Steven’s former college work, UW has been “harder than I expected.” Because he already had college experience, he “didn’t study a lot” in his first quarter because he “expected it to be at the same level.” Initially, Steven had planned to continue college at the same institution where he was enrolled in Running Start (he called this “the easy route”), but his professors there encouraged him to apply to UW since it had been “pretty easy” for him to maintain a 4.0 during Running Start. Now, at UW, he hopes to get into the business school to study finance, and the application includes a writing section that emphasizes formal writing conventions based on DAE—in his words, applicants “have to keep it structured and make it flow well,” but he notes that compared to English 109/110, readers of the business school application “expect more” and “require more advanced” writing including spelling and grammar conventions. In preparation for the major, Steven is involved in a professional development club for aspiring and current business students and attended a workshop series for OMA&D students preparing to apply to the business school.

Formality and academic writing were a recurring theme for Steven, who was told by his Running Start instructors that he needed to work on “academic English,” a term that he defined as “writ[ing] in a better formal tone” and “not sounding like you’re talking like someone in a regular conversation.” He strives to limit repetition and write out words instead of using contractions. Yet, he also says, “I don’t really know what formal is or academic is,” indicating that perhaps these ideas are not his own but instead vague notions adopted from previous mentors and teachers and perhaps societal norms about DAE. Dita, his instructor, asked students to bring an old essay to class in order to deconstruct the genre of the five-paragraph essay, which many students learned in high school, and invite linguistic and genre practices beyond what students may have been taught previously. Steven observed:

I looked at one of my old essays from a year ago [from Running Start], and I looked at the feedback, and it said, “good work.” I liked it, but it still needed an academic tone.

Something like that, I don’t know. And I read through it, and I’m like, I used evidence, I used sources, I cited. I just didn’t know what was missing.

Steven’s sentiments echo Andrea’s statements about academic vocabulary as well as broader raciolinguistic rhetorics of DAE—both students define it as something that they are not doing but can’t quite identify what formal academic writing should look like.

During a class discussion in week two about stakes, Steven expressed that a stake for him in his writing is “to be correct, communicate the truth.” Dita challenged the idea of objective truth and correctness: “Do you think absolute truth is possible in research? Is it possible to get a truth that is not biased?” She continues: “If you want to get at the truth, you have to get at it from different perspectives”—a challenge to the notion that so-called formal English is the best or only way to write in an academic context. Challenges to DAE and prescriptive genre

conventions, especially in academic research, were ideological threads that permeated throughout Dita's English 109/110 curriculum. By unlearning prescriptive language ideologies and conventions, Steven, who entered the course with a focus on learning "formal" writing conventions, realized "that sometimes, academic writing doesn't need all that formality. It doesn't need all that stuff, but it still needs some of it. Still needs the proper—maybe—okay, proper, like, sentence structure, grammar." While his perception of academic writing may not have shifted as dramatically as Marco's or Andrea's, Steven learned to decenter prescriptive DAE as the only way to write "academically."

### **Elena: "Our Little Community"**

Elena, a first-year student in Taylor's section of English 110, speaks often of her family when talking about her education. Her home is three hours away in Central Washington, but she calls her two-year-old sister every night to say good night and tries to visit once a month. She says that her sister has inspired her to want to work in child psychology or early childhood education. It was her mom who convinced her to apply to college when she was uncertain about whether going into college with an undecided major would be worth the financial burden. Elena immigrated to the US from Mexico as a young child, and, as with many of my dissertation participants, her parents emphasized the importance of education and shared that a major reason for their immigration was "so me and my brother could have a better life." At UW, she has found small communities within the large institution through the Ethnic Cultural Center, Educational Opportunity Program (EOP), and Leadership without Borders:<sup>33</sup>

Being in such a big institution, you can feel like "maybe I'm alone and nobody else is

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<sup>33</sup> Leadership Without Borders (LWB), according to their website, is a program that "works to serve and empower undocumented students."

like this,” but with the Leadership without Borders and the EOP program as well, I have found other people who may be in the same situation as me, so it’s like our little community, so we support each other.

Elena has found support among others who share her cultural, racial, and FGEM identities at UW. Still, she expresses that she felt out of her depth starting college as a first-generation student.

When recounting her first conversation with her academic adviser, Elena conflates her status as a first-generation college student with a need for remediation:

He was like, hey, since you’re barely starting, and you’re a first-gen, then maybe you should try this one [109/110] out [...] ‘cause since I’m a first-gen, I don’t know anything. I don’t have anybody that I can, like, ask how, how does this class go, so this is like a really, I don’t want to say easy class, but it’s like a starting class in a way.

Elena associates her first-generation status with a lack of knowledge and an inability to navigate college and indicates that a “starting class” like 109/110 could help her adjust to college academics. In my second interview with Elena, I asked further about her course registration process, and she elaborated that her adviser recommended 109 because “it would probably help me get used to the work ethic of the university.” She notes that he did not discuss other composition course options in detail. She does say that the “work ethic” demanded in college has been a challenge for her in terms of “time management” and that it has been “like cultural shock kind of because you have all this responsibility that’s not yours, and you didn’t get to practice it.”

One of the intended purposes of 109/110 *is* to help first-generation students “starting out” at UW to acclimate to the university culture—not academically in terms of language

preparedness but, rather, for example, learning about and accessing campus resources such as writing centers and office hours, practicing discussing feedback with instructors, and becoming comfortable sharing ideas with peers in class. While these skills could fall under the “not-knowing” that Elena speaks to, it seems more likely that she is referring at least in part to academic preparedness. Knowledge about how to navigate the university and access resources is helpful, but these capacities are often conflated with knowledge of how to use language, share and create knowledge, participate in discussions, etc. in ways that have traditionally been seen as “scholarly”—often white, upper middle class ways of communicating and navigating the world. Like other case study students, Elena found support through others with whom she shares identities and experiences. In her first quarter, she was paired with an older student with “similar circumstances” who met with her biweekly to talk and “de-stress.” She cites this mentorship as a major factor in helping her adjust to what she calls the culture shock of college. Coming into college, Elena was “very wary about writing,” but by the end of English 110, she expressed that, with the help of her newfound “little community” and support from her instructor, she’s “getting the hang of it” and feels “a lot better.”

### **“Belonging” in a Racist Institution**

[W]hite, middle and upper class people have been associated more closely to those who go to college because they have been the ones who have gone to college and who have controlled those institutions (Inoue 79).

While many freshmen experience loneliness, students in my study expressed isolation due to their minority status as Latin American, FGEM, Spanish-speaking students in a predominantly white institution. The “traditional college student” is imagined (usually implicitly) by administrators and some instructors—as Inoue notes—to be a white, wealthy

individual (despite demographic evidence that increasingly indicates otherwise). Even when actively resisting harmful ideologies, the people, institutions, and texts that make up the ecology of a university reproduce the unequal distribution of knowledge that allows the already-privileged to navigate academic and professional spheres while BIPOC FGEM students are often left out of the conversation. Grande describes “the academy as *an arm of the settler state*” in ways that are “distinct from other frameworks that critique the academy as fundamentally neoliberal, Eurocentric, and/or patriarchal” (47). Her anticolonial lens offers a perspective on how the university marginalizes and decenters BIPOC individuals, narratives, and rights to participate in and govern the workings of higher education. Grande raises the question of whether, given how deeply universities are predicated on settler colonialism in the literal sense of land theft and centering white voices, “the university-as-such is beyond reform” (49). In that sense, composition programs and classes are situated in and often unintentionally perpetuate hostile writing ecologies simply by virtue of their existing in the enterprise of higher education, which centers the language practices and lived experiences of wealthy, white, continuing-generation students in a university with an underrepresentation of Black, Indigenous, and Latin American students.

Given our inability within our scope as instructors and writing program administrators to abolish universities or even reform them as a whole, I discuss how we might, within our small scope, carve out a space within a harmful, unjust institution for a space that is built fundamentally to center BIPOC, FGEM, and multilingual students in ways that the university does not and perhaps cannot fully realize. Carving out meaningful spaces for change that resonate beyond the writing program is a large task but one that we can work toward even if we may not achieve it to the extent that we want in the long term. Following the student vignettes in

the previous section, I seek to unpack some of the ideologies of deficit and cultural capital that underscore students' stories and explore additive, culturally sustaining alternatives to conceptualizing the resources students bring into the classroom.

Education scholar and critical race theorist Tara Yosso has discussed how deficit approaches—which some students, such as Elena, who associates her first-gen status with “not knowing anything” may have internalized, harm BIPOC and FGEM students by enforcing the idea that students need to gain institutional knowledge of white, wealthy spaces. Many factors such as internalized prejudices and the individualistic narrative of the American Dream narrative, may contribute to students' self-perceptions of their literacy skills as needing remediation. A deficit-based approach propagates an idea that “[p]eople of Color ‘lack’ the social and cultural capital required for social mobility” (Yosso 70) and that institutions such as universities further marginalize students by treating them as ignorant of cultural norms instead of “refram[ing] the object of critique from our children to oppressive systems” (Alim et al. 3). Through culturally sustaining pedagogical practices that center a range of literary and cultural experiences and voices in the texts that students write and read, students' opportunities to see themselves represented among their peers and in their coursework can make a significant impact on their sense of belonging and confidence in their academic abilities. The EWP Statement on Antiracist Pedagogy and Program Praxis draws upon such approaches, acknowledging oppressive institutions and actors and calling for direct engagement with those realities in ways that center marginalized students while calling attention to and challenging oppressive structures:

[W]e seek to support our students and instructors through active antiracist and equity-focused pedagogies and program praxis that [...] encourage students to make connections

between their lived experiences and academic research and inquiries that complicate the notions of objectivity and neutrality in writing and academic learning.

While English 109/110 cannot disrupt the entire structure of the university, it is an enclave in a pivotal time in students' college experience (their first year) when instructors can encourage students to share their experiences and language capacities while fostering a sense of confidence and belonging among peers and in the broader university through access to a close relationship with their instructor and peers, affirming feedback, and a community of students who share similar identities.

In what follows, I address questions of how to resist systemic racism in the university while also helping students navigate larger structures we cannot fully transform on a systemic level. Instructors in this case study implement culturally sustaining pedagogies—which were emphasized in the new teacher trainings that came about through collaborative program revisions—that foreground historically marginalized writers and engage students in prompts that invite them to share their linguistic resources and personal experiences. These aspects of the course as well as the inclusion of specific populations (FGEM BIPOC) who are underrepresented in the larger university help students feel comfortable sharing their voices, experiences, and linguistic capacities in the writing classroom and, as a result, participate more and gain confidence in their writing. As I discussed earlier in this chapter, many students in this study cited a lack of confidence, attributed to their first-generation status, in succeeding in college as a reason why they enrolled in English 109/110. Their belief that their family histories leave them unprepared to succeed compared to their continuing-generation peers reflects a deficit model that focuses on a particular canon of privileged cultural capital that first-generation students are less likely to have. Prevalent, conventional educational models elevate white, middle and upper class

linguistic norms over other literacy practices, and universities often use such models when emphasizing the skills that help students navigate and succeed in college. I talk in this section about how some FGEM students have internalized a deficit model and how writing courses can alternatively cultivate student confidence and reframe how FGEM students navigate the university using their own experiences and linguistic and cultural knowledges rather than having to “catch up” with their continuing-generation peers.

As Aja Martinez says, Latin American students are often (tacitly or otherwise) encouraged to give up their home literacies and adopt the norms of academic institutions, which are more often than not steeped in ideologies that privilege white students:

There must be another way for young Chicano/a and other marginalized students to obtain an education without risking the resulting representation crisis caused when they are encouraged to turn their backs on their cultures/ethnicities to join the traditions of a system that has not been founded on-and not necessarily maintained with the intention to serve-an underclass population. We cannot try to give new answers to old questions, and we can no longer rely on an old system to accommodate a new population (594).

Students in my study shared that “it gets really lonely at times” at an institution that minoritizes BIPOC FGEM students and where Latin American students are underrepresented (Gabriel).

There must be another way, as Martinez says, to forge new ecologies that reimagine participation, inclusion, and representation beyond what is currently offered within the context of oppressive institutions. Educators and administrators in higher education often interpret Bourdieu’s concept of cultural capital as a form of access involving knowledge of navigating spaces traditionally occupied by privileged individuals and groups. The rituals, language, and resources adopted to attain that kind of capital may at times come at the cost of one’s own

identity. Ayala and Contreras reject such models of cultural capital, citing that they are often deficit-based and normalize whiteness at the expense of students of color.<sup>34</sup> English 109/110 can engage students' resources to help them gain confidence and practice their writing skills while actively resisting white cultural capital and/or assimilation in the university as the goal of a college education. Instructors and administrators can offer alternatives to other university spaces that often (unintentionally or otherwise) discount personal experience (especially when it differs from that of more privileged peers), discourage multilingual language practices, and limit spaces for students to meet and build community with others who share their backgrounds.

Yosso proposes that resistant capital, which includes “knowledges and skills fostered through oppositional behavior that challenges inequality,” offers a culturally sustaining and additive alternative to more traditional cultural capital frameworks that are often adopted by universities (80). That might look like using languages and dialects outside of “academic English,” drawing on personal experiences, especially related to marginalized identities, or organizing social spaces on the basis of common identities in writing classrooms. Students can draw upon resistant capital when they feel safe and affirmed as they find a sense of belonging in the writing classroom and in the university. Ayala and Contreras additionally offer the concept of “racial and/or ethnic empowerment capital [...], the sense of pride that students feel by being members of their racial and/or ethnic group” (233). They argue that “this pride is motivational and transformative, enabling students to remain connected to, and even reinforce, their racial and/or ethnic identities” (233). Almost all of the students in my study reported feeling comfort, pride, and confidence when they spent time in community with Latin American students in

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<sup>34</sup> Ayala and Contreras focus on Latin American students in their scholarship.

spaces such as 109/110 and the Instructional Center and the Ethnic Cultural Center.<sup>35</sup> English 109/110 offers students an environment where they can begin to feel a sense of belonging and pride in their identity on campus. Steven, for example, says that the 109/110 class environment is comforting because [there are] people you can relate with, especially for me being a Hispanic. The Hispanic community really isn't big here at UW, so knowing there's other Hispanics in the room, it's like...it's nice. It's nice that you can relate with each and every single one of them.

This sense of belonging leads students to participate more often in class discussions and feel like their ideas are valued, that they're "not gonna be brought down, [they're] not gonna be judged" (Steven). Another student, Marco, adds that "as a collective, as a group, you know that you all share that [first-generation status] in common [...] as a collective, it means a lot. Likewise, Elena says that knowing that her peers are also first-generation students helps her feel like "we're not alone" and that "if you're struggling, and somebody else has struggled like that [...], you give each other support." Students overwhelmingly expressed, both in focus groups and my case study, feeling a sense of safety, comfort, and belonging in 109/110 and felt that they could participate in a scholarly community of readers, writers, and thinkers without judgment on the basis of their race, family income, or first-generation status.

Given the systemic raciolinguistic harms perpetuated by structures of higher education, the stakeholders of English 109/110, on the whole, seek to mobilize the course and its surrounding ecology as a site—however small—for affirmation and resistance. Administrators

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<sup>35</sup> The Instructional Center is a tutoring and study center on the UW Seattle campus that is available specifically for students in OMA&D programs. The Samuel E. Kelley Ethnic Cultural Center, part of the Office of Minority Affairs and Diversity, is a building that "serve[s] and empower[s] marginalized and underrepresented students by providing educational and cultural opportunities for holistic development" according to their website.

and instructors hope to foster a resistant space in English 109/110 by creating classroom communities that welcome a variety of language practices and that are demographically in opposition with majority, privileged spaces on campus. Some English 109/110 instructors already draw upon additive, culturally sustaining pedagogies, such as “locating students,” which “means to center students’ lives, languages, and experiences in one’s teaching for a more authentic portrayal of students as individuals and as members” (King and Swartz 258 referenced in Flint and Jagers). One of Dita’s students, Antonio, spoke to the importance of reading texts by multilingual BIPOC writers:

For the most part, the readings we have and the readings she’s assigned are from ethnic people [such as Sara Ahmed, Linda Tuhiwai Smith, and Shawn Wilson, among others], and I can relate to that easily, so bringing in past experiences and part of who I am made it a whole lot easier given the fact that questions and discussion points are on those topics.

English 109/110 teachers, including Taylor and Dita, tend to teach responsively to the EWP Antiracist Pedagogy and Program Praxis Statement goal to “resist Eurocentric and white U.S.-centric curricula” in favor of material that “centers voices, knowledges, and experiences from marginalized authors and discourse traditions.” The new link between English 109 and the university's diversity credit requirement further cements this emphasis as a core commitment and expectation of the course. According to the university’s undergraduate advising website, classes that grant the diversity requirement “should encourage thinking critically about topics such as power, inequality, marginality, and social movements, and support effective cross-cultural communication skills.” While the goal of that requirement, from the university’s perspective is “to help [students] develop an understanding of the complexities of living in increasingly diverse

and interconnected societies,” it also serves the purpose, in 109/110, of giving students examples of published texts by scholars with similar backgrounds to their own.

Centering writers of color in texts also responds to the 2020 CCCC demand that “teachers engage their students in ‘Black linguistic consciousness-raising that provides them with the critical literacies and competencies to name, investigate, and dismantle white linguistic hegemony and anti-Black linguistic racism’” (Baker-Bell 86). During one lesson, Dita taught students about citational politics,<sup>36</sup> unpacking the fact that white men are unquestionably cited far more frequently than their peers and how writers’ positionality can affect their research. Students shared that the practice of critiquing the privilege of white writers starkly contrasted their earlier schooling: Andrea, for instance, shared during class that in high school, one of her teachers wanted to teach an anthology of authors of color, but the district did not allow her to do so.<sup>37</sup> Antonio and Rachel added that “teachers just have to follow a curriculum,” and that curriculum often emphasizes “things that were correct”—presumably lessons and readings that maintain existing power structures. Dita responded: “Yeah, you’re right. It will only change if the people in power change it. If you’re a person of color, take that power. You *are* powerful. Which is why I want you *all* to speak up in this class.” This statement underscores how English 109/110 can be a space for students to find a place for themselves in academic environments where they have not always felt welcome, empowered, and valued. Taylor and Dita, like many 109/110 instructors, encourage self-advocacy and seek to foster communities where students

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<sup>36</sup> Students read Sara Ahmed’s “Making Feminist Points” from *Feminist Killjoys* to the other assigned reading, Ray Victor’s “The Racial Politics of Citation.”

<sup>37</sup> In a later interview, she shared that she applied the lesson on citational politics to her interests in medical research, noting, “white people tend to research white people on diseases—this is not helpful.”

think critically about race and identity and feel comfortable self-advocating and questioning classroom practices.

## **Conclusion**

How can we support teachers to engage in equity-oriented practices, challenging their own language ideologies and genuinely seeing and valuing students' contributions to the class? Instructors Dita and Taylor successfully helped the students I spoke with value their own writing and believe in themselves as students. How can tenets of the EWP Statement on Antiracist Pedagogy and Program Praxis be put into action to foster the types of classroom relationships and environments that I witnessed in this study? Some of my takeaways from this chapter are that 1) students tend to become more confident writers in English 109/110, citing a trusting and affirming relationship with their instructor via classroom and conference conversations; 2) students value sharing a classroom with other FGEM BIPOC peers and reading texts by writers of similar backgrounds; 3) linguistic injustices negatively impact students' writing confidence prior to college and contribute to them developing an impression that they are not prepared for college writing; 4) making program-wide changes (in advising, curriculum, course structure, teacher training) around antiracist, anticolonial, culturally sustaining praxes can aid in cultivating spaces that invite students' full array of linguistic, cultural, and personal literacies and experiences in the writing classroom. Given these findings, while equity work is never done, it seems that at least some parts of the English 109/110 writing ecology are already, in many ways, supporting historically marginalized students in finding community and beginning to see themselves as academic writers through translingual, antiracist, and culturally sustaining pedagogies that invite students' voices and knowledge, interrogate citational politics alongside

students, and provide a supportive network of peers and instructors in a small classroom environment. In the next chapter, I present an archive of teaching materials from several instructors and highlight connections to the EWP Statement on Antiracist Pedagogy and Program Praxis. I connect students' statements on belonging and connections to readings and assignments with sample prompts, readings, and syllabi that affirm and invite diverse notions of scholarly writing that critique and challenge a white linguistic habitus as the sole way to engage in academic genres.

## **Chapter 4**

### **Changing Spaces:**

### **An Archive of Ethical and Inclusive Teaching Practices**

I would like to ask what spaces we can create in the classroom that will allow students freedom to nourish an inner life (O'Reilley 3).

What does it mean to create an equitable space for students who have been historically marginalized by educational institutions? O'Reilley says in *Radical Presence: Teaching as Contemplative Practice* that when cultivating classroom spaces, teachers should foreground students' autonomy and holistic sense of self. In Chapter 3, I discussed how important students' sense of belonging is to their engagement in the classroom and self-perception. Seeing themselves and their identities reflected in scholarly work helped foster a space where they could exercise freedom of linguistic expression beyond the confines of what they perceived to be an elite and exclusionary community of scholarly writing. To foster freedom and joy for historically marginalized students in the writing classroom, Casey Wong and Courtney Pena ask:

As culturally sustaining educators, how can we provide spaces for young people where they are not defined solely, or overwhelmingly, by their marginalization? How can you provide spaces for young people to extend and imagine joy to experience and theorize happiness for the sake of happiness, not happiness only as a means of relief and release from their struggles?" (132).

Wong and Pena invite an ethos of joy that challenges one-dimensional narratives of trauma that are often associated with historically marginalized students. Ethical and culturally sustaining pedagogies engage students' inner lives and invite them to express themselves on their own terms.

Throughout this project, I have sought to find meaningful applications and a home for not just my own work, but also the labor of the instructors and administrators who teach, design, and revise programmatic aims and curricula to support students in English 109/110. This chapter is, first and foremost, a teaching archive that showcases the collaborative work of instructors who engage students' linguistic and cultural resources and foster a classroom environment that implodes the gates that often keep historically marginalized voices out of scholarly communities. Prior to this project, there was not a unified teaching archive specific to 109/110. I seek to fill this gap with a curated collection of teaching materials and accompanying framing connecting to antiracist praxis. This collection is by no means comprehensive, but I hope it provides a structure for future instructors and WPAs in the English 109/110 stretch writing ecology to share their work. While this is not a traditional dissertation chapter, it is an ecologically situated one in that it exists at the intersection of writing program instructors, their teaching dispositions, and their texts. I have curated it in the context of disciplinary scholarship and student experiences and framed it for peer instructors, who can, in turn, enact these pedagogies in their classes. The living archive in this chapter is a form of praxis: an applied commitment to act on the stories shared by instructors, students, advisers, and administrators and a gesture to contribute back to the community whose voices and labor were essential to this dissertation. My hope is that the work of this dissertation—not just my own, but that of all the aforementioned contributors and stakeholders—will have a meaningful, lasting impact on the changing ecology of English 109/110.

Throughout this chapter, I introduce syllabus statements, assignments, teacher reflections, and suggested readings<sup>38</sup> for students, all contributed by current and past English 109/110

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<sup>38</sup>I extend my immense gratitude for these suggestions to EWP instructors Sumyat Thu, Nolie Ramsey, Anselma Prihandita, Matthew Hitchman, Lubna Alzaroo, and Hunter Little.

instructors. I frame these artifacts in the context of the EWP's Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis, a collaboration between many staff members across many years with the intention "to ground some translingual conceptions of language within an explicit acknowledgement of and commitment to work against the historical and systemic devaluing of language practices from historically minoritized peoples," primarily authored by Candice Rai, Sumyat Thu, and Emily George with feedback and revision from Stephanie Kerschbaum and other EWP staff members (Thu et al. 2016). The full document (Appendix A) includes framing statements on the writing program's philosophy, which is rooted in acknowledging and working collaboratively against systems of oppression that impact students and instructors. The statement draws on translingual, intersectional, antiracist, accessible, and anticolonial frameworks to envision "equitable pedagogical frameworks" throughout the program. The 109/110 revisions were part of these ongoing programmatic changes and, in many ways, drove these philosophical shifts in EWP.

The philosophical framing in the EWP's statement is followed by fifteen commitments to equitable pedagogy. These commitments, while all important, are too expansive to cover thoroughly and accessibly in a teacher-centered archive. Since the archive that follows and its framing will be circulated to instructors, I aim for it to be digestible and navigable while still foregrounding the statement's core tenets. To meet both goals, I combined some of the bullet points from the statement into four overarching themes, which interconnect and layer together. While not fully comprehensive, these themes get at the core philosophies of the statement: Engaging Student Experiences, Centering Historically Marginalized Voices and Language Practices, Linguistic Justice, and Ethical and Inclusive Assessment and Curricular Practices. I plan to include a table of contents cover page within the Google Drive through which instructors

can navigate to teaching artifacts related to each theme. These themes engage with some of the same concepts that students spoke to in Chapter 3 (e.g., seeing themselves in the texts they read, deconstructing ideas about DAE, and building a supportive community space in the classroom) and, at the core, work to help students see themselves as belonging in a scholarly community—a barrier that students voiced consistently in the interviews and focus groups I discussed in the previous chapter. Each theme from the archive is preceded in this chapter by a dissertation-facing framing statement in which I engage with relevant scholarship. Unlike the teaching-facing assignment framing statement included with each theme (labeled “teacher-facing framing statement for clarity in the context of this dissertation), the dissertation-facing framing is not included in the archive so it can remain concise and easily accessible to instructors who do not specialize in composition theory (the primary audience of the teaching archive).

In what follows, each theme is introduced with dissertation-facing framing with the name of the theme, relevant tenets of the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis, and related scholarship. Following each dissertation-facing framing section, I include a teacher-facing framing statement (labeled as such) accompanying each teaching artifact and connect to the EWP statement.

## Table of Contents

*This is the instructor-facing Table of Contents for the shared Google Drive. In the online version circulated to instructors, each assignment title and theme will link to corresponding documents.*

### **Note to instructors:**

This teaching archive for English 109/110 brings together the generous contributions of graduate student instructors and situates their work within the antiracist, anticolonial ethos of the Expository Writing Program, in specific, the Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis. You are invited to adapt materials for use in your class and contribute, if you are willing, your own materials via the 109/110 Assistant Directors.

### Theme 1: Engaging Student Experiences

- Suggested texts for students
- Autoethnographic Genre Project (prompt), Anselma Prihandita
- Writing Autobiography and Goal Setting (prompt), Sara Lovett
- Burrowing Exercise and Topic Decision & Reflection (prompt sequence), Hunter Little

### Theme 2: Centering Historically Marginalized Voices and Language Practices

- Suggested texts for students
- Under Our Skin (worksheet and activity), Lubna Alzaroo and Matthew Hitchman
- Positionality Statement (prompt), Hunter Little
- Course Description for English 109 (course description), Anselma Prihandita

### Theme 3: Linguistic Justice

- Suggested texts for students
- Preliminary Essay: What is “Good” Writing? (prompt), Hunter Little
- Materializing Translingualism in the Writing Classroom (website/archive), Zhenzhen He-Weatherford, Sara Lovett, and Sumyat Thu

### Theme 4: Ethical and Inclusive Assessment and Curricular Practices

- What Do You Say? Collective Criteria (assessment), Nolie Ramsey
- Assessment Agreement (assessment), Hunter Little
- To Maintain a Healthy Classroom Community (syllabus clause), Anselma Prihandita, adapted from Dr. Regina Y. Lee
- Accessibility and Accommodations (syllabus clause), Sara Lovett

## Theme 1: Engaging Student Experiences

Related EWP Statement tenets:

- Help students engage with course curricula in reflexive and compassionate ways that do not ask students of marginalized identities to relive trauma, but that asks all students to engage in social issues and how they relate to composing with criticality.
- Encourage students to make connections between their lived experiences and academic research and inquiries that complicate the notions of objectivity and neutrality in writing and academic learning.
- Encourage students to think about the social impact of their writing and the social groups and communities they are accountable to as part of audience awareness.

The first theme of this teaching archive, “Engaging Student Experience,” coalesces around engaging student experiences “in reflexive and compassionate ways that do not ask students [...] to relive trauma” while inviting them “to make connections between their lived experiences and academic research” and account for “the social impact of their writing” (EWP Statement). Students, especially from historically marginalized backgrounds, often view academia as a place to learn about others’ experiences but where they are not qualified to share their own. Gabriel, a student in this study, said that he connected with the assignments in English 109/110 in part because he was able to talk about his life experiences and employ a genre of his choice, spoken word poetry. Andrea, another student in this study, applied lessons about minority representation in scholarship to her interest in a career in scientific research. Students shared their experiences in discussions in Taylor and Dita’s classes about how they have experienced linguistic discrimination, used hybrid language practices, and engaged with various genres. This section of the teaching archive imagines rhetorical situations that matter in the 21st

century—praxes drawing upon the knowledge of and giving back to students’ communities. The three tenets of the EWP statement I have selected for this section validates students’ experiences and literacies as relevant sources of data and catalysts for research, drawing upon linguistically just, antiracist, anticolonial, and culturally sustaining pedagogies to suggest ways to foreground student identities, relationships with the world and their communities, and their lived experiences, not just of their challenges or setbacks, but of their joys and hopes. When applied effectively, these approaches can impact students like Andrea, Marco, Steven, and Elena, whose anecdotes in Chapter 3 illustrated how they found space for their voices and experiences in English 109/110. Below, I trace the evolving history in composition studies from strictly discouraging students’ engagement with home literacies to more recent invitations to include personal experiences in the classroom.

As composition instructors, we ask our students to perform many roles: the writer, the scholar, the citizen. Often, these roles are imagined as part of an elite academic discourse community that we are training our students to join. Throughout the history of literacy education in America, cultural and legal discourses have often conflated literacy and democratic citizenship. When the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) formed in 1911, its founders “articulated how to teach English and distribute literacy, [ideologies] which were inflected with these larger debates about the constitutions—productive, cultural, or otherwise—that citizens should make” (Wan 119). Since 1990, the NCTE’s mission statement<sup>39</sup> has read: “The Council promotes the development of literacy, the use of language to construct personal and public worlds and to achieve full participation in society, through the learning and teaching of English and the related arts and sciences of language.” The mission statement language

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<sup>39</sup> <https://ncte.org/about/>

implies that without certain practices and skills purportedly gained through literacy education, students are less than full participants in society. This sentiment is reflected in pedagogies that require students to exchange their literacy practices for ones that will supposedly grant them freedom and currency in American society—possibly at the expense of their own literacy practices and life experiences that differ from those reified in the writing classroom (Gere; Lu; Martinez; Roozen). Composition scholarship takes up the notion of academic citizenship in the 1980s through the social constructivist movement. Bartholomae forwarded the notion that students belong to discourse communities, each with their own rules and values. To join the academic discourse community, students need to exchange their linguistic norms with new norms aligned with the values of the academic discourse community. Bartholomae uses private-public discourse to explain the process of exchanging literacy practices: “A [basic writer] is not so much trapped in a private language as he is shut out from one of the privileged languages of public life” (609). As Bartholomae demonstrates, many composition theorists at the time believed that the teacher’s job was to liberate students from their home literacies so they could become members of the academic discourse community.

The type of writer, scholar, and community member students are trained to become often requires them to subordinate their rich “self-sponsored literacies”—ones that are rooted in family and community experiences—as “separate streams of literate activity” compared to institutionally promoted as skills and values that one must acquire to become a full member of the academic discourse community (Roozen 100). In an effort to join academic discourse communities, students often must “exchange commonplaces” by relinquishing their home literacies and adopting academic commonplaces to approximate class markers and be interpellated as members of the elite sphere of academia (Lu). In reality, these discourses are

“hazily marked and often travelled” and “often distinct and overlapping,” allowing for more plurality and hybridity (Harris 753). More recently, writing studies has shifted toward models that allow for multiplicity, contradiction, and deviation from centralized norms. Instead of training students to become the imagined members of an elite academic community, writing instructors and program administrators can reimagine students’ home literacies and their academic literacies as overlapping, plural, and hybrid, as scholars of translanguaging emphasize in their conceptualizations of language as fluid, dialogic, and hybrid (See Canagarajah; Gilyard; Guerra; Horner; Lu; among others). Recent scholarship influenced by translingual and culturally sustaining pedagogies stresses the importance of students’ “rich repertoires,” which “reflect the rich and evocative nature of their lived and on-going linguistic and cultural experiences” (Guerra 36). Likewise, culturally sustaining pedagogies emphasize the importance of deconstructing monolithic notions about who or what can be considered “academic” writers and writing and actively designing assignments and activities that invite students to share their interests, desires, and experiences.

The first bulleted tenet included in this theme emphasizes the importance of creating assignments and spaces that invite students’ experiences but “do not ask students of marginalized identities to relive trauma”—a pitfall that instructors often encounter when asking students to share personal narratives involving their past experiences with language and culture. 109/110 instructor Taylor echoes a similar concern: while the course is “integrated into [students’] lived experiences,” it can be difficult to “engage with precarity” and hard to grade if students “feel like they will be rewarded with their grade for sharing a personal experience because that’s not fair to students who don’t want to share it, and it’s also kind of exploitative of students.” In all EWP classes, but especially in 109/110, a core tenet of antiracist pedagogy is creating responsible and

responsive curricula and practices that center students' communities and literacies and invite them to draw on their existing resources, expertise, and experiences, instead of initiating students into the university on its terms and invalidating students' lived experiences. Nancy Mack suggests critical approaches to teaching the genre of the literacy narrative to working-class students, affirming concerns about asking students to relive trauma but advocating for the genre: "If the goal is to have students write more critically analytical literacy narratives, we must open issues of identity and literacy for investigation rather than dropping narrative writing altogether" (143). Like the EWP statement, Mack emphasizes the importance of nesting personal writing in critical yet compassionate frameworks. Mack's students engage with topics like imposter phenomenon, double consciousness, and emotional labor, much like the lessons in English 109/110 on citational politics discussed in Chapter 3 and the reflective exercises included in this section of the teaching archive (145-146). At the core, assignments should be designed so students can approach them in ways that engage their learning, experiences, and goals on their own terms, affirming that "this community is theirs, that it will not work against their identity and their interest" to respond to writing tasks in agentive, authentic ways rather than to perform or exoticize their lived experiences for a grade (Fox 74).

The EWP's praxis encourages instructors to thoughtfully engage student experiences while also connecting the personal to public-facing, community-based, stakes-driven issues. The teaching artifacts in this section do both. Anselma Prihandita's Autoethnographic Genre Product asks students to start with their personal experience and delve into research that connects their experience to the broader public through genres of their choice. My Writing Autobiography and Goal Setting prompt asks students to share their linguistic ideologies in relation to their experiences but gives a range of question prompts so they can choose how much to self-disclose

as they reflect and set goals for the course. Hunter Little's Burrowing Exercise and Topic Decision and Reflection, like Prihandita's assignment, asks students to research questions that engage with their communities while simultaneously reflecting on their positionality. Each of these prompts invites students to engage their experiences without requiring them to discuss trauma or oppression.

***Teacher-facing framing statement:***

Equitable teaching requires us to foreground lived student experiences and create spaces that are built with them and their life experiences and capacities in mind. Teaching materials in this section accomplish this, in part, by:

- Help[ing] students engage with course curricula in reflexive and compassionate ways that do not ask students of marginalized identities to relive trauma, but that asks all students to engage in social issues and how they relate to composing with criticality.<sup>40</sup>
- Encourag[ing] students to make connections between their lived experiences and academic research and inquiries that complicate the notions of objectivity and neutrality in writing and academic learning.
- Encourag[ing] students to think about the social impact of their writing and the social groups and communities they are accountable to as part of audience awareness.

This section includes four prompts from EWP instructors: Anselma Prihandita’s “Autoethnographic Genre Product,” in which students draw upon their lived experiences as the basis for their research; Sara Lovett’s “Writing Autobiography” assignment, which asks students to interrogate the good, bad, and ugly of their relationship with writing; and Hunter Little’s “Burrowing Exercise” and “Topic Decision & Reflection,” two parts of an autoethnographic community-oriented research sequence.

**Suggested texts for students**

Alexander, Bryant Keith. “Standing at the Crossroads.” *Callaloo*, vol. 22, no. 2, 1999, pp. 343–345.

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<sup>40</sup> Bulleted principles are quoted from the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis.

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## Autoethnographic Genre Product

Instructor: Anselma Prihandita

This research project “puts [students’] personal experience in focus” by asking them to research their own lives and communities while connecting to scholarly works. Prihandita emphasizes that the stakes for the project must impact not only the audience, but also the student writer.

By inviting students to join in conversation with academic scholarship, they can “make connections between their lived experiences and academic research” to engage with issues that matter to them without sharing overly personal or traumatic experiences.

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Prompt:

This is your culminating project for this class—all your work this quarter builds toward this assignment. In simple terms, your autoethnography is a research project that puts your personal experience in focus. You will be researching yourself and your own lived experiences, situating and connecting that with broader sociocultural and historical contexts as well as related scholarly works.

I realize that your **college life**, whether beginning or ongoing, is probably a significant moment for you. While exciting, this moment in your education might also be fraught and complicated, even traumatic. Therefore, I thought we might try to tap into the richness of this moment, using this class and this autoethnographic research project as a space for you to process your experiences in the coming months, looking into your lived experiences critically in order to better understand—and perhaps reframe—**what education means for you and what the “university” and “scholarship” are**. That being said, if you need to process experiences other than your current university experience (since we’re basically living an apocalypse), feel free to come up with other topics! The most important thing is that you ground your research on your own lived experiences.

Your autoethnography thus should benefit both *yourself personally* and the *general public*. For yourself, you’ll get to process your own experiences and attend to whatever other needs or purposes you may set for yourself along the way. For the general public, your critical reflections on your own lived experiences should result in social commentaries, testimonies, or other forms of knowledge that people can learn from.

I call this assignment an autoethnographic “genre product” because you are allowed to communicate the results of your autoethnographic research in *any genre of writing you want*: a short story, a poem, an interpretive dance, a spoken word performance, a pantomime, a podcast, a speech, a dialogue, a movie...or just the good old essay. Besides the genre product itself, you

will also write a **writer's memo** which explains your writing process and how you have designed your genre product to effectively communicate to a chosen audience with purpose.

Length:

- For the autoethnographic genre product: whatever you need it to be.
- For the writer's memo: 1-2 double spaced pages.

## Writing Autobiography and Goal Setting

Instructor: Sara Lovett

For this preliminary writing assignment, students are given multiple choices to share about their relationship with writing. They have a range of options to choose from that give options for them to reveal minimal amounts of personal information but also to get them thinking about writing beyond traditional academic genres and consider what they are proud of—not just where they struggle.

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Prompt:

During the next ten weeks, you will investigate your relationship with language and identity. In order to get to know you and your experiences with writing, language, and identity, I am asking you to write this ungraded writing autobiography. In your essay, include two specific personal learning goals that you would like to achieve in our class this quarter. You will be reflecting on and revising these goals throughout the quarter. Beyond these goals, you can tell me anything you'd like about your experience as a writer and your relationship with language and identity. Below, I have listed some (optional) ideas to get you started.

- What terrifies, excites, or frustrates you about this class or about writing more generally?
- What parts of English classes have you found helpful, hurtful or just plain frustrating?
- What does “good writing” mean to you?
- Describe your writing process. Do you prepare in a certain way, structure in a certain way, revise in a certain way?
- What is the most challenging writing task you've ever faced? What was successful or unsuccessful about your strategy, and what did you learn?
- What is your favorite style/form of writing beyond the kind you usually do in school (think: creative writing, journaling, social media, songwriting etc.)? What is it about this particular form/style of writing that you enjoy?
- When it comes to writing, what is something that you are good at or proud of?
- What do you hope to learn from this class?

Goals

- Reflect on your identity as a writer, reader, and learner.
- Start thinking about issues relevant to the course theme of Language and Identity.
- Introduce yourself to your teacher.
- Establish a baseline of your writing so you can see how much you have grown at the end of the quarter.

Format

You can write in whatever format you find most effective (letter, poem, narrative, etc.). It must be the equivalent of 1.5-2 pages double-spaced in 12-point Times New Roman with 1” margins. Please include your name and a title (something besides the title of the assignment).

## Burrowing Exercise

Instructor: Hunter Little

Through the “Burrowing Exercise” and “Topic Decision & Reflection,” Hunter Little’s students explore and select research topics that have stakes for their communities. Students must reflect on their positionality and personal expertise before beginning their research. These tasks encourage students to draw upon their lived experiences while challenging “notions of objectivity and neutrality.” Students become prepared through this English 109 assignment to thoughtfully connect their experiences with academic scholarship in English 110.

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### Prompt:

For this assignment, you will complete a “burrowing exercise.” By this, I mean you will explore possible topics for your research paper by burrowing into your interests and deciding which topics interest you most, what you’d like to learn more about, what change you would like to push for, etc.

For essays, burrowing can help you dig deeper into the topic in which you are interested. The deeper you dig, the more likely it will be that you are “safe” in how you are developing your assignment. The goal of the burrowing exercise is to help you narrow your topic to ensure you’re not biting off more than you can chew by choosing something too broad.

### Instructions

1. Make a list of **six to ten communities or topics** in which you have participated, currently participate in, or in which you hold a vested interest
2. Select the **three to five communities or topics** from the list that interest you most or that you are most invested in and list **THREE** subcategories beneath them. Think about what interests you about those communities or that topic, what issues might be most prevalent within them or in relation to them, etc.
3. Now, choose **ONE** of the subcategories in which you place the most interest and generate at least seven questions related to that subcategory.

Ideally, these questions will be the start of your “research questions” or the “line of inquiry” that directs your research, how you read your evidence/sources, and the development of your research paper, keywords, and complex claim. Also, remember that your line of inquiry will continue to develop as you read, research, and take notes.

For a past student sample, [click here](#). I highly recommend reviewing the sample before you begin working on your own.

## Topic Decision & Reflection

### Background

Thus far, you have chosen a tentative topic that you will begin researching in hopes of continuing said research in English 110 (if you are enrolling 110 next term). The following assignment asks that you provide a rationale for your chosen topic, analyze why it is an important and timely topic, discuss how you plan to approach the topic, express what obstacles you might face, and explain why you are the best person to write about this topic.

### Instructions

For your reflection paper, consider **some or all** of the following questions. Your reflection is not restricted to these questions alone if you'd prefer to share other information about why you chose this topic or feel that it is important.

1. What community did you choose and why?
2. What questions do you hope to focus on in your research? or what are you going to be looking up when we begin looking for secondary sources?
3. Why is this topic important to you? Why does it matter to you? Why should it matter to others?
4. Who do you hope your research will benefit? How will it benefit them?
5. Based on your positionality, what biases and values do you carry with you that you may need to be aware of in your research process?
6. What obstacles do you anticipate you will encounter in exploring this topic?
7. What resources do you plan to consult in your research? Do you have first-hand experience you can use?
8. Who might be an ideal audience for your topic? Why?
9. Do you anticipate that you might change the topic? Why or why not?
10. Is the topic timely and relevant? How?
11. Why are you the best person to write about this topic?
12. What questions do you have for me as you enter the research process?

Remember: You do not have to answer all of the questions, but you will want to establish a rationale for your chosen topic.

### Technical Aspects

400-500 words in paragraph format (not list format or question/response format)

Times New Roman 12-pt font, double or single spaced

Include your last name in the file title when you save it.

### Rationale

The purpose of the assignment is to achieve the following:

- To encourage you to begin thinking about what types of sources you will engage with in your research
- To further engage your line of inquiry and prepare for compiling sources and generating new knowledge about the topic

- To contemplate how you will use various kinds of evidence
- To assess the stakes and consequences of your research
- To understand your project as complex and situated within a current conversation as well as affecting others within a particular community
- To practice metacognition and understand your position in relation to your research and understand your own purpose for researching/who your research will benefit

## **Theme 2: Centering Historically Marginalized Voices and Language Practices**

Related EWP Statement tenets:

- Create a culture of unlearning the norms and characteristics of systems of white supremacy and continually build a more actively antiracist writing program and praxis.
- Resist Eurocentric and white U.S.-centric curricula and engage in curating reading and writing curricula that centers voices, knowledges, and experiences from marginalized authors and discourse traditions.
- Encourage and support[ing] all instructors to practice antiracist pedagogy that is critically responsive to the contexts of their social identities, positionalities, teaching philosophies, and disciplinary and course objectives.

As many composition scholars have written (Baker-Bell; Condon; Daniel et al.; Gilyard; Guerra; Inoue; Matsuda; Paris and Alim; Smitherman; Thu et al.; Trainor; Villanueva; Young; among others), academic writing has historically centered white, Western, affluent voices. English 109/110 students like Andrea, Marco, Steven, and Elena, whose stories we heard in Chapter 3, often haven't read the voices of writers from their own racial, linguistic, and/or socioeconomic backgrounds. In some cases, diverse texts are even banned, as Andrea expressed in regard to her high school English curriculum. In Chapter 3, we heard discussions on citational politics in Dita's class that stress the relative positionality, power, and privilege of writers based on their identities can unmask the politics that influence whose voices are heard and why. Culturally sustaining and anticolonial pedagogies, including classroom activities like unpacking citational politics with students, can help "resist Eurocentric and white U.S.-centric curricula," directly challenge and unlearn "the norms and characteristics of white supremacy," and center

“voices, knowledges, and experiences from marginalized authors and discourse traditions” (EWP Statement). Theme 2 builds on Theme 1 by offering curricular scaffolding that can help students see themselves as writers through the texts they engage with and find ways to engage their own experiences, if they so choose, in their writing. These pedagogical touchstones echo Eve Tuck’s call to suspend damage—to read and write the narratives of historically marginalized people not just through “stories of pain and brokenness” but through a “desire-based framework” that captures three-dimensional, messy, complex, and fully human experiences (409; 416). In other words, bringing to life stories that students can relate to. Centering historically marginalized voices doesn’t just mean reading more texts by or about Latin American people, for example. It means engaging with a variety of genres, discourses, audiences, authorial identities, and rhetorical situations that capture a range of human emotions and experiences. Evoking students’ full repertoires, Aja Martinez argues, can enable them to “imagin[e] themselves within the academy with honest, eyes wide-open perspectives so as to anticipate and be unsurprised by the systemic and structural racisms they will confront in higher education and within mainstream America” (594). When students have the opportunity to read academic and narrative texts across many disciplines, identities, and genres, they can start to see themselves in texts and position themselves as members of an academic community who deserve to be at their university just as much as any of their peers.

To build classroom spaces and practices that, from the ground up, are designed with students in a specific writing ecology and their needs, goals, and experiences in mind, instructors can draw upon culturally sustaining pedagogies (CSP) that “perpetuate and foster [...] cultural pluralism” and remake learning spaces for students who have been systemically excluded or essentialized as examples of “diversity” (Paris et al. 1). At the core of CSP is the directive to

critique “the white gaze itself that sees, hears, and frames students of color in everywhichway as marginal and deficient” (3). In other words, such pedagogies implore educators to unlearn, alongside their students, harmful language and other ideologies that they have internalized about themselves and others about who academic writers and what academic texts look like and why. CSP is not about “liberating” students but instead to “create conditions in the classroom under which students could empower themselves—if they so choose” (Guerra, “An Embodied History” 29).

Centering historically marginalized writers and texts exposes students to a plurality of voices and, importantly, maintains their agency in choosing how to interpret, analyze, and respond to those texts. Instead of ignoring systemic oppression and simply offering “diverse” texts out of context, “CSP must work with students to critique regressive practices [...] and raise critical consciousness” (10). This work is echoed in teaching artifacts in this section that engage with privilege, identity, and positionality. In the *Under Our Skin* worksheet, Lubna Alzaroo and Matthew Hitchman ask students to watch videos in which Seattle residents reflect on their identities. Then, students answer questions about unpacking terms related to privilege, power, and identity. The videos and students’ responses decenter Eurocentric positionalities and ask students to reflect on their relationships with texts and the world around them. In Hunter Little’s Positionality Statement assignment, students reflect on the relationship between their views, values, and identities in relation to their research. This assignment compels students to unlearn the belief that academic research is “neutral” or “unbiased” as well as imposter syndrome they may have about their positionality in relation to producing research. Anselma Prihandita’s English 109 course description deconstructs the concept of “good writing.” Much like Little’s

prompt, Prihandita's course challenges assumptions about research positionality and neutrality. She proposes questions about whose voices are amplified in research along with why and how.

Designing curricula that invite students to engage with a diverse array of texts, rhetorical situations, genres, audiences, and authors can challenge the often-isolating individualistic narratives that some English 109/110 students internalize before coming to college. All of the Latin American students in my case study are from immigrant families and express a mix of pride and pressure regarding their pursuit of what their parents see as the American Dream for which they immigrated to America. Marco stated, "I carried my parents' dream, but then it actually turned into mine." While this is a moving sentiment, it also belies the more harmful and isolating elements of the "American Dream" narrative, which can put pressure on FGEM children of immigrants to pursue a college education and succeed for their family's sake while the university does not provide the resources and knowledge that continuing generation students learn from their families. Aja Martinez notes that the American Dream narrative can also be troubling in ways that can reproduce racist ideologies:

The narratives by my first-generation (in citizenship and college status) Chicano/a students express overall a sense of accomplishment and success achieved through individual effort. Their essays are success stories, told to detail the struggles that they faced. The texts concentrate on the notion of overcoming the odds of the racial status quo in order to become successful individuals in society and to become students who will embody the American Dream (589).

The pressure to be a "success story" is a motivator for some students, yet the university as a whole does not affirm students' experiences or their cultural and linguistic backgrounds.

Martinez continues to say:

This pressure, both implicit and explicit, involves continuing to perform the ways of assimilation that marginalized peoples learned in order to get into college in the first place. This assimilation aligns itself with color-blind racist ideology, and it pressures young Chicano/a students to discard their own cultural and ethnic representation (585).

In challenging isolating ideologies and narratives, writing ecologies can imagine and cultivate new spaces—for “we cannot try to give new answers to old questions”—that invite students’ full array of experiences and capacities without essentializing them or highlighting them for the sake of advertising diversity (Martinez 594). Instead, students need the opportunity to see themselves as part of a community of writers and creators—valued, expert voices from a variety of backgrounds—and a space to share their own capacities on their own terms (as discussed in Theme 1) if and only if they want to. Classrooms that decenter Eurocentric narratives can make space for Black and Brown joy and not just pain, community instead of individualism, belonging instead of isolation.

***Teacher-facing framing statement:***

Equitable teaching requires us to curate texts that illustrate a wide variety of identities and experiences and allow students to see themselves in those texts and, in doing so, see themselves as writers. Teaching materials here accomplish this, in part, by:

- Creat[ing] a culture of unlearning the norms and characteristics of systems of white supremacy and continually build[ing] a more actively antiracist writing program and praxis.<sup>41</sup>
- Resist[ing] Eurocentric and white U.S.-centric curricula and engage in curating reading and writing curricula that centers voices, knowledges, and experiences from marginalized authors and discourse traditions.
- Encourag[ing] and support[ing] all instructors to practice antiracist pedagogy that is critically responsive to the contexts of their social identities, positionalities, teaching philosophies, and disciplinary and course objectives.

The teaching artifacts in this section include a worksheet designed by Lubna Alzaroo and Matthew Hitchman that asks students to engage with concepts regarding race and oppression and challenges them to decenter whiteness, a positionality statement designed by Hunter Little asking students to reflect on their privilege and positionality in relation to the communities they are researching, and a course description by Anselma Prihandita that centers students' voices as academic writers. These artifacts decenter whiteness and recenter the voices of students in a class predominantly made up of students of color.

**Suggested texts for students**

Ahmed, Sara. "Making Feminist Points." *feministkilljoys.com*, 11 Sept. 2013.

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<sup>41</sup> Bulleted principles are quoted from the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis.

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## ***Under Our Skin* Worksheet**

Instructors: Lubna Alzaroo and Matthew Hitchman

In this class, themed around race and popular culture, Alzaroo and Hitchman ask students to reflect on their own positionality. Students watch videos from the *Seattle Times* project *Under Our Skin*, in which Seattleites from various backgrounds unpack what terms like institutional racism, white privilege, and microaggression mean to them. In the worksheet below, students define these terms for themselves and gain skills to critically analyze how words take on different meanings in different contexts. The worksheet questions whiteness as a norm and creates space for historically marginalized voices.

The full course materials can be found in the EWP Archive. While their materials were designed for 131 classes, which tend to have students from more privileged backgrounds relative to 109/110, students can still learn by exploring intersectional identities in themselves and others and foregrounding identities beyond those that are typically most privileged in academic texts.

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### *In Class:*

Louis Chude-Sokei states in the introduction video, “a lot of these terms are constantly used, but never really unpacked and people are interpreting them in quite different ways than the people who are speaking them.” What does he mean by “unpacked”? How can you unpack a term?

Why might it be important to have a common understanding of terms in a conversation? How can you make sure that, in your writing, you and your readers have a shared understanding of your key terms?

### *At Home:*

What are a few terms you think are particularly important to unpack? Why?

(Here are the terms: Institutional Racism; Person of Color; Racist; Ally; Microaggression; All Lives Matter; Politically Correct; Colorblindness; Safe Space; Diversity; white Privilege; white Fragility)

For each of these terms, describe the way at least two people from the video talk about each term. Do they agree about the definition? Why do they think the term is useful or not? Address each person by name (their names can be found at the bottom of the website).

## Positionality Statement

Instructor: Hunter Little

Through this assignment, students interrogate the myth of neutrality in research in relation to their work and the work of other writers whose work they have read. In doing so, students can center their own voices if they have not felt heard in the past and/or recognize the relative privilege that they may have in relation to the communities they are researching.

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Prompt:

In class, we discussed what positionality means, how it pertains to research, and reviewed some sample positionality statements from past students, other researchers, and me.

Now, you will create your own positionality statement. \*Note: This statement will likely develop further by the time you write your final project and create your poster for presentation.

### Definitions of Positionality

- "Positionality is the notion that personal values, views, and location in time and space influence how one understands the world. In this context, gender, race, class, and other aspects of identities are indicators of social and spatial positions and are not fixed, given qualities. Positions act on the knowledge a person has about things, both material and abstract. Consequently, knowledge is the product of a specific position that reflects particular places and spaces" (Luis Sánchez)
- "Positionality is the social and political context that creates your identity in terms of race, class, gender, sexuality, and ability status. Positionality also describes how your identity influences and [...] biases, your understanding of and outlook on the world" (Duvall, Epting, & Isaac; Elon University).

Thus, a *positionality statement* is...

A description of your identity in society, especially as it relates to a particular project (i.e., your research project). By including a positionality statement in your research, you are acknowledging that no research (yes, this includes scientific quantitative research) can ever be 100% objective. You are noting the ways in which your experiences and identity influence your research choices and the potential findings of your research. In such a statement, you are showing the audience that you are aware of how your background shapes the particular lens through which you see the world. This means, you are rejecting the idea of leaving oneself out of your writing as this is not possible even in seemingly objective texts. This statement is also an acknowledgement that the information in your project could have a different meaning for someone of a different identity.

Positionality statements can include

- Educational background
- Personal experience related to the topic
- Race
- Ethnicity
- Gender

- Sexuality
- Geographical location
- Age/generation
- Language repertoire
- Occupation (or lack thereof)
- Housing status (or past housing statuses)
- Economic background
- Physical and/or mental/emotional abled-ness (physical/mental/emotional disability/illness)
- Relationships (e.g., sister, son, aunt, daughter, etc.)
- Religion/spirituality
- Pretty much any aspect of your identity or experience that you feel influences your research choices, including methods, methodology, and topic

## Course Description for English 109: Critical Composition: Inquiry

Instructor: Anselma Prihandita

This course description deconstructs the concept of “good writing,” which is often presented in academic spaces as text adhering to Dominant American English norms and disproportionately affluent white voices. The description also centers students and what they need from the course and from their instructor. Many 109/110 students express feelings of imposter syndrome and not being heard. A course description is an opportunity for their first impression of a college class to be that their instructor believes that they belong in this academic community, and they deserve to be heard.

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Welcome to English 109! This course is the first in a series of two composition courses; it will be followed by ENGL 110. While ENGL 109 is focused on understanding what inquiry is and how to start one, in ENGL 110 you will learn more deeply about doing a sustained research process and what you do with the knowledge you gain from that. In short, ENGL 109 is about coming up with a research question, and ENGL 110 is about answering a research question in a systematic manner.

The goal of this ENGL 109 course is two-fold. First, we will begin with a critical discussion on what “good writing” is. As a university student, you are expected to master academic literacy skills, and classes like this one are normally expected to help you do this. However, academic discourse and literacy are never value-neutral; they are embedded in complex power relations involving racial, gender, and class dynamics, among others. We are going to take these into account as we learn about writing and scholarly inquiry.

Second, we are going to practice conducting an inquiry and the politics surrounding that. Here are some questions we are going to grapple with:

- What questions get asked in research? What questions get answered? (*Disciplinary, social justice priority*)<sup>42</sup>
- Who’s doing the asking? Who doesn’t get to ask? (*Positionality*)
- Why are they asking? Why are *you* asking? Why these questions? (*Stakes*)
- Where are the askers located? Where are the problems located? (*Geopolitical context*)
- When is this problem happening? When did it start? How long has the discussion on this issue been going on? (*Historical context*)
- How is the question asked? How is it answered? (*Framing, ethics, methods and methodologies*)

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<sup>42</sup> Parentheticals are maintained from the original document.

These are questions that you will have to consider as you try to arrive at a research question. As you can see, there are a lot of things to consider before deciding where to start a research project!

With all that being said, my priority in this class is to *support you* both in developing your writing skills and in starting your college life. I am here to help you get what *you* need and achieve *your* goals, all of which should be set by *you*. Aside from our classroom meetings, we will also work closely on an individual basis to troubleshoot problems and make sure you are on track to grow the way you want to. As such, communication is key—I can't help you if you don't tell me how to help you. Please take advantage of this.

### **Theme 3: Linguistic Justice**

Related EWP Statement tenets:

- Integrate language justice work as part of writing courses in which we examine how systemic racism is often encoded in practices that uphold “academic language” or “Standard English.”
- Create composing occasions through assignment design that invite students to practice their multilingual, translingual, and multimodal language and literacy repertoires for different audiences, contexts, media, and situations with varying stakes.

A commitment to linguistic justice is central to culturally sustaining, antiracist pedagogy. Linguistic justice is as important now as it was when Students’ Right to Their Own Language (SRTOL) was written in 1974 when CCCC Language Policy Committee members “affirm[ed] the students’ right to their own patterns and varieties of language” in the composition classroom. Yet, nearly a half century later, in 2020, the same issues remained exigent as April Baker-Bell et al. delivered demands for Black Linguistic Justice amidst highly publicized police violence toward Black Americans. These scholars ask: “How has Black Lives Mattered in our research, scholarship, teaching” and other parts of the praxes of compositionists? They underscore the need to divest from DAE and code-switching and engage in “political discussions and praxis that center Black Language as teacher-research activism for classrooms and communities.” Without incorporating and valuing an expansive array of students’ linguistic resources, be it dialects, codes, discourses, genres, or languages, a composition course prohibits students from engaging with themselves and lived experiences fully and having those experiences valued and centered through the texts they read as part of a scholarly community. Explicitly naming and interrogating

DAE, “academic language,” and “Standard English,” is an important part of critiquing who gets to be part of scholarly conversations and how. The assumption that different discourses offer the same access and enjoy equal currency in writing classrooms fails to account for systemic inequity and disregards the imbrication of power and discourse (Lu). When we ask students to trade their home literacies for academic discourse, we are asking some to risk more than others.

Many EWP instructors draw upon translingualism and other hybrid language approaches to engage students' linguistic resources in efforts to ensure that home literacies are not relegated to a “separate but equal” curriculum that Vershawn Ashanti Young calls “the same phony logic behind Jim Crow legislation” (53). Translingual scholars, as I have discussed in previous chapters, propose that language is constantly negotiated between interlocutors, who collaboratively co-create meaning in an effort to affirm students' linguistic resources and aid in leveling the playing field between speakers and listeners (Canagarajah). While emergent pedagogical orientations like translingualism position language as fluid and emphasize the negotiations between speakers, it is important to address the role of race in linguistic interactions. Suhanthie Motha warns: “Optimism about new hybrid-language practices therefore needs to be tempered by a consciousness of the role being played by race in our constructions (79). Systemic forces render some students' language practices less legible than others based on their raciolinguistic identities. Negotiation does not actually level the playing field and can render existing hierarchies invisible: as Keith Gilyard says, approaches like translingualism have “the tendency to flatten language differences” and ignore the reality “that we don't all differ from said standard in the same way” (286). Additionally, translingual approaches can tokenize students whose identities are already marginalized. If instructors privilege writing that appears “translingual” above other types of writing, they run the risk of engaging in “linguistic

tourism:” tokenizing students on the basis of their perceived language practices (Matsuda). Therefore, when engaging hybrid language pedagogies, it is essential to acknowledge and discuss the impact of writers’ multiple intersectional identities without imposing expectations on what students’ linguistic resources are or how they will choose to express them.

At the same time, multilingual and translingual pedagogies are complicated by the less friendly realities outside of the composition classroom, where students are often expected to conform to the imagined standards of DAE, which, as many scholars have illustrated in varying contexts, does not exist (e.g., Audre Lorde’s concept of the “mythical norm,” discussed in Chapter 3). It is nearly impossible for students to “pass” as DAE speakers or mythical “normate students” because they are often judged based on their raciolinguistic identities rather than their actual language practices (Davila; Flores and Rosa; Young). One of the biggest problems with code-switching is that it forces students to embody someone they are not—someone who has historically had much more power than that student. Even if code-switching enables students to reach their goals, the act of “[p]assing as a native-English speaker” requires students to relinquish their own identity (Motha 97). Perceptions of race and language are inextricably tied, and naming and engaging with these ties in the composition classroom benefits students when done thoughtfully and intentionally, informed by critical pedagogies. In 109/110 and other UW composition courses, instructors teach grammar lessons not as static rules of DAE but to emphasize the rhetorical, situated, and flexible nature of grammar. The EWP’s ethos discourages prescriptive grammatical instruction on the basis that imposing DAE standards reproduces harmful ideologies and material consequences for students, especially those who have already faced such ideologies prior to college. Yet, students often ask to learn the conventions of DAE

demanded by other professors in their fields of study. Former 109/110 instructor Nolie Ramsey explained the nuances of addressing language in the composition classroom:

I included weekly mini grammar lessons. I did this after having students tell me about having classes where they were deducted a point for each ‘error.’ I know that grammar and correctness are cultural constructs. I expressed this to my students, but I also taught them brief 5–10-minute bits of grammar at the same time (parts of speech, types of sentences, subject-verb agreement, the royal order of adjectives, and so on). I would stay behind after class and line-edit with students for their assignments for other classes.

There was a tension between what I knew to be true, and the reality students encountered in other classes.

I, and many instructors I have talked to, have felt the same tension as Ramsey, and reconciling students’ goals and the ethos of linguistic justice can be challenging to navigate. Teaching DAE grammar, however, can be detrimental to students’ goals, say Flores and Rosa: “AAE users are most likely to learn the codes of power if they feel that their home linguistic practices are affirmed” (165). This is not to say that DAE cannot or should not ever be taught, but rather that the most important through line is culturally sustaining pedagogies that affirm students’ linguistic practices and that when DAE is taught, it is done so critically and in ways that emphasize how language can be used strategically, rhetorically, and even subversively to effectively communicate with different audiences and for a variety of purposes while drawing upon a student’s own array of literacies.

The work of challenging and unpacking the hegemony of DAE is demonstrated in the artifacts in this section. In Hunter Little’s prompt, “What is Good Writing?” she asks students to directly challenge their ideas about what academic writing is and who academic writers are and

reflect on their own experiences internalizing ideas about “good” writing. Little does not require students to answer questions that could be overly personal or ask students to perform trauma. Instead, she offers a list of suggested starter questions ranging from personal (“What are the most common judgements you find yourself making about your writing?”) to impersonal (“Who is excluded by current definitions and misconceptions of academic writing?”) that students can choose to engage with as inspiration for their essays.

The second artifact in this section is, in itself, a small archive that I curated in 2018 alongside two of my colleagues, Zhenzhen He-Weatherford and Sumyat Thu. We gathered materials contributed by our colleagues in the Expository Writing Program related to linguistic justice and translingual orientations toward teaching. We then framed these materials for teachers who may not have a background in translingual theory, aiming to make linguistically just approaches to hybrid language practices accessible to all teachers in our program. The “Materializing Translingualism” archive can be found through the Expository Writing Program’s website.

### ***Teacher-facing framing statement:***

Equitable teaching requires us to challenge linguistic norms of dominant and “standard” English and the entrenched colonial histories of English and reimagining the writing classroom as a space that invites a wide array of language practices. Teaching materials here accomplish this, in part, by:

- Integrat[ing] language justice work as part of writing courses in which we examine how systemic racism is often encoded in practices that uphold “academic language” or “Standard English.”<sup>43</sup>
- Creating composing occasions through assignment design that invite students to practice their multilingual, translingual, and multimodal language and literacy repertoires for different audiences, contexts, media, and situations with varying stakes.

The first resource in this section is Hunter Little’s preliminary essay prompt, in which students are asked to challenge ideas of “good” writing and reflect on how they formed these ideologies.

The second resource is a website that Zhenzhen He-Weatherford, Sara Lovett, and Sumyat Thu curated to share teaching artifacts that engage translingual pedagogies and framing aimed toward EWP instructors who want to apply translingual pedagogies but who may not have in-depth knowledge of composition theories.

### **Suggested texts for students**

Anzaldúa, Gloria. “How to Tame a Wild Tongue.” *Critical Creative Writing: Essential Readings on the Writer’s Craft*, Bloomsbury Academic, 2019, p. 169.

Conference on College Composition and Communication. “This Ain’t Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice!” Jul. 2020.

<https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/demand-for-black-linguistic-justice>

Flores, Nelson, and Jonathan Rosa. “Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies and

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<sup>43</sup> Bulleted principles are quoted from the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis.

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- Leung, Karen. “Embracing Multilingualism and Eradicating Linguistic Bias.” *TED*. Mar. 2018.
- Lippi-Green, Rosina. “The Standard Language Myth.” *English with an Accent*, Routledge, 2012, pp. 74–84, <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203348802-12>.
- Lyiscott, Jamila. “3 Ways to Speak English.” *TED*, Feb. 2014, [https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila\\_lyiscott\\_3\\_ways\\_to\\_speak\\_english?language=en](https://www.ted.com/talks/jamila_lyiscott_3_ways_to_speak_english?language=en)
- Mena, Mike. “Flores and Rosa - ‘Undoing Appropriateness: Raciolinguistic Ideologies...’ (2015).” *YouTube*, 31 Jan. 2019. [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oPWMEJjGbk&ab\\_channel=MikeMena](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5oPWMEJjGbk&ab_channel=MikeMena)
- Motha, Suhanthie. *Race, Empire, and English Language Teaching: Creating Responsible and Ethical antiracist Practice*. Teachers College, Columbia University, 2014.
- Tan, Amy. “Mother Tongue.” *The Opposite of Fate: A Book of Musings*. Putnam, 2003.
- Young, Vershawn Ashanti. “Nah, We Straight”: An Argument Against Code Switching.” *JAC*, vol. 29, no. 1/2, Association of Teachers of Advanced Composition, 2009, pp. 49–76.

## **Preliminary Essay: What is “good” writing?**

Instructor: Hunter Little

This assignment deconstructs the idea of “good” writing in an academic context. Little highlights how standardized language ideals can impact students’ ideas about academic writing. Such ideas can reinforce affluent white voices as the norm and decenter or reject the use of other linguistic resources. By deconstructing “good” academic writing, students can begin to find a space for their own voices that they may not have found before college.

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Prompt:

### **Background**

On the second day of class, I asked you to collaborate and make a list of qualities that define “good” or “academic” writing. Now, you will write a short essay (~ 500+ words), explaining what you believe “good” or “academic” writing should look like and where you believe your perceptions of good writing originated.

### **What to Do and Include:**

#### *Content*

Ideally, I would like this essay to resemble a narrative in some sense of the word. A narrative, in the simplest sense, is a story that someone tells about their lived experience. In other words, this essay should be about *you* and your experiences with academic writing. The most essential requirement for this essay is that you write about writing. You must in some way acknowledge what you believe academic writing should look like and describe one or more experiences you’ve had that may have shaped your understanding of academic writing.

#### *Brainstorming*

You might find it helpful to begin by brainstorming teachers, mentors, tutors, friends, and/or family members who you believe impacted your view of academic writing. Make a list of moments when someone told you what was “(in)correct” or “(in)appropriate” for writing in academic contexts. You may even begin by making a list of what you believe academic writing should look like and adding branches or sub-lists that include the origin of those beliefs.

#### *Formatting*

- 500+ words (~ 1 page single spaced or 2 pages double spaced)
- You may use single or double spaces
- Save the file with your last name in the title. For example, Little\_Prelim\_109
- Note: Points will *not* be deducted for incorrect formatting. In other words, don't sweat these details too much.

### **Questions for Inspiration**

\*These questions are meant to guide you if you find yourself stuck in your writing at any point. They are meant to help you enter the conversation rather than constrain you. You are \*not\*

required to answer all of these questions unless you so choose. You may end up not responding to any of them directly at all!

- Who was the first person that taught you or told you what good writing is? How do you think this event impacted your current perception of good writing?
- Did preparation for standardized testing influence your sense of good writing? Why or why not?
- What do you see as the purpose for writing well? Where does this belief about the purpose of writing come from?
- How do you feel about a single definition of good writing? What are the benefits? What are the cons?
- Who is excluded by current definitions and misconceptions of academic writing?
- Do you judge your own writing harshly? What are the most common judgments you find yourself making about your writing? Why do you think that is?

### **Rationale**

First and foremost, the purpose of this essay is to help you enter into a conversation about what it means to write well, the purpose of writing well, and how former and current perceptions of writing can be harmful. It allows you to reflect on your own experiences with writing and use your life and knowledge as valid forms of meaning making and evidence for your claims. This assignment also allows me to identify a “starting point” for you in this course. As stated in the assessment agreement, this course is about progress (not perfection), and I believe individualized assessment is essential in the writing classroom. This means the preliminary essay allows me to compare your future work in this course to *your own work* rather than the work of your peers or the guidelines of a standardized rubric.

## **Materializing Translingualism in the Writing Classroom**

Instructors: Zhenzhen He-Weatherford, Sara Lovett, and Sumyat Thu

This compendium, housed on the writing program's website, offers syllabi, readings, prompts, assessment strategies, lesson plans, and additional resources that draw upon translingual frameworks (approaches to writing that embrace fluidity and linguistic diversity instead of correctness and standardization). Materials are gathered from EWP instructors and include framing that contextualizes translingual approaches in tangible ways for instructors who may be unfamiliar with these approaches.

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<https://english.washington.edu/materializing-translingualism-writing-classroom-0>

## Theme 4: Ethical and Inclusive Assessment and Curricular Practices<sup>44</sup>

Related EWP Statement tenets:

- Practice ongoing metacognition and self-reflexivity with regards to our own teaching philosophies, classroom practices, power, policies, and positionality to help create more equitable classrooms and curricula.
- Develop writing assessment criteria for grading, peer-reviews, and students' self-assessment that emphasizes writers' development and their language choices and rhetorical effectiveness based on the writing occasion, genre, purpose, and audience rather than strictly on monolingual and dominant academic English norms and standards of correctness.
- Nurture classroom learning environments in which students and teachers are committed to engaging in critical and productive dialogue on issues of equity, justice, difference, and power as they manifest in class readings, writing, discussion, and more broadly.
- Conceptualize and practice teaching and learning with accessibility and Universal Design principles within the context of antiracism and anti-oppression.

“Ethical classroom practices” may sound like an overly broad category, but self-reflection, thoughtful assessment, and classroom policies interact to form a shared pedagogical ecology. The first two teaching artifacts in this section pertain to assessment. Antiracist assessment challenges white language supremacy and DAE, instead moving toward measuring students in terms of their own goals, growth, and labor (Inoue). Such practices can be manifested

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<sup>44</sup> Because this theme focuses on assessment and syllabus practices rather than documents associated with student assignments, I did not include suggested texts for students.

through individual assignment criteria (see Ramsey “Collective Criteria”), syllabus policies (see Little “Assessment Agreement”), or grading contracts. Grading contracts, though not included in this archive, are the most in-depth and integrated of these ways to assess ethically. Any of these practices can decenter grades and recenter student learning. Whiteness and other forms of privilege can impact assessment practices, even against a teacher’s best intentions, especially in traditional grading structures. One instructor I spoke with, Nolie Ramsey, shared these thoughts alongside her collective assessment criteria:

The fact that grades are tied to scholarships means that if a teacher gives a student a bad grade that can result in the student losing funding, either forcing them to drop out or take out (more) student loans. In the context of a writing classroom, white teachers often, whether intentional or unintentional, uphold white language norms as criteria.

The power and privilege that impact assessment can have material impacts on students’ lives—something that is especially important to consider in a class like 109/110, where most students are BIPOC from FGEM backgrounds.

Alongside ethical assessment practices, it is integral for instructors to reflect on their privilege, including their power as instructors as well as any racialized, gendered, linguistic, or other privileges that they may hold in relation to their students. Though reflective practices are not captured in these artifacts, they are essential to the antiracist and anticolonial pedagogical training that instructors, including Little and Prihandita, participated in. While most 109/110 students are Latin American, Black, or Asian, many, if not most, instructors (including me) are white. Acknowledging and discussing whiteness and white teacher positionality is a necessary part of ethical teaching. As Suhanthie Motha says, “When whiteness is equated with neutrality and transparency, it becomes normative” (124). This applies, too, to DAE, often perceived as the

discourse of white scholars. Whiteness is never neutral even though it appears to be and is often the invisible norm in educational systems (as discussed in Theme 3: Linguistic Justice section). It is essential for white people—especially people in authority positions like teachers—to acknowledge their systemic privilege as well as their role in raciolinguistic inequity. Many white people intentionally distance ourselves from racism by defining themselves as more morally good than “racist” white people (Applebaum 18, 20). Yet, a person doesn’t have to display a Confederate flag in their window or espouse racial slurs in order to be complicit in racist systems (12, 46). Although most white people don’t intentionally hurt people of color, we all benefit from whiteness, and this is particularly important to realize as instructors of English—a historically white, Eurocentric enterprise. Challenging the idea that whiteness is normal and neutral is a small but necessary first step in deconstructing a raciolinguistic hierarchy.

Though the focus of this chapter and the statement I discuss is primarily on race, other forms of equity, such as equal access for disabled students, intersects with race, class, and language. Disability is mentioned in the EWP’s statement and included in the teaching archive I curated. Access to diagnoses is unequal across racial, linguistic, and socioeconomic identities; therefore, a critical disability lens is an antiracist one. Disability studies scholars echo many of the same sentiments as antiracist and feminist scholars: Jay Dolmage speaks to an idea similar to Audre Lorde’s mythical norm; he calls it the “normate subject,” who “is white, male, straight, upper middle class; the normal body is his, profoundly and impossibly unmarked and ‘able.’ On the page, this subject and his body translate as error free” (110-111). Ethical classroom practices challenge traditional grading practices that imagine students as this “normate subject” and instead assess and build community with students collaboratively based on who they are, what they value, and what they want to learn.

***Teacher-facing framing statement:***

Equitable teaching requires us to co-create classroom communities with students by collaborating to prioritize student learning goals and universally accessible learning spaces and activities. Teaching materials here accomplish this, in part, by:

- Practic[ing] ongoing metacognition and self-reflexivity with regards to our own teaching philosophies, classroom practices, power, policies, and positionality to help create more equitable classrooms and curricula.<sup>45</sup>
- Develop[ing] writing assessment criteria for grading, peer-reviews, and students' self-assessment that emphasizes writers' development and their language choices and rhetorical effectiveness based on the writing occasion, genre, purpose, and audience rather than strictly on monolingual and dominant academic English norms and standards of correctness.
- Nurtur[ing] classroom learning environments in which students and teachers are committed to engaging in critical and productive dialogue on issues of equity, justice, difference, and power as they manifest in class readings, writing, discussion, and more broadly.
- Conceptualiz[ing] and practic[ing] teaching and learning with accessibility and Universal Design principles within the context of antiracism and anti-oppression.

The following artifacts engage with ethical, student-centered practices through a collective assessment practice (Ramsey), assessment agreement (Little), and two syllabus statements (Lee and Prihandita; Lovett), all of which emphasize collaboratively generated norms in the form of

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<sup>45</sup> Bulleted principles are quoted from the EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis.

living documents through which instructors and students collaboratively create assessment and classroom community standards.

## What Do You Say? (Collective Criteria)

Instructor: Nolie Ramsey

Ramsey’s assessment practice, formulating collective criteria, illustrates one way to incorporate collaborative, student-centered grading practices in individual assignments. By building a rubric together with students, instructors can foreground students’ goals and knowledge. It can take multiple attempts to build a collaborative, trusting environment for collective assessment, but in doing so, students can take ownership of their learning and lessen—though not eliminate—some of the power imbalances in the classroom.

Beyond the value of this assessment practice, Ramsey’s students (in her words), “clearly stated their beliefs about themselves and about how the world needed to change. In their manifestos, students critiqued the university, the strict gender expectations of their home life, the fact that to even afford to be in this class required that many of them faced repeated bodily and neurological trauma on a football field. Those manifestos did not change a thing about the realities students faced, and I don’t even pretend it came close to doing that. It did give them space to think and critique those realities, and the manifesto genre also made space for them to reimagine and call into view a different world that they wanted to exist. Ideally, writing allows students to create room for themselves, room to think, to interpret, to reinterpret, to critique, to imagine, to reimagine, to hope.”

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Respond to Sara Ahmed’s “Killjoy Manifesto.” To refer to the language *They Say, I Say* uses, decide whether you think “Yes,” “No,” and “Okay, but…” In other words, do you agree, disagree, or agree with some adjustments? Explain why. This should be **1-2 pages** long.

In an additional **1 page**, write your manifesto for something you think is important. It can be anything. **In an additional paragraph**, explain how you knew what a manifesto looked like? What did you take from our readings to model this?

Your total project should be **2.5-4 pages** long.

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### Collective criteria:

How do you think this assignment should be evaluated? What are some “criteria” I could use to give you feedback?

## **Assessment Agreement (English 110)**

Instructor: Hunter Little

Unlike many syllabus policy statements that only list requirements of students, Little's assessment agreement establishes expectations for the instructor as well. These expectations include practical guidelines, such as timelines for returning feedback on assignments, as well as value-based expectations, such as not expecting students to code-switch or adhere to DAE standards of English. A bidirectional assessment agreement, as Little says, can be a living document. Instructors can build such an agreement collaboratively with students and revisit it throughout the term.

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### **Assigning Grades**

As per the EWP program policies and my own values as an instructor, no official grades will be assigned to your work until the end of the quarter after you've completed the final project and reflection (70%). However, each weekly and daily assignment, class discussion, note taking submission, group activity, free write, and other small assignments you complete count toward your participation (30%). Participation also includes one-on-one conferences and peer reviews. Thus, although grades will not be assigned, I will be tracking the progress of your writing, the effort you put into the class, and the overall completion of coursework.

The reason grades are not assigned until the end of the quarter is to ensure that you are not judged by the skills you possess upon entering the class, but rather the skills you possess at the end of the quarter and how much you have grown from day one. Assigning grades on day one and comparing you to an unspoken standard can be discouraging, though I acknowledge and celebrate the skills, experiences, and tools you bring with you from your past writing and life experience.

Additionally, if at any point you would like to know how you are doing in the class, please do reach out. I'm more than happy to chat about your progress or discuss assignment feedback one-on-one!

### **Submitting Work**

As stated in the syllabus, all deadlines (apart from that of the final portfolio) in this course are "rolling." This means you are given a three-day window to submit your assignment if you would like to receive feedback. For example, if the deadline is Friday and you submit on Tuesday, you will not receive feedback unless you communicate with me. If you submit your work after the third day and would still like feedback, it is your responsibility to contact me to schedule a time to discuss your paper.

## **Return Time**

All feedback on assignments will be returned to you no later than two weeks after your work is submitted. I am often able to return work within a week of submission and will try my best to do so. As per the syllabus, if you submit an assignment three or more days after the posted deadline, you will not receive feedback on your work unless you schedule a time to meet and discuss the work with me. All comments on your work are meant to build your writerly confidence and guide you toward a discussion in your final reflection; they are not punitive or corrective.

## **Types of Comments**

Minor Assignments (discussions and discussion posts, note taking, free writes, worksheets, activities, etc.): Comments on minor assignments will be minimal. That said, if comments are not provided, it does not mean that I have not read and appreciated the work you have done and the effort you have put into the assignment.

Daily and Weekly Assignments: Written feedback will be provided to you for each daily and weekly assignment, typically in the form of marginal and terminal comments unless otherwise requested. The comments will focus on “higher order concerns,” such as development of thoughts, organization, depth of analysis, backing up claims, etc. rather than “lower order concerns,” such as grammar, spelling, punctuation, etc. unless you specifically request otherwise.

The reason I do not provide feedback on such lower order concerns is to combat the idea that one must “master” writing in English and challenge the belief in a standard way of writing that is both Eurocentric and oppressive. However, if another instructor is deducting points from your assignments for grammatical errors, I’d be happy to sit down with you and discuss the “errors” they’ve marked.

Final Portfolio/Reflection: Minimal feedback will be given on the final portfolio, but I welcome any questions that arise based on the grade assigned to you at the end of the quarter.

Remember, all written comments left on your work are meant to build writerly confidence and push you toward the discussion in your final reflection; they are meant to encourage you to improve the piece of writing and, thus, your writing skills overall.

## **Focus of Assessment**

Assessment is mostly based on general completion of the course assignments. However, you will also be assessed on overall progress, thorough reflections in the final, and observable effort. When you enter this classroom there is no standard to which I am comparing your work. In other words, the only person you are competing with in your writing is yourself. The only person you need to try to do “better” than is your past self.

With the completion of your first writing assignment, you demonstrate the skills you possess as an experienced writer (and, yes, you are all experienced writers) and, thus, set a goal for yourself to learn and grow as you acknowledge writing as a process rather than a product. Typically, when asked what my main assessment criterion is in English 110, I always say “effort.”

To demonstrate that you have put an average amount of effort into this course (i.e., to receive an average grade [B range], I expect the following:

1. Completion of all but one discussion board post
2. Completion of all but one minor assignment
3. Completion/submission of all weekly assignments
4. Completion and submission of your research journal twice per term
5. Completion of all but three free writing exercises
6. Occasional, thoughtful contributions to in-class discussion (responding to lectures, readings, activities, discussions, etc.)
7. Attendance and participation in all peer review sessions
8. Attendance of 90% of our class sessions (this mean only missing one week of classes, i.e., 4 class sessions)
9. Completion of your final portfolio demonstrating an understanding of the course learning outcomes and thoughtful reflections of your work
10. Making an effort to communicate with me if/when necessary (e.g., asking questions or expressing concerns via email or during office hours)
11. Attendance of one one-on-one conference with me during our two scheduled conference weeks
12. Upholding community guidelines throughout the quarter

To demonstrate that you have put a great amount of effort into this course (i.e., to receive an above-average grade [A range], I expect the following (differences emphasized *italics*):

1. Completion of all discussion board posts and all minor assignments with the addition of frequent responses to your peers’ discussion board posts
2. Completion/submission of all weekly assignments within the three-day “rolling” deadline window
3. Completion and submission of your research journal twice per term demonstrating thoughtful engagement with prompts and research in and outside of class
4. Completion of all free writing exercises demonstrating thoughtful engagement with the prompts/questions
5. Frequent, thoughtful contributions to in-class discussion (responding to lectures, readings, activities, discussions, etc.)
6. Attendance and participation in all peer review sessions
7. Attendance of 95% of our class sessions (missing no more than 2 class sessions)

8. Completion of your final portfolio demonstrating an understanding of the course learning outcomes and thoughtful reflections of your work with the addition of a clear reflection of your overall progress, what aspects of the course you will carry with you, and how the course changed your views of writing in general
9. Making an apparent effort to communicate with me if/when necessary (e.g., asking questions or expressing concerns via email or during office hours)
10. Attendance of two one-on-one conferences with me during our two scheduled conference weeks
11. Upholding community guidelines throughout the quarter

### **Other Notes**

In return for the effort you put into this course, I will hold myself to the following:

1. As stated above, all written work will be returned with feedback within two weeks of submission if submitted within the three-day rolling deadline window.
2. I will meet with you one-on-one to discuss your writing, any other aspects of the course, or general life stuff upon request. Just shoot me an email or ask after class.
3. I will not require an “excuse” for absences, requested extensions, or missed work. It’s not my business unless you choose to share it with me. In which case, I will listen and discuss the situation with care.
4. I will not deduct points from participation for missing 5% or less of our class sessions.\*
5. I will excuse one discussion post and one free write at the end of the quarter.
6. I will respond to all emails as soon as possible. I am usually great at responding to emails within minutes, as I check my email often during the day. Thus, I will be sure to respond within twenty-four hours.
7. If asked a question or called on in class, you will not be penalized for passing, not paying attention, or not being prepared to answer.
8. I will not deduct points if your initial drafts of your daily and weekly assignments do not meet the page count or fulfill the prompt. However, they must fulfill the prompt when submitted with the final portfolio as the end of term.
9. I will not expect you to codeswitch in order to be successful in my course.
10. I will not penalize you for “improper” grammar, syntax, etc. in your written work.
11. I will deeply consider changes to course design, assignments, guidelines, etc. if concerns, issues, or suggestions are raised. In other words, I will approach discussions of work overload with grace and consider revising course design if issues arise.

\*Attendance in this course for winter quarter 2022 will be judged/graded as an exceptional quarter given the circumstances.

Final note: As all works of writing are, this document is a work in progress. This means I am always open to suggestions from current students on how I can make this document more equitable for you and future students

## **To Maintain a Healthy Classroom Community**

Instructor: Anselma Prihandita, adapted from Dr. Regina Y. Lee

This classroom conduct statement works to cultivate an environment in which students can, in the words of EWP's Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis, engage "in critical and productive dialogue on issues of equity, justice, difference, and power as they manifest in class readings, writing, discussion, and more broadly." A statement that establishes the likelihood of discomfort that students will experience when encountering new ideas sets a tone that emphasizes growth rather than the inclusion of all ideas (some of which could be harmful or bigoted). This statement emphasizes the breadth and depth of knowledge that students can discover from their classmates throughout the course.

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This course aims to transform the ways we think about our relations with human and inhuman others, especially considering our positions with respect to social structures and the academic institution. Our materials may prove difficult and uncomfortable; our in-class discussions, even more so.

I require that you approach your peers, your instructor, and the course materials with an open mind and with as much respect as you would give to yourself. As you learn, I require you to demonstrate your understanding of our course materials in assuming the best, calling out the worst, maintaining kindness, and holding open lines of communication based in scholarly affection for our course materials. This is especially important in the moments of your sharpest disagreements. Use them to bend your thoughts toward ever-deepening analysis of our course materials, in the service of the work we are doing together. Always keep in mind that there is something to learn from both in the most trivial things and the hardest challenges, and of course, from everyone you cross paths with.

## Accessibility and Accommodations

Instructor: Sara Lovett

Many accessibility statements emphasize the need for students to obtain official accommodations through the disability resource office to receive accommodations in the classroom. This statement emphasizes the importance of access for all students regardless of an official diagnosis or accommodations. There are many systemic, cultural, and logistical barriers to obtaining official diagnoses and accommodations, and a syllabus policy that invites all students to discuss access with instructors moves toward an environment in which all students can learn equally. Additionally, this statement acknowledges the bidirectionality of accessibility needs from both students and instructors.

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I am dedicated to making this class a space where all students, including students with various disabilities or other needs, can succeed. I also ask that you work with me and my accessibility needs. I work to make this classroom as accessible as I can, but I need your input about how you most effectively learn to make the class work for everyone. I imagine that your needs might change due to any number of factors especially as you adjust to learning online and as we all watch the COVID-19 pandemic unfold. Please talk to me early and often about your ideas and needs, and let's keep talking about how they change over time.

I do not require that you have documentation from the Disability Resources for Students (DRS) office, but I recommend that you speak to them about what they can offer you. DRS can be reached at <https://depts.washington.edu/uwdrs/>.

## **Conclusion**

This chapter connects theoretical and applied parts of the English 109/110 writing ecology through a living archive of teaching artifacts and accompanying framework. Based on what my colleagues and I have learned from focus group students and instructors, I curated the teaching artifacts in this chapter, which correspond with the priorities of students and instructors (based on interviews) and administrators (based on the Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis). The intersection of these intentions and goals is another community effort: a donation of time and labor from outstanding instructors in our writing ecology who engage in a variety of ways with critical praxis. I am only one small part of this writing ecology; thus, this chapter enacts a praxis of community and recursivity through the constellation of work and perspectives of various stakeholders synthesized with relevant scholarship. This archive will be shared digitally in the EWP 109/110 Google Drive and circulated to future instructors at their new teacher orientation, and instructors and administrators can contribute to and revise the archive over time as the critical praxis of this ecology evolves. Critical pedagogies are always a work in progress, and I hope that this archive will be a living document for future instructors to adapt and add to as we learn how to teach more ethically and compassionately.

The teaching artifacts that I have curated in this chapter embody some of the antiracist values of the EWP, particularly those that I have highlighted as part of the four themes in this chapter, and also more broadly the underlying theoretical frameworks of antiracist, anticolonial, culturally sustaining, translingual, student-centered pedagogies. Building on students' contributions in Chapter 3, in which they said that seeing themselves represented in the texts they read helped them feel more like writers, the texts recommended by instructors in the teaching archive recommend a diverse array of linguistic, cultural, and genre capacities to help students

conceptualize writing broadly beyond the often white, middle class, Eurocentric canon and five-paragraph essay mode frequently emphasized in high school English courses. Instructors also contributed artifacts that engage with linguistic justice, such as prompts that ask students to deconstruct the idea of “good” writing. As students shared in Chapter 3, they were often told that their language was not “formal” or “academic” enough for high school and college writing. Beyond engaging students in analysis and production of a wide array of texts, the assignments showcased in this chapter engage students in “unlearning the norms and characteristics of systems of White supremacy” by interrogating why and how some voices are published and elevated while others are not (Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis).

The following chapter, this dissertation’s conclusion, connects the various parts of the writing ecology I have sketched out in these four chapters: the institutional framework and program revisions, student experiences, and instructor materials paint a picture of an interstitial network that expands and contracts in response to students’ needs. I discuss, in the final chapter, how the needs expressed by students, administrators, and instructors can more impactfully shape a community of support that challenges oppressive systems while fostering joy and community as students find their place as writers and as people.

## **Chapter 5**

### **A Recursive Ecology**

In this concluding chapter, I return to the driving questions of this dissertation and discuss how others might extend this work in the future of the University of Washington's program and beyond. I end with a coda on my positionality as a researcher in this study. In this dissertation, I set out to discover how individuals and campus units in a FGEM-focused writing ecology are influenced by, among many other factors, ideologies, policies, and curricula with the intention of developing ideas for programmatic revision and curricular development informed by equity-minded, student-centered praxis. As I have argued throughout, a critical ecological approach can drive student-centered change by challenging linguistically unjust ideologies and how they manifest in our classrooms. Recursive analysis of the documents, policies, ideologies, and individual experiences in a writing ecology can drive transformational change that reimagines the writing classroom as a site for community and collective knowledge-sharing and building. Key questions I have raised center on how the members of a writing ecology designed for FGEM students can cultivate writing ecologies driven by equity-minded, antiracist, linguistically just praxes. Specifically, I have traced questions of how we might challenge rhetorics of remediation to redefine access in ways that invite and center students' literacies instead of requiring them to adopt practices that displace their diverse home literacies. Further, I ask how stretch writing ecologies can be driven by such definitions of access to contribute to institutional transformation driven by antiracist, culturally sustaining praxes that engage and reflect students' lived experiences, linguistic and cultural capacities, needs, goals, and knowledge. Such work is important because first-generation, economically marginalized students are often at a disadvantage in terms of familial knowledge of universities, economic security in paying for tuition and living expenses, and imposter syndrome. The latter especially impacts

students who do not see themselves reflected in the texts they read and who are told that their writing is too informal or unacademic due to their identities or linguistic background. At the same time, much scholarship on historically marginalized groups, as Eve Tuck, Casey Wong, and Courtney Pena remind us, focuses on oppression, trauma, lack, and deficit, ignoring the rich and varied life experiences, aspirations, and linguistic capacities of BIPOC FGEM students that are rarely represented in the academy. All students deserve the opportunity to see themselves in texts and to feel heard through their writing.

English 109/110 is part of a unique writing ecology that specifically seeks to support and engage students in ways that the university at large often does not. I argue that such an ecology is valuable because of the aforementioned opportunities it offers and that students at other universities might benefit from similar programs. Antiracist, networked approaches to studying changing writing ecologies can contribute to institutional transformation that engages and reflects students' lived experiences, linguistic and cultural capacities, needs, goals, and knowledge. Further, equitable, accessible pedagogies affirm students' role as co-creators in producing knowledge alongside their peers and instructors. The seven students in my case study shared that they felt a sense of community in 109/110 that they did not feel elsewhere in the university due to the small class size and shared life experiences and identities with their peers. Some students shared, for example, that because there are few Latin American students at UW, they feel the greatest sense of belonging on campus in English 109/110 (where many of their peers are Latin American and bilingual) as well as the Ethnic Cultural Center. The four students whose experiences I focus on in greater depth in Chapter 3 share experiences with imposter syndrome and linguistic injustice. Steven shares, for example, that developing "formal" and "academic" writing styles was one of his primary goals in English 109/110 on the basis of his

previous teachers' feedback that his writing is not on par with college work. Students expressed that they felt unprepared for college writing as first-generation students and therefore enrolled in English 109/110, which they perceived to be an easier course that would prepare them for future writing classes. Students reported that throughout the stretch sequence, they developed greater confidence in their writing skills as they received positive, affirming feedback from their instructors on their papers and from their peers in class discussions.

In order to ethically and equitably support FGEM and BIPOC students in a stretch writing ecology such as English 109/110, it is critical to engage in a recursive process of ecological revision—an unending process of program-wide learning and reshaping alongside students, instructors, administrators, and campus partners and situated in the documents, ideologies, and curricula that inform the ever-changing interactions and experiences that unfold in the writing classroom. In light of legacies of remediation, material and embodied classroom conditions, and the complexities and paradoxes of the inequitable structures of power in stretch composition courses and higher education more broadly, stakeholders in a writing ecology have a responsibility to work together to center students' experiences, needs, and goals. Composition programs that intend to challenge socioeconomic and racialized barriers best serve students when working as a cohesive ecology to explicitly affirm students as writers and scholars. Students' testimonies underscore the value of courses driven by community-building and culturally sustaining praxes and designed with historically marginalized students in mind. Such classes offer an alternative to remedial stretch writing models that disproportionately include historically marginalized students and, at times, do not offer credit for coursework (Glau; Royer and Gilles; Sullivan et al; TYCA). This work is especially crucial in a predominantly white (and inherently

highly educated) discipline like composition studies, which also reflects the demographics of the academy at large.

Individuals and organizations in positions of power in writing ecologies can redefine access to account for the lived experiences of students while challenging inequitable structures of power in higher education (as well as in broader societies and contexts). I argue for redefining access away from a model of “helping” students navigate and access inequitable institutions and instead for antiracist models aimed at centering students' lived experiences, meaning-making practices, knowledge, expertise, and goals. The students and instructors in this study illustrate the pervasiveness of ideologies of linguistic injustice that lead students to believe that they are not writers—or, at the very least, that they are in need of remediation before they are prepared for college writing. These ideologies, students share in my case study, are intertwined with their backgrounds as FGEM, Latin American students who are children of immigrants. Teaching students to adopt the linguistic and cultural practices most widely modeled and accepted will not necessarily meet student's needs and desires even if such an approach did succeed in meeting the expectations of the university. Access can instead be defined as creating spaces where students can be themselves and are encouraged to bring their full selves to their composition practices.

## **Future Spaces**

The English 109/110 revision project continues beyond my dissertation, and I hope that the knowledge I have shared—both my own and that of the many contributors to this project—will further drive equitable, student-centered change. Going forward, there are opportunities for cross-institutional collaboration between the UW writing program and other universities with similar praxes and/or existing stretch writing programs. This case study, though difficult to extrapolate, can aid in local program assessment by providing detailed pictures of students' lived

experiences in relation to programmatic changes and contributes to a growing body of research on stretch programs and equity-minded praxes in an effort to shift composition program design and instruction toward models that better support historically marginalized students.

Administrators and researchers can share knowledge and models for antiracist, ecological program revision with stakeholders at other universities throughout the field of composition studies. Locally, UW can collaborate with institutions including branch campuses, community colleges, and small private universities in the area to share our revision process. Other institutions could undergo similar studies to learn about their writing ecologies and share their findings to collaboratively develop antiracist methods that underscore a student-centered, equity-minded writing program. Such collaborations can facilitate recursive knowledge-building across institutions as new scholarship and changing student populations influence program policies, curricula, and approaches to engaging with student support services across campus (such as advising units in this study).

In this dissertation, I employ institutional ethnography methods by focusing on individuals as a way of grounding complex systems in the everyday experiences of the people who navigate them—especially students—in pursuit of foundational knowledge of what some students experience in this local ecology. I connect individuals' experiences with documents such as teaching artifacts and departmental statements, but with more time, I would delve further into archival documents and institutional practices and policies that influence the writing classroom to engage with a deeper study of the writing ecology. Such focal points would give a fuller depiction of how a writing ecology's ideologies and individuals' goals, experiences, and desires are materialized or come into tension with everyday practices. I would additionally expand connections to ideologies to a more systemic level to elaborate on how and why students

may have developed and internalized linguistic injustices and imposter syndrome in relation to the writing classroom and finding a sense of belonging.

Future research could further interrogate the long-term impact of English 109/110 and similar courses through longitudinal studies. A study that begins in high school could track students' experiences in their English classes through studies of school policies and curricula in conversation with the ideologies of teachers, administrators, families, and students. A larger case study could follow students at multiple schools in the area with a high population of FGEM students in college preparation programs. Such a study could follow a dozen or so students from their late high school experience through college with a focus on perceptions of their writing and opportunities to share their voices and experiences in the writing classroom. A longitudinal study could help college writing program administrators and instructors better understand and respond to the practices and ideologies students developed and were exposed to in their previous education and how those experiences impacted their confidence and sense of belonging in the writing classroom. To make a longitudinal study ecological, the case study experiences of students could be analyzed in relation to how focal students and their teachers take up linguistic ideologies in their application of policies, curricula, cultivation of classroom community, and writing feedback. While it is not possible to incorporate every element of a writing ecology, a deeper study could generate more knowledge by connecting more parts of an ecology more thoroughly with more case study participants over a longer period of time.

As I conclude, I return to Gabriel's quote that opened this dissertation:

That's rough. First-generation student. You're the first one. That's, that in and of itself is hard as heck. I had a really tough time [...] navigat[ing] how to even apply to college [...] not having the ability to talk to a family member about that was, to be truthful, kinda

tough. It's kinda sad. And there's also, like I said, twice, three times the pressure of okay, now you're here, next comes a degree, you've gotta graduate. This is the expectation. You've gotta meet it if not exceed it. Which, like I said, I'm still tryin' to manage. [...] I haven't really found a group or community myself of students that talk about that struggle. Like that's, that's hard. What does it mean to me? I'm very proud.

While Gabriel shares the difficulties of navigating college applications and his first year at UW, there is heaviness, trepidation, and loneliness. But I hope readers will also see his joy and pride. In imagining a future where we make change and change spaces, if we are inspired by students' joy, we can answer questions of how we can further cultivate community, honor students' capacities, and more deeply resist hegemonic institutions by changing spaces with students in mind.

## **Coda**

### **Researcher Positionality in the English 109/110 Writing Ecology**

White teachers perpetuate racism in their classrooms – often despite good intentions and decades of educational research meant to help White teachers understand and interrupt racism (Daniels 9).

Does speaking about whiteness allow it to become an 'essential something'? If whiteness gains currency by being unnoticed, then what does it mean to notice whiteness? What does making the invisible marks of privilege more visible actually do? (Ahmed 149).

In this coda, I reflect on my personal relationship with this writing ecology given my positionality as a white continuing-generation student from an upper middle class family background. I wrestle with what it means for me to take on the role of commentator and observer in a space in which I hold disproportionate privilege. Though I do not have all the answers, I consider this reflection an important part of situating myself in this ecology.

I'm in first grade. My mother, a teacher, gets me tested for my school's gifted program. The assessor evaluates my IQ—a test that is rooted in eugenics and highly biased toward white individuals from middle and upper class English-speaking backgrounds. I was labeled “gifted” and pulled out of class weekly from first through fifth grade to engage in playful, creative, exploratory learning. I lived in Central Florida in a racially diverse community, but I recall only one non-white student in the gifted program.

I'm in sixth grade. I test into advanced math classes, skipping two years, and honors English. These standardized tests are, again, biased toward white middle and upper class English speakers. I discover a love of writing through the mentorship of extraordinary teachers (who likely were picked to teach those classes because they were the “best” teachers).

I'm in ninth grade. My father gets a job in Shanghai, China, and his company pays for my tuition at an international school, where I benefit from small class sizes and the perspectives of students from around the world. My peers were the children of businesspeople, educators, and engineers—no doubt, almost all parents with college degrees. While at this school, my parents pay for two summers of SAT prep. In my first practice test, I score quite poorly but have the chance to take many more tests and learn how to take the exam (which I discover is much more important than the actual content). I memorize grammar rules in my English classes and gleefully “correct” my peers' essays upon their request.

I'm in twelfth grade. I have received a National Merit Scholarship based on my PSAT score and could attend a state school for free. Instead, I attend a private university, and my parents pay the majority of the steep tuition. I benefit from campus resources, which I know how to navigate because my parents both attended college in the US and help me fill out forms to accommodations for my ADHD and advise me to visit office hours and develop study skills.

I'm in my second year of graduate school. I am ranking my top choices of classes to teach. I hesitate. I'm interested in teaching English 109/110, the stretch course, because I believe in its mission to support historically marginalized students in accessing the university. I talk to two colleagues—at the time, English 109/110 Assistant Directors—and ask if it is appropriate for me, a white continuing generation teacher with immense privilege, to teach this course. They say yes and emphasize how wonderful the course, the students, and the mission are. I rank the course as my first choice—with some trepidation—and proceed to teach two quarters of 109, two of 110, and two quarters of other composition courses offered exclusively to OMA&D students and student athletes. I love the course but continue to question whether I should be taking up space in these classrooms.

I'm writing my dissertation prospectus. After participating in another doctoral student's study of my class and a pilot project revising the stretch sequence, I decide that I, too, want to pursue a qualitative study of English 109/110. After all, the assistant directors were right about the incredible students and valuable mission of the course. I wanted to create a practical dissertation to give back to the department and the students: instead of getting lost in high-level theory, making concrete changes that I could see in the writing program. At the core of that project, I wanted to help students “gain access” to the university. The original title of this dissertation was “Access in Stretch Writing: Making Change, Changing Spaces.” My committee wisely asked what, exactly, were students gaining access to. I was stumped and realized that my study was at a crossroads and could veer into the territory of white saviorism in a space where I, a person of considerable privilege, did not really need to be heard. My intention going forward with the project has been to center students' voices—I realize the irony in concluding with a personal narrative—and learn about what they wanted from the course.

In this qualitative study, I have been humbled at how little I know and how much wisdom surrounds me in this writing ecology. This lesson is fitting in that it encapsulates the value in ecological thinking: I, alone, cannot improve or even understand an ecology. I alone contribute little to this study. I put in conversation the deep wisdom of scholars, students, instructors, administrators, and student support staff across campus. It is only through learning about and synthesizing these deep wells of knowledge that weave together inextricably that I can say much of anything about what I have learned and contribute.

At the core of this dissertation, I argue that a critical ecological approach is imperative in the recursive process of building a student-centered classroom for first-generation, economically marginalized students. Affirming students' cultural and linguistic practices, making space for their experiences, centering historically marginalized voices and meaning-making practices, and co-creating classroom practices can affirm students' belief that they have something to say that matters. Best practices and students' needs will change over time, necessitating recursive, frustrating, never-ending processes of revision and listening deeply to the contradictory, ambitious, nebulous perspectives across a writing ecology. But this work is necessary and meaningful.

I am finishing my dissertation. I take up space that I, in many ways, did not earn. I look to others across a writing ecology—especially students—and learn how the actors across an ecology can make change and change spaces.

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## **Appendix A: EWP Statement on Antiracist Writing Pedagogy and Program Praxis<sup>46</sup>**

### *Our Commitments and Vision*

We in the Expository Writing Program—program directors, instructors, and staff—approach the teaching of writing as consequential social action and ethical communication and we understand language as political and tied to identity, culture, and power. In our role as educators, we commit to reflect on the communities to which we are accountable and the language practices we are sustaining. We further commit to work against the various forms of systemic oppression emanating from racial capitalism and white supremacy that shape the social conditions of teaching, learning, and living in the university, in our social institutions, and in our everyday lives.

Rather than being simply a matter of individual biases or prejudices, we understand that various forms of oppression are pervasive, intersectional, and built into our educational, economic, and political systems. Racism, sexism, oppression of gender nonbinary and queer people, ableism, and oppression on the basis of language and citizenship all work in intertwined ways to reproduce the conditions of racial capitalism and colonialism.

These systemic oppressions are ongoing problems that concern all of us, that we all participate in perpetuating even unconsciously and unintentionally, and that require us to understand the important differences between intent and impact. We commit to working together, with compassion and critical intention, to resist and transform normative systems within our university and program and to rebuild our teaching and learning communities to be more socially equitable, culturally sustaining, and just.

We acknowledge that literacy education and language policies in the U.S. are built on a foundation of racial capitalism, white supremacy, and settler colonialism that persists and has delegitimized and often penalized the language practices, experiences, and knowledges of minoritized and historically underrepresented peoples. We therefore reject Eurocentric assumptions about the written word as a superior form of literacy and define composition and literacy in our program ecology as multi- or trans-modal, translingual, anticolonial, and culturally affirming communication practices. We also reject the binary formations of standard/non-standard Englishes and native/non-native English speakers that racial capitalism has exploited at the expense of multilingual communities of color. We seek to transform this ongoing systemic inequity and discrimination by developing writing curriculum, assessment practices, teacher development programs, and language policies that recognize linguistic and other differences as the norm of communication and that stress rhetorical effectiveness and

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<sup>46</sup>Created by Candice Rai, Sumyat Thu, Emily George, and Stephanie Kerschbaum with contributions from other EWP staff.

ethical language use across different lived experiences, contexts, genres, purposes, audiences, and writing occasions within and beyond the academy (See links at end of this document for more information).

### *Our Praxis*

In teaching writing as social and ethical literacy, we are committed to developing antiracist and equitable pedagogical frameworks in our writing program and policies, in our teaching preparation and mentoring efforts, and in our curriculum and classroom practices. Antiracist pedagogical frameworks, as we understand them, are intersectional, which means that they center different forms of intersecting marginalizations as well as the power relations among race, class, gender, and other social, political, and cultural identities and experiences that may manifest in texts that we read and write, in students' and teachers' experiences, and in classrooms as well as broader social dynamics. While this statement and the below examples only signal the start to ongoing work, we seek to support our students and instructors through active antiracist and equity-focused pedagogies and program praxis that:

- contextualize writing as a socio-political practice that helps students and instructors examine how writing might be practiced as personally and socially impactful, ethical, and empowering forms of literacy;
- practice ongoing metacognition and self-reflexivity with regards to our own teaching philosophies, classroom practices, power, policies, and positionality to help create more equitable classrooms and curricula;
- create a culture of unlearning the norms and characteristics of systems of white supremacy and continually build a more actively antiracist writing program and praxis.
- make instituted and sustained efforts on recruiting and retaining instructors and administrators of color and of historically marginalized identities through equitable hiring practices and antiracist forms of support for teacher development;
- develop writing assessment criteria for grading, peer-reviews, and students' self-assessment that emphasizes writers' development and their language choices and rhetorical effectiveness based on the writing occasion, genre, purpose, and audience rather than strictly on monolingual and dominant academic English norms and standards of correctness;
- integrate language justice work as part of writing courses in which we examine how systemic racism is often encoded in practices that uphold "academic language" or "Standard English;"
- encourage and support all instructors to practice antiracist pedagogy that is critically responsive to the contexts of their social identities, positionalities, teaching philosophies, and disciplinary and course objectives;

- nurture classroom learning environments in which students and teachers are committed to engaging in critical and productive dialogue on issues of equity, justice, difference, and power as they manifest in class readings, writing, discussion, and more broadly;
- conceptualize and practice teaching and learning with accessibility and Universal Design principles within the context of antiracism and anti-oppression;
- resist Eurocentric and white U.S.-centric curricula and engage in curating reading and writing curricula that centers voices, knowledges, and experiences from marginalized authors and discourse traditions;
- help students engage with course curricula in reflexive and compassionate ways that do not ask students of marginalized identities to relive trauma, but that asks all students to engage in social issues and how they relate to composing with criticality;
- explore the relationships among writing, language, power, and social identities such as race, class, gender, sexuality, disability, mobility, faith/religion, and citizenship;
- encourage students to make connections between their lived experiences and academic research and inquiries that complicate the notions of objectivity and neutrality in writing and academic learning;
- encourage students to think about the social impact of their writing and the social groups and communities they are accountable to as part of audience awareness;
- create composing occasions through assignment design that invite students to practice their multilingual, translingual, and multimodal language and literacy repertoires for different audiences, contexts, media, and situations with varying stakes

## **Appendix B: EWP Course Outcomes - 100-level courses**

### **Outcome 1**

To compose strategically for a variety of audiences and contexts, both within and outside the university, by

- recognizing how different elements of a rhetorical situation matter for the task at hand and affect the options for composing and distributing texts;
- coordinating, negotiating, and experimenting with various aspects of composing—such as genre, content, conventions, style, language, organization, appeals, media, timing, and design—for diverse rhetorical effects tailored to the given audience, purpose, and situation; and
- assessing and articulating the rationale for and effects of composing choices.

### **Outcome 2**

To work strategically with complex information in order to generate and support inquiry by

- reading, analyzing, and synthesizing a diverse range of texts and understanding the situations in which those texts are participating;
- using reading and writing strategies to craft research questions that explore and respond to complex ideas and situations;
- gathering, evaluating, and making purposeful use of primary and secondary materials appropriate for the writing goals, audience, genre, and context;
- creating a ‘conversation’—identifying and engaging with meaningful patterns across ideas, texts, experiences, and situations; and
- using citation styles appropriate for the genre and context.

### **Outcome 3**

To craft persuasive, complex, inquiry-driven arguments that matter by

- considering, incorporating, and responding to different points of view while developing one’s own position;
- engaging in analysis—the close scrutiny and examination of evidence, claims, and assumptions—to explore and support a line of inquiry;
- understanding and accounting for the stakes and consequences of various arguments for diverse audiences and within ongoing conversations and contexts; and
- designing/organizing with respect to the demands of the genre, situation, audience, and purpose.

### **Outcome 4**

To practice composing as a recursive, collaborative process and to develop flexible strategies for revising throughout the composition process by

- engaging in a variety of (re)visioning techniques, including (re)brainstorming, (re)drafting, (re)reading, (re)writing, (re)thinking, and editing;
- giving, receiving, interpreting, and incorporating constructive feedback; and
- refining and nuancing composition choices for delivery to intended audiences in a manner consonant with the genre, situation, and desired rhetorical effects and meanings.

## Appendix C: Student Interview Protocol #1

1. Can everyone introduce themselves by saying your name and the pronouns that you use if you feel comfortable doing so?
2. Which programs are you in? EOP? SAAS?
  - a. Which EOP program(s) [CAMP, TRiO, Champions, etc.]?
3. How did you first hear about 109/110?
  - a. Can you tell me about the registration process for your class (e.g., did your advisor encourage you to take it? Was it based on a test score?)?
  - b. [If it was the student's choice] Why did you decide to take 109/110?
4. How would you describe 109/110 if you were talking to someone who doesn't go to UW? Like a friend from high school?
5. What are some of your goals in your [first] year of college, and how do you hope that 109/110 will help you work toward those goals?
6. How, if at all, does 109/110 make space for your knowledge, expertise, and experience?
7. How would you describe the classroom community and your peers in 109/110?
  - a. How has the classroom community shaped your learning experience?
8. Where do you feel like you belong on campus? Or where do you feel most at home?
  - a. What makes you feel at home there?
  - b. Where have you met your friends at UW?
  - c. How, if at all, has 109/110 contributed to your sense of community or belonging on campus?

## **Appendix D: Student Interview Protocol #1**

1. How, for you, is 110 different from the other 100-level EWP courses?
  - a. What opportunities does 109/110 offer to foreground students' needs, goals, experiences, and knowledge?
2. What does "access" mean to you?
  - a. What, if anything, are students gaining access to in 109/110?
3. One form of access is community and belonging. How, if at all, do you feel that your ENGL 110 course fosters community and belonging?
  - a. How could 109/110 be revised to further foster community and belonging?
4. How might 109/110 foster sites for resistance against inequitable structures of power in higher education?
  - a. How, if at all, might it reproduce those inequities?