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Preparing Student Researchers: An Investigation of Obstacles in the Inclusion of Primary
Research Methods in First Year Composition

by

Sarah E. S. Carter

Under the Direction of Ashley J. Holmes PhD

A Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

in the College of Arts and Sciences

Georgia State University

2022

ABSTRACT

This dissertation aims to address and validate obstacles hindering the integration of primary research methods specifically in the first-year writing classroom. My study seeks to meaningfully contribute to the many teacher-scholars already pushing for more primary research in undergraduate and first-year classrooms by building on those conversations to specifically assess instructor attitudes about and knowledge on the integration of primary research in first-year composition. A mixed methods, comparative study, this research project includes interview and survey responses from writing instructors and administrators, as well as an overview of curricula, and current first-year writing and pedagogical textbooks. Data was collected from 20 writing program administrators at R1 universities from across the country, and 14 faculty members from Georgia State University and the University of South Carolina participated in a comparative analysis, to provide a snapshot of what research methods first-year writing instructors use in their classrooms, why they use them, and what they feel is the primary purpose of first-year composition.

This dissertation argues and makes a call for the necessity of a reconsideration of pedagogical training and professional development endeavors to include a broader overview of primary research methods. This research helps provide a continued discourse on the purposes of first-year composition and the advancement of professional development and training in writing programs across the country. This dissertation concludes by providing suggestions on how writing programs and English departments could include primary research initiatives during pedagogical coursework and professional development sessions.

INDEX WORDS: First-Year Composition, Curriculum, Obstacles, Primary Research, Professional Development, Pedagogical Training

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2022

Preparing Student Researchers: An Investigation of Obstacles in the Inclusion of Primary
Research Methods in First Year Composition

by

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May 2022

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to everyone who has helped me achieve this goal.

To my parents and my husband, without your unwavering love and support, I would never have been able to complete this.

To my children, I love you so much; I work hard for you.

To so many friends and neighbors who helped in countless ways, both large and small.

To Zach and Matthew, my battle buddies.

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Additionally, I would also like to acknowledge and thank the thousands of students that have helped me re-consider my approaches to teaching first-year composition over the last decade.

I will never forget the support, patience and optimism, Dr. Ashley Holmes provided throughout this entire process. In addition, I am incredibly thankful for the support of my entire committee to include both Dr. Lynee Lewis Gaillet and Dr. Elizabeth Lopez.

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PREFACE

My own educational and pedagogical background ties directly into my current investigations of addressing and validating obstacles integrating primary research in first-year composition. When I first began teaching in 2009, I had no prior experience in a classroom. I had worked with adolescents as a mental health associate in a psychiatric rehabilitation program but never in a teaching capacity. I started teaching first-year writing as soon as I had 18 graduate credit hours logged and I never really considered if teaching with no experience was a common occurrence, until recently when I began thinking about why instructors, especially new instructors, tend to teach what they are knowledgeable in and comfortable with. Previous scholarship suggests that graduate teaching assistants and adjuncts are influenced more strongly by prior personal experiences and beliefs and their experiences in the classroom than by their formal pedagogy education (Reid, Estrem, and Belcheir 2003). The phenomenon of college teachers being put in front of classrooms with little-to-no training in teaching is not anything new and current scholarship across the disciplines suggests there is already an awareness of a lack of teacher preparedness. Elizabeth Alsop focuses most recently on this, in the article “Who’s Teaching the Teachers?”. Published in 2018, the article sheds light on the fact “that less than one-fifth of aspiring college teachers are effectively taught how to teach.” After graduating with my M.A., I taught in the Southeast for 8 years at 7 different colleges. A mix of both liberal arts schools and research universities, the curricula at all of these schools only mandated students’ complete secondary research. Therefore, I never considered including primary research in my teaching pedagogy.

After teaching for 8 years as an adjunct instructor at various colleges and universities across the country, in 2017, when I began my doctoral work, I began encouraging students in my

first-year composition (FYC) courses to consider conducting primary research as a supplement to the secondary research students are already expected to complete for their semester-long research papers on a public topic/issue of their choice. I define primary research as first-hand research experience being conducted by the researcher for the first time to gather and analyze documents and data. When I use the term “primary research,” I include methods such as: interviews, ethnographies, surveys, polls, and archival investigations. Similar to Douglass Downs, I also feel that “there is a sense of uniqueness in primary research- and thus so is the resulting data.” I feel it is important to distinguish and expand from archival research, as primary research encompasses more methods. I also agree with many rhetoric and composition scholars who think of primary research similarly to Wendy Hayden’s definition as an “inquiry-based activity” (“And Gladly” 135).

In that sense, when I made this shift in my teaching, I soon realized that most students in my first-year classes were unfamiliar with primary research methods. After having some informal conversations with students and fellow instructors, my suspicion was validated; I continued to hear students had no prior knowledge or experience with conducting primary research and many instructors had little to no training in how to teach primary research. My experiences propelled me to begin investigating research in composition pedagogy to see what scholars have already said about integrating primary research into first-year courses.

Scholarship suggests a lack of teacher training exists across all disciplines but is seen most noticeably in first-year curricula. First-year programs have a growing need for more instructors each year as the majority of these courses are mandatory, and a lot of full-time, tenure-track faculty choose to teach other courses. Therefore, depending on the college or university, there is often a lack of instructors to teach these courses and the responsibility tends

to fall on graduate teaching assistants (GTAs) and adjuncts. These small insights provide a foundation for my study's investigation.

Scholars in Rhetoric and Composition have already demonstrated the numerous benefits of incorporating instruction in primary research into FYC courses (see, among others, Downs and Wardle, Hayden, and Chiseri-Strater). However, much less has been said about the role of teacher preparedness in supporting and promoting a robust curriculum for primary research in FYC. To better understand these gaps in the literature, I designed a three-part, mixed methods study that examined instructor experiences with pedagogical training and their opinions about teaching as they relate to primary research in the FYC curriculum. In the first part of the study, I conducted interviews with FYC instructors at two R1 institutions in the Southeast; in the second part of the study, I sent out surveys to writing program administrators at R1 universities across the nation, and in the third part of the study, I reviewed, and assessed program curricula to include textbooks already in use by first-year writing programs nationally.

The goals of the study are to better understand how instructors feel about their preparedness to teach primary research in first-year composition; relatedly, this study seeks to discover why some R1 universities across the nation encourage or require primary research in current first-year composition curricula while others do not. Finally, this project will identify teaching obstacles and provide possible recommendations for preparing teachers to incorporate more primary research methods in first-year writing. At its core, first-year composition is viewed as a developmental course; with this being the case, many programs and scholars are not discussing the importance of teacher training and preparedness in order to integrate primary research methods within these courses.

This dissertation presents new voices and perspectives that would otherwise not be heard while addressing the obstacles in integrating primary research in first-year composition. This project provides marginalized voices to include graduate students and adjuncts in addition to full time faculty and offers some insight on why the integration of primary research although valued, is not being integrated in more first-year curricula. Additionally, this dissertation offers some guidance on re-visiting pedagogical training and professional development initiatives and how more programs and instructors could integrate primary research methods in their curricula. The goal of this project is to encourage individual instructors and program administrators that the inclusion of primary research in first-year composition would help boost the experience and success of students regardless of their academic or professional path.

The following dissertation presents the results of a mixed methods study and discusses the implications the findings have for first-year composition pedagogy and writing program administration scholars. At the instructor level, this project is essential for understanding how first-year composition instructors can introduce and support various research methods in their classroom while supporting students' goals and plans for future academia and professional careers. At the administrative level, this dissertation offers suggestions with which writing program administrators can serve their institution's mission and research goals in a way that offers continued support and advancement for all students. My hope is that this project will encourage writing programs, administrators, first-year writing instructors, and readers to support primary research initiatives, and a re-evaluation of pedagogical training and professional development.

1 TEACHING PRIMARY RESEARCH METHODS IN FIRST-YEAR COMPOSITION

Primary research methods, often referred to as empirical research methods, invite researchers to conduct new research by way of interviews, ethnographic observations, surveys, polls, and archival investigations. This type of research is widely accepted as a certifiable means of gathering evidence and data in a multitude of disciplines, mainly within the social sciences. It wasn't until the 1980's, when scholarship expanded within the field of rhetoric and composition studies that the field began to address and accept primary research methods as a valid form of gathering qualitative and quantitative data and drawing relevant conclusions alongside traditional academic scholarship that most often applauds secondary research methods.

Currently, scholarship supporting the integration of primary research methods in first-year and general composition is broad and developed. However, the scholarship that addresses potential obstacles integrating primary research in first-year composition has not been as widely addressed. As some teacher-scholars are already aware, the inclusion of all forms of primary research in first-year composition has proven to benefit the curriculum while also providing student growth and development. Many scholars who have been on the forefront of promoting and establishing primary research methods in first-year writing agree that the inclusion of primary research assignments allow students to become researchers and experience “meaning-making firsthand, gaining empathy and understanding for their subjects and simultaneously understanding the researcher's perspective through active learning” (Beckelhimer 44). Students become invested in the process of research, which makes them feel empowered, and a knowledgeable and credible resource of information on the research completed (Downs; Gaillet).

Some English departments and writing programs housed in universities across the country integrate primary research methods alongside secondary research methods because they find value and practical application in the integration of primary research methods alongside secondary research methods; However, many first-year composition programs across the country have not integrated any aspect of primary methods within their programs.

This dissertation attempts to address and validate potential obstacles instructors and writing program administrators face when deciding whether to integrate primary research methods in first-year composition courses and programs. It is beneficial for readers to consider the amount of scholarship that already surrounds the positive impact learning and using such research methods can have in academic and professional lives. Additionally, we need to consider the varying experiences of college instructors and how these experiences truly impact the decisions that are made within the classroom. This study provides the real voices of instructors and writing program administrators through interviews and survey responses that can help first-year instructors and other writing program administrators determine if and how to best integrate the teaching of primary research methods alongside secondary research methods in first-year composition courses.

My study seeks to meaningfully contribute to the many teacher-scholars already pushing for more primary research in undergraduate and first-year classrooms by building on these conversations to specifically assess instructor attitudes about and knowledge on the integration of primary research in FYC—a goal I have set out to accomplish by collecting interview data from two universities in the southeast and additional program survey data from universities across the country. As Richard Beach confirms in his chapter “Experimental and Descriptive Research Methods in Composition” in *Methods and Methodology in Composition Research*, “Educators

are continually confronted with the question of whether what they do makes a difference” (220); it is in that regard that it is essential to address the concerns or limitations instructors feel affect their teaching pedagogy.

In this opening chapter, I review how terminology related to research methods, such as “primary research” and “secondary research,” are often presented within literature about the teaching of first-year composition (FYC). Additionally, this chapter discusses how composition studies has seen a shift in research methods and practices over the last 20-30 years and provides an overview of the obstacles many programs and instructors face when considering including primary research methods in their curriculum. The chapter also traces the role of teacher training and preparedness in the effective implementation of teaching research in FYC. To conclude, I introduce the design and methods for the present study and preview the coming chapters.

1.1 Research Methods and First-Year Composition

Across the country, in most colleges and universities, first-year writing is mandatory for many students to complete prior to enrolling in future academic course work, and it typically serves as a requirement for graduation. Tens of thousands of students register for these courses every single semester with varying backgrounds, perspectives, and preparedness. Some students enter these courses with no prior knowledge or experience using primary or secondary research methods as they pertain to rhetoric, composition, and literature; “the high impact nature of these courses makes them a focus for many academic library instruction programs, and the information literacy literature is filled with case studies of collaborations between the library and English composition” (Rinto and Cogbill-Seiders 14). First-year composition encompasses many differing goals and objectives depending on the program and university; and while there is some

overlap in what scholars believe is the best for first-year composition, agreeing on how to teach research methods is not one of them.

Nearly all first-year composition curricula include some requirement of research, but the approach to how “research” is defined, taught, and implemented differs from program to program and institution to institution. Much of this variance is because rhetoric and composition does not follow a vertical curriculum using first year writing as an introduction to the discipline (Mendenhall 84); instead, first-year writing courses take the place as a foundational course for future academic writing in general education. Prior research in this area shows that most programs across the country include some form of a secondary research requirement (Rinto and Cogbill Seiders; Lovitt and Young); the student must be able to find adequate scholarship on a topic or issue, analyze and synthesize said scholarship, and summarize or include such scholarship in the form of evidence for a research project. For many years now, and in most programs across the country, the focus of first-year writing has been placed on the inclusion of information literacy in the curriculum (Neumann, 2016; Paterson & Gamtso, 2017; Taylor & Patterson, 2000). Information literacy, the ability to collect and analyze data while understanding the difference between reliable and unreliable sources, is a necessary component to conducting strong secondary research (Neumann, 2016; Paterson & Gamtso, 2017; Taylor & Patterson, 2000), and many first-year writing programs only include information literacy to support secondary research and do not integrate primary research methods at all. As this dissertation explores in more detail, some programs across the country have chosen to include expectations of primary research in addition to secondary research in their curriculum. In these programs, the student is asked to conduct original research on their own, analyze the data, and include results in

a research project. The inclusion of primary research methods in first-year composition, however, is far less common in first-year writing programs, and often left up to the instructor.

1.2 Shifts in Research Methods in Composition

Between 1980 and 1990, the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition began to shift as teacher/scholars began to pursue more research endeavors that included and proclaimed the use of primary research methods alongside secondary research methods; Peter Vandenberg suggests “if the terms rhetoric and composition ever enjoyed a period of uncontested unity, it was no doubt between 1965 and the early 1980s; while the only scholarly outlets that seemed to matter, *College Composition and Communication* and *College English*, continued to provide little more than assignment descriptions and testimonial essays (Goggin, *Authoring* 46)”. When George Hillocks asserted in his 1992 article, *Reconciling the Qualitative and Quantitative*, “This distinction divides us over questions such as what counts as research, what counts as evidence, and what the principles are by which we connect evidence to our claims” (57), scholars in the field of rhetoric and composition immediately responded by debating how scholarship views and rates various forms of research—e.g., observational, experimental, and empirical. This debate has since been ongoing, but rarely has the discussion viewed how research is defined for students, especially in the first-year classroom.

In 2011, the journal *Research in the Teaching of English* published “100 Years of Research,” and within the article—“‘One Story of Many to Be Told’: Following Empirical Studies of College and Adult Writing through 100 Years of NCTE Journals” Kevin Roozen and Karen Lunsford provide an overview of the empirical research of scholars over the last century and note many issues of “the shifting notions of empirical research and our relationship to that tradition” (205). They assert there has been hesitation from English departments since the 1960s

to include certain research methods in writing curricula since it is unclear how English professors will teach research methods, but they argue scholarship has presented a “prominent empirical trend throughout the century” (198). Included in the article are dozens of references to teacher/scholars who have successfully used primary research methods to present and validate their claims, but there is not a single mention of scholarship in the article that has contributed to the teaching of research methods in writing courses. While these scholar-teachers have clearly proven their proficiency with employing research methods within their own writing studies research, there is no discussion or exploration of the possibilities for incorporating this methodological skill set within the *teaching* of first-year composition.

In 2012, the journal *College Composition and Communication* (CCC) invited contributions on various methods and methodologies being used that support and define the field. Included in the call for proposals was an invitation to discuss the role of research methods in undergraduate classes including first-year composition and rhetoric and composition. The CCC issue discusses methodologies generally, and though all chapters included in this issue could be applied to first-year writing and undergraduate research, none of the published manuscripts in the entire special edition of the journal include a direct reference or provide an indication of how to apply these methods directly to first-year or undergraduate pedagogy. This issue, though lacking in relation to teaching and integrating research methods in first-year composition, included many articles that discussed the value of archival research in the discipline, and from this, more teacher/scholars began investigating, integrating and writing about the archives.

Three years later, in February of 2015, the journal *College Composition and Communication* (CCC) published two pieces that at the time may not have been connected, but looking back, provide a clear representation of how much the discipline had shifted over 28

years. In vol 66, no. 3, *CCC* editor, Jonathan Alexander, invited scholars to contribute to a symposium, reflecting on the 1987 *CCC* Position Statement, “Scholarship in Composition: Guidelines for Faculty, Deans, and Department Chairs,” which addresses faculty tenure. In that same volume of *CCC*, Wendy Hayden’s “‘Gifts’ of the Archives: A Pedagogy for Undergraduate Research” was published. The symposium responses alongside Hayden’s article show major frustrations and advancements in how scholars view empirical research within the discipline of composition studies.

Most of the symposium pieces were responses to a particular bullet point in the 1987 *CCC* Position Statement that declared: “Much important work done in the field is observational and experimental. It involves human subjects and a variety of methods drawn from the social sciences, from ethnographic observations to experimental procedures requiring statistical analysis” (CCCC). Our field has for some time considered various methods of inquiry and research important and applicable to scholarship but has not incorporated most of these sentiments in the teaching of research, especially in the undergraduate classroom. It is clear from the responses of scholars in the symposium that the view and application of research methods is not consistent with the field of composition studies.

In the first of the symposium responses, Laura Wilder expresses some frustrations in her contribution, “Tangled Roots.” She asserts many current teacher/scholars were not even aware of the outdated 1987 guidelines. Wilder claims that while some work in the field of composition studies is observation and experimental, “empirical research remains somewhat peripheral to composition” (502) which could be due to “the tensions between our disciplinary and our institutional positioning” (502); or it could be because the work is difficult and there is a lack of support for it (504). In the third symposium response, “Twenty-First-Century Relevance of

‘Scholarship in Composition’”, Irwin Weiser reflects on the 1987 CCC’s guidelines for faculty by claiming the continued relevance of the original guidelines that provided a strong foundation for current scholarship in the discipline. His response to the 1987 guidelines is almost a complete contradiction of Wilder’s response to which he states, “scholars in composition often use empirical methods” (512) and he argues that work done within the field of composition studies is interdisciplinary, multimodal, and uses a variety of methods (512). The varied symposium responses to the 1987 *CCC* guidelines present a disconnect among teacher/scholars and what some present as good practices, versus what is presented within composition classrooms across the country. Some teacher/scholars do not see primary research methods as important to the field of composition studies, which is why many programs across the country do not incorporate such methods in their composition curriculum, while some teacher/scholars do see primary research methods as valuable to the field of composition studies, but still do not incorporate such methods in their composition curriculum for a variety of reasons.

Also included in the same volume of the 2015 *CCC* journal was Wendy Hayden’s article “‘Gifts’ of the Archives: A Pedagogy for Undergraduate Research.” Hayden’s article details a pedagogy for incorporating archival research in first-year composition curricula. The inclusion of Hayden’s article within the same journal publication, makes it apparent that some scholars use empirical methods in their research, and as Hayden argues, should teach them too. Hayden’s article marks an important shift in the field, as it represents one of the early instances of a scholar advocating for not just using but specifically teaching primary research methods. This coincides with a growing interest in the late 2010’s in undergraduate research, which has brought more attention to the teaching of research methods in undergraduate writing courses. Most recently, The Naylor Report on Undergraduate Research in Writing Studies, published in 2020, provides

material and guidance on incorporating more primary research in undergraduate work, but does mention incorporating any in first-year composition.

It is important to consider the major differences between first-year writing and undergraduate writing courses. First-Year writing, often mandated for new (freshman) and transferring (sophomore/junior) students into a university (sometimes depending on the student's prior work in high school or at a transferring college), exists to ensure student success in future academic writing and beyond. While many argue first-year writing is a gateway course and possibly a barrier for many students, the goals of many first-year writing programs are to help students learn to write in the academy and learn strong research skills. One of the objectives of this dissertation is to provide reasoning for why some faculty value inquiry-based research, but only a handful assign projects that ask students to perform such inquiry in first-year writing.

1.3 Obstacles

This dissertation aims to address and validate possible obstacles that could hinder the integration of primary research in first-year composition, and the three main obstacles I have identified that hinder the integration of primary research methods in first-year writing are teacher training/professional development, curriculum, and textbooks, both first-year and pedagogical textbooks. In the next three sections, I provide an overview of each obstacle, and the implications these obstacles can have on the advancement of first-year writing in the academy.

1.3.1 Obstacles—Teacher Training/Professional Development

Since the turn of the 21st century, major changes were implemented in composition courses, specifically, the integration of teaching and introducing more research methods for undergraduate students. Scholars began pushing for more primary research methods, primarily archival research methods, to be included alongside the secondary research methods already

being taught in the composition classroom. In 2009, Barbara L'Eplattenier pointed out that "The few articles on methods available to new researchers either lament the lack of methods in our field or offer overly simplistic advice- read widely in your field, have a good time, formulate a research question, or something of that nature." (69). She proposed it is time we begin talking about methods, primarily archival methods, because most scholars and instructors are not incorporating such methods in their curriculum or classrooms. The problem, however based on her preliminary findings, was that no one was trained to introduce such methods.

For over 30 years, scholars have been bringing attention to the fact that graduate students and teachers of college English do not receive enough training in the field, primarily with teaching research methods. Barbara L'Eplattenier draws evidence from numerous scholars in her 2009 article "An Argument for Archival Research Methods: Thinking Beyond Methodology" by referring to previous scholarly concern, namely, Thomas Miller, Linda Ferreira-Buckley, and Richard Enos to further her argument for the need to focus more attention on teaching research methods in rhetoric and composition. Thomas Miller voiced his concern in his 1993 article, "Teaching the Histories of Rhetoric as a Social Praxis," when he stated, "no one has said much about how we teach them" (70), referring to teaching research methods appropriate for teaching the histories of rhetoric to graduate students, specifically archival investigations. In 1999, Linda Ferreira-Buckley states in her article, "Rescuing the Archives from Foucault," that graduate students are neglected in terms of methodological training (577), and do not receive the same type of training as other graduate students in other departments. Also in 1999, Richard Enos asserted in his article, "Recovering the Lost Art of Researching the History of Rhetoric," that it is essential to "require students to learn techniques to assimilate data and procedures for field work" (15). While L'Eplattenier's argument was mainly aimed towards investigating the

archives, she makes the claim that “All of these authors concluded that we don’t do enough work in, training in, and teaching of primary research methods” (68). While all of these scholars have advocated for more teaching and training of research methods and methodologies of graduate students, there is a gap in scholarship specifically aimed at discussing the teaching and training of research methods among undergraduate students, primarily, first-year writing students.

In 1999, Sally Barr Ebest revealed to scholars that there was a gap in the teaching of research methods in graduate school and also a gap in the offerings of practical pedagogy courses for graduate students. Ebest’s findings revealed only 14% of graduate students felt there was an emphasis on research during their time in graduate school (71), which is incredibly detrimental since “students in composition/rhetoric usually enter the field in graduate school, and when they do, they are suddenly introduced to totally alien methodologies” (72). Ebest’s research shed light on some major concerns as she addressed the necessity of placing more emphasis on teaching research methods in graduate school, as well as the importance of teacher training in the form of professional development, primarily in the composition/rhetoric graduate curriculum.

Many FYC instructors have a background in an area of study outside of Rhetoric and Composition, and Jessica Restaino notes “new teachers...are largely untrained, unsure of their responsibilities, equipped with a syllabus they did not design, and a list of pedagogical procedures they do not understand” (qtd. by Aimee Mapes and Susan Miller-Cochran 209). New graduate students have so much to worry about in addition to teaching for the first time, although they make up 25% of writing instruction teachers (Gere). A lot of instructors currently teaching are not trained to include primary research in their pedagogy; the only way they would is if they had prior knowledge or experience with those methods, perhaps through their undergraduate

education. Exposure to primary research as a student might mean a higher level of comfort in teaching, but it does not make up for pedagogical training. Wendy Hayden suggests, “one challenge to integrating archival research into undergraduate courses has been the lack of practical advice and training in archival research provided by the field” (“Gifts” 404). Laura Wilder provides some personal reflection in her article “Tangled Roots” to describe to readers that the one research methods course she took as a graduate student “emboldened” her “to pursue such research, for which I am forever grateful,” “but it also helped me to see that I needed much more than one course” (504). While some universities across the country are including archival training by means of a methods and methodologies course for graduate students, learning about primary research does not make up for learning how to effectively teach those methods.

A significant factor contributing to this stasis in curricular development is the high numbers of graduate teaching assistants and adjunct instructors who mainly teach first-year courses. As scholars like Wendy Bishop and David Starkey have noted, “the first-year writing course (freshman composition) is most often taught by graduate teaching assistants” and adjuncts who “are given some-to-minimal preparation” (37). This is commonly referred to as a “teacher-training conundrum,” and a huge factor contributing to the issue even further is the amount of dependence teaching-intensive schools rely on adjuncts (Krebs). This situation still exists in many R1 programs today. In the Fall 2019 *CCC* Forum on Issues About Part-Time and Contingent Faculty, Jes Philbrook highlights how “the adjunct has morphed in the face of online education” and is now more commonly seen online, as graduate students and adjuncts pick up more online courses as the development of online learning continues to soar (A1). First-year writing instructors initially teach as they were taught. In the event of more online teaching,

instructors (at all levels) are given more freedom to explore pedagogy they are comfortable with and there is a major lack of consistency.

1.3.2 Obstacles—Curriculum

Across the country, first-year writing programs are created and managed by Writing Program Administrators and Directors who either volunteer for the position or are tasked with this service. These are revolving positions, and the development of curricula thus reflects the background and comfort of those administrators and directors which is based on a wide variety of factors, but mostly disciplinary background and experience; for example, the last two directors of the first-year writing program at University of South Carolina (2017-2022) both had a background in Literature. Each first-year writing program's approach to the teaching and integration of research is thus very different, and therefore the curriculum imposed by universities across the United States varies greatly. As suggested by many teacher/scholars, many first-year writing programs are still based on early designs of what composing in higher education should look like (Coxwell-Teague and Lunsford xiii). A quick google search of "first-year writing curriculum" will provide over 200 million results, the first several pages highlighting several universities first-year writing homepages, such as University of Connecticut, Texas Tech University, and Michigan State to name a few. Many of these first-year writing programs have been "redesigned" over the last five years, but many of the program goals include a turn towards the multimodal composing processes, and not a turn towards student investigation or primary research. Based on circumstantial research from Summer 2020¹, only a few of the numerous colleges and universities in the U.S. are re-considering first-year composition curricula

¹ I sent an email inquiry to 25 first-year composition programs at R1 universities across the U.S., and found only 20% (5 out of the 25) of these programs mandate some form of primary research.

and pedagogy to reflect an ever-growing student body and evolving society to include primary research methods and methodologies. One of the reasons first-year composition has been under scrutiny for some time is because of the diverse curricula of programs and diverse experience and pedagogy of instructors across the country—contributing to these curricular and experience concerns is the fact that, “from its inception, first-year composition, has been imagined as existing for the sole purpose of ‘teaching students to write’ in general: for no audience or purpose in particular” (Downs and Wardle 279). Many programs across the country only have a single-course composition requirement, and many scholars have argued that “too many hopes and dreams get pinned in one place” (Trimbur qtd. in Mathieu 111), and inevitably, teachers often find themselves “trying to do too much with too little” (Mathieu 111). Given the challenge of integrating a wide variety of research methods, to include primary research, alongside secondary research, many instructors are not able to put forth the extended efforts.

1.3.3 Obstacles—Textbooks

Textbooks are another obstacle instructors face when integrating research methods in first-year composition courses (Hood; McDonald; Davis and Shadle; Welch). Many textbooks chosen and implemented by universities include a minimal amount of information on primary research. As Kathleen Welch notes, “books act as persuasive places where new teachers of writing are trained and where experienced ones reinforce the training” (271), and the majority of FYC textbooks only offer a few pages, maybe a chapter at best, on primary research methods. In “Textbooks and the Evolution of the Discipline,” Robert Connors explains that teaching assistants, professors, and adjunct instructors in composition were issued textbooks and handbooks to learn how to teach first-year composition. It was the assumption that with these texts came the wisdom the instructors needed to figure out how to teach composition (190).

These sentiments have not changed as much as Connors and many other scholars would like to hope. Many teaching assistants, professors, and adjunct instructors are still simply handed the textbooks necessary for their students to purchase for the course with the intention they too will review the material in the textbook prior to teaching it to the students enrolled in their courses. Since many first-year composition textbooks still do not incorporate a great deal of primary research methods in their textbooks, it is an obstacle for teachers to integrate primary research methods in their pedagogy.

Many textbooks used in first-year writing classrooms focus on analyzing and incorporating secondary research in arguments. In “Ideology and Freshman Textbook Production,” Kathleen Welch asserts, “any attempt to change writing textbooks and the unspoken ideology that produces them will have to deal with a 2,500 year-old tradition of technical rhetoric” (270). A lot of universities across the country publish and use in-house textbooks to distribute the information they deem necessary; this is in part due to the fact that, for many years, scholars have acknowledged the limitations of mass-produced composition textbooks (Barrios 11). Custom textbooks provide ample publishing opportunities for graduate students and professors, but do not always offer a broad spectrum of reading, writing, and research examples. Barclay Barrios argues that custom publishing represents a shift in textbook publication allowing for “small and responsive changes that, cumulatively, promise to alter the overall landscape of composition textbooks” (16). These custom textbooks tend to reflect university programmatic approaches to first-year curricula; many do not offer instructional approaches to varying research methods.

Similarly to textbooks, many handbooks, are lacking in research method instruction. *The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings and Handbook* (4th ed.) provides readers with one

sentence defining primary research, and 5 pages to “Doing Field Research.” *The Everyday Writer*, only gives 3 pages to conducting field research (6th ed). Newer editions of handbooks seem to be going in the wrong direction—*The Little Seagull Handbook* 4th edition (2021) only gives 1 page to “Doing Field Research.” Handbooks that are updated annually do not receive much of a preview before a new edition is released and depending on the type of institution—liberal arts or research—buying the textbooks, the content will reflect what is typically taught at that university.

Some scholars are making a turn towards archival methods and approaches, but this method is not widely used in first-year classrooms. In the recently published open-access text, *The Archive as Classroom* (2019), Kathryn Comer, Michael Harker, and Ben McCorkle acknowledge in the introduction, “the increasing centrality of archival practices” as the field has seen “the archival turn.” The “archives are now viewed as primary sources for creating knowledge rather than mere storehouses for finding what is already known” (Gaillet 298); they have been deemed by the field as appropriate, and even necessary to introduce to undergraduates. In addition, “writing studies scholars have demonstrated the complexities of archives: their deeply rhetorical, often political nature” (Daniel-Wariya and Lewis 143), and the possibility that “through guided activities and discussions, first-year composition students can discover the complexities and experience the uncertainty of texts, leading them to genuine inquiry” (Daniel-Wariya and Lewis 143). There have been entire textbooks devoted to primary research methods, such as *Primary Research and Writing* (2015), and *FieldWorking: Reading and Writing Research* (2012). Though a small coverage of scholarship is presenting and acknowledging the benefits of integrating archival research methods in first-year composition, many scholars (Hayden, Fic, Stringfellow, Roff) have geared their work towards archival research in the

undergraduate classroom, but not in the first-year classroom. My research aims to address potential obstacles of integrating more primary methods in the first-year writing classroom.

Teacher training/professional development, curriculum, and textbooks are just three of many obstacles WPA's and instructors face when deciding when and how to integrate primary research methods in first-year composition. As previous research has shown, teacher training is not consistent, first-year curriculums vary across the country, and textbooks need major improvements. This dissertation is a response to those three obstacles and aims to provide support that suggests there is a current shift in first-year writing classrooms; however, while there is progress towards the integration of more primary research methods, there is room for growth and proper training.

1.4 Methodology

This dissertation explores the extent to which current first-year composition instructors are knowledgeable on primary research methods and methodologies and the extent to which they feel comfortable teaching primary research. In addition, this dissertation investigates choices writing programs have made across the country in relation to content, research, and training, and aims to present data and perspective not yet addressed. There were two major parts to the study that provided data for this dissertation. The first part of the study was spent interviewing instructors at two R1 universities in close regional proximity. One of the institutions has more fully integrated elements of primary research in their FYC curriculum than the other, and the interviews provided a comparative lens to the experiences and perspectives faculty have that fuel the decisions they make when they approach teaching research methods in first-year composition.

Collecting data in the form of interviews, can “afford researchers opportunities to explore, in an in-depth manner, matters that are unique to the experiences of the interviewees, allowing insights into how different phenomena of interest are experienced and perceived” (Brinkmann and Kvale). I have found in previous experiences that interviews provide an immense amount of insight into any given topic or issue. Interviews are considered common data collection tools in multiple fields and disciplines and provide a grounding narrative for continued discourse and research investigation.

In the second part of the study, I collected writing program administrative survey data from 20 WPAs at R1 universities across the nation, about 1/5 of the total number of R1 universities in the country. Combining writing program administrative data collection with instructor interviews allows for the research to not be committed to any one system of philosophy and reality as it applies mostly to a mixed methods approach (Creswell 11). I decided on a survey design method for the second part of my research (Creswell 155) for university participants—namely writing program administrators—that includes both an empirical experimental approach as well as a descriptive empirical approach (Beach 220-221). I assessed objectives, trends, attitudes, knowledge and opinions of first-year composition programs, so the survey approach is ideal. As Fowler explains, the survey

provides a quantitative or numeric description of trends, attitudes, or opinions of a population by studying a sample of that population. It includes questionnaires for data collection—with the intent of generalizing from a sample to a population (Fowler qtd. in Creswell “Research Design” 13)

Sending a survey to a sample of R1 universities to assess their FYC curricula provided the study with necessary quantitative information while also helping to limit possible bias from the data

collection in the first part of the study. Additionally, the survey presents additional information that is not addressed in the interviews.

The majority of instructors who teach FYC are adjuncts, GTAs, and non-tenure-track lecturers, all marginalized voices in academia. Furthermore, these instructors come from various backgrounds, not only in their specific fields of Creative Writing or Literature, but also in their identities outside the academy. In “Moving Writing Research into the 21st Century,” Sarah Freedman asserts “new knowledge about learning to write and read has to be generated from many sources” (183), specifically, “the insights and expertise of our diverse citizens” (183). In addition, “primary source material gives us the opportunity to directly engage with sometimes marginalized voices” (Thorn qtd. in Hayden “Gifts” 418). Freedman, Thorn, and Hayden express exactly how I feel about the importance of surveying instructors about establishing a place for primary research alongside first-year composition. Diverse voices in academia can give necessary insight to recommend development, growth, and curriculum adjustment to better suit a growing diverse populace of learners and researchers.

1.5 Questions/Hypothesis

My preliminary interests in why some R1 universities require primary research in FYC and others do not, helped me develop my main research questions, which are as follows:

1. How knowledgeable are current first-year composition instructors on the methods and methodologies of primary research?
2. What are instructors’ perceptions of the value of integrating primary research in FYC?
3. What concerns or limitations do FYC instructors and Writing Program Administrators see with potentially integrating primary research in their FYC pedagogy?

4. To what extent have FYC instructors, through formal or informal pedagogical training or mentorship, received support for teaching primary research?
5. Why are some FYC programs integrating primary research while others are not?
6. How much focus/space do primary research methods receive in the textbooks that are being used at institutions that integrate primary research in their FYC curricula?

In conducting interviews with first-year composition instructors at two major R1 universities, looking into curriculum objectives, syllabi, and materials at the same two universities, and also conducting surveys of WPAs at 20 RI universities, I found that many instructors and writing program administrators feel that primary research methods have value, but have varying reasons (some of those clear obstacles listed earlier, and some new) why they do not incorporate such methods within their classrooms and curriculum. The data collected from this study helps identify obstacles of integrating primary research in first-year composition, but may also help the development of materials and recommendations for future course designs including primary research methods to be implemented specifically in first-year composition.

1.6 Methods

This study includes a mixed methods approach, which neutralizes the weakness of quantitative and qualitative on their own (Creswell 15). There are multiple parts to this study: Interviews, Surveys, and the collection of curriculum materials and information, specifically textbooks from universities across the country. The instructor interviews at University of South Carolina and Georgia State University are categorized as convenience sampling (Creswell 158), as I was employed at both universities, and the collection of anonymous WPA surveys from outside of these institutions helped mitigate the bias in the analysis of data.

1.6.1 Research Sites Used for Interviews

My first research site is University of South Carolina (UofSC) Main Campus. Founded in 1801, UofSC has approximately 28,000 undergraduate students on their main campus, located in the heart of Columbia, SC. According to US News and World Report, UofSC average cost after financial aid is 19K, acceptance rate is 68%, and graduation rate is 65%. In addition, US News and World Report ranks UofSC #117 nationally, and #3 in First-Year Experiences.

Demographically, students from all 50 states and over 100 foreign countries attend the university. I chose this site because students in the first-year program are not mandated to complete primary research. Conducting a case study analysis of a school that does not require primary research is beneficial because it has the potential to provide insight on administrative program choices and pedagogical training.

The first-year writing program, also known as first-year English (FYE) at UofSC, includes both English 101, Critical Reading and Composition, as well as English 102, Rhetoric and Composition. All students attending UofSC must either complete both courses, or test out of them. I targeted this site specifically for first-year composition instructor interviews because primary research methods and methodologies are not integrated into standard English 101 and 102 course curricula and are not included in their in-house textbooks. Both English 101 and 102 have a required secondary research component. The first-year English department publishes their own in-house textbooks for both courses: The Carolina Reader and The Carolina Rhetoric, both updated every Spring, and available in print.

My second research site is Georgia State University (GSU) downtown Atlanta campus. Founded in 1913, GSU has approximately 27,000 undergraduate students spread over 6 total campuses. My proposed research focused specifically on the downtown campus since it has the

largest student body and employs the largest number of GTAs and non-tenure track instructors. According to US News and World Report, GSU average cost after financial aid is 15K, acceptance rate is 67% and graduation rate is 29%. In addition, US News and World Report ranks GSU #239 nationally, #2 in Best Undergraduate Teaching, #2 in Most Innovative Schools, and #6 in First-Year Experiences. Demographically, students from more than 170 nations and territories attend the university and GSU claims they “annually graduate more African American students than any other public or nonprofit higher education institution” (gsu.org/about). I chose this site because the first-year composition program mandates students complete primary research. As a school with mandated primary research in FYC, this site is particularly valuable for research because it provides insights into curriculum design and choices and possible pedagogical training.

The first-year writing program, also known as lower division studies (LDS) at GSU, includes both English 1101, English Composition I, and English 1102, English Composition II. Similar to UofSC, all students attending GSU must either complete both courses, or test out of them. I targeted this site specifically for first-year composition instructor interviews because primary research methods and methodologies have been integrated into both English 1101 and 1102. Both courses require students complete both primary and secondary research over the course of a complete semester. GSU publishes their own in-house textbook for both courses: *Guide to First Year Writing*. This textbook is currently only available in an online format.

I chose these campuses specifically because the majority of FYC has a broad reach across disciplines and it is where the majority of students complete undergraduate degrees. In addition, the student population on these campuses is comparable, as is the age of the students. The student population demographically, however, varies greatly as there is a much more diverse

population of learners at GSU. Another reason these research sites prove valuable is because at both UofSC and GSU, the first-year courses are mainly taught by GTAs, who are all specializing in differing areas of study (Literature, Creative Writing, Rhetoric and Composition)—this factor is representative of a broad range of FYC programs across the U.S.

1.6.2 Procedures, Participants, and Data Collection for Interviews

Fourteen faculty members were interviewed at two major R1 universities in the Southeast, University of South Carolina, and Georgia State University, 7 individuals at each institution. Faculty interviewed included a large spectrum of ranks—professors, associate professors, non-tenure track lecturers, and graduate students. Participants ranged in demographics and years of teaching experience. In this regard, the data is diversified and will acknowledge a variety of teaching pedagogies, experiences, and perspectives. Every participant had taught first-year composition in the last 5 years, with the majority teaching first-year composition every year. Of the fourteen participants, five were professors, one was an associate professor, four were lecturers, and four were GTAs. All participants provided informed consent before participating in the study.

All interviews took place virtually through virtual platforms, and email. Participants were asked to respond to interview questions (see appendix A). See Chapter 2 for a complete overview of the instructor interview data.

1.6.3 Procedures, Participants, and Data Collection for Surveys

A list of universities classified by Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education as “R1: Doctoral Universities- Very High Research Activity” was located and printed. Of the 95 public R1 universities on the list, one university at minimum, per state was contacted in the recruitment for the study. Recruitment was done by emailing the study information to

WPAs at the randomly chosen R1 universities across the country using the email addresses provided on their program's websites. Forty-six WPAs were emailed and 20 completed the survey (n=20). The response rate was 43%. Participants were asked to respond to survey questions (see Appendix B), and all participants provided informed consent before participating in the study. The survey was anonymous, so no identifying information was collected. The completion of the survey questions by a sample of R1 universities ensures a more thorough review of FYC program curricula across the country and help to establish a review of the choices program administrators have made in regard to the integration of primary research methods in FYC. See chapters 3 and 4 for a complete overview of the survey response data.

1.6.4 Collection of Curriculum Materials and Textbooks

First-year curriculum materials were gathered from the two Southeast R1 universities featured for instructor interviews. The materials collected consisted of both first-year course syllabi, assignment sheets, and textbooks. See chapter 2 for a complete overview of curriculum materials and first-year textbooks from these two R1 universities. See chapter 4 for a complete overview of textbook information collected as part of the WPA surveys. WPA Participants were asked to share the textbooks their department uses for first-year courses.

1.6.5 Data Analysis

While Chapters 2, 3, and 4 of the dissertation provide a fuller description of data analysis and findings, I provide here a preview of the methods used for coding interview and survey data. I coded the participant responses as defined by Creswell (1986) as the procedure of fragmenting and classifying text to form explanations and comprehensive themes in the data, by labeling instructor and WPA responses relating to specific themes. Coding instructor and WPA responses by related themes assists in disseminating the information collected. After transcribing the

interviews, some of the themes I identified and used for analyzing the data included: “resources/support”, “ethics awareness” and “knowledge/comfort”. For example, when interviewees talked about “particular reasons why they haven’t incorporated primary research in their FYC courses” as in this example—“It’s a complicated issue- need to think about ethics; protections; for freshman that’s a lot, and community awareness- don’t know the situations the students come from, may be asking too much of them.”—I labeled that “ethics awareness.” I utilized instructor responses to express knowledge and perception of integrating primary research methods in first-year composition, while also showing some potential limitations through a diverse perspective of instruction. I utilized WPA responses to express program and curricula choices as they pertain to the use and integration of primary research methods, teacher training and preparedness, potential obstacles, and textbook use.

For the survey data, I used Qualtrics as a research tool that allowed me to both create the survey and analyze quantitative lists and visual displays of the results. Qualtrics created graphs and scales for the quantitative survey data received from WPAs. I coded qualitative survey data similarly to the interviews by disseminating data into categories and expanding by utilizing keywords given. Some of the themes I identified and used for analyzing the data included: “program restrictions” “limited professional development/training” and “instructor background and experience.” For example, when interviewees talked about “barriers or limitations that may exist that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research into their FYC courses” as in this example—“our program was very prescriptive and limited instructors in what they were allowed to do”—I labeled that “program restrictions.” I created a pie chart to show the textbook choices provided by the WPA survey participants and assessed the amount of space

(through number of pages with coverage) the designated course textbooks give to primary research.

1.7 Overview of Dissertation

Drawing on analysis from interview data of first-year instructors at two large R1 institutions in the Southeast, the second chapter provides qualitative and quantitative data that highlights instructor knowledge, comfort, and experience of teaching primary research methods in the first-year classroom. I argue there is a varying level of knowledge and experience with teaching primary research methods, and this is in part due to program curricula and training. In addition, this chapter offers insights to how instructors define the purpose of first-year composition. The arguments in this chapter offer pedagogical insights from the micro-level practices of individual FYC instructors and classrooms.

Broadening in focus and scope, chapter 3 provides analysis of a portion of the survey data received from writing program administrators at R1 universities across the country. The survey data in this chapter provides both quantitative and qualitative data that shows what professional development/teacher training looks like at some R1 universities across the country—all of which have a direct impact on whether instructors incorporate primary research in their FYC courses. It also provides quantitative data to show how some WPAs rank their instructor's comfort levels teaching primary and secondary research in the first-year classroom. Based on survey research data I argue that there is not consistent training for first-year instructors to successfully incorporate instruction in primary research in their FYC courses.

The fourth chapter provides analysis of a portion of the survey data received from writing program administrators at R1 universities across the country and focuses specifically on the role of First-Year Composition curricula, textbooks, and limitations in relation to the teaching of

primary research. This chapter details curricula choices and an analysis of the coverage of research methods being used within writing programs across the country. This chapter also includes a visual representation of textbooks choices being made within twenty first-year writing programs, and the space each textbook gives to an overview of research methods, to include primary research methods.

The fifth and last chapter details recommendations and guidance for integrating primary research in pedagogical training and professional development. I provide suggestions for integrating primary research efforts in pedagogical training, and guidance for reconstructing professional development sessions. Additionally, a sample course syllabus for pedagogical training, and a sample course syllabus for first-year writing including outcomes and goals that present assignments including both primary and secondary research requirements is provided in the appendix. I also address ways to continue this research beyond this study.

2 A PEEK INSIDE: WHAT FIRST-YEAR WRITING INSTRUCTORS ARE SAYING ABOUT TEACHING RESEARCH IN FYC

In this chapter I provide a comparative analysis of two first-year writing programs at two universities in the southeast, Georgia State University and University of South Carolina by conducting corresponding interviews with 7 composition instructors at each university. I begin by providing an overview of the first-year writing programs at each university, and I follow that by presenting my findings from conducting interviews with instructors who have recently taught first-year writing at each university. The data presented in this chapter suggests many first-year writing instructors view the purposes of first-year composition very differently and many do not feel comfortable incorporating primary research methods in their pedagogy due to a variety of reasons. The voices of current instructors who teach first-year writing highlighted throughout this chapter provide personal reflections of individualized experiences and pedagogical choices that will help researchers better understand the challenges and complexities of incorporating primary research into the teaching of FYC.

2.1 Methods

In Spring of 2021, fourteen instructors were interviewed at two major R1 universities in the Southeast, seven at University of South Carolina, and seven at Georgia State University. Participants interviewed included a large spectrum of ranks. Interviewees included six tenured associate professors, five non-tenure track lecturers, and four graduate students. At both universities, interviewees were chosen by suggestion of writing program administrators. Potential interviewees were contacted by university email. A total of ten invitation emails were sent out at each university. Other than university association and faculty rank, demographic data was anonymous; however, participants ranged in demographics and years of teaching

experience. Every participant had taught first-year composition in the last 5 years, with the majority teaching first-year composition every year. In this regard, the data is diversified and covers a variety of teaching pedagogies, experiences, and perspectives. All participants provided informed consent through Georgia State's Qualtrics before participating in the study.

All interviews took place virtually through virtual platforms, and email. Participants were asked to respond to interview questions (see appendix A) (Refer back to Chapter One for more details on the study's methods.) In addition to the interview portion of this study, curriculum materials such as syllabi, assignment sheets, and textbooks were collected from both universities to provide further information on each program's goals, objectives, and course of action for the first-year writing coursework.

2.2 Data Analysis

The interview data gathered for this chapter consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data. All interviews and follow up notes were transcribed and coded twice. Open coding, the process of sorting the collected data into distinct categories and themes (Saldana), was used for qualitative responses to allow themes to emerge organically from the data. The second round of coding used axial coding, (Saldana) to draw connections between the themes and categories created during the open coding. Coding instructor responses by related themes assisted in disseminating the information collected. The coding was done manually.

The interview questions provided for instructor interviewees and analyzed for this chapter included five open, one combination, and one closed multi-faceted question that allowed and invited comments. The open questions posed to Instructors included:

- “What do you think of when you think of primary research²?”
- “When and how did you first learn about primary research methods and methodologies defined as “new research, collected first-hand by interview, ethnography, survey, etc.?”
- “What do you think is the primary purpose of first-year composition?”
- “What assignments do you think are most successful at achieving that purpose?”
- “What barriers have you encountered, or limitations do you imagine exist for instructors wanting to incorporate primary research into their FYC courses?”

The combination question, asked participants

- “Do you include primary research methods in your first-year composition pedagogy? Why or Why not?”

When participants provided reasons for why or why not, two main themes emerged:

“curriculum...” and “background”. Two follow up questions were asked in response to the fourth question, the first asked participants who responded that they do incorporate primary research methods in their first-year writing courses, “How have your students responded to conducting primary research in FYC?” “Do you feel as though your first-year students benefit from your inclusion of primary research methods and methodologies?” “How can you tell?” The second follow up question asked participants who responded they did not incorporate primary research methods in their first-year writing courses, “Are there particular reasons why you haven’t incorporated primary research in your FYC courses?”

² Based on a response during a preliminary interview with the Director of First-Year English at University of South Carolina in Fall of 2018, not everyone thinks of primary research in the same way. Some faculty and scholars think of primary research in terms of primary sources, and not the act and process of conducting the actual research. So in that sense, when I conduct the interviews for this project, I may need to explain primary research to some of the interviewees after asking the first question in this set.

The closed multi-faceted question asked participants,

- “Did you receive formal or informal pedagogical training before teaching for the very first time?” “Have you ever received formal or informal pedagogical training? If so, did it include coverage of teaching primary research?” One bar graph and two pie charts were created to provide a visual representation of participant responses.

The instructor responses express knowledge and perception of integrating primary research methods in first-year composition, while also showing some potential limitations through a diverse perspective of instruction. Notes about my reaction to the data after each coding session were written focusing interpretations of data through the lens of first-year writing studies. While in the process of conducting interviews and collecting follow up data, my notes were used to reflect on my own point of view and positionality as a first-year instructor, adjunct, and GTA to keep myself aware of my possible bias (Creswell, 2014).

2.3 Department, Program, and Course Overviews

In the section that follows, a programmatic overview of each participating institution is discussed to provide necessary background that could justify some decisions instructors make when deciding whether to incorporate primary research methods in their first-year writing pedagogy. While composition studies as a discipline continues to expand, and many scholars continue to look and investigate theory and pedagogy, it is important to remember that many writing programs across the country implement curricula choices due to budget and local and regional considerations (Carter-Tod 76). Considering the differing first-year writing programs and curricular structure prior to discussing the findings from the interviews helps ensure a greater understanding the impact choices writing program administrators and English departments have made.

2.3.1 University of South Carolina

The first sentence of the University of South Carolina's mission statement³, found on the university's main website, declares "The primary mission of the University of South Carolina Columbia is the education of the state's citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and community engagement." As an adjunct English instructor for UofSC from 2012-2015, and again from 2017-2021, I saw many changes within the first-year writing department. In 2012, the university launched the Carolina Core curriculum which "provides a common core of knowledge, skill, and academic experience for all Carolina undergraduates" (office of the provost). The first-year writing program saw a major overhaul as Dr. Christy Friend worked with librarian Karen Brown, and several others to combine the new information literacy library requirement course of one credit hour with the English 102 course. Once this was complete, the English 102 course became a mandatory course for all students attending the university to also ensure students received the information literacy requirement if they did not already fulfill the library requirement course. Up until two years ago, this remained in place, but the university has been moving towards expanding their first-year experience program, and the Carolina Core will soon see a new restructuring (Brown). The first "University 101" course in the United States, the UofSC first-year seminar was established in 1972 and designed to "build trust, understanding, and open lines of communication between students, faculty, staff, and administrators" (History). Similar to many universities across the country, UofSC continues to transform and expand their first-year experience seminar in hopes of addressing the increasing attrition rates (Costino 52).

³ University of South Carolina's full mission statement found here: https://sc.edu/about/offices_and_divisions/institutional_research_assessment_and_analytics/about_us/mission_statements

The first-year writing courses, categorized as English 101 and 102 at University of South Carolina, fall under a micro-department of the English department, named First-Year English. Within this department there is an official Director and Associate Director; the Director position is a revolving position, switching out Directors every 2-3 years. The Associate Director position is a permanent position, filled by a Senior Lecturer. Graduate Assistants fill temporary roles within the department. The First-Year English department follows the Carolina Core for disseminating Course Goals for its two first-year writing courses: “Students must be able to identify and analyze issues, develop logical persuasive arguments and communicate ideas clearly for a variety of audiences and purposes through writing and speaking”. The student cap for English 101 is 19, and the student cap for English 102 is 24.

The course overview of English 101: Critical Reading and Composition, as provided on the UofSC main website, states, “Instruction in strategies for critically reading and analyzing literature and non-literary texts; structured, sustained practice in composing expository and analytical essays”. The course overview of English 102: Rhetoric and Composition, as provided on the UofSC main website states, “Instruction and intensive practice in researching, analyzing, and composing written arguments about academic and public issues”. Both courses utilize their own custom textbooks, *The Carolina Reader* and *The Carolina Rhetoric*, respectively. Textbooks are updated every academic year and created by graduate students and faculty within the English department. Students are encouraged to purchase print copies of the textbook from the university’s bookstore.

Neither *The Carolina Reader*, nor *The Carolina Rhetoric* include any information on research methods; however, UofSC also requires students purchase a handbook, *The Everyday Writer* for both English 101 and 102 courses. This version of *The Everyday Writer* was published

for The University of South Carolina. Within the handbook, in the “Research” section, there is a paragraph that discusses the differences between primary and secondary sources on page 152, and then a brief section, three pages, that discusses conducting field research on pages 161-164. These three pages provide a limited coverage of interviews, observations, surveys, and data analysis and interpretation.

Both courses are primarily taught by graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), lecturers, and adjuncts. Full-time faculty who teach these courses teach it in the Honors College or as a Capstone Course. Course requirements vary for both courses, but a standard syllabus is prepared by the first-year writing department then shared and used by the majority of GTAs. Lecturers and adjuncts are free to create their own syllabus and assignments, but most follow the standard syllabus shared by the department. See English 2021-2022 101 standard syllabus in Appendix C, and 102 standard syllabus in Appendix D. As of Fall 2021, there is no longer a research requirement in English 101, but there remains a secondary research requirement in English 102.

During the 2020-2021 academic year, the standard English 101 assignments included a Literacy Narrative, an Argumentative Essay, a Comparative Analysis Essay, Reading Responses, Peer Review, and a Reflection Essay. In Fall of 2021, the department made a decision to drop the argumentative essay and replace it with two new assignments, a Close Reading Essay, and an Open Genre Literacy Project (multimodal). As stated on the open-shared prompt, the assignment asks students to “create a text that communicates their experiences or aspirations as a writer in college or beyond by identifying a discourse community they are learning (or hope) to be part of and the literacies they’ll need to contribute effectively.” More details on these assignments can be found in Appendix E. The English 102 curriculum has not changed in several years, and the standard English 102 assignments include a Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography, a

Research Argumentative Essay, a Public Turn Assignment (multi-modal), Information Literacy Projects (mini-annotated bibliographies), and Peer Review. More details on these assignments can be found in Appendix F. None of the standard assignments created, shared, and implemented by first-year instructors at UofSC include primary research methods.

2.3.2 Georgia State University

The first sentence of Georgia State University's mission statement⁴, found on the main website, states, "Georgia State University, an enterprising public research university, transforms the lives of students, advances the frontiers of knowledge and strengthens the workforce of the future." As a graduate student and GTA in the English department from 2017-2022, I helped transform the lives of students by teaching three first-year classes a year and contributing to a first-year custom-combination textbook.

The first-year writing courses, categorized as English 1101 and 1102 at Georgia State University, fall under a program of the English department, named Lower Division Studies (LDS). Within LDS there is a Director and Associate Director, both revolving positions, with currently no limit on length of service. The Associate Director position, similar to the position held at UofSC, has also most recently been filled by a Lecturer or Senior Lecturer. Graduate Teaching Assistants (GTAs) comprise the majority of instructors for English 1101 and 1102 within the department. The student cap for both English 1101 and 1102 is 25; however in Fall of 2021, the college granted the cap be exceeded to allow 27 students per course due to the student demand and rise in enrollment (Harker).

⁴ Georgia State University's mission statement can be found here: <https://www.gsu.edu/mission-statement/>

The course overview of English 1101: English Composition I, as shared on the main GSU website, states: “A composition course designed to increase the student's ability to construct written prose of various kinds. Focuses on methods of organization, analysis, research skills, and the production of short argumentative and expository essays; readings consider issues of contemporary social and cultural concern.” During the 2020-2021 academic year, the department began revising the English 1101 curriculum to reflect the College to Career initiative to better align with the college’s Quality Enhancement Plan that prepares students for their lives and a career after academia. The college’s current QEP strives to “develop curricular enhancements that help students become aware of career competencies, connect those competencies to the work they do in the major, and demonstrate their proficiency of transferable skills” (CTC website). The course overview of English 1102: English Composition II, as shared on the main GSU website, states: “A composition course designed to develop writing skills beyond the levels of proficiency required by English 1101. Stresses critical reading and writing and incorporates a variety of more advanced research methods; readings will be drawn from a wide variety of texts”.

Both courses utilize an online digital custom textbook, *English 1101: Guide to First Year Writing* and *English 1102 Guide to First Year Writing*, which students can access in a platform named Top Hat. The last print textbook was published in 2019. Beginning in Fall of 2019, the department decided to transition the textbook to an online space. The current digital textbooks have been created and edited by current graduate students and faculty within the English department.

The English 1101 textbook devotes two sections in Chapter 6, "Research and Documentation" to methods related to primary research. Under "Types of Evidence and Sources"

there are sub-headings: "Primary and Secondary Research, ""Firsthand Accounts: Your Own Experience," "Firsthand Accounts: Observation," "More Firsthand Accounts," and "Original Reports of Research: Scholarly Publication." Additionally, the section: "Conducting Research: Methods and Techniques" has a sub-heading: "Primary Research: Observation." The English 1102 textbook devotes two sections in Chapter 4, "Research and Documentation" to methods related to primary research. "Types of Evidence and Sources" has sub-sections: "Review: Primary and Secondary Research, "Firsthand Accounts: Interviews and Surveys," "Firsthand Accounts: Archives." Additionally, under the section "Conducting Research: Methods and Techniques" are the sub-headings: "Primary Research: Interviews," "Primary Research: Surveys," "Primary Research: Archives."

Both courses are primarily taught by graduate teaching assistants (GTAs), lecturers, and adjuncts. Full-time faculty also teach these courses, but not nearly as frequently. Course requirements may vary for both courses, but a standard syllabus is prepared by Lower Division Studies, then shared and used by the majority of GTAs. Lecturers and Adjuncts are free to create their own syllabus and assignments, but most follow the standard syllabus shared by the department. See English 1101 standard syllabus in Appendix G, and 1102 standard syllabus in Appendix H.

During the 2020-2021 and 2021-2022 academic year, the standard English 1101 assignments included a Literacy Narrative, an Interview Report, and an Argumentative Essay. More details on these assignments can be found in Appendix I. During the same academic year, the standard English 1102 assignments included a Visual Analysis, Precis and Annotated Bibliography, Academic Research Paper, and Revision and Reflection Paper. More details on these assignments can be found in Appendix J. Of the standard assignments created, shared, and

implemented by first-year instructors at GSU, there is only one assignment that includes primary research methods, and that is the Interview Report in the current English 1101 course.

2.4 Interview Findings

2.4.1 Defining Primary Research

Instructors interviewed were first asked “What do you think of when you think of primary research?”. Based on a response during a preliminary interview with the Director of First-Year English at University of South Carolina in Fall of 2018, not everyone thinks of primary research in the same way. Some instructors and scholars think of primary research in terms of primary sources, and not the act and process of conducting the actual research. All fourteen participants responded to this question and two main themes emerged from their responses:

1. Research defined by source material- Primary research defined as an original source of information, also known as a primary source, such as an autobiography, painting, original document, or text.
2. Research defined by an act of collecting new data- Primary research defined by collecting new data, or conducting research in the form of an interview, ethnography, survey, poll, or investigation of the archives.

2.4.1.1 Research Defined by Source Material

Three instructors at UofSC and four instructors at GSU included in their definitions of “primary research” a reference to an original source of information that already exists. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “To inform oneself of the broader context of an exigence by using other people’s work”

- “Finding sources, physical documents,”
- “Whatever text they’re using as a lens to understand something”

Based on the seven instructor responses, 50% of participants interviewed, that defined primary research as primary sources, some teacher/scholars do not think of primary research as anything but looking at an original text or document. It is possible that if primary research methods were introduced as “field work,” this could garner a different result in the way it is perceived.

2.4.1.2 Research Defined by an Act of Collecting New Data

Four instructors at UofSC and three instructors at GSU included in their definitions of “primary research” a reference to the collection of data done by a researcher for the first time. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “An attempt to contribute to the knowledge of a field and to study the subject using the methods appropriate... that might involve qualitative or quantitative data collection”
- “Things that students bring that isn’t given to them in class...conducting original surveys, lab work”
- “Any kind of individual step towards gathering data to include raw numbers or raw information”

Based on the seven instructor responses, 50% of participants interviewed, that defined primary research as original research, some teacher/scholars are incredibly familiar with primary research methods, and this could in part be due to prior background, knowledge, and experience with scholarly research methods.

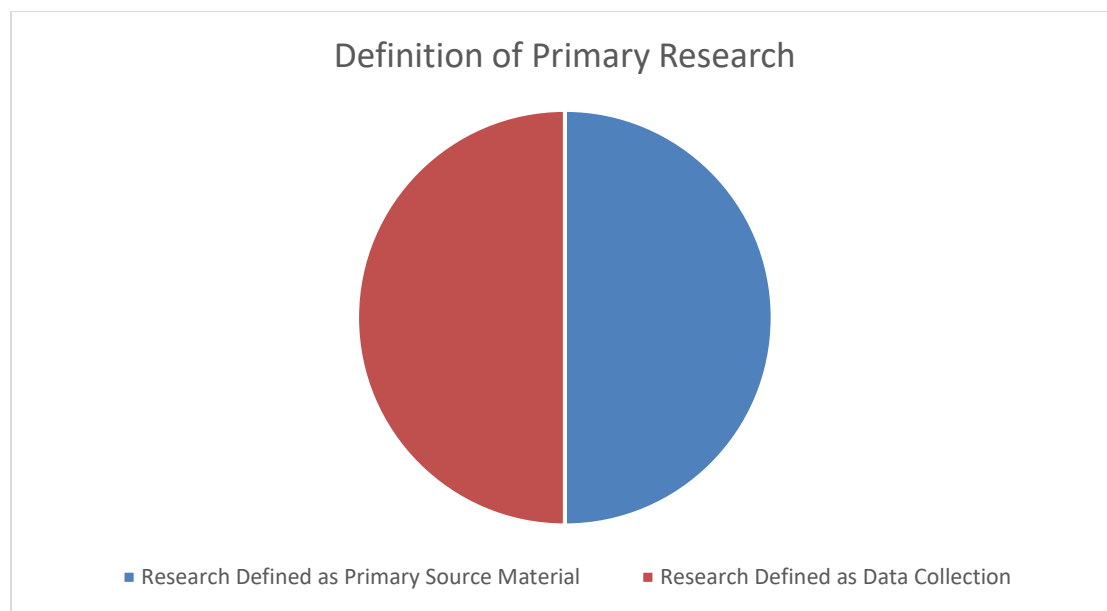


Figure 1 Definition of Primary Research

The data gathered from instructor interview responses suggests the even split on the definition of primary research is mostly due to educational background and prior experience. These findings are not surprising to me since I have been in conversation with many faculty members over the years who have a background in literature or creative writing (as I do) and who do not conduct any qualitative or quantitative research. It makes sense for those instructors to think of primary research in the form of a primary source, and arguably such, possibly an archive (although only one instructor mentioned using archives to find “primary” sources). These findings suggest there is still a gap that exists within our own discipline where primary research is too often a muddled term.

2.4.2 Learning About Primary Research

After participants provided their own definition of primary research, I provided the definition of primary research as first-hand research experience being conducted by the researcher for the first time to gather and analyze documents and data. I then asked participants

“When and how did you first learn about primary research methods and methodologies defined as “new research, collected first-hand by interview, ethnography, survey, etc.?” All fourteen participants responded to this question and four main categories emerged from the responses:

1. Primary and/or Secondary School- One instructor at UofSC and one instructor at GSU, for a total of two combined, noted that they first learned about primary research methods in primary and/or secondary school.
2. Undergraduate- One participant at GSU noted that they first learned about primary research methods during their undergraduate education.
3. Graduate- Five instructors at UofSC and four instructors at GSU, for a total of nine combined, noted that they first learned about primary research methods during their graduate education working on either a Masters or Doctoral degree.
4. Never- One participant at UofSC and one participant at GSU, for a total of two combined, had never heard of primary research methods and methodologies.

Most participants learned about primary research methods and methodologies for the first time during their graduate education. This could be part of the reason why many teacher/scholars do not find it necessary to incorporate primary research methods within first-year writing.

2.4.3 Primary Purpose of First Year Composition

The third question asked participants “What do you think is the primary purpose of first-year composition?” Four main categories emerged from the responses. It is important to note here that some participant responses overlapped in more than one category; therefore, instructor responses were included in more than one category, and the data set will present the number of responses each category received.

1. Overall Student Growth- The primary purpose of first-year composition is to help students gain confidence and improve their reading, writing, research, and communication abilities.
2. Standardization/Checkpoint/Barrier- First-year composition presents as a checkpoint for incoming freshman/students who must meet certain criteria before advancing further in academia.
3. Prepare Students for Academia- The primary purpose of first-year composition is to prepare students for success in future courses and continued education.
4. Depends on Institution- The purpose of first-year composition varies depending on the goals of the institution and the objectives they have set in place.

2.4.3.1 Overall Student Growth

Six instructors believe that the purpose of first-year composition should help students become more confident in their work, and work to help them improve in their reading, writing, research, and communication abilities. Some responses include, but are not limited to:

- “to increase the student’s confidence in their ability to express ideas that they are developing in the academic field”
- “Teach students to be better readers, thinkers, communicators, and arguers”

Many instructors interviewed believed overall student growth is the primary purpose of first-year composition, and many connect this confidence and growth to their success in the future. There were several overlaps between the responses that fell in this category and the responses that fell in the “prepare students for academia” category. Responses suggest that many first-year writing instructors view confidence as a starting point for success later in life whether that is in academic writing or professional writing. One instructor mentioned “I’m probably supposed to say prepare

students to write, think, research, and compose at a collegiate level, but what I'm actually going to say is: prepare students to write, think, research, and compose for real world success".

2.4.3.2 *Standardization/Checkpoint/Barrier*

Four instructors shared in their responses the purpose of first-year composition is in place to set a standardization of students, and often presents as a checkpoint and/or a barrier. Some responses include, but are not limited to:

- "it's a foundational course, maybe a checkpoint, possibly a barrier"
- "for the school to make instant cash and weed out the dummies"

Many still view first-year composition as a barrier and a checkpoint for students to "prove their worth" and work their way out of the coursework in order to continue with their academic goals.

Others see it as a way to present a standardization of college related reading and writing.

Unfortunately, this is true in some cases that the course, depending on the school, the instructor, the pedagogy, the course requirements, and the student's internal and external limitations, first-year writing can often present as a barrier.

2.4.3.3 *Prepare Students for Academia*

Seven instructors mentioned in their responses the purpose of first-year composition should work to prepare students for future academic coursework. Some responses include, but are not limited to:

- "Facilitate and help students learn to express themselves in ways that will meet their needs, but also conform to institutional expectations."
- "Train students in the fundamental skills they need to succeed in their future courses; we have an obligation to teach students how to write topic sentences and incorporate quotations and make/write papers in which the paragraphs have a meaningful order

rather than just a jumbled mess”— “I think it’s crucially important to have multiple assignments that have the same instruction... so the students can master it”

It appears based on instructor responses that many still align with Sharon Crowley’s assertions that composition instruction “serves the need of the academic community” (227). Some faculty members view first-year writing as a guide and a step to help students master the writing and research skills they will need for future courses in academia. I was not surprised by the number of responses that created this category.

2.4.3.4 Depends on Institution

Four instructors mentioned in their responses they believe the primary purpose of first-year composition depends on the institution. Some responses include, but are not limited to:

- “Beyond the most reductively general sense of trying to teach students to communicate better, it depends on the kind of institution and the student body and the curricular goals.”
- “Varies from institution to institution”

Some view first-year writing goals and objectives specific to a certain college or university. In this regard, the goals and objectives would vary, depending on the type of college: liberal arts, research, two-year; region of the college: urban, rural; and student population.

The findings from this study align well with previous scholarship that has suggested the purpose of first-year coursework is to “foster intellectual engagement”, “academic discourse”, and “bodily retention” (Brent, 256). Additionally, many instructor responses suggest what Crowley mentioned in 1995, and that is “despite its pedagogical innovations and its ambitions toward curricular expansion” (232) due to the fact that first-year composition is a “universally” required course, many teacher/scholars are still mainly concerned with the basics of writing

pedagogy (232). Collected data based on responses show from this sample that 29% interviewed perceive the purpose of first-year writing to help students build confidence and writing ability; 19% interviewed perceive the purpose of first-year writing to set a standardization, also creating a barrier and checkpoint; 33% interviewed perceive the purpose of first-year writing to prepare students for future academic work; 19% interviewed perceive the purpose of first-year writing depends on the institution. See pie graph below.

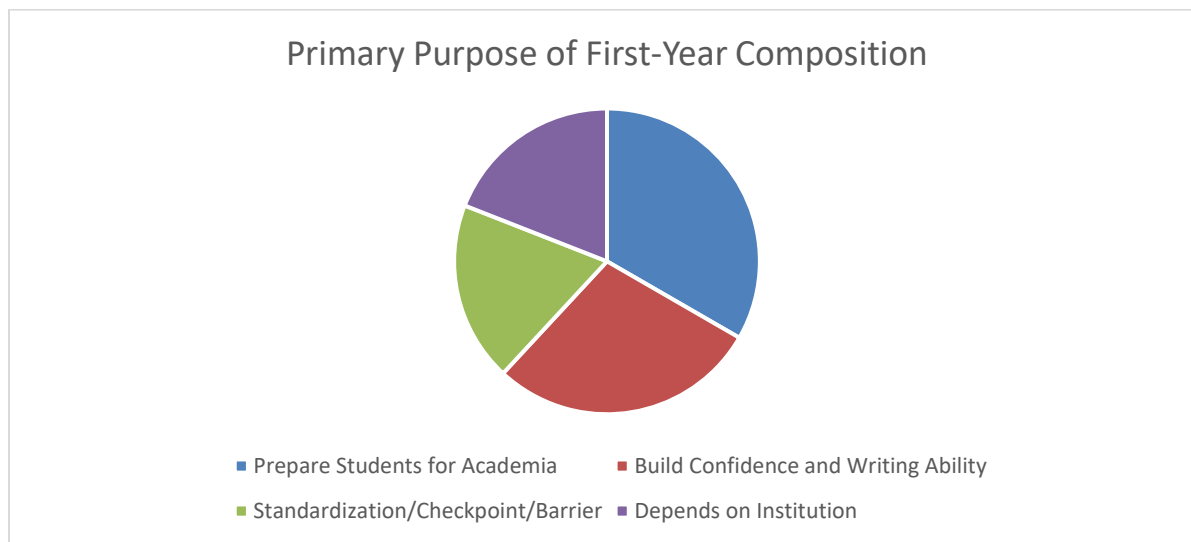


Figure 2 Primary Purpose of FYC

2.4.4 Choice Assignments for FYC

The follow up question “What assignments do you think are most successful at achieving that purpose?” was asked, and six main categories emerged from the responses:

1. **Exposure to research with the student’s field of study:** One UofSC participant and one GSU participant both shared that they think the most successful assignment is to ask students to familiarize themselves with their chosen discipline in first-year composition to better understand and prepare for what lies ahead. As one instructor stated, “I’m a fan

of getting students to get their hands figuratively dirty exploring the field they are interested in.”

2. **Constant Writing:** Two instructors at UofSC shared they think the most successful assignments ask students to have a lot of practice writing. As one stated, “lots and lots of writing; getting supportive feedback on draft work; reminding them that writing is a process.”
3. **Assignments that help students understand varying audiences:** One participant at UofSC and one at GSU believe the most successful assignments ask students to become familiar with different audiences. As one stated, “assignments that build on each other like a persuasive essay and then a persuasive video—that makes them think about different audiences”
4. **Narratives:** One instructor at UofSC and three instructors at GSU shared they think the most successful assignment asks students to write a literacy narrative. As one instructor stated, “the literacy narrative; it is a good way to make composition and essay writing more personal.”
5. **Annotated Bibliographies:** One interviewee at UofSC and one at GSU noted the most successful assignment asks students to complete an annotated bibliography. As one stated, “I have an assignment called ‘writing on and about sources’...this is kind of like an annotated bibliography.”
6. **Close Readings:** One instructor at UofSC and one instructor at GSU stated they think the most successful assignment asks students to complete a close reading of a text. As one instructor stated, “I think a close reading of a text (whether it is linguistic or visual) is very effective.”

It is apparent from participant responses that as Elizabeth Wardle has evidenced in her WPA scholarship (2007), faculty conceptions of writing influence writing instruction. The many varying responses from instructors at both schools provides evidence that it is incredibly hard to determine what assignments are the most successful for the goals of first-year composition, and part of that is due to individual instructor perceptions on writing and research. While some instructors feel a narrative is best, others feel an annotated bibliography is best. Their reasons vary but are mostly due to how the instructors feel the students would best connect to the composing process. For example, asking students to compose a narrative, invites those students to write about themselves and consider how their past has influenced their current life. Whether through a literacy narrative or a descriptive narrative, a narrative assignment can be successful because students are interested in the subject and are often empowered by completing writing assignments. However, asking students to compose an annotated bibliography demands students conduct some form of research, whether that is primary or secondary research. They then must read and analyze their sources and compose a summary and analysis of said sources. The work for an annotated bibliography is considered by most to be more intensive, both in time and effort. This writing assignment however is also successful in meeting the goals of first-year composition and similarly to the narrative can be empowering for students to feel accomplished in their research and writing progress and goals.

2.4.5 Choosing to Incorporate Primary Research Methods

After participants established what they think is the primary purpose of first-year composition and what assignments they think are most successful at achieving that purpose they were then asked “Do you include primary research methods in your first-year composition

pedagogy? Why or Why not?” All fourteen participants responded to this question and three main categories emerged from the initial responses to include “yes,” “no,” and “sometimes.” Three instructors at UofSC responded “yes”, and four instructors at UofSC responded “no”, while four instructors at GSU responded “yes,” one responded “no,” and two responded “sometimes.” A total of seven include or invite primary research methods in their first-year pedagogy; a total of five do not, and a total of two do sometimes. See bar graph below:

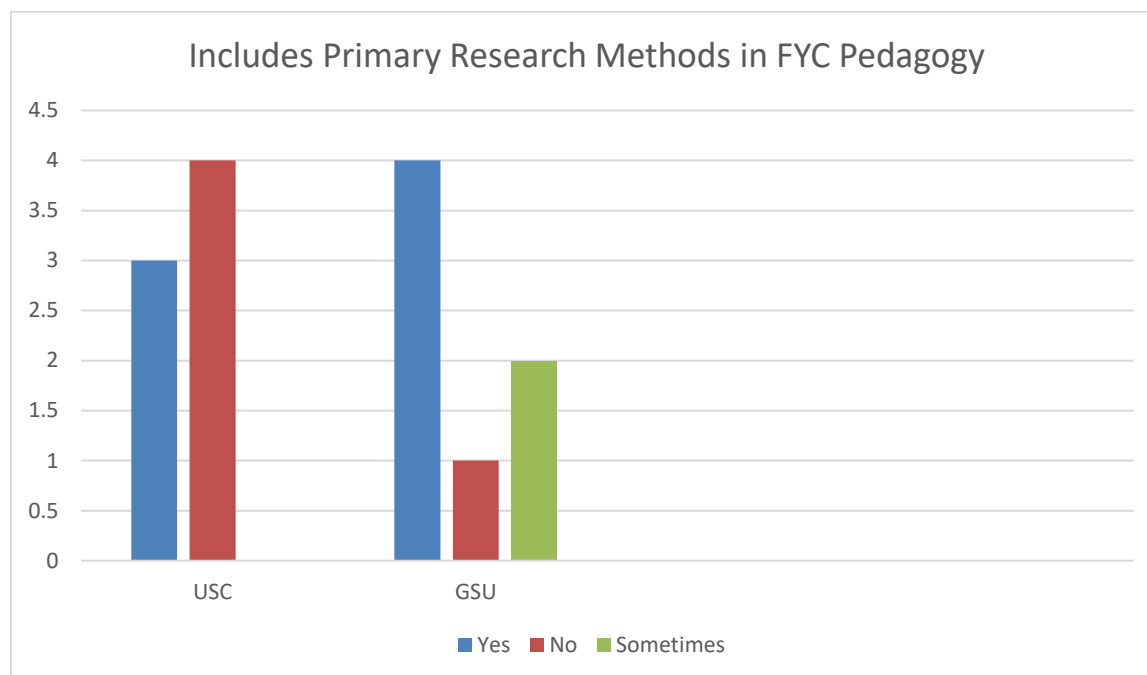


Figure 3 Includes Primary Research Methods in FYC Pedagogy

Participants also provided reasons for why they include primary research methods in their pedagogy or why they do not, and two main themes emerged:

1. **Curriculum:** Based on participant responses, some instructors felt encouraged by the curriculum the program had set in place, while others were discouraged by it. Based on the small sample size of instructor participants, the program and curriculum that invited primary research methods to be included, saw more instructors who felt

comfortable introducing such methods in their pedagogy. The program and curriculum that did not invite primary research methods to be included, saw more instructors who did not feel comfortable doing so. Some examples of participant responses on why they make these choices include, but are not limited to:

- “I do, but I try to make sure that it’s doing the work of the program; it’s not mandatory.”
- “I don’t, but it’s not an intentional decision, it’s the way the FYE courses are structured.”
- “It is easier when the curriculum is set up in a way that makes it easier; I try to work it in.”

2. **Background:** Based on participant responses, some instructors did not feel comfortable including primary research methods in their pedagogy due to not having prior knowledge on such methods. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “No. I don’t have the background, and I’m following models that don’t include it.”
- “I do not tend to include primary research methods in first-year classes, in part because this is not part of my usual research process.”

Overall, data suggests instructors are interested in integrating primary research methods in their first-year writing pedagogy, but there are some limitations such as programmatic obstacles and a lack of knowledge based on prior educational background and training. UofSC does not include primary research methods in their first-year writing curriculum and less instructors felt comfortable including such methods in their pedagogy. However, GSU does include primary research methods in their first-year writing curriculum and more instructors felt comfortable

including such methods in their pedagogy. Many first-year writing instructors at UofSC and GSU (as well as many other universities across the country), have a background in a concentration other than rhetoric and composition. According to one interviewee at UofSC, “about half of our sections are taught by MFAs”.

Participants who answered “yes” to including primary research methods in their first-year composition pedagogy were then asked, “How have your students responded to conducting primary research in FYC?” and “Do you feel as though your first-year students benefit from your inclusion of primary research methods and methodologies?” Six participants responded to this question, and three main themes emerged from their responses:

1. **The work is empowering for students:** Instructors whose responses fell into this category mentioned in their responses the overall enjoyment and benefit of primary research for students as individuals. As one instructor stated, “I think they enjoy the process, but it comes at the end of the semester, and they are burned out at this point, but I think it reinvigorates them and it’s empowering.”
2. **The work helps students understand research:** Instructors whose responses fell into this category mentioned in their responses how primary research can help students conduct better research overall and become more aware of the intricacies of the research process. As one instructor stated, “the polls allow students to see bias more clearly; interviews are tricky; a buzzfeed style quiz works well because subjects find it fun and it reveals a lot about preferences and trends.”
3. **The work helps students become better writers:** Instructors whose responses fell into this category mentioned in their responses how primary research benefits students as writers. As one instructor stated, “I think is a great way to help them

practice integrating quotes into their sentences and into their paragraphs; I think it's a great way to scaffold up and to slowly introduce research; I find interviews to be something I can make an easy pitch for and they up appreciating them or getting something out of it."

Participants who answered "no" to including primary research methods in their first-year composition pedagogies were then asked, "Are there particular reasons why you haven't incorporated primary research in your FYC courses?" Five participants responded to this question, and two main themes emerged:

1. **Space and Time Constraints:** Instructors whose responses fell into this category mentioned in their responses that they do not feel there is an adequate amount of time to teach primary research methods when there is so much else they need to cover. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:
 - "It feels like there's already too much to do; I feel too cramped like I wouldn't be able to do it justice."
 - "It's the way the FYE courses are structured; there is not adequate space or time to sufficiently explore methods in FYE."
2. **Limited Background/Capability:** Instructors whose responses fell into this category mentioned in their responses that they do not feel they have enough of an understanding or experience to teach primary research methods. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:
 - "I've never conducted an interview and I would have to learn how to do it"
 - "It was never presented to me as something that I should do, or I should understand."

Instructor responses from these follow up questions suggest that even though some are aware of the benefits of introducing primary research methods to students and some include such methods in their pedagogy, there are multiple challenges. The challenges of space/time constraint limited background/capability are reflective in this study of the program curriculum at both UofSC and GSU, and varying areas of expertise of those that teach the first-year writing courses at the universities. The first challenge of space/time constraint is most apparent; as such, these responses suggest a divide between instructors, possibly due to disciplinary background and research interests.

2.4.6 Limitations When Choosing to Incorporate Primary Research Methods

All fourteen participants were asked, “What barriers have you encountered, or limitations do you imagine exist for instructors wanting to incorporate primary research into their FYC courses?” Five main categories emerged from their responses:

1. **Lack of Support (Materials and Program):** Support for primary research methods is not included in every department and program or in the materials the department distributes.
2. **Lack of Training:** Pedagogical training and professional development lacks the inclusion of primary research methods and methodologies.
3. **Ethics Awareness:** Students need to be aware of appropriate ethics standards when conducting primary research investigations.
4. **Lack of Motivation and/or Time:** First-year writing instructors struggle to find enough time to teach something other than what they already know and are familiar with.

5. **Preconceived Notions of First-Year Student Ability:** First-year students are not capable of conducting primary research.

2.4.6.1 Lack of Support (Materials and Program)

Three instructors from the two universities combined mentioned in their responses a barrier or obstacle they have encountered or imagine exists for first-year instructors wanting to incorporate primary research methods and methodologies in their pedagogy: these instructors identified the obstacle as a lack of support from the department and a lack of suitable materials that would help both instructors and students better understand and apply primary research methods. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “If the standard material doesn’t promote primary research, it’s very difficult; I don’t always feel encouraged to adapt things; it would be a good bit of work.”
- “I haven’t found good resources on how to help students analyze data.”

2.4.6.2 Lack of Training

Three instructors from the two universities combined mentioned in their responses a barrier or obstacle they have encountered or imagine exists for first-year instructors wanting to incorporate primary research methods and methodologies in their pedagogy is a lack of appropriate training. Participants mentioned a lack of pedagogical training and continued training and development within the departments and universities. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “I feel very disconnected to this form of research; I am lacking any appropriate training and/or background; I would need more training.”

- “There is no training; the required composition pedagogy course was a way for people to vent their frustrations, and the required department meetings are a complete joke.”

2.4.6.3 Ethics Awareness

Two instructors from the two universities combined mentioned in their responses a barrier or obstacle they have encountered or imagine exists for first-year instructors wanting to incorporate primary research methods and methodologies in their pedagogy is a lack of appropriately discussing ethical standards with first-year students. This is a barrier/obstacle not often addressed, yet an incredibly important one, as students need to be aware of ethic standards and consent. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “The ethics of it; the intricacy; I feel like I’m doing some sort of like you know diet Sprite version of primary research.”
- “You have to think about ethics and community; getting access to appropriate resources like Qualtrics for surveys.”

2.4.6.4 Lack of Motivation and/or Time

Four instructors from the two universities combined mentioned in their responses a barrier or obstacle they have encountered or imagine exists for first-year instructors wanting to incorporate primary research methods and methodologies in their pedagogy is a time constraint and motivational barriers. Since many first-year instructors are GTAs, Adjuncts, and Lecturers, they are balancing multiple roles. GTAs are balancing teaching courses and taking courses, Adjuncts could possibly be stretching themselves thin teaching at multiple colleges, and Lecturers are teaching for a small percentage of what tenure track faculty are making, and often teaching double or even triple the course load. An example of this includes, but is not limited to:

- “I would not have done this as an early GTA, still trying to figure out my own style and teaching presence—too many constraints.”

2.4.6.5 Preconceived Notions of First-Year Student Ability

Two instructors from the two universities combined mentioned in their responses a barrier or obstacle they have encountered or imagine exists for first-year instructors wanting to incorporate primary research methods and methodologies in their pedagogy is the perception that conducting primary research is beyond a first-year student’s ability. Examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “It seems that instructors who are unfamiliar with composition’s history might struggle with the idea or belief that students are capable and effective at generating their own evidence to support claims.”
- “Instructors think it’s a step beyond what they can do with first year students.”

Responses indicate there are many barriers and obstacles that hinder first-year instructors from incorporating primary research methods and methodologies in their pedagogy, and the perception of barriers and obstacles is very closely split.

2.4.7 Pedagogical Training

All fourteen participants were asked, “Did you receive formal or informal pedagogical training before teaching for the very first time?” One instructor at UofSC replied yes, while six replied no. Four instructors at GSU replied yes, while three replied no. A total of five out of fourteen instructors, 35% interviewed received some form of pedagogical training before teaching for the first time, while nine out of fourteen, 64% did not. The bar graph and pie chart below provide a visual representation of these findings.

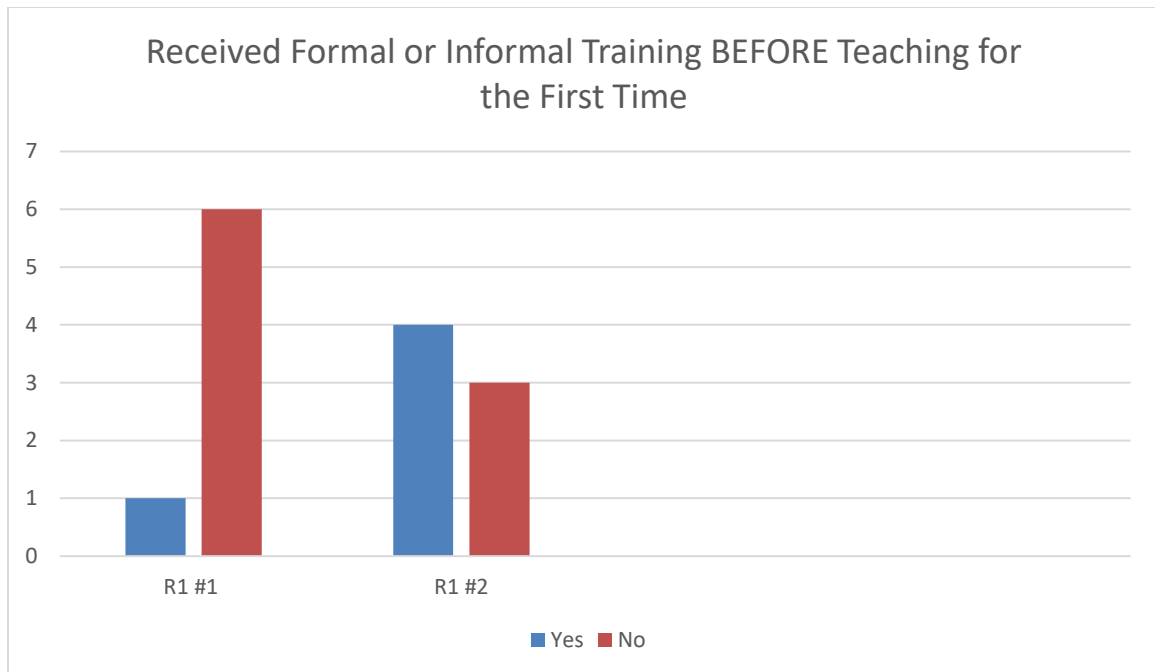


Figure 4 Received Formal or Informal Training BEFORE Teaching for the First Time

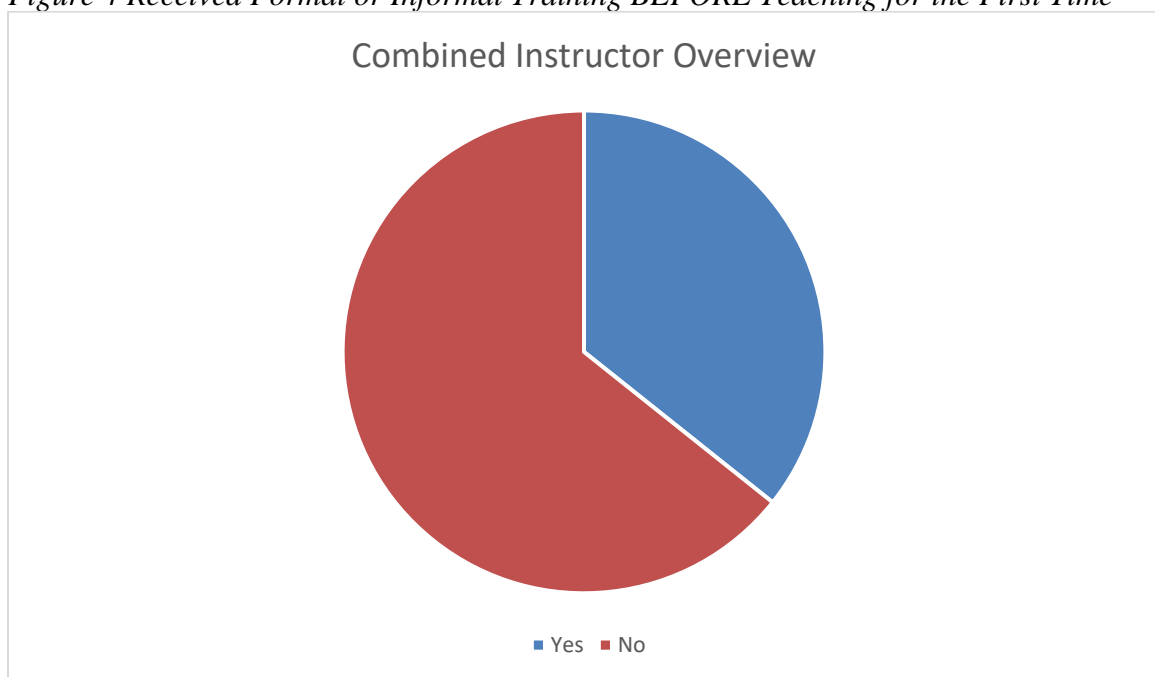


Figure 5 Combined Instructor Interview

The majority of first-year instructors interviewed did not receive pedagogical training before teaching for the first time.

All fourteen participants were asked, “Have you ever received formal or informal pedagogical training? If so, did it include coverage of teaching primary research?” Four instructors at UofSC stated they received pedagogical training while teaching for the first time, and two instructors at GSU stated they received pedagogical training while teaching for the first time. A total of 43% of instructors interviewed received pedagogical training while teaching for the first time. Two instructors at UofSC stated they have never received pedagogical training, and one at GSU stated they had never received pedagogical training. A total of 21% of instructors interviewed have never received pedagogical training. One instructor at UofSC and one at GSU stated they have received training on how to teach primary research methods. A total of 14%, 2/14 instructors interviewed received some form of training on how to teach primary research methods. 12/14, 86% of instructors interviewed have not. See pie graph below for visual representation.



Figure 6 Instructors Who Received Training on How to Teach Primary Research Methods

2.5 Discussion

Georgia State University and University of South Carolina are both R1 schools, however their general university outlook and first-year writing goals vary greatly. Georgia State University's first-year writing program follows the College to Career (CTC) university initiative and strives to prepare students to be successful outside of academia. Including the Interview Writing Assignment during a student's first year not only invites and encourages practical life application, but also provides early control and empowerment in the student's education. The early inclusion of primary research methods in first-year writing can transfer to advanced writing coursework and professional writing outside the university. Georgia State's student population includes more non-traditional students than University of South Carolina, and it is possible the new initiative could help with Georgia State's undergraduate graduation rate of only 52%. University of South Carolina's first-year writing program differs in that it emphasizes goals for student success in future college coursework and maintains "Teaching students to write well is also an essential part of the liberal arts goal at the University of South Carolina" (FYE website). University of South Carolina's undergraduate graduation rate is significantly higher with 75% of students finishing their four-year degree. The data suggests the instructors who teach at each university promote the goals of the writing program, and thus, prioritize and maintain the writing and research goals already in place. This is evidenced by the fact that less instructors include primary research methods in their first-year writing program at UofSC.

As an adjunct instructor at UofSC for 8 years, I attended annual start-of-year required orientations for all GTAs, adjuncts, and part-time faculty, and a discussion of primary research methods was never introduced. These annual meetings were several hours long, always included a guest speaker (or several), provided an overview of the first-year writing program, its current

initiatives, which most recently centered around information literacy, and always incorporated a lecture on the use of the writing center. Additionally, GTAs and contingent faculty were encouraged and reminded to make their first-year writing classes' library session reservations so the librarians could teach basic research initiatives. I spoke with many GTAs during orientations over the years, and although UofSC requires GTAs take two pedagogy courses, one during their first semester teaching, and one during their second semester teaching, neither of the two required pedagogy courses covers teaching research methods. Additionally, the students taking the pedagogy course are a mix of MA, MFA, and PhD students. Based off these observations, it is clear that one of the main reasons the English department and first-year writing program at UofSC does not include the integration of primary research methods in their curriculum is because no one is trained on how to teach research methods.

As a GTA at Georgia State University, I took the one required pedagogical training course my first semester, and attended all professional development sessions (4 yearly, for a total of 12, 2017-2020) until Covid. The pedagogical training course at GSU is required of all GTAs who are going to teach, and most GTAs take this course while teaching during their first semester at GSU. Some students have never taught before as the class is a mixture of MA and PhD students. Students were encouraged to purchase pedagogical textbooks for this class; however, only one of the textbooks included one chapter that mentioned primary research methods. Additionally, during the 12 professional development sessions I attended at GSU, a discussion on the integration of primary research methods in the first-year writing classroom never ensued. Thus, it is interesting that GSU's English department and writing program choose to include primary research methods in their first-year writing curriculum, and also possibly why

only half of the first-year writing instructors interviewed from Georgia State University include primary research methods in their first-year writing pedagogy.

As evidenced from the data provided in this study, some first-year writing course curriculums include primary research methods; however, if an instructor doesn't feel knowledgeable or comfortable teaching those skills, they will continue teaching what they are comfortable teaching; they are not going to branch out to invite or integrate primary research methods in their pedagogy if it is not something they feel comfortable using themselves. One of the goals of integrating primary research alongside secondary research in first-year writing is to ensure instructors feel comfortable doing so. As one interviewee stated "If we had the ability to construct a syllabus that everybody felt comfortable using and was able to incorporate the methods that might be touched on in that if we had a textbook that allowed for all of it, and if all of this contributed to the objectives of the program in the core curriculum and the institution, then maybe we might, for a brief moment in time, make that successful." A lot of instructors interviewed expressed that due to a divide in educational background, i.e. creative writing, literature, rhetoric and composition, it would be very difficult to provide adequate training for first-year writing instructors.

2.6 Conclusion Overview

First-Year Writing instructor interview responses included in this chapter, indicate:

1. "Primary research" is a confusing term, and many teacher/scholars still struggle with the ideal definition. While many teacher/scholars have some prior knowledge of primary research methods and methodologies, they do not necessarily know to define them as such. It may be best to reconsider "primary research" with another term already in use,

such as “empirical research” which includes both “qualitative research” and/or “quantitative research.”

2. First-year writing instructors have varying perceptions on the purpose of first-year composition for students. While many instructors’ stated purposes overlap, there is a clear division of what actually is the primary purpose of first-year composition. Many first-year writing instructors don’t feel as though completing research of any kind is as significant to the purposes and goals of the course as writing is.
3. There are numerous barriers and limitations that hinder the integration of primary research methods and methodologies in first-year writing—the clearest being the lack of training on how to effectively teach primary research methods. Since many GTAs and Professors have a background in something other than rhetoric and composition, it is essential that conversations surrounding the use and teaching of research methods continue within pedagogical training and professional development.

2.7 Future Implications and Continued Research

Just as Laura Wilder asserts in “Tangled Roots,” (2015), “we lack training and support for data collection and statistical analysis. Further, we find ourselves housed in institutional settings—very often English departments—where it is hard to recognize and evaluate empirical research of this sort” (504). Since 2015, first-year writing programs and English departments have re-considered their approaches to incorporating a variety of research methods within their curriculums, but while there have been some massive overhauls to first-year writing programs, there does not appear to be the same review of pedagogical training and professional development. If first-year writing programs continue to transform their curricula goals and

objectives to include a variety of research methods and multimodalities within the classroom, it will be essential for training and development to reflect this program and curricula changes.

Additionally, first-year writing courses are often perceived as a corrective course for students coming into academia without the proper skillsets. There is a lot of pressure placed on first-year writing instructors, and a lot of expectations for them to help develop first-year student's writing and research abilities (Artman, Frisicaro-Pawlowski, & Monge, 2010), yet without the proper training, first-year writing instructors are teaching based on how they were taught. There is room for substantial growth in promoting continued research addressing pedagogical training and professional development needed to explore and address the current needs of GTAs, Adjuncts, and Instructors teaching first-year writing. There is a huge gap between the expected preparation and actual preparation of composition teachers.

3 WRITING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATORS REFLECT ON PEDAGOGICAL TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT, AND A PERCEIVED COMFORT LEVEL OF TEACHING RESEARCH METHODS IN FYC

This chapter expands on several key themes and issues mentioned in Chapter Two related to teacher training and professional development for graduate students and first-year writing instructors. The data presented in this chapter shifts from a comparative analysis of instructor interviews at GSU and USC to considering WPA perspectives based on a nationally circulated Qualtrics survey. In addition, this chapter highlights how some writing program administrators rate their first-year instructors' comfort level when teaching research methods. Based on the data collected from the WPA surveys, this chapter and the next provide evidence that suggests many first-year instructors are not comfortable teaching research methods to first-year students, due to a lack of the inclusion of research methods in teacher training and professional development.

In the first part of this chapter, I provide some background information on writing program administrators in English departments in reference to first-year writing programs and curriculum development. I then review scholarship that provides general guidance for introducing research methods in teacher training and the training inconsistencies represented within that scholarship. Even though the guidance to introduce primary and secondary research methods in the discipline exists, the results from the present study suggest that support for this kind of teaching is not well- established in many programs across the country. The second part of the chapter details the methods and partial findings of surveys distributed to WPAs across the country at various R1 universities investigating how they are managing the teacher training and professional development in their departments and writing programs. Also included in this chapter's findings from the survey responses is WPA feedback on the comfort levels of their

writing instructors teaching primary and secondary research methods in the first-year classroom. The chapter concludes with a discussion of the findings and a plan for continued research.

3.1 Background

The Writing Program Administrator (WPA) position has evolved over the last forty years, and depending on the institution, the position is one that is either sought after or avoided, but regardless, comes a great deal of department responsibility. In many colleges and universities, the work of the WPA is now spread out over multiple faculty and graduate students who have either been tasked or have volunteered for a substantial amount of the work (Latterell 2003). The work of the WPA often involves working and helping students with appropriate placement in respective courses; managing records; staffing classes; program accountability; and developing curriculum (Bishop 1987); the position demands a great deal of time and effort. Many believe the WPA is often “powerless” to the greater institution in which they are housed (Holdstein, 18), and must figure out how to “work as individuals while also functioning within an institution” (Holdstein 19). Working within the institution and department, collaborating with faculty and graduate students will always present an “inevitable tension between accommodation and resistance to programmatic imperatives” (Desmet, 43). Additionally, the fact that the WPA is typically a revolving position could add to the potential strain on the development of pedagogical training, professional development, and curriculum.

When the Conference on College Composition and Communication’s (CCCC) position statement on preparing teachers of college writing was updated in 2015, it clearly detailed that ethical and effective research methods should include “an understanding of both secondary and primary research methods, as well as a knowledge of plagiarism, copyright law, and human subjects protection.” However, many first-year composition programs across the country find it

challenging to integrate primary research methods in first-year composition courses due to a lack of advice and training provided by the field (Downs and Wardle; Hayden). Many scholars feel that failing to prepare teachers of college writing is also failing to ensure “students who become undergraduate writing researchers obtain knowledge of writing that can be learned only through direct participation in full-fledged creative or critical inquires” (CCCC position statement on Undergraduate Research in Writing: Principles and Best Practices). As the field continues to promote position statements that support integrating more primary research in writing classes broadly and first-year composition specifically, we can begin to see the disconnect between the stated values of organizations like CCCC and the daily practices of what is happening in writing programs and classrooms.

The present study includes the responses and voices of WPAs to provide more positionality to current conversations on the integration of primary research in first-year composition. Investigating and situating research on teacher training, professional development, and mentorship affords scholars the ability to develop resources for better training, to include better time management, and appropriate research methods awareness.

3.2 Methods

In the Spring of 2021, I collected surveys from 20 WPAs at R1 schools across the U.S. Of the 95 public R1 universities in the United States, one university at minimum, per state was contacted in the recruitment for the study. Recruitment was done by emailing the study information to WPAs at the randomly chosen R1 universities across the country using faculty email addresses provided on their program’s websites. Forty-six WPAs were emailed and 20 completed the survey (n=20). The response rate was 43%. Participation was anonymous. Participants were asked to respond to survey questions (see Appendix B), and all participants

provided informed consent on Qualtrics before participating in the study. (See Chapter One for additional details on the study's methods).

3.3 Data Analysis

For this chapter, I focus on a sub-set of five survey questions for WPAs: two closed questions, one closed question with a write-in option, and two scaling questions. The remaining WPA survey data is analyzed in Chapter 4. The survey gathered both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualtrics created graphs displaying the quantitative data for the first three closed questions that asked participants the following:

- “Do you provide pedagogical training/professional development to GTAs, Adjuncts, Instructors, and Professors?” with the options to select “Yes” or “No”
- “Does the training/development include teaching research methods?” with the options to select “Yes” or “No”
- “Could you provide some detail on what pedagogical training/professional development looks like in your program?” with eleven possible choices, including an “other” category in which participants could choose to include write-in responses.

Additionally, two scaled questions were included in the survey questions. Qualtrics provided a statistics table and line graph displaying the quantitative data for the following scaled questions:

- “On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the least comfortable, how would you rate the level of comfort of instructors in your program with teaching primary research methods?”
- “On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the least comfortable, how would you rate the level of comfort of instructors in your program with teaching secondary research methods?”

3.4 Findings

3.4.1 Teacher Training/Professional Development

All twenty WPA survey participants were asked “Do you provide pedagogical training/professional development to GTAs, Adjuncts, Instructors, and Professors?” One hundred percent of participants responded “yes”.

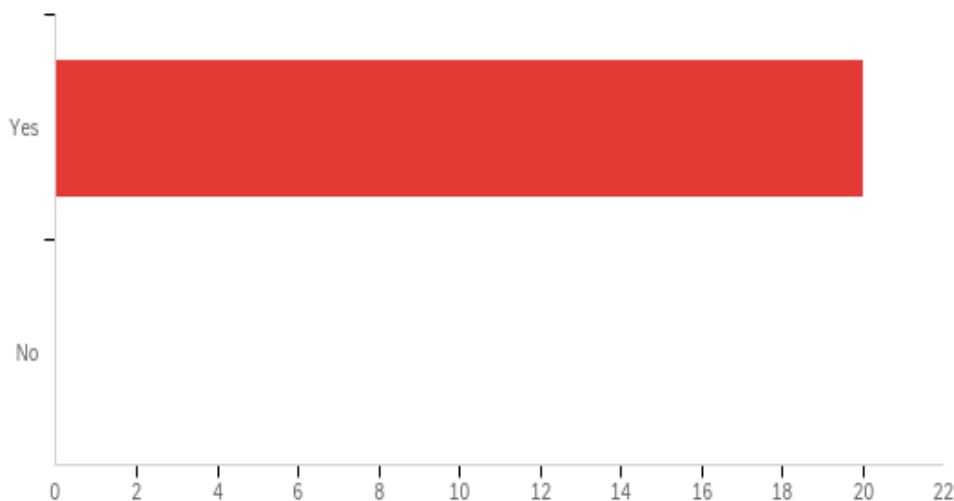


Figure 7 Pedagogical Training/Professional Development Provided by WPAs

There are several limitations with the question posed to participants. A specific definition of “pedagogical training/professional development” was not provided for participants. Due to the broad nature of the question, it is not entirely clear if the writing programs provide the training and development and/or the English departments and/or the universities. It is also not clear if the above offer pedagogical training and professional development, or just one or the other. It is also not clear if everyone partakes in the pedagogical training and professional development, or if the pedagogical training is limited to only graduate students and the professional development is limited to only certain faculty and staff. The question would have offered more information if it would have been split into two questions asking universities if they offer pedagogical training

and then asking if they offer professional development. It would have also been helpful to ask who is included in the training and development and who provides the training and development.

All twenty WPA participants were asked “Does the training/development include support for how to teach research methods in first-year writing?” Fifteen of the twenty WPA participants responded “yes”. Five responded “no”.

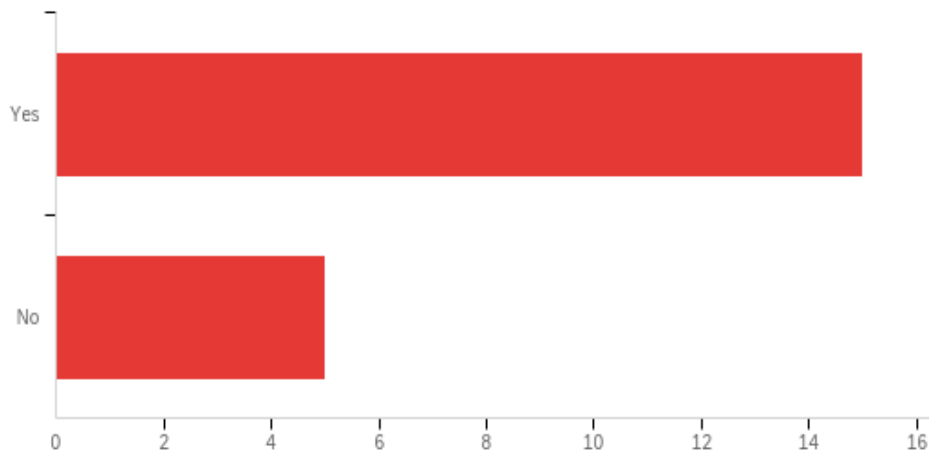


Figure 8 Training/Development to include the support of "how to teach research methods"

The number of positive responses to this question surprised me, however, similarly to the first question, there are several limitations with the question posed to participants. A definition of research methods was not provided for participants. Due to the broad nature of the question, it is not entirely clear if some writing programs include information and support on teaching a variety of research methods, or just particular research methods. It is not clear if the programs include the teaching of both primary and secondary research methods, or just one or the other. A better definition of “support” could have been provided to gain more insight and information on what “support” looks like at a variety of institutions. The question would have provided more information if it would have been split into two questions asking universities if they include

support for teaching secondary research methods and if they include support for teaching primary research methods.

When asked to provide more detail on what training and development might look like at their individual university, participants were given eleven options, including an “other” option with a place to write in what their university does that was not a given choice. Participants were able to select as many options from the list as they wanted. According to twenty participant responses, nine WPA participants, (45%), provide pedagogical training and/or professional development to GTAs, Adjuncts, Instructors and Professors at least once a year; four WPA participants, (20%), provide pedagogical training and/or professional development at least twice a year; nine WPA participants, (45%), utilize breakout groups during their pedagogical training and/or professional development; nine WPA participants, (45%), utilize discussion forums; eight WPA participants, (40%), invite a keynote speaker to attend their training/development; fifteen WPA responses, (75%), state “pedagogical training/professional development” is mandatory, while ten WPA responses, (50%), claim the training and development is optional; five WPA participants, (25%), note that training/development is compensated; eight WPA participants, (40%), note that training/development is provided more than twice a year; fourteen WPA participants, (70%), note that training/development counts as graduate level course credit; and five WPA participants, (25%), chose the other category.

Of the five WPA participants, (25%) that chose the other category, two of the five participants who chose to write in the other category included in their responses that the training/development included “Mentoring.” Two of the five participants who chose to write in the “other” category included in their responses that the training/development included faculty and staff meet on a weekly or monthly basis, and two of the five participants noted that graduate

students are only expected to attend training and development at the beginning of their graduate teaching assistantship.

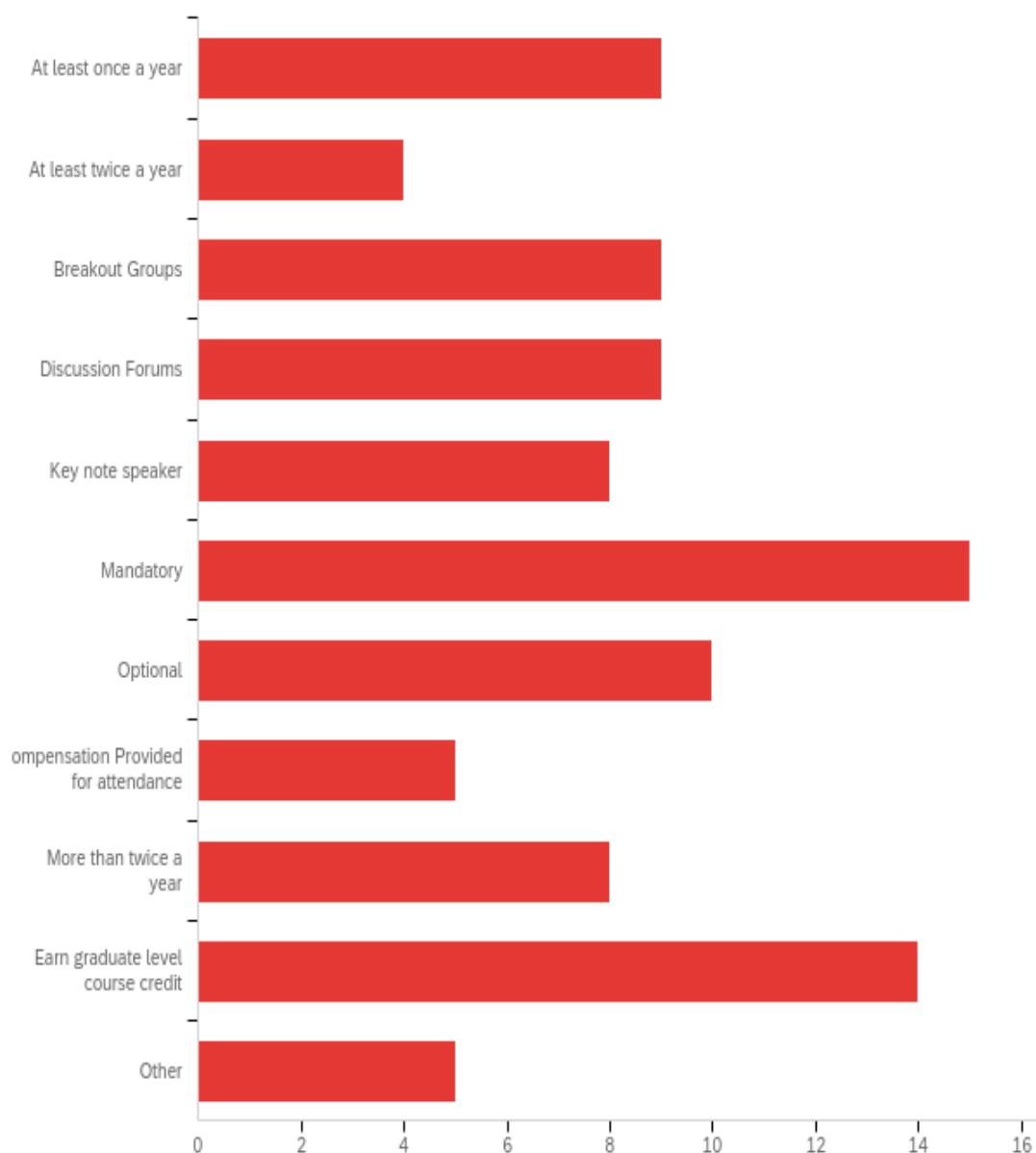


Figure 9 An Overview of Training and Development

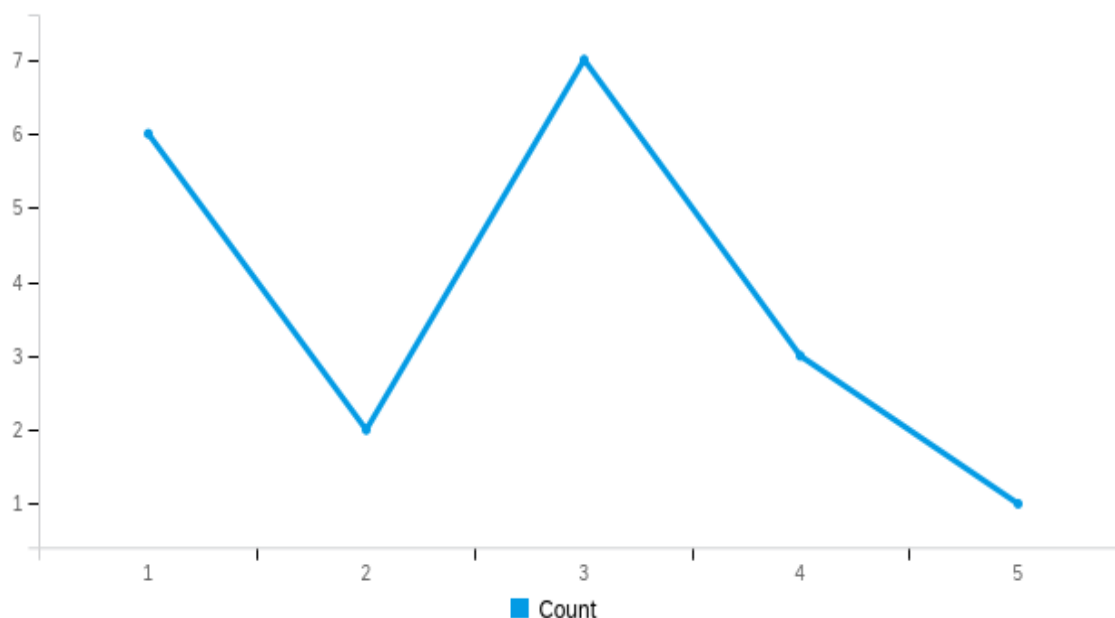
Findings suggest the majority of training and development occurs at least once a year and is mandatory. Findings also suggest many GTAs earn graduate level course credit, so it is possible participant responses categorize the graduate seminars that cover pedagogical and

theoretical coursework as training and development. While the data gathered from this question offers significant insight into choices departments and writing programs make for training and professional development, participant responses point to some limitations in the data collection. After reviewing the participant responses, it appears some of the WPA participant responses overlap, and do not provide clear details on how often pedagogical training and professional development takes place within their programs; who is required to attend; whether it is mandatory; and what the training and development provide. It is clear the data set would have been more successful if participants would have identified criteria for pedagogical training and professional development separately.

3.4.2 Perceived Comfort Levels of Teaching Research Methods

All twenty WPA participants were asked “On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the least comfortable, how would you rate the level of comfort of instructors in your program with teaching primary research methods?” Nineteen WPA participants participated in this question and the data collected shows the average WPA response was 2.5 with a standard deviation of 1.2. Six participants rated the level of comfort at a 1, Two participants rated the level of comfort at a 2; Seven participants rated the level of comfort at a 3; Three participants rated the level of comfort at a 4; and One participant rated the level of comfort at a 5.

Table 1 Perceived Comfort Level of Instructors Teaching Primary Research Methods
 Perceived Comfort Level of Instructors Teaching Primary Research Methods



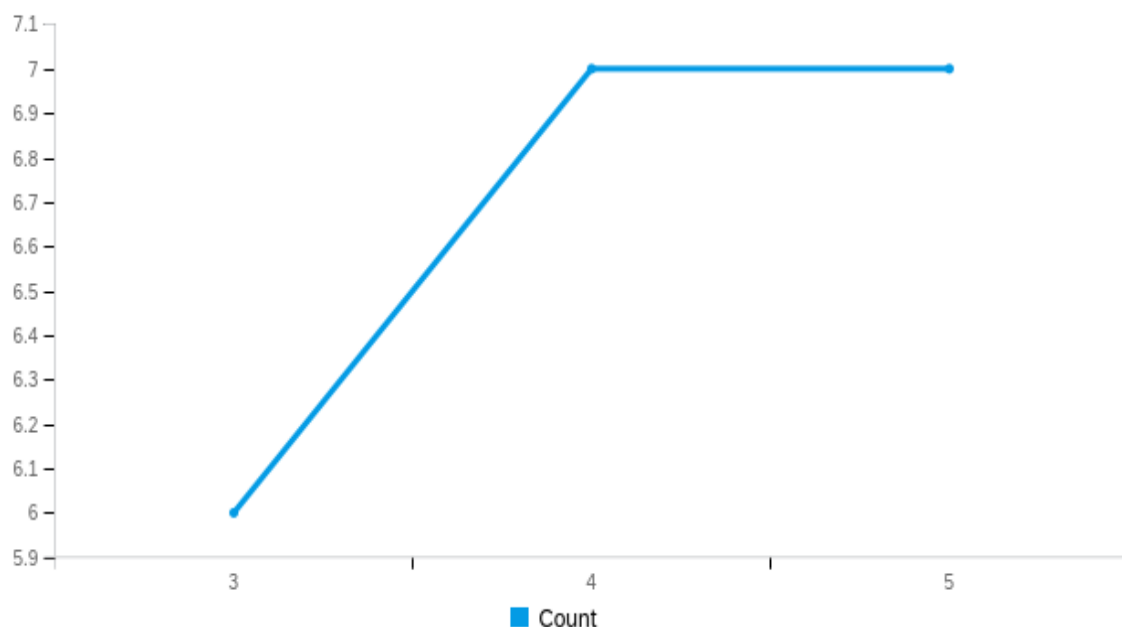
Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
	1.00	5.00	2.53	1.23	1.51	19

It was not surprising that only one participant rated the first-year instructor comfort level of teaching primary research methods at a 5. What was surprising was that 32% of participants rated the comfort level at a 1 and 37% of participants rated the comfort level at a 3. Those percentages suggest to me that writing program administrators across the county are disillusioned to think their first-year instructors are that comfortable teaching primary research methods, and/or there is a disparity across the country of the actual ability and comfort of first-year writing instructors teaching primary research.

All twenty WPA participants were asked “On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the least comfortable, how would you rate the level of comfort of instructors in your program with teaching secondary research methods?” Twenty WPA participants participated in this question

and the data collected shows the average WPA response was 4.0 with a standard deviation of .8. The participants began rating their instructors at a level of 3. There were no ratings for 1 or 2. Six participants rated the level of comfort at a 3; Seven participants rated the level of comfort at a 4; and Seven participants rated the level of comfort at a 5.

Table 2 Perceived Comfort Level of Instructors Teaching Secondary Research Methods
Perceived Comfort Level of Instructors Teaching Secondary Research Methods



Field	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std Deviation	Variance	Count
	3.00	5.00	4.05	0.80	0.65	20

The findings from this question were exactly what I suspected. WPAs perceive the instructors in their programs feel comfortable teaching secondary research methods. What I find interesting about these findings is that 68% of writing program administrators still perceive the comfort level of first-year writing instructors teaching secondary research methods could still be improved.

The data gathered from the scaling questions indicates WPAs perceive the instructors in their programs feel more comfortable teaching secondary research methods than primary research methods. This could be due to several reasons, some of those reasons include but are not limited to—programmatically approaches, lack of training, varying instructor background and experience and a lack of support and materials from departments and programs. These reasons will be established and expanded upon in chapter four of this dissertation.

3.5 Discussion

This chapter aimed to present data and information on what pedagogical training and professional development looks like at a variety of R1 universities across the country, to include perceptions of how WPA's rate the level of comfort of instructors in their program with teaching research methods. The survey, though successful in presenting a snapshot of information of choices programs and departments are making when it comes to training and development of GTAs, faculty, and staff, was limited in collecting more specific information such as whether any of the pedagogical training or professional development covers research methods. Participant responses suggest a possible misunderstanding of choices based on survey findings, for example, the apparent overlap from participant responses between mandatory and optional pedagogical training and professional development.

This study demonstrates, writing program administrators don't perceive first-year writing instructors comfortable teaching primary research methods. As evidenced in Chapter Two of this dissertation, many first-year composition instructors at varying levels of tenure and experience have a difficult time developing lessons that include primary research, both because they likely haven't spent time developing those skills and because they may not have the confidence or support to integrate primary research into their pedagogy.

Teacher training and professional development has been a general concern for many years; an issue that continues to present on the forefront is a lack in pedagogical training for GTAs who teach forty one percent of the first-year courses (American Federation of Teachers 2009). In 2020, a survey of thirty-eight writing program administrators was conducted by Amy Cicchino who found GTA training appears to be lacking at many universities across the country as most pedagogical training only occurs in a graduate student's first year, rather than spread out over the entire time they are in a graduate program. She argues in her article that this lack of pedagogical training for GTAs could impact student retention issues for undergraduate students (Cicchino 2020).

While the majority of research universities include a required pedagogy training course for their graduate students, either before they teach for the first time or while they are teaching, there is no guarantee the teaching of research methods will be covered in that required course. A lot of instructors interviewed and surveyed for this study feel as though the required pedagogy courses are often taught as a theoretical introduction to the discipline of first-year composition and rarely include a practical foundation for teaching research methods in the classroom. The widely circulated anthology texts often used in composition theory and/or pedagogy courses have little coverage of primary research; *The Norton Book of Composition Studies* widely used for teacher training, last published in 2009, only includes one essay (out of approximately 101 essays on "composition study") that mentions the importance of primary research within composition: the chapter is "Claiming the Archive for Rhetoric and Composition" by Susan Wells (911). Additionally, in the chapter "Teaching Research Skills in the First-Year Composition Class" in *Strategies for Teaching First-Year Composition* also used for teacher training, last published in 2002, Mark Gellis mentions the opportunity for teachers to include

primary research methods in their goals for the course, but notes “people feel uncomfortable with this approach and focus more on library research” (589). Gellis’ sentiments shared in a text that is used to train and guide first-year composition instructors in the classroom does not encourage incorporating varying research methods.

Even in the updated textbook *A Guide to Composition Pedagogies* (2014), primary research is not directly mentioned in the chapter “Researched Writing.” Rebecca Howard and Sandra Jamieson spend the entire chapter discussing the issues of the typical research paper, assigned to students in first-year writing courses, and then set out to provide recommendations and solutions to how this research assignment could be improved. They declare “the question is whether writing instructors will continue to assign this problematic genre or whether they will find other, better ways of teaching research *practices*” (232) However, they don’t include opportunities for students to conduct primary research at any point, and only mention “inquiry-based approaches” in one sentence as they give a head nod to the scholarship Robert Davis and Mark Shadle have contributed to the field.

Two other commonly assigned texts in pedagogical courses, *Naming What We Know* (2015) and *(Re)Considering What We Know* (2020) are both used for introducing threshold concepts of writing studies to graduate students. Both texts include references to Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) and “teaching for transfer” in almost every chapter, but primary research is only mentioned once in *Naming What We Know*. In the section “Threshold Concepts in First-Year Composition,” Doug Downs and Liane Robertson state “primary (first hand) research experiences are crucial to help students understand both how knowledge is made and how they might contribute to the discussion about subjects they are researching” (116). If “the threshold concepts framework is particularly powerful in helping faculty begin to generate a shared body

of knowledge” (Estrem 96), but the only mention of primary research (aside from primary sources) is one sentence. How can the field expect instructors to introduce primary research methods and methodologies without pedagogical support and training? Closely looking at the texts often used to introduce new instructors to best practices in FYC suggests that the concept of primary research in the classroom is only given a cursory glance.

While pedagogy textbooks are one component of training and preparedness specifically for GTAs, there is not current research that examines whether non-tenure track adjuncts and instructors who have experience in something other than rhetoric and composition are included in faculty training sessions. Writing program administrators work in “conflicted, liminal spaces” (Miller-Cochran) and don’t often work closely with contingent faculty, but 83.8 % of writing instructors are contingent faculty teaching in institutions of higher education (Hammer, A3). As previous scholars have pleaded, “administrators should look for ways to include part-time faculty and, provide pedagogically sound training opportunities for contingent faculty in both face-to-face and online environments” (Beavers, 24).

The collected data shows many departments and writing programs require pedagogical training and professional development for GTAs, faculty, and staff, and many of these programs and departments hold training and development at least once a year. It is recommended by teacher/scholars that writing programs and departments include pedagogical training and professional development through a graduate student’s second and third year in a program (Reid, Estrem and Belcheir). Providing pedagogical training and professional development that includes coverage of both primary and secondary research methods to graduate students during their time in graduate school, at both a Masters and Doctorate level, would help them become more

confident in their own pedagogy and help them employ a variety of research methods in their own work and in the first-year classroom.

3.6 Conclusion Overview

Writing Program Administrator survey responses included in this chapter indicate:

1. English departments and writing programs provide pedagogical training and professional development to GTAs, Adjuncts, Instructors, and Professors but that training, and development varies depending on the university and department. The training and development is not consistent among R1 universities, so graduate students completing degrees at various institutions are very likely to have differing backgrounds and experience even when working on the exact same degree and teaching in the first-year classroom. The data suggests the pedagogical training and professional development are not always mandatory, therefore graduate students and instructors will likely have varying levels of confidence and knowledge when teaching.
2. Of the twenty WPA responses on what teacher training/professional development looked like in their program, two WPAs mentioned “mentoring” as a form of teacher training/professional development. Mentoring initiatives can be incredibly beneficial to teachers with little to no experience. However, this form of training/development can hinder the growth and development of a teacher assigned a mentor with less experience than the mentee personally holds. Additionally, programs that utilize mentoring approaches need to include other forms of accountability, to ensure students are being observed by faculty in addition to other graduate students.
3. It is not likely that a wide range of research methods are introduced and discussed in pedagogical training and professional development at R1 universities across the country.

Though the survey data only includes a snapshot of what some R1 universities include in training and development, it suggests 75% include some coverage of research methods. From my experience attending an R1 university as a doctoral student, in addition to teaching at another R1, as well as teaching at 2 liberal arts universities, and many community and technical colleges, I have never attended a professional development meeting or session that included an overview or conversation about teaching primary research methods that included some guidance on the many varying approaches on how to choose which method would be best for a given project, or how to analyze data after conducting the research, or how to include such findings within an assignment. From my time attending required GTA training sessions, over the course of a three-year period, 4 sessions a year, 12 sessions total, only 2 “breakout” sessions (which are optional), held conversations on primary research methods. One such session offered “observational techniques for ethnographic data collection in first-year composition,” and was given by a lecturer from the anthropology department, and the other session offered an overview of “community-engaged writing in English 1102” and was given by a lecturer in the English department. Additionally, based on my own experience in one pedagogical course during my time as a PhD student, I did not receive any training on how to teach primary research methods. To this end, I draw the conclusion that research methods in general are not receiving enough coverage in training and development.

4. Most WPAs perceive their first-year instructors do not feel comfortable teaching primary research methods in their first-year composition classrooms but feel much more confident teaching secondary research methods. This could be due to a variety of reasons; however, a potential research opportunity arises from this perception that would investigate: How

often are WPAs and other faculty observing first-year instructors in the classroom?

Chapter four continues the conversation and provides possible reasons for why instructors may feel more comfortable teaching secondary research methods.

While the work of a WPA is tireless, and some WPAs feel as though the job is “eating our livers in anger and frustration” (Malenczyk, as qtd. in Holdstein, 19), it could prove to be beneficial for WPAs to consider implementing mandatory training and professional development for all first-year writing instructors, and make it a point to include contingent faculty, both part-time and full-time. Mandatory training and professional development to include the teaching of a variety of research methods could help alleviate some issues WPAs deal with, such as those first-year writing instructors “who were reared, nurtured, and trained in one program and who, having left their first homes, find themselves in uncomfortably alien territory” (Desmet 43).

3.7 Future Implications and Continued Research

Chapter Two interview responses and this chapter’s survey responses suggest that while the majority of research universities include a required pedagogy training course for their graduate students, there is no guarantee the teaching of research methods will be covered in that required course. Pedagogical training and professional development instituted by English departments and Writing Programs, typically caters to a composition and rhetoric lens, as the main focus of pedagogical training is often theoretical, and the main focus of professional development is often collaborative work. Not including coverage of primary and secondary research methods and methodologies in teacher training and professional development is doing a disservice to first-year writing instructors who are expected to teach research methods. With this in mind it is important to investigate how much emphasis is being placed on the teaching of research methods in pedagogical training and professional development. It would be incredibly

beneficial to further pursue this research by continuing to investigate the choices writing program administrators and department chairs are making at R1 universities and perhaps a larger range of universities to include liberal arts, community and technical colleges and HBCUs across the country. Identifying more details about the strengths and limitations of pedagogical training would have the potential to improve training and development for GTAs, adjuncts, and instructors in first-year writing programs across the country.

I plan on continuing this research by creating an additional survey and sending out the survey through a WPA-listserv. I plan to ask questions such as, but not limited to:

1. How many years do GTAs receive pedagogical training?
2. Does pedagogical training provide support and materials for the teaching of primary research methods (i.e. interviews, ethnographies, surveys, archival investigations)
3. Does the professional development include support and materials for how to teach primary and secondary research methods?

The discourse that surrounds teacher training and professional development is ongoing and ever fluid. There are a lot of factors that writing program administrators and department chairs must consider when planning training sessions. Without including conversations and training on research methods, first-year writing instructors will not be confident in their ability to introduce such approaches and concepts to their students.

4 EVALUATING RESEARCH CHOICES, TEXTBOOKS, AND LIMITATIONS AS THEY PERTAIN TO FYC PROGRAMS ACROSS THE COUNTRY

In the previous chapter I provided a brief overview of the writing program administrator (WPA) position and duties. That chapter presented survey data that highlights choices writing program administration and English departments are making when it comes to pedagogical training and professional development. This chapter provides evidence to support what many scholars have been asserting—many universities do not integrate primary research methods when it comes to field work such as interviews, ethnographies, archives, and surveys in their first-year writing coursework. A continuation of the WPA responses and voices included in chapter three, this chapter includes additional survey data collected from WPAs across the country to provide more positionality to current conversations on the integration of primary research in first-year composition. Investigating program curricula, research choices, and textbook use at various universities across the country affords scholars the ability to broaden conversations about decisions and choices that are being made within an expanse of programs to possibly better understand why some programs integrate primary research methods while some do not.

In the first part of this chapter, I provide the details of the study; a re-cap of some of the already familiar methods also shared in Chapter Three, and then the data collected from the surveys. The data suggests a lot of first-year writing programs are still focusing research method instruction primarily on information literacy and secondary research and not including primary research methods in their first-year courses. The data also suggests a lot of writing programs still depend a lot on library instruction for the teaching of research methods, and it is unclear how

many writing programs expect their instructors teach research methods to students. I close the chapter with a look into curriculum choices and shifts over the last forty years.

4.1 Methods

Of the 95 public R1 universities in the United States, one university at minimum, per state was contacted in the recruitment for the study. Recruitment was done by emailing the study information to WPAs at the randomly chosen R1 universities across the country using faculty email addresses provided on their program's websites. Forty-six WPAs were emailed and 20 completed the survey (n=20). The response rate was 43%. Participation was anonymous. Participants were asked to respond to survey questions (see Appendix B), and all participants provided informed consent before participating in the study. (Refer back to Chapter One for more details on the study's methods).

4.2 Data Analysis

The survey questions provided for WPAs and analyzed for this chapter included one closed and four open questions. The data gathered consisted of both quantitative and qualitative data. Qualtrics created a graph for the quantitative data from the one closed question that asked participants to "identify if they integrate primary research in their first -year composition curriculum." The qualitative data collected from the open questions was coded using relative themes determined from participant responses. The first open question asked participants to "identify how their program integrates primary research methods in their FYC curriculum." Four main methods emerged from their responses: "interviews," "field work," "archives," and "data work." The second open question asked participants "how their program approaches the teaching of research in FYC." Three main approaches emerged from their responses: "information literacy," "library research," and "secondary research." The third open question asked

participants “what barriers or limitations they believe exist for instructors wanting to incorporate primary research in FYC courses.” Five main limitations emerged from their responses: “program restrictions,” “limited professional development/training,” “instructor background/experience,” “teaching/service load for instructional track faculty,” and “too difficult.” The fourth open question asked participants “what textbook their FYC program uses, what they like about their textbook, and whether they see any limitations within the textbook.” A pie graph was created to display the textbook choices. Three main themes emerged from their responses on what they like about their textbooks, “digital accessibility,” “coverage of research methods,” and “student examples.” Three main themes emerged from their responses on what limitations they feel the textbook has: “cost,” “lack of coverage of research methods,” and “lack of instructional content/material.” Open questions and qualitative data was coded as defined by Creswell (186) as the procedure of fragmenting and classifying text to form explanations and comprehensive themes in the data, by labeling WPA responses relating to specific themes.

4.3 Findings

4.3.1 Curricula Choices Primary VS Secondary Research

All twenty WPA survey participants were asked “Does the first-year writing program at your university integrate primary research methods into course curricula, e.g. interviews, ethnography, investigating the archives, surveys, polls, and mandate students use primary research methods in their research?” Ten WPA participants responded “no,” and ten WPA participants responded “yes.”

FYC program integrates and mandates primary research methods in curricula

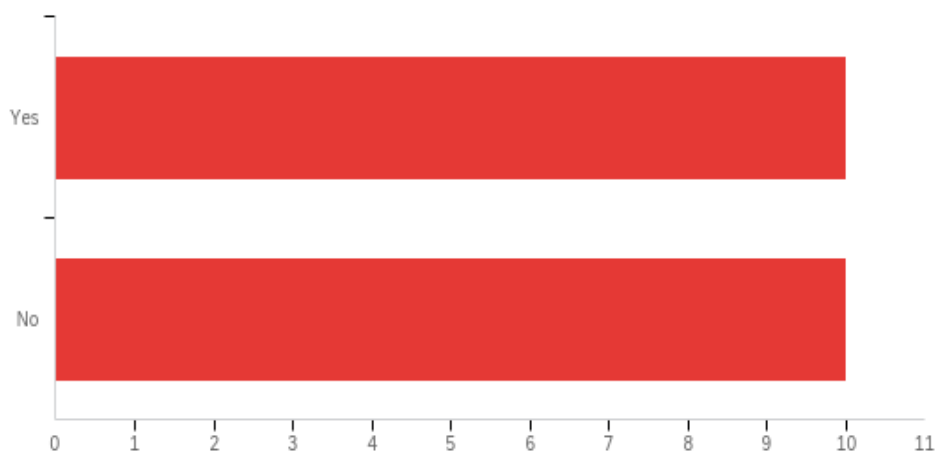


Figure 10 FYC Programs that integrate and mandate primary research methods in curricula

Those who responded “yes” to the mandate of primary research methods were then asked the follow up question, “How does your program approach the teaching of primary research and the kinds of primary research assignments that might be typically assigned.” It was within these ten responses that it became apparent two of the initial “yes” responses were not valid. One participant responded, “usually in connection with the library with whom we have a special relationship for first year experiences, especially in critical reading of primary sources” and another participant responded, “students are not required to do primary research in their first-year writing class but are encouraged to engage in primary research.” Further investigation based on their follow up questions shows only eight of the twenty institutions mandate their students (which in this sense, based on the question asked, and their responses, for the purposes of this dissertation and the data collected, I define mandate as require) use primary research methods in their research; twelve institutions do not.

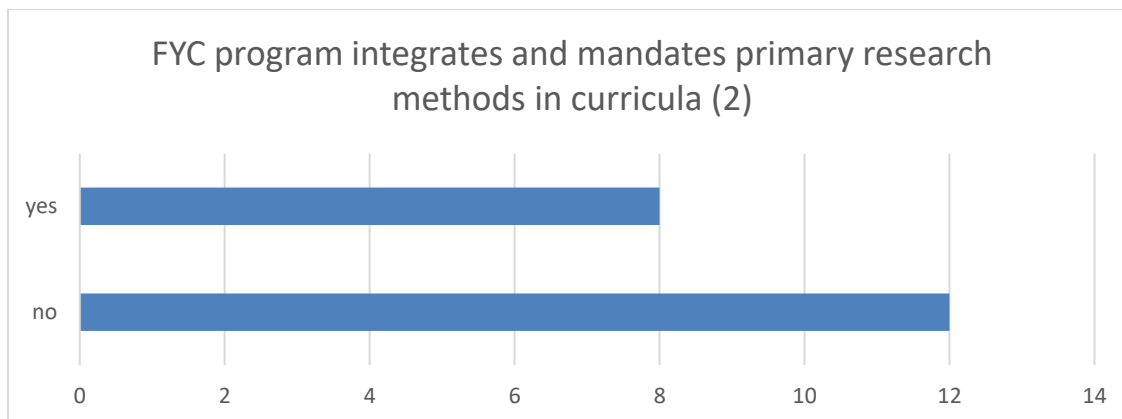


Figure 11 FYC Programs that integrate and mandate primary research methods in curricula (2)

4.3.2 Curricula Choices- Primary Research Methods

The eight participants who initially responded “yes” to the question “Does the first-year writing program at your university integrate primary research methods into course curricula, e.g. interviews, ethnography, investigating the archives, surveys, polls, and mandate students use primary research methods in their research?” provided examples of how they use primary research methods in their first-year composition courses. All eight WPA responses identified students have a choice for conducting primary research; however, there were 4 main methods mentioned by WPAs are as follows:

1. Interviews- Seven WPA participants identified interviews as a chosen primary research method their program uses in first-year composition. Students are expected to conduct an interview with another individual.
2. Field Work- Five WPA participants identified field work as a chosen primary research method their program uses in first-year composition. Students are expected to engage in direct observation of a person, place, or thing within a community.

3. Archives- Three WPA participants identified archival research as a chosen primary research method their program uses in first-year composition. Students are expected to investigate and find information within an archive.
4. Data Work- Three WPA participants identified data work as a chosen primary research method their program uses in first-year composition. Students are expected to create a survey or poll, distribute it, and analyze the results.

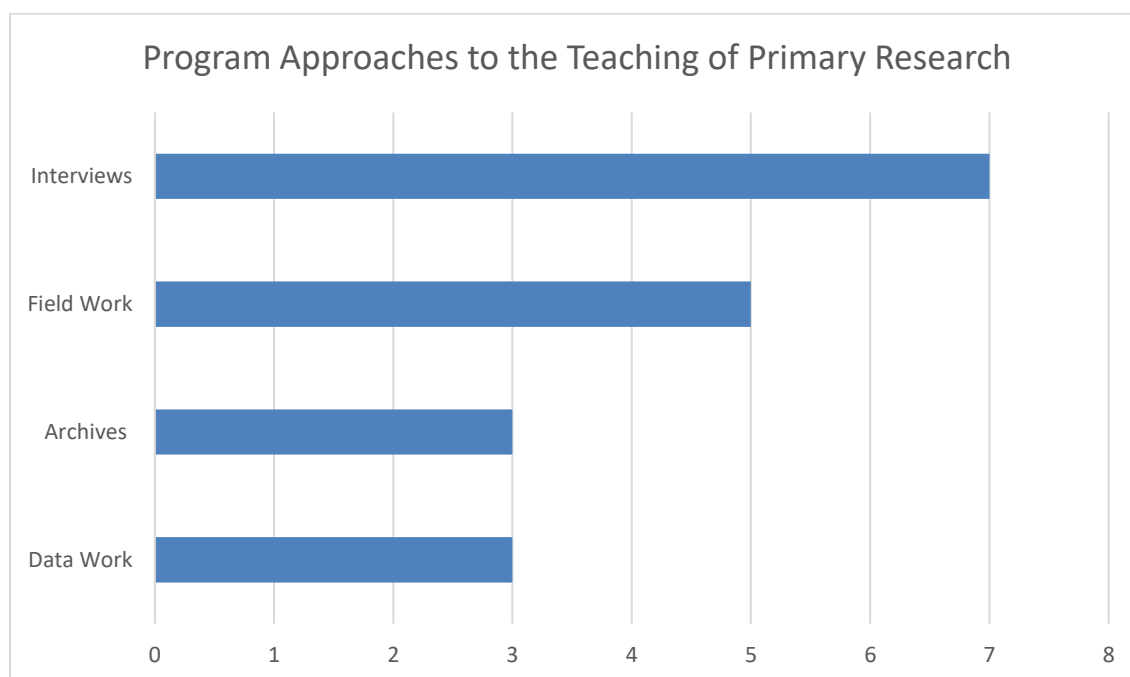


Figure 12 Program Approaches to the Teaching of Primary Research

All eight WPA participants identified students have a choice for conducting primary research. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to the following:

- “Students tend to conduct interviews with a person they are profiling and/or conduct observations and take notes about an event or place for their profile.”
- “We have an assignment or two that asks students to do interviews, ethnography, and archival research.”

- “Folks use interviews, surveys, and ethnographies.”
- “Anecdotally, instructors use interviews, surveys, and archival research.”

In summary, this subset of WPA participants identified interviews as the most common primary research method included in FYC. This was initially surprising to me since our field has supported and prioritized ethnography for a considerable amount of time (Beach, Bishop, Bushman, Chiseri-Strater, Scharton), as well as archival investigations (Hayden, Gaillet, L'Eplattenier). I was expecting more WPA participants to mention the use of the archives, but from a teacher/scholar perspective I understand why interviews are being promoted more widely in first-year writing programs. Even if instructors are not widely versed in primary research methods and methodologies, teaching how to prepare questions for an interview, how to conduct an interview, and then how to break down the collection of data, is something most instructors are generally comfortable teaching and discussing. Additionally, some teacher/scholars may feel if a student is going to choose one form of primary research to conduct for a paper or writing project, an interview is incredibly manageable. Conducting an interview allows a student researcher to move through the process of research rather seamlessly, with little to no worry. Interviews are used across the disciplines in and out of academia, and it is a rather conventional form of research to feel comfortable completing.

4.3.3 Curricula Choices- Secondary Research Methods

Those who responded “no” to the mandate of primary research methods were then asked the follow up question, “Can you tell me a little more about how your program approaches the teaching of research in first-year writing, whether or not that includes primary research”. Ten WPA participants responded to this question and three common program approaches were

identified by the repetition of keywords. Below is a list of these three approaches, and the following subsections provide additional explanation and detail:

1. Information Literacy- Students are taught how to be information literate by learning how to evaluate sources.
2. Library Research/Librarian Assisted Research- Students are taught how to conduct research by the librarians who sometimes work in collaboration with first-year instructors.
3. Secondary Research- Students are expected to learn how to find and evaluate secondary research.

4.3.3.1 Information Literacy

Four WPA participants identified information literacy as their program's approach to the teaching of research in first-year writing. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “Our research-based writing course is focused on information literacy.”
- “Our approach is really about information literacy in academic research using library resources. It does not include any primary research.”

Based on WPA responses, their program's main focus is on teaching and facilitating student's abilities to identify, understand, and evaluate secondary sources, with the ultimate goal being to make students “information literate.” Two of the WPA participants included in their responses that their program does not teach primary research for quite a few reasons. One participant added, “we can't really teach primary research, because our program is structured around argument and argumentation, not really around “research” per se. We're not really teaching “research” in an intellectually meaningful sense of some structured, replicable practice designed to gather analyzable information about the world.” Another participant added, “If

students need to use primary research in their majors, those departments would prefer to teach those skills.” These two WPA responses show an alternate perspective of integrating primary research methods in first-year writing. The first statement suggests teaching information literacy is not a “structured, replicable practice,” however, scholars such as Holly Hassel who created a pedagogical approach to teaching information literacy in her first-year classroom would disagree. As noted in “Social Justice and the Two-Year College: Cultivating Critical Information Literacy Skills in First-Year Writing” she details her approach as a structured, replicable process of adaptable pedagogy in her classroom. Additionally, she prioritizes research as inquiry and her goal is for students to “establish a benchmark of their prior knowledge as well as develop a foundation of understanding around how information is created and used and the appropriate and ethical ways of using it” (143). These goals are similar to those who advocate for primary research to be integrated and taught in first-year writing. Any form of research, whether the goal is simply to become more information literate, or to conduct first-hand research is a recursive process, similar to writing. The research, the work, the sources, and the data can potentially shift, and researchers should be prepared for this possibility. The second statement projects students should be taught primary research by specific departments, thus insinuating a discipline-based approach is best, but by assuming another department would prefer or is going to teach those skills is not preparing students early in their academic careers, but rather, accepting that they may never learn research methods. Learning how to conduct research and then analyze the evidence gathered from the data can only help form a stronger argument. Only focusing research in first-year writing to a reductive sense of making sure students are “information literate” is doing them a disservice.

4.3.3.2 Library Research/Librarian Assisted Research

Six WPA participants identified library research, library faculty, library support, or working with librarians as their program's approach to the teaching of research in first-year writing. Three of the six participants in this category overlap from the information literacy category. I included those participants in this category as well, because based on their responses they depend on the librarians help to teach and facilitate the program's approach to information literacy. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “Students are introduced to university library resources, but they are not limited to peer-reviewed academic writing in their research.”
- “It focuses on library research, how to find journals, articles, books. The course works on citation, evaluating sources for reliability, and using them ethically.”
- “The curriculum has been collaboratively designed with library and composition faculty to integrate a range of information literacy concepts and skills.”

Librarian assisted research in collaboration with English departments has been a long-standing programmatic approach to integrating various forms of research for many years. University benefits of combining first-year composition and library objectives has been well-developed across the nation and even though it is beneficial for students to receive more in-depth information on information literacies and secondary research, there is difficulty in the instruction process and in student involvement. Several scholars have found that instructional librarians face many challenges in developing and delivering effective instruction for college students. There is evidence to suggest that librarians sometimes struggle with motivating students, so they are receptive to learning research skills. Often, it has been noted that students do not see the

relevance of the research to their academic work or their personal lives, and thus become disengaged from the work. (Latham and Gross 430).

4.3.3.3 *Secondary Research*

Two WPA participants identified secondary research as their program's approach to the teaching of research in first-year writing. Their responses include, but are not limited to:

- “It [the program] is built on argumentation. Secondary research is required, but primary is not”
- “In the first-year course, research is taught in terms of identifying secondary research to support one's points, with a heavy emphasis on lateral reading and assessing credibility”

Most first-year writing instructors are comfortable teaching secondary research since it has for so long existed in the undergraduate and graduate curriculum as being the chosen research method taught to all English majors. While the integration of secondary research in first-year writing is essential in teaching and facilitating students understand the complexities of sources and arguments, it presents a limited approach to teaching research methods.

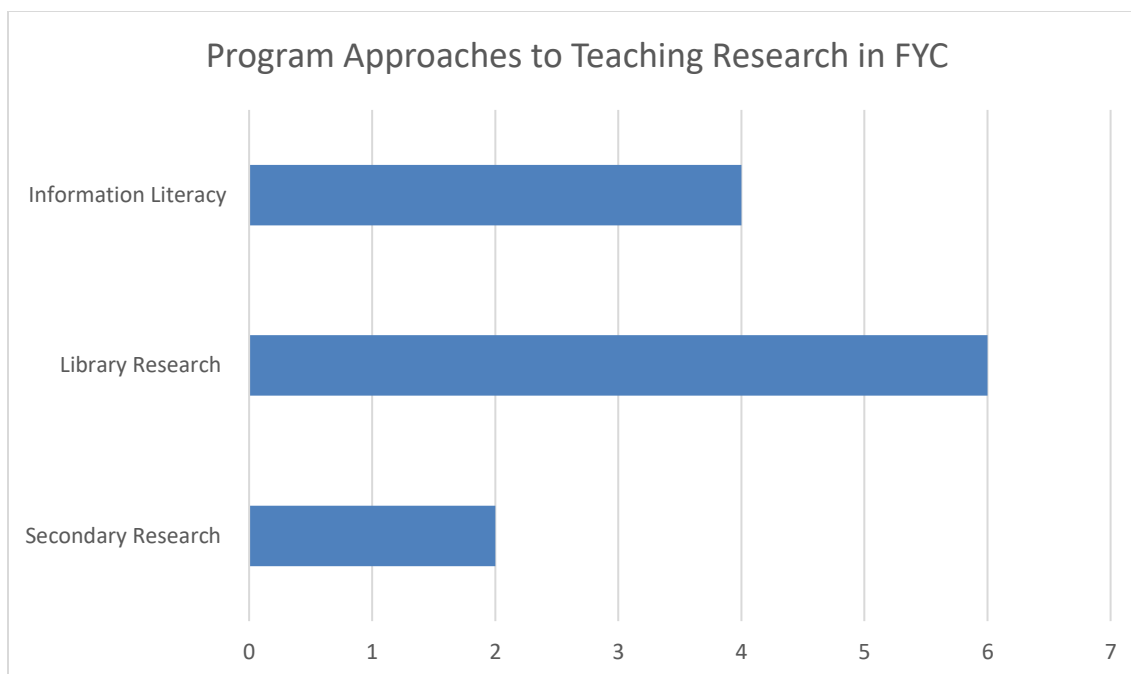


Figure 13 Program Approaches to Teaching Research in FYC

When asked, “Can you tell me a little more about how your program approaches the teaching of research in first-year writing, whether or not that includes primary research”. There was one outlier who responded their program “includes a variety of research possibilities, but primary research is not mandated (though some students do it).”

In summary, this subset of WPA participants identified library research as the most common program approach to teaching research in first-year writing. This suggests that a lot of English and writing programs across the country have long-standing relationships with the library and writing centers within the library. It also suggests that a lot of first-year writing instructors do not teach any research methods to first-year students at all, but instead depend on the librarians to teach and facilitate the research.

4.3.4 Barriers and Limitations Integrating Primary Research Methods in FYC Curricula

All WPA participants were asked “Do you think there are any barriers or limitations that may exist that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research into their FYC courses?” Responses varied, but overlapping themes emerged from their responses. All twenty WPA participants responded, and some provided multiple possibilities for barriers that may exist. One WPA participant responded to the question, “No. Not in our curriculum or with our teachers.” The other nineteen participant responses were broken into five categories that best explain possible barriers and/or limitations:

1. Program Restrictions- The first-year writing program does not allot or provide support for the teaching of primary research methods.
2. Limited Professional Development/Training- The department does not include training or support for the teaching of primary research methods.
3. Instructor Background/Experience- The instructors teaching first-year writing have a background in something other than rhetoric and composition and are not familiar with a variety of research methods.
4. Teaching/Service Load for Instructional Track Faculty- The teaching and service load is already too demanding for non-tenure track faculty.
5. Too Difficult- Teaching primary research methods would be difficult for instructors to teach and/or difficult for students to learn.

4.3.4.1 Program Restrictions

Nine WPA participants identified program restrictions as a major limitation that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research methods into their FYC courses. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “Traditionally there have been barriers, as our program was very prescriptive and limited instructors in what they were allowed to do.”
- “The barriers could be that the program itself has not adopted this approach, there are no support materials, no training, no pedagogical infrastructure built around primary research.”

The WPA responses suggest that program restrictions are the largest barrier for instructors. First-year instructors, as noted before, are most often GTAs, adjuncts, and lecturers who are given a course syllabus, and a textbook, and expected to meet the goals and objectives of the program. They are not given many freedoms and are expected to follow curriculum guidelines that have already been established. If there is no establishment of the integration of primary research methods in the first-year curriculum, it won't be introduced to students.

4.3.4.2 Limited Professional Development/Training

Six WPA participants identified limited teacher training and professional development as a major limitation that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research methods into their FYC courses. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “An understanding of the logistics and ethics of using primary research is not part of any training or professional development curriculum.”
- “The primary barrier is training.”

This category and the following category directly correlate. The WPA responses suggest there is a major lack in teacher training and professional development, as also seen in chapters 2 and 3. The training could be pedagogical training or in-house professional development. Based on the responses, it appears these writing programs don't include any form of training on primary research methods.

4.3.4.3 Instructor Background/Experience

Six WPA participants identified varying instructor backgrounds and a lack of experience with teaching research methods as a major limitation that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research methods into their FYC courses. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “Many composition instructors are not versed in social-science research, or, more broadly, empirical research, as many specialize in creative writing or critical literary interpretation as a result of earning a degree in English Studies.”
- “The majority of our instructors are trained humanities researchers who have a somewhat limited range of primary research experience.”

These WPA responses directly correlate with the need for research methods to be included in teacher training and professional development. It appears based on these findings that some view teacher training as training during course work, and some view training after graduation. The responses suggest that many instructors who teach first-year composition classes are not trained to teach research methods, specifically primary research methods during their time in graduate school before teaching for the first time.

4.3.4.4 Teaching/Service Load for Instructional Track Faculty

Two WPA participants identified the teaching and service load already too full for non-tenure track instructors as a major limitation that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research methods into their FYC courses. Their responses include, but are not limited to:

- “Designing and engaging in a primary research project may take up more time than our teachers have available.”
- “The inhumane teaching AND SERVICE load that is demanded of our Instructional Track faculty.”

Across the country more and more non-tenure track faculty are being hired to teach a 4/4 and sometimes more, up to a 6/6, while a typical tenure-track faculty will teach a 2/2, sometimes less. While the argument that the WPA participants that suggested course teaching load and other possible service requirement of a non-tenure track faculty as a barrier or limitation to integrating primary research is fair, it doesn't consider the choice of the instructor.

4.3.4.5 Difficult for Students and/or Instructors

Three WPA participants identified primary research as being too difficult for instructors to teach or for students to learn as a major limitation that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research methods into their FYC courses. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “Primary research is difficult for students who don't fully know research methodology or how to critically assess in scholarly ways without having done significant work reading scholarly articles.”
- “Some instructors may be uncomfortable with the messiness and uncertainty of primary research.”

This is a common misconception of primary research methods and methodologies. Since many writing program administrators and instructors that teach first-year writing are not familiar with a wide range of research methods and methodologies, a number of them assume primary research methods are “tricky” or “messy” and that these methods are harder to teach or harder for students to learn. This stigma is one that needs to be addressed.

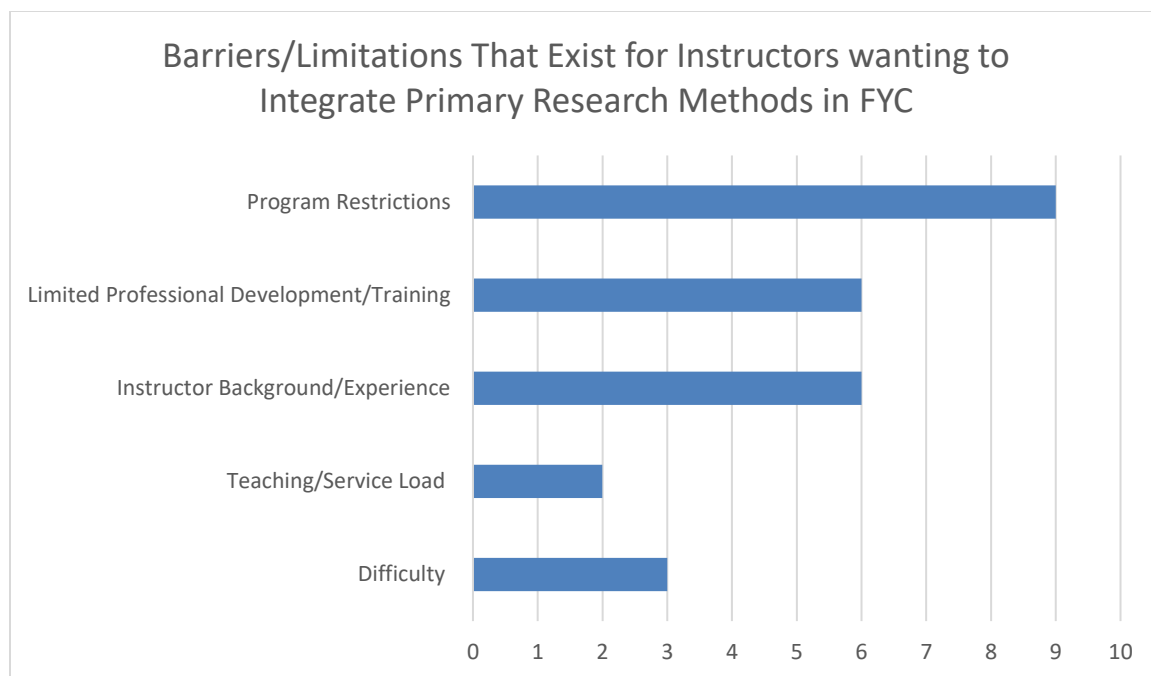


Figure 14 Barriers/Limitations that Exist for Instructors wanting to Integrate Primary Research Methods in FYC

In summary, this subset of WPA participants identified program restrictions have the greatest impact on limitations instructors face when wanting to incorporate primary research methods in FYC with limited training for instructors and instructor background/lack of experience tied for second. It makes sense that program restrictions would present the greatest limitation for instructors wanting to incorporate primary research methods in their pedagogy. First-year instructors, who are generally GTAs, Adjuncts, and Lecturers are generally required to teach to the goals and objectives of the course curriculum. If the writing program’s first-year

course curriculum does not include any information or requirement for the use of primary research methods, instructors would have no reason to pursue it on their own. Without training on how to teach research methods, many instructors would not attempt to do so on their own due to a lack of knowledge, comfort, support, and materials.

4.3.5 Textbooks

WPAs were asked “What textbook(s) do you use for your first-year writing program? What do you think is best about the textbook? What limitations do you see in the book?” All twenty WPA participants shared the textbook their program uses. Four WPA participants responded that they use an “In House or Custom” textbook that a textbook committee produces for their department. Six WPA participants responded that they use a “Custom Combination” textbook that similarly to a “custom” textbook, a textbook committee produces, and combines already published content alongside their own created content. Two WPA participants responded that they use “Everyone’s an Author”, originally published in 2012, now in its 3rd edition (July 2021). One WPA participant responded that they use “They Say/I Say”, originally published in 2005, now in its 5th edition (January 2021). One WPA participant responded they use “Good Reasons with Contemporary Arguments” originally published in 2000, now in its 7th edition (January 2017). One WPA participant responded they use “Bedford Book of Genres”, originally published in 2014, now in its 3rd edition. One WPA participant responded they use “Everything’s an Argument”, originally published in 1998, now in its 8th edition (2019). Two WPA participants responded there is no set textbook, instructors can choose whatever text they would like, or provide supplemental materials. Two WPA participants responded they do not require a textbook at all; see pie graph below for visual representation.

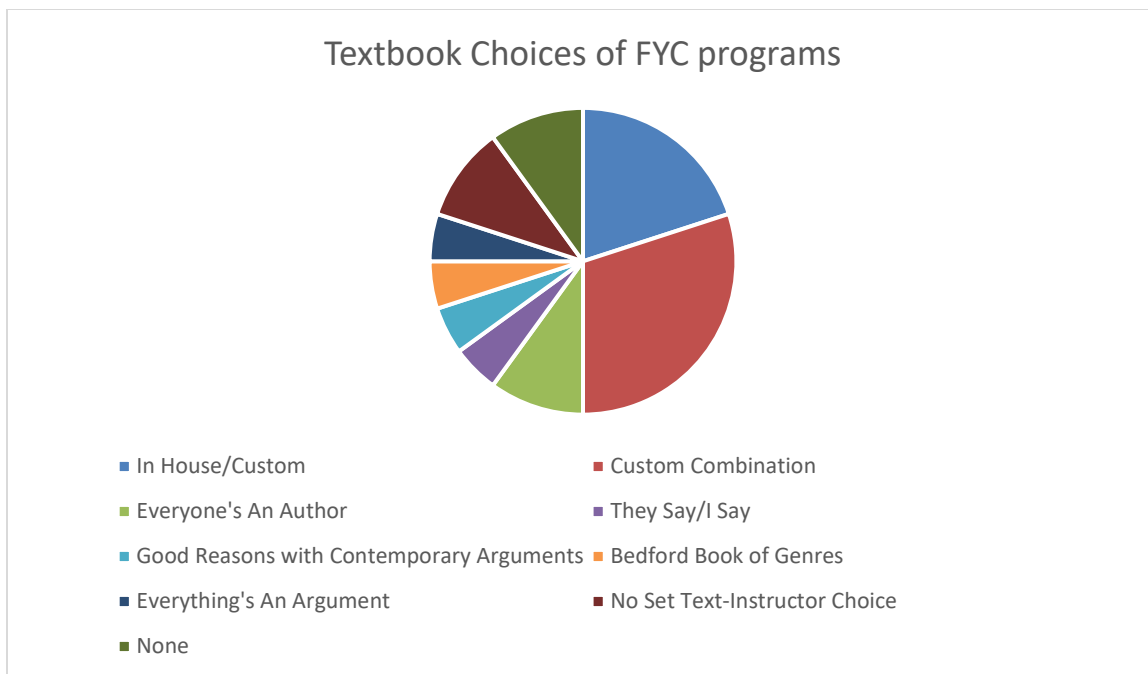


Figure 15 Textbook Choices of FYC Programs

Of the sixteen WPA participants who identified a specific text, six included a response to what they think is best about the text and thirteen included a response to limitations they see in the text. The responses from the six WPA participants that shared what they think is best about their chosen text was broken into three categories:

1. Digital Accessibility- One of the six WPA participants responded their text had some good “e-book features.”
2. Coverage of Research Methods- Two of the six WPA participants responded their text (which was the same text- a custom combination) had a good coverage of research methods since two of their in-house authored chapters “explicitly address research design and methods.”
3. Students Examples- Three of six WPA participants responded their text included student examples and essays. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:

- “What is best about the book is that it features student writing from the first-year course.”
- “We publish a collection of student essays from the course”

The responses from the thirteen WPA participants that shared what limitations they see in the textbook was broken into three categories:

1. Cost- Three of the thirteen WPA participants responded with concerns about the cost and expense of textbooks. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:
 - “I think composition textbooks are too expensive”
 - “I am concerned about cost”
2. Lacking Coverage of Research Methods- Four of the thirteen WPA participants responded with concerns about the lack of information on research methods in their program’s chosen textbook. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:
 - “I have found it very difficult to find a text that addresses the research skills we must teach.”
 - “We have found that the research sections are somewhat lacking. We definitely think that the texts are lacking in academic research examples.”
 - “It does not offer a solid yet accessible introduction to primary research methods.”
3. Instructional Material/Content- Six of the thirteen WPA participants responded with concerns about a lack of instructional material in their program’s chosen textbook. Some examples of this include, but are not limited to:
 - “I think the content is too watered-down to be useful at times.”
 - “not enough instructional material—needs to be bulked up.”

In summary, 38 % of WPA participants who identified a specific textbook for their first-year writing program noted something positive about their chosen textbook, while 81% of WPA

participants who identified a specific textbook for their first-year writing program noted limitations within their chosen textbooks. The overall WPA responses indicate a lack of satisfaction in first-year textbooks.

4.3.5.1 Coverage of Research Methods Within First-Year Writing Textbooks

Ten of the WPA participants responded they use either a custom or custom-combination textbook. Since the research surveys were anonymous, it is not clear how many pages those custom and custom-combination textbooks devote to research methods. The other six WPA participants mentioned specific textbooks by name. Further investigation of these textbooks shows the inclusion of primary research methods is incredibly lacking. *Everyone's an Author* only gives 10 pages to “conducting field research”; *Everything's an Argument* only gives 8 pages to “collecting data on your own”; *They Say/I Say* only talks about including data and evidence from research in academic writing, but doesn't actually allot any pages to teaching how to conduct primary research; *Good Reasons with Contemporary Arguments* only gives 3 pages to “conducting field research” ; and lastly, *Bedford Book of Genres* allots zero pages to conducting any kind of research.

As evidenced from the collection of survey responses from WPAs across the country, textbooks often present a barrier to incorporating research methods in first-year composition courses. Some scholars have noted the limitations of textbooks and are publishing textbooks that cater specifically to the inclusion of primary research methods in first-year classrooms. One such text is Lynee Lewis Gaillet's and Michelle Eble's textbook *Primary Research and Writing: People, Places, and Spaces*. This text is one of few first-year writing textbooks that can be utilized for teaching and integrating primary research into first-year writing classes. Gaillet and Eble note in the preface of the textbook that not many students are getting instruction on primary

research at any point in their education from primary school through college, and “are often confused” (xviii). This sentiment also applies to instructors teaching research methods.

Another textbook advancing primary research methods in the classroom is Bonnie Sunstein and Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater’s *Fieldworking: Reading and Writing Research*, now in its 4th edition. This textbook begins with a note ‘to the Instructor’ that provides a cursory overview of the text to better assist in the classroom. This section mentions that “fieldwork brings the research and writing processes together...and requires students to choose research sites, interact in the sites, investigate, and document experiences in writing” (vii). Addressing both the student, and the instructor, invites both as audience, something that would be greatly beneficial if it became more commonplace. The focus on rhetoric and research and the in-depth overview of various research methods assists both the student and instructor in the classroom.

Though there are limited choices for textbooks that focus on how to integrate primary research methods in the first-year classroom, there are not a lot of textbooks that provide an acceptable amount of coverage on both primary and secondary research methods, to include coverage of collecting data and data analysis. Many instructors provide supplemental materials to students when introducing research methods in the first-year classroom. As noted in Chapters two and three, even if there was such a textbook that included a decent amount of both primary and secondary research methods, an instructor who is unfamiliar with primary research methods would have a difficult time integrating those methods in first-year pedagogy if it wasn’t something that was mandated.

4.4 Discussion

This chapter aimed to present WPA voices and perspectives from universities across the nation, to provide details and insight on the choices WPAs, writing programs, and English

departments are making when it comes to the teaching of research methods in first-year composition, and their outlook about those programmatic choices. The gathered responses and data collection show many departments and programs are still not integrating primary research methods in their first-year curriculum for a variety of reasons.

Many WPA survey participants made it clear there are barriers and limitations that make it much more difficult for instructors to integrate a variety of research methods (specifically primary research) in their first-year writing classes. Program restrictions and a lack of inclusion on the teaching of research methods in professional development and/or teacher training significantly impacts how instructors teach first-year writing.

Many WPA responses indicate there is still a clear divide on how some faculty view primary research. One WPA noted “The distinction between ‘primary’ and ‘secondary’ research is not all that useful...It’s [primary research] also a more social science methods approach which doesn’t fit with our department’s or TA’s research strengths or interests.” However, another WPA noted “primary research is a great way to get students excited about writing and to build community.” Based on WPA responses, it appears not all WPAs have the same outlook on what should be included in first-year composition courses, namely how research methods should be addressed and taught, but also what the purpose of the first-year composition course is. Some of the WPAs included in their responses that their first-year composition classes do not even require students to conduct any research, even library research, and additionally only teach those students to read and think critically.

For many years, composition studies, primarily first-year composition, has been critiqued by scholars and viewed as an introductory, gate-keeping writing course that doesn’t provide students with a good foundation of writing in academia or professional genres (Wardle 765).

Critiques of first-year composition have not wavered, and many scholars still believe that typical first-year composition curricula is being “squeezed into a single course or two—into the so-called modes of discourse: description, narration, exposition, and persuasion” (McClelland and Donovan 1) and a large majority of undergraduate research, specifically the integration of primary research in first-year composition, “has been slow to gain ground in composition studies” (Kinkead 138). Corroborating these scholars’ claims, this study provided evidence how many first-year composition programs across the country are still prioritizing information literacy and secondary/library research. The integration of primary research methods in first-year composition is being viewed by some as not essential to the curricula, and some feel as though primary research has no place in an introductory writing course.

The gathered data on textbook choices reveals that half of the WPA survey participants use a custom or custom-combination textbook. These responses on textbook use indicate more WPAs are satisfied with custom or custom-combination textbooks than regular publisher texts. This data suggests that with custom or custom-combination texts, WPAs and department textbook committees can choose for themselves what content would best fit their individual programs and have the ability to include more information on research methods.

The data collected from the surveys shows advancements and inclusion of coverage of research methods in training and curriculum will need to occur for primary research methods to be integrated alongside secondary research methods in first-year writing programs. Many barriers and limitations are present among faculty, sometimes even unbeknownst to them. For primary research to receive more attention in first-year composition, our field needs to invite and advance the integration of more primary research methods in teacher training and preparation, professional development, and textbooks.

4.5 Conclusion Overview

Writing Program Administrator survey responses included in this chapter indicate:

5. Research methods are receiving a very limited amount of coverage in first-year writing programs at R1 universities. As evidenced by WPA responses, there are many reasons why this is. Many English and writing programs depend on library assistance when introducing and teaching research methods to first-year students. Teacher training and professional development appear to be lacking in the training of teaching research methods.
6. English departments at R1 universities view the purpose of first-year writing courses differently. Based on WPA responses, some first-year writing programs focus on introductory writing with little to no research included whatsoever. Some first-year programs only teach students to find, read, and evaluate secondary sources, and do not think students need to know how to conduct their own research.
7. There are many barriers and limitations that prevent instructors from incorporating primary research methods in their first-year writing courses. As stated earlier, typically unbeknownst to them. WPA responses indicated five clear barriers first-year instructors face when planning course design. WPA responses indicate an awareness of this issue, that some would like to resolve, while others are not interested in changing the design of the curriculum.
8. First-Year Composition textbooks do not include enough coverage of instructional material or research methods. WPA responses made it clear that first-year composition textbooks are significantly lacking in many areas. Many writing programs, and departments are shifting to custom and custom combination texts to ensure the content in

the textbook correlates to the program's goals and objectives. Half of the WPA participants noted they either create their own custom textbook or create a custom-combination textbook.

Challenging the existing first-year curricula by designing and distributing solutions could help instructors feel more confident providing guided activities and discussions with "inquiry-based activities" in mind. Instructors should be able to present a wide range of research methods to students in first-year writing programs, but in order to do so, instructors need adequate training, appropriate support materials, and a decent textbook.

4.6 Future Implications and Continued Research

WPA survey responses suggest there are varying perceptions of the purpose of first-year writing, and the necessity of teaching and integrating research methods in first-year writing. It would be incredibly beneficial to continue this research by investigating the teacher training and professional development (more in depth) occurring at R1 universities, and the choices first-year programs are making at R1 universities across the country and why. Asking WPAs "What is the primary purpose of First-Year Composition?" and "What objectives do you set in place for your students to achieve that purpose?" would provide programmatic insight into how their department views the purpose, goals, and objectives of first-year writing.

Additionally, the stigma of the "messiness" and "difficulty" of primary research needs to be addressed. Many WPAs and instructors in chapter two mention teaching students how to conduct a proper analysis of their findings is not something they have ever been taught how to do. This research could branch outside of writing studies and into general education research approaches.

5 RE (CONSIDERING) AND INVITING NEW APPROACHES TO INCORPORATING RESEARCH METHODS IN TRAINING AND CURRICULUM

While scholars have been arguing for primary research pedagogies, with a particular attention to archives, since the early 2000s, the data collected from this study acknowledges obstacles that have not been fully addressed and acknowledged in prior research that hinder the inclusion of primary research pedagogies in first-year composition specifically. Gathering data from first-year writing instructors and writing program administrators on local, regional, and national levels presents a data set not previously captured in other studies. The goals of this dissertation and research study were to identify and validate obstacles instructors and writing program administrators face when deciding whether and how to integrate primary research methods in first-year composition courses at R1 universities. The first chapter introduced perceived obstacles, such as teacher training/professional development, curriculum, and textbooks. Based on first-year writing instructor interviews in chapter two and writing program administrator survey responses in chapters three and four, it is clear there are more obstacles than those introduced in chapter one. Other such obstacles that exist include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Instructors' preconceived and limited notions of first-year student capabilities (see Chapter 2),
- Differing ideas, among instructors and writing program administrators, on the purposes of first-year composition (see Chapters 2 and 4),
- Instructor (over)dependence on librarians to provide research coverage for first-year students (see Chapters 3 and 4) and

- The difficult and time-consuming nature of including primary research methods within first-year writing curricula (see Chapters 2, 3, and 4).

Though this study used a convenience sample in chapter two, and a sample of writing program administrators in chapters three and four, the research results present a “snapshot” of how and why primary research methods are or are not being integrated in first-year writing curricula, pedagogies, and classrooms across the country. While some first-year writing programs are already integrating elements of primary research methods in their curriculum, this research confirms and highlights that there are many unique challenges to doing so. While rhetoric and composition scholarship presents a plethora of teacher/scholars who include primary research methods in the upper-level undergraduate and graduate classroom, many are not introducing such methods in the first-year classroom due to these unique challenges. The data and findings from this study suggest that this hesitancy or oversight to include primary research in FYC is due in large part to a lack in pedagogical training and professional development; however, this research also presents opportunities within curricula and programs to draw on the interests and strengths of FYC instructors to advance writing program commitments to valuing primary research in FYC.

To inspire and invite a new wave of thinking about how to best integrate primary research into all levels of instruction and how primary research could benefit all student populations including first-year writers, it is going to take a multi-faceted effort to result in meaningful change beyond individual professors and classrooms. Appropriate preparation and training to integrate primary research methods in first-year pedagogy would benefit all ranks of instructors, but in addition, utilizing already available resources, and promoting new texts would

encourage the advancement of primary research inclusion and the opportunity for continued discourse surrounding the role research plays in first-year writing.

5.1 Moving Forward

In this final chapter I offer suggestions for a broader coverage of research methods to be included in pedagogical training and professional development for writing program administrators and English departments that are interested in integrating more primary research methods alongside secondary research methods already in place in many first-year writing programs across the country. I would also like to invite readers, WPAs and instructors to work locally within their programs to develop initiatives, materials, and resources with instructors who can bring some expertise while also inviting those who are interested to collaborate and learn more. To encourage primary research methods to be integrated in the first-year classroom, a centralized, concerted effort and commitment from instructors experienced in primary research methods and pedagogies could help an entire department re-model a first-year curriculum. Additionally, re-envisioning pedagogical training would further ensure new graduate students are familiar with primary research methods and pedagogies before and during their time teaching in the undergraduate classroom. This chapter begins with a look at the role institution mission has on departments and writing programs, and transitions into a re-envisioning of teacher training and professional development. Reconsidering the role of research methods in pedagogical training and professional development has the potential to re-create the role first-year writing plays in the academy. Lastly, I discuss how instructors, and writing program administrators could call on the expertise of primary research ambassadors, and special collections librarians to further support this initiative.

5.2 Does Institution Mission Impact English Departments, Graduate Programs and Writing Programs?

This research study offered a look into two R1 institutions in the Southeast, and their writing programs, while also surveying anonymous writing programs at R1 universities across the country. While the study offered a great deal of comparison between the two specific universities, it was limited in not providing a larger overview of specific universities across the country, their institution mission, and the impact that mission might have on the department, graduate program and writing program. I suspect based on prior scholarship that focuses on the relationships between institution mission and writing programs (DelliCarpini; Janangelo; Schoen), since university missions are often reflective of the region and community in which they reside, they present both opportunities and challenges and can in various ways impact the decisions English programs, graduate programs, and writing programs make. While a full investigation of relationships between institutions and communities was beyond the scope of the present study, the data collected and detailed in chapter two does suggest some teacher/scholars believe an institution's mission can impact the curriculum of a department, and thus a writing program. As detailed in Chapter two, the very first sentence in University of South Carolina's mission statement, "The primary mission of the University of South Carolina Columbia is the education of the state's citizens through teaching, research, creative activity, and community engagement" and thus invites an opportunity for investigation through the use of primary research and would potentially support the inclusion of primary research in first-year writing.

Therefore, "by investigating the relationships between writing programs and institutional mission, WPAs can better position themselves to maximize opportunities or mitigate challenges in proactive ways" (Schoen). Because an institutional mission can "evoke a legacy of scholarship

and pedagogy that faculty and administrators can use to steward their departments, programs, and initiatives forward” (Janangelo). Interview participant responses in chapter 2 demonstrated that a writing program may choose to maintain the curriculum they have for a variety of reasons, even if the university mission invites the possibility of integrating various modes of research inquiry. This results from the numerous constraints often placed on the FYW curriculum and staffing, such as the pressures of institutional first-year student success programs, Quality Enhancement Plans, and university strategic plans. It is apparent from prior scholarship, (Busser; Holdstein; Desmet), that WPAs face a great deal of pressure from their department and institutions to ensure students do well in first-year writing. WPAs must often make difficult choices to address constraints and challenges, including faculty resistance, resource allocation, and/or recent changes already made to the curriculum (Malenczyk). It is possible that WPAs may see adding mandates for primary research initiatives as going against prescribed first-year syllabi, and that coverage of another topic could be displaced when primary research is added to curricula. This could deter a program from adding primary research methods to a FYW curriculum because it may feel like one more thing to add to an already full curriculum. However, WPAs have an opportunity to re-evaluate their program missions to align with institution and department goals. Rather than feeling like a tacked-on component, meaningfully weaving primary research throughout the curriculum can help achieve course objectives while benefiting student learners.

Based on personal experience, and conversations with peers, some writing programs may feel as though “institutional missions may aim to do more than can reasonably be expected from an undergraduate education” (Johnson 72). This notion addresses feedback from interview participants that offer another major obstacle in presenting primary research methods in first-year

writing programs is sometimes due to program and instructor preconceived notions of first-year student capabilities. This aligns with prior scholarship that addresses the diverse needs of first-year students and that “first-year students often arrive underprepared for college-level course work and have a wide range of abilities as readers and writers” (LaFrance 2). However, based on the data presented in this study, it appears there is a lack of connection between pedagogical training within graduate programs and expectations of institution mission. If there is a lack of connection between institution mission, English departments, graduate programs, and writing programs, it poses a risk to the success of the students, both undergraduate and graduate. Therefore, this research presents opportunities to address the ways in which institution mission, English departments, graduate programs, and writing programs are all intertwined.

5.3 Re-Defining Primary Research

One way a connection can be made between institution mission, English departments, graduate programs, and writing programs, is to better define some terminology that is often confusing for students and faculty. As this study shows, one such term is “primary research”, which is a muddled term that is often defined differently depending on educational background and experience. As seen in chapter two, half of the teacher/scholar participants view primary research as research defined by source material, also known as primary source, and some define it as research being collected and analyzed for the first time. Thus, the concept of “primary research” can have different implications. To some, it might mean reading and analyzing an interview transcript from fifty years ago, and to others it might mean writing interview questions, scheduling an interview, conducting the interview, writing/recording the transcript, and then analyzing the interview. When asked how to define primary research, Doug Downs said “interesting question—a little fraught, though at least you didn't ask me to define rhetoric”.

Many teacher/scholars often find it difficult to define a term, such as primary research, so broadly used for a variety of different research methods and applications. This apparent confusion with the term, opens possibilities for the humanities discipline, and the field of rhetoric and writing studies, to better define “primary research” for current and future students and faculty. Many social science disciplines do not use the same language and identify an interview simply as a method of data collection. An opportunity exists to conduct future research and investigations of how to best introduce and define primary research methods during teacher training/professional development, and research methods coursework. Introducing and discussing commonly used terminology as it applies to the field should start during teacher/pedagogical training and continue into annual professional development.

5.4 Re (Vamping) Teacher Training and Professional Development

Some universities across the country have reimagined their first-year writing programs and now include primary research methods alongside secondary research methods; however, it is not clear if the pedagogical training and professional development at those same universities provides an overview of how to teach those methods. There appears to be a common misconception that most teachers are trained to teach at PhD granting institutions (Giordano and Hassel; Flaherty). Based on the findings from this study, conversations on primary research methods and methodologies are lacking in teacher training and professional development in R1 universities across the country and writing program administrator responses included in chapter three appear to acknowledge this gap in training. Many first-year writing instructors do not feel comfortable integrating such methods in their pedagogy and classrooms because they lack a foundational knowledge on how to do so.

According to the 2014 MLA Survey of Departmental Staffing, graduate teaching assistants teach more first-year writing classes than other faculty at PhD granting institutions. Graduate teaching assistants teach 38.8 % of first-year writing classes in comparison to full-time tenure-track faculty members who teach 13.4%, full-time non-tenure track who teach 23.5%, and part-time faculty who teach 24.2%. Since graduate students are often additionally teaching assistants within the programs and departments, they “occupy a complex, contested role in writing programs” (Osorio et.al). They are studying various disciplines within the department while also teaching first-year students. Full-time, tenure-track faculty members tend to teach the lowest percentage of first-year writing classes. However, at schools with graduate programs, these tenured faculty members serve in a dual role as graduate teacher and advisor to students in concentrations where a firm knowledge of research methods would be incredibly beneficial. Providing resources on primary research methods and methodologies, as well as opportunities for peer-to-peer discourse through training initiatives and workshops, would benefit everyone teaching first-year writing—GTAs and full-time faculty alike. These professional development opportunities also develop stronger connections across the program, department, and institution. Pedagogical training, start-of-year meetings, and concurrent professional development would enhance the comfort and knowledge of all first-year writing instructors.

5.5 Pedagogical Training Efforts for Graduate Students

Graduate Programs pride themselves on their ability to prepare graduate students for teaching and professional positions after graduation. Pedagogical training courses are typically one semester long, and professors teaching those courses attempt to include a great deal of content in a short 14-16 weeks. According to the data gathered from interview participants for this study, most graduate students take a pedagogical course while teaching, instead of before

teaching, and as one interviewee participant noted, “I did not find the necessary training and teaching sequence particularly useful.” Additionally, based on those interview responses, most graduate students are not introduced to primary research methods during pedagogical training, nor are they taught how to teach those methods to undergraduate students. As one interviewee stated, “in the pedagogical course, primary research methods weren’t taught formally, just sort of glazed over” and another mentioned, “The class focused solely on theory of writing pedagogies, not a practical application of research.” One purpose of the class is to prepare graduate students for teaching first-year writing to undergraduate students, and within the requirements of those courses, it would be beneficial for students to complete a research assignment. For pedagogical training to be successful, a combination of theory and practice would provide a fuller understanding and practical application of research methods in the classroom. According to the CCCC statement on preparing teachers of college writing, all writing instructors should have “an understanding of both secondary and primary research methods, as well as a knowledge of plagiarism, copyright law, and human subjects protection,” but unless graduate students enroll in a research methods class, they are not being provided an overview of research methods, nor information on human subjects protection. Many graduate students teaching first-year writing at R1 universities across the country are working to obtain an MFA or PhD in Creative Writing and are not required to take a research methods course; therefore, a broad overview of research methods in pedagogical training would benefit all graduate students. Additionally, if first-year writing instructors were more knowledgeable and comfortable teaching research methods, that could enhance the success of first-year students, since primary research is engaging and has been found to empower students and provide them with agency (Downs); it is possible this could also help with retention initiatives. Finally, writing programs have an opportunity to capture the

diversity of backgrounds, training, and interests in GTAs and other writing instructors as an asset in pedagogical training and professional development. Helping draw on the expertise of creative writers, literary studies specialists, English education, *and* rhetoric and composition instructors would enhance the coverage of primary research and help develop a common vocabulary and shared set of approaches that make the unfamiliar approachable, attainable, and practical for instructors new to teaching primary research in FYC.

Pedagogical training initiatives aim to include a wide coverage of foundational information to encourage best practices. Therefore, providing graduate students a foundation on the teaching and inclusion of both primary and secondary research methods alongside other pedagogical theory would help encourage and allow graduate students to implement a diverse set of research methods to include primary research methods in the first-year writing curriculum while encouraging and expanding their own ability to conduct research and enhance their experience in graduate school. This will help eliminate some obstacles of teaching primary research methods in first-year writing.

I've created a pedagogical training course syllabus which can be found in the appendix G. This sample course syllabus offers suggestions for a greater coverage of research methods in pedagogical training for graduate students alongside other pedagogical initiatives. Some suggestions include, but are not limited to:

1. Using Open-Access Pedagogy Textbooks- To ensure coverage of both primary and secondary research methods, it is necessary to not depend solely on current pedagogical textbooks. There is a limited amount of coverage on the teaching of research methods, and the majority of the coverage focuses on secondary research

- methods. Professors teaching pedagogy courses have the ability to use open-access texts in addition to texts from the library and their own personal archives.
2. Discussing IRB- All graduate students should have a simple understanding of an Institutional Review Board and Human Subjects Protection. Unfortunately, many students will complete a graduate program with an MA, MFA, or PhD and will lack a fundamental ethics awareness. Since the majority of FYC courses are taught by graduate students, it is imperative they have a foundational knowledge of human subjects protection and how it applies to research protocols, so they can better inform undergraduate students when teaching research methods.
 3. Inviting Students to Participate in Research Assignments- Graduate students need a safe and accessible place to learn and apply various forms of research inquiry. They cannot be expected to teach research methods if they are not comfortable with research themselves.
 4. Holding Weekly Discussion Forums- These discussion forums can take place in a face-face classroom, online, or both. Discussions should center around scholarship that discusses the role of first-year writing and the first-year student, and the experiences graduate students are currently having in their classrooms.
 5. Assigning End of Course Pedagogy Presentations- End of Course presentations offer graduate students the opportunity to share their knowledge on a specific pedagogy practice that they have applied in their classrooms or plan to in the future.

5.5.1 Using Open-Access Pedagogy Textbooks

Chapter Three's discussion section provides an overview of the lack of primary research inclusion in pedagogical textbooks used during teacher training. In the discussion I mention

popular textbooks—such as *The Norton Book of Composition Studies*; *Strategies for Teaching*; *Naming What We Know*; and *(Re)Considering What We Know*—all lacking any form of inclusion or mention of primary research method application. Professors teaching a pedagogy course have the freedom and ability to offer graduate students a broader array of pedagogy scholarship by not simply choosing one or two popular texts. One solution for this is for pedagogy instructors to not only utilize resources that offer a wide array of research methods, but also offer practical application of teaching in a hybrid or online classroom environment.

One such textbook, *Writing Spaces: Readings on Writings*, a creative commons textbook, includes chapters designed for students and accompanied with teacher resources, addressing primary and archival research that are useful, valued, and free for teachers and students to reference and adopt in both volume 2 and volume 4. Additionally, a sample of some stand-alone articles and essays professors could incorporate in their composition pedagogy classrooms can be found in the sample pedagogical syllabus in appendix G. This sample list would be useful for introducing a wide range of research method approaches to graduate students and could be integrated alongside other pedagogical texts and resources. Professors teaching pedagogy courses could choose their favorite pedagogy resource, and still integrate stand-alone pieces to introduce newer scholarship, or scholarship that has not yet been integrated in their favorite pedagogy resource. Additionally, I invite professors to incorporate open-access materials in their graduate courses to help students cut down on costs, and to encourage students to share materials with their students.

5.5.2 *Discussing IRB*

Every graduate student, in every field and discipline should receive at the minimum an overview of an institutional review board, and information on human subjects training, especially

if they are going to be teaching research methods in the first-year or undergraduate classroom. As one example, after reviewing the Georgia State’s graduate English program and course requirements for graduation for their three main fields of study, the creative writing discipline does not require graduate students take a research methods class (GSU course catalog); however, these graduate students often teach as graduate teaching assistants. Introducing IRB and human subject protection and training information in a pedagogy course allows and invites new graduate students to investigate research opportunities and possibly propel their studies and application and practice of research and pedagogy in an entirely new direction.

The inclusion and overview of IRB should include, and not be limited to:

- A definition of Institutional Review Board and a link to the institution’s IRB

The inclusion and overview of human subject protection should include, and not be limited to:

- A definition of a human subject, human subject protection, a link and overview of the Belmont report, and a link and overview of CITI training

<https://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/index.html>

<https://about.citiprogram.org/>

Multiple interviewees shared they don’t feel comfortable including and teaching primary research methods due to the “ethics of it”. Providing an overview of the IRB, and human subjects protection during pedagogical training and inviting graduate students to participate in research activities will help inform and educate them, which in turn will increase their comfort discussing a wide range of research methods in their classroom.

5.5.3 Inviting Students to Participate in Research Assignments

Part of pedagogical training should be ensuring graduate students will feel comfortable teaching and incorporating various forms of research methods and methodologies in their

classroom. In order for this to occur it is necessary to introduce, discuss, and apply approaches and options for various modes of research inquiry within the pedagogy course. There are countless ways for graduate students to apply and practice research inquiry, and some examples include, but are not limited to:

- Inviting graduate students to participate in a formal interview assignment with another student in class.
- Inviting graduate students to investigate an archival database.
- Inviting graduate students to create, distribute, and analyze a survey.
- Inviting graduate students to complete an ethnographic observation.

(See sample pedagogical training syllabus in Appendix M for more details on these assignments.)

5.5.4 Holding Weekly Discussion Forums

Weekly Discussion Forums offer graduate students a chance to discuss and continue conversations on the practices and approaches to teaching while providing a comfortable and inclusive environment. One interview participant shared “I don’t always feel encouraged to adapt things” and another stated, “communication with my students seems to be an issue.” Pedagogy courses should offer guidance and assistance to help graduate students feel more comfortable and confident in their teaching roles. The graduate students who are required to take a pedagogy class have a mixed amount of experience teaching, as one interview participant shared, “I have a master’s degree in teaching, so I was trained then, and was in the classroom at the middle and high school level for a few years.” Some graduate students taking a pedagogy class are teaching for the first time, while others have been teaching for years.

According to the data and personal knowledge shared in this dissertation, while a lot of universities utilize a mentorship program for new GTAs and “experienced” GTAs, holding weekly discussion forums during pedagogical training would enhance graduate students’ support community by inviting everyone to contribute to ongoing discourse in and out of the classroom space. I suggest introducing a weekly discussion prompt and posting that prompt to the corresponding virtual-learning platform⁵ that the university uses. Graduate students enrolled in the class should receive credit for contributing to the weekly discussion forums and also responding to peers. Asking students to not only respond to the prompt, but also respond to peer-responses encourages reflection and support. Weekly Discussion prompts could include, but not be limited to:

1. What do you think is a great approach for creating an inclusive environment for your students on the first day of class?
2. How would you define the goals of first-year writing for one of your non-academic friends or family members?
3. How do you approach the topic of professionalism in your first-year classroom? Do you allow your students to call you by your first name? Why or why not?
4. What do you think is a good approach when introducing research methods to your first-year students? What are some activities you use? What are some resources you share?
5. How do you encourage discussion in your classroom? Do you break students into groups? Do you call on individual students?

⁵ Many universities across the country utilize Learning Management Systems (LMS) which many informally refer to as virtual-learning platforms. Some common LMS’ are Blackboard, Canvas, and Desire to Learn.

Pedagogy courses play a major role in the introduction and fostering of foundational knowledge for graduate students who have taught and/or will teach in the university. As the weekly discussions show, teaching primary and secondary research methods need to be a central component in pedagogical training, but they should be incorporated alongside other foundational content.

5.5.5 Assigning End of Course Pedagogy Presentations

This dissertation not only addresses the many obstacles that hinder the inclusion of primary research methods within the first-year classroom, but it also suggests there is a need for a re-evaluation of pedagogical training in general. As noted by many scholars, it is essential that graduate students receive adequate pedagogical training (Flaherty) and proper pedagogical training helps ensure graduate students become good teachers with good communication skills (Flaherty). An End of Course (EOC) Pedagogy Presentation offers graduate students the opportunity to share a teaching method they have applied in the classroom, or one they plan on applying in the future. Situating the presentations at the end of the course allows students time to create, possibly apply, reflect, and make any necessary changes to their presentations. This can empower graduate students by helping them develop their ethos in regard to teaching and presenting in a classroom environment.

There are many options to enhance pedagogical training for graduate students, and countless opportunities exist to build a more robust experience.

5.6 Professional Development Efforts

Based on interview participant feedback and responses, opportunities exist to amplify professional development initiatives. This work is important because FYC instructors are a diverse population of teacher/scholars with varying degrees, experience, and backgrounds. ,

Based on prior scholarship, a lack of funding and an overwhelming workload significantly impact the inclusion of adjuncts and part-time faculty in professional development initiatives (Beavers). The work of a writing program administrator is complex and demanding; however, a writing program and department lacking professional development for all faculty can be very disadvantageous to the overall success of the institution. As Aaron Basko noted in a January 2022 publication in *The Chronicle of Higher Ed*, “When employees have not kept current in their field, they operate in outdated ways that put their institutions at a competitive disadvantage.” The inclusion and contribution of both seasoned and new FYC instructors, whether they are full-time or part-time, can lead to more beneficial professional development sessions when they are all invited to contribute their voices, knowledge and first-hand classroom experiences which could lead to practicum initiatives. Professional development efforts should be reviewed and assessed to maintain institutional, programmatic, and student needs to continue implementing appropriate research methods in first-year writing courses, and administrators need to be supportive and encouraging to provide an inclusive environment for faculty (Beavers). In addition, since the majority of GTAs at R1 universities are expected to teach first-year composition, it would be incredibly beneficial for first-year writing learning outcomes to be reviewed once a year during training sessions.

Some professional development initiatives that could support and benefit writing program goals and methodologies could include, but not be limited to:

- Inviting first-year writing instructors with experience teaching primary and secondary research methods to lecture during whole-group training sessions and invited to share

materials and resources to an open department repository, such as “Box⁶.” These materials and resources could include, but not be limited to:

1. Presentations and handouts that include a broad coverage of a variety of primary research methods and methodologies to include definitions and approaches of incorporating such methods in the first-year classroom. (see appendix H)
2. Locally developed and publicly available open-access resources such as articles, essays, sample assignments and rubrics.
3. Sample First-Year Writing Course Syllabi including both primary and secondary research assignments. Including and acknowledging the practical life application of a variety of research methods will encourage students to continue to do so through academia and within their professional careers. (see appendix I)
 - Providing an overview of software programs available at many R1 universities, such as Qualtrics⁷, which makes integrating primary research methods much more accessible for both instructors and students to conduct primary research. If programs such as Qualtrics are not available at the university, providing coverage of free-programs students can use, such as survey monkey and google forms.
 - Making professional development sessions open to all GTAs, adjuncts, lecturers, and tenured faculty teaching first-year writing. Many scholars believe however that “professional development should not be optional. It should be required of all staff members and administrators” (Basko). Several colleges and universities across the

⁶ Box is a cloud storage company that enables users to upload files to a single repository and access them from anywhere. Box is ideal for English Departments as it enables faculty to share resources and materials and make them accessible for anyone in the department.

⁷ Qualtrics is a web-based software program available for use at many R1 universities across the country. This program allows novice researchers to create surveys, view data, analysis, and reports without any prior experience or knowledge in programming knowledge and research experience.

country already require TT and NTT faculty to attend professional development sessions; however, many still do not. Departments have an opportunity, if hoping to implement changes to their program and curriculum, to invite, praise, and offer recognition for faculty participation and attendance. There is also a greater chance of higher faculty participation if professional development is offered in a multitude of platforms, both virtually and in-person.

- Redesigning mentorship programs. If universities are going to continue using mentorship as a means of teacher training and professional development, it would be beneficial for writing program administrators and committees to assign faculty observations to check the progress of the mentors and mentees at least once a year, but it would be better if it could be done once a semester. Mentorship programs should be kept under programmatic review.

I encourage and invite readers to call on the experience and expertise of teacher/scholars already working within their own departments and programs to develop and create materials and resources that could help support professional development initiatives that support the inclusion of more primary research methods in first-year writing.

5.7 Continuing this Research

University and public libraries are excellent resources for K-12 teachers and university instructors, and many offer classes, resources, and events that invite all levels of teachers to engage in primary research methods. The data from this study suggests library instruction is the most common approach to teaching research methods in the first-year writing classroom, because while many composition researchers and scholars value a diverse set of research methodologies, many are not entirely comfortable delivering and integrating research methods in

their own pedagogy. Responses from instructors of first-year writing and writing program administrators confirm “first-year composition courses tend to equate research with library research” (Lovitt and Young 118), and the data from this study further suggests the majority of first-year writing programs still emphasize information literacy and utilize librarian instruction as “the library one-shot” (Artman et.al). One (or maybe two) visits to the library in a student’s first year in college is not enough time to prepare that student for college-level or professional research by itself, but an opportunity exists for writing instructors to call on the expertise of special collections librarians to further enhance a student’s library experience while providing a better overview of primary research methods. I invite readers interested in promoting such research methods in the first-year classroom to call on the knowledge of local librarians and academic peers with a passion for primary research to help create assignments and models that could be utilized and shared within programs and departments. .

In order to successfully move composition research into the 21st century, research needs to be inclusive of a diverse population of teachers and learners by including knowledge gathered from diverse sources using diverse methods (Freedman 184). As previous scholars (Clary-Lemon; Faulkner-Springfield; Ostergaard) have shown us, the archives provide researchers a way to investigate personal, professional, and political memories and could help to create an inclusive classroom and society. Scholarship continues promoting archival research and investigations in undergraduate and graduate coursework, and in June of 2022, teacher/scholars will be able to purchase *Teaching through the Archives: Text, Collaboration, and Activism*, a textbook that aims to “engage students in archival research in its many forms, and successfully model mutually beneficial relationships between archivists, instructors, and community

organizations”. This work matters and helps bring about change by helping teacher/scholars and student researchers develop agency and identity.

The skills that come with an understanding and application of all primary research methods is beneficial in every discipline and for all individuals. As noted from the interview participants and survey participants, instructors who integrate primary research methods in their first-year writing pedagogy find the content valuable for students. Previous research provides a substantial amount of evidence that shows student engagement through interviews can provide “a window to the world beyond their own” (Jolliffe 60). As the National Research Council has argued, “[t]he ultimate goal of learning is to have access to information for a wide set of purposes—that the learning will in some way transfer to other circumstances” (61). This notion applies to both undergraduate and graduate students. Essentially, all student work is meant to transfer from the academy into the workplace.

Similarly, Jaycie Vos and Yadira Guzman promote the importance of primary source literary in their research that “encourages the serious consideration of the emotional impact of primary source materials, particularly those that reveal underrepresented historical narratives, and their power to connect students to complex, larger narratives that can inform their understanding of their place in the world and within broader cultural contexts.” Many universities across the country are developing and adding diversity, equity, and inclusion goals to their missions, and integrating primary research methods in undergraduate and graduate course work could significantly help institutions, departments, graduate programs, and writing programs achieve those goals. While it is up to individual programs to determine what they feel they can accomplish with their students in a limited amount of time; not allowing or inviting an opportunity for students to become researchers and contribute to scholarly conversations is doing

a disservice to not only the student, but also the institution in which the writing program is housed. Writing programs have the capability to revisit institution mission, and ensure their program supports student engagement, diversity, equity, and inclusion by promoting agency in primary research endeavors.

When students conduct primary research, they must consider others in addition to themselves. Introducing and situating primary research methods in undergraduate and graduate training and writing courses invites all students to participate in languages of multiple forms and investigate different cultures, communities, and environments, thus situating the focus on language and writing alongside engaged research and opening possibilities for re-conceptualizing writing (Feldman). Primary research teaches students to understand they are the writers and the audience, and it helps them translate and transform collected information for others to also understand; it allows students to become more conscious, critical, and prepared to enter future academic, social, and political discourse.

APPENDICES

Appendix A Interview Questions

- “What do you think of when you think of primary research⁸?”
- “When and how did you first learn about primary research methods and methodologies defined as “new research, collected first-hand by interview, ethnography, survey, etc.?”
- “What do you think is the primary purpose of first-year composition? What assignments do you think are most successful at achieving that purpose?”
- “Do you include primary research methods in your first-year composition pedagogy? Why or Why not?”
- If yes: “How have your students responded to conducting primary research in FYC?”
“Do you feel as though your first-year students benefit from your inclusion of primary research methods and methodologies?” “How can you tell?”
- If not: “Are there particular reasons why you haven’t incorporated primary research in your FYC courses?”
- “What barriers have you encountered, or limitations do you imagine exist for instructors wanting to incorporate primary research into their FYC courses?”
- “Did you receive formal or informal pedagogical training before teaching for the very first time?” “Have you ever received formal or informal pedagogical training? If so, did it include coverage of teaching primary research?”

⁸ Based on a response during a preliminary interview with the Director of First-Year English at University of South Carolina in Fall of 2018, not everyone thinks of primary research in the same way. Some faculty and scholars think of primary research in terms of primary sources, and not the act and process of conducting the actual research. So in that sense, when I conduct the interviews for this project, I may need to explain primary research to some of the interviewees after asking the first question in this set.

Appendix B Survey Questions

1. Does the first-year writing program at your university integrate primary research methods into course curricula, e.g. interviews, ethnography, investigating the archives, surveys, polls, and mandate students use primary research methods in their research? (Yes/No)
 - If yes: Can you tell me a little more about how your program approaches the teaching of primary research and the kinds of primary research assignments that might be typically assigned?
 - If no: Can you tell me a little more about how your program approaches the teaching of research in first-year writing, whether or not that includes primary research?
2. Do you provide pedagogical training/professional development to GTAs, Adjuncts, Instructors, and Professors? (Yes/No)
 - If yes: Does the training/development include teaching research methods? (Yes/No)
 - Could you provide some detail on what pedagogical training/professional development looks like in your program?
3. On a scale of 1-5, 1 being the lowest, how would you rate the level of comfort of instructors in your program with teaching research methods? (This would include teaching both primary and secondary research)
4. Do you think there are any barriers or limitations that may exist that would prevent instructors from incorporating primary research into their FYC courses? Please explain.
5. What textbook (s) ⁹do you use for your first-year writing program? What do you think is best about the textbook? What limitations do you see in the book?

If there is anything else you would like to add, please do so.

⁹ I plan on asking all WPAs at R1 universities being surveyed to send me a copy of the textbook they use for FYC and also a sample syllabi that represents the first-year writing class(es) at the university. I don't expect to receive this information from all 33 universities.

Appendix C University of South Carolina

English 101-XXX: Critical Reading and Composition Fall 2021

Instructor:

Email:

Office Location:

Office Hours:

Class Location:

Class Days and Time:

Course description

English 101 prepares students for future academic work through structured and sustained practice in critical reading, textual analysis, and expository writing. Students will learn to analyze texts critically and creatively while discussing issues of global importance and while reflecting on the relationship between writing and literacy. Students will strengthen their abilities to inquire, interpret, and write within the academic sphere through close readings of various media and genres—including fiction, non-fiction, poetry, graphic novels, music, and film. Writing assignments and peer review will train students to engage ethically and respectfully with perspectives outside of their own. Through active participation and inquiry, students will enhance their ability to comprehend texts and communicate ideas.

Course Goal and Learning Outcomes

English 101 and 102 satisfy the Carolina Core requirement for written communication (CMW). The goal of this requirement is to ensure that students learn to think critically, and to read, write, inquire, and converse as citizens in a diverse, democratic society. In service of this larger goal, by the end of the semester students will be able to:

1. Identify and differentiate among common genres of written communication (linguistic, multimodal, visual, and aural);
2. Summarize and analyze challenging texts from a variety of genres;
3. Explain how texts' generic features contribute to their meanings;
4. Synthesize ideas from multiple sources to support original arguments about issues of major social importance;
5. Compose narrative and interpretive essays that advance clearly stated, progressively complex arguments using the recognized conventions of academic prose;
6. Revise their written work in response to feedback from others, including their peers; and
7. Reflect critically on their own writing processes and academic goals, as well as on their experiences as readers and writers.

Required Materials

Hawthorne, Chelsea D. with Kathleen A. Carroll. *The Carolina Reader for English 101*. Hayden-McNeil, 2021. (You MUST purchase the 2021 edition)

Lunsford, Andrea A. *The Everyday Writer: For the University of South Carolina*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020. (Must be the updated MLA edition)

Access to Blackboard

Access to a computer with MS Office 365 ([free to students](#))

A trustworthy system for backing up your work (cloud, external drive, etc.)

Assignments and Grades

This course proceeds through four units. In each, you will read selections from *The Carolina Reader* and *The Everyday Writer*, respond to those readings through in-class writing and homework, and complete a larger assignment that brings the concepts of that unit together.

<p>Literacy Narrative Polished, evaluated writing assignment that examines a moment of literacy learning; 1,000 - 1,500 words.</p>	15%
<p>Close Reading Essay Polished, evaluated writing assignment that argues for an interpretation of a text using close reading strategies of analysis and synthesis; 1,250 - 1,750 words</p>	20%
<p>Comparative Synthesis Essay Polished, evaluated writing assignment that synthesizes two or more texts of any genre; 1,500 - 2,000 words</p>	20%
<p>Open-Genre Literacy Project Open-genre creative project that imagines future literacy learning</p>	15%
<p>Short Writing Assignments Various tasks completed at home or in class. Each counts equally toward their total.</p>	15%
<p>Participation Active and engaged participation in all classroom discussions and activities. At the end of the semester, you will write a self-assessment of your participation.</p>	10%
<p>Final Reflection Polished, evaluated writing assignment that reflects on your writing and revision process; submitted with your final portfolio; 500 - 750 words.</p>	5%

Final Portfolio

Your final portfolio, submitted digitally during the final exam period, will include revised copies of the Literacy Narrative, the Close Reading Essay, the Comparative Synthesis Essay, the Open-Genre Literacy Project, the Participation Self-Assessment, and the Final Reflection.

Appendix D University of South Carolina

English 102: Rhetoric and Composition Fall 2021 | Section

Instructor:

Instructor Email:

Office Hours and Location:

Class Location & Time:

REQUIRED MATERIALS

1. Kim, Lindsey with Heather Buzbee, ed. *The Carolina Rhetoric*. Macmillan Learning, 2021.
 2. Lunsford, Andrea A. *The Everyday Writer: For the University of South Carolina*. Bedford/St. Martin's, 2020.
- Access to a computer with MS Office 365 ([free to students](#))

COURSE DESCRIPTION AND LEARNING OUTCOMES

English 102 builds on English 101 to prepare you for the writing you will do in future college courses and beyond. While English 101 honed your ability to critically read and closely analyze particular texts, English 102 emphasizes helping you to write well-reasoned argumentative papers that draw upon multiple sources and viewpoints. During the semester, you will learn to identify the elements of an effective argument, and then you will apply those principles in composing researched essays about academic and public issues. This course will also strengthen your information literacy skills by teaching you strategies for finding, assessing, using, citing, and documenting source materials. We will also discuss basic principles of academic integrity. You will learn these skills through frequent, intensive practice. By the end of the term, you should feel more confident about your ability to research and write about challenging topics responsibly and articulately.

In English 102, you will:

- Learn rhetorical concepts and terms that enable you to identify and analyze the elements of an effective argument.
- Write effective college-level papers on a variety of academic and public issues, each of which articulates a central claim (thesis), draws on credible supporting evidence, and effectively addresses opposing viewpoints.
- Do research to find, assess, and use appropriate supporting materials from the university libraries, the Internet, and other sources.
- Effectively integrate material from research into your papers via summary, paraphrase, and quotation.
- Document source materials correctly using MLA style and understand basic principles of academic integrity.
- Work through a full range of writing processes—including invention, planning, drafting, revision, and editing—in order to produce effective college-level essays;
- Work with classmates to share ideas and critique each other's work in progress.
- Develop a clean, effective writing style, free of major errors, and adapt it to a variety of rhetorical situations.

MAJOR ASSIGNMENTS

Project Proposal and Annotated Bibliography (15% of overall grade)

This assignment requires you to explore and evaluate current research on your selected research topic. As you conduct research and complete ILPs throughout the semester, you will add additional bibliographic entries that survey and analyze the variety of sources you find. The first draft of the annotated bibliography

must include at least **6 sources**, while your final draft (the one that will be submitted in your Final Portfolio) must have **10 sources** total. This assignment aims to supply you with a valuable research tool that will help you enter the academic discourse community by creating your own researched argumentative essay.

Researched Argumentative Essay (20% of overall grade)

For this assignment, you will write a sustained argument stemming from your research this semester, developed from the annotated bibliography and other assignments completed for this class. Your essay must be 2500 words minimum and must make use of at least eight sources from your annotated bibliography assignment. Your paper should adhere to the latest MLA style guidelines for research papers. Through this assignment, you will develop and practice the skills necessary for understanding and engaging within the academic discourse community through its central form of communication – argument.

Public Turn Assignment (15% of overall grade)

In our current information society, the vast majority of arguments are not located in academic essays. Arguments also appear in videos, images, sounds, etc. This assignment asks you to reconfigure the central argument and main points of evidence from your research project into a new medium and/or genre using multiple modes of expression (e.g., video, audio, etc.) so that it speaks to a new audience outside the academic discourse community. This can take the form of a presentation, blog, song, poetry, short story, film, podcast, dance, food, painting, or other medium. I must be able to assess your project in 5-6 minutes (i.e., keep audio, video, and presentation length to 5-6 minutes). These projects will be presented to the class at the end of the semester and will be submitted via your Final Portfolio project along with a reflection indicating your reasoning behind your rhetorical choices as you changed mediums and modes in order to fit your argument to the needs of a new discourse community.

Information Literacy Projects (ILPs) (20% of overall grade)

These assignments help you develop and practice skills in writing, rhetoric, and information literacy that are necessary for academic research. Each ILP has three parts: A citation and summary, a source analysis, and a research reflection. You will use ILPs to conduct research for your major assignments.

Peer Review Workshops (15% of overall grade)

We will be doing group-based peer review of drafts of each of the major assignments for the course. You are expected to read and comment thoroughly on the drafts of your peers for each workshop.

Participation (15% of overall grade)

You will be writing almost every class, often in the form of in-class writing, group work, class activities, or formally written responses and other out-of-class writing. These assignments will vary in number, length, difficulty, and complexity. In addition, your active participation in discussion and activities will count towards a participation grade.

Appendix E Georgia State

English 1101 Composition

Instructor:

Term:

Email:

Class Meetings:

Virtual Conference Times:

CRN:

Course Catalogue Description:

This course is designed to increase the student's ability to construct written prose of various kinds. It focuses on methods of organization, analysis, research skills, and the production of short expository essays. Readings consider issues of contemporary social and cultural concern. *A passing grade is a C.*



College to Career Course

This English 1101 section is a College-to-Career (CTC) course. CTC work is integrated into your English 1101 curriculum; you will be completing some small, daily writing activities and a few larger projects tied to CTC goals. English 1101 is specifically designed to help you gain awareness of rhetorical knowledge and career competencies as outlined by the National Association of Colleges and Employers. Assignments in this course aspire to bridge academic expertise with your potential career path. You can learn more about the CTC program at GSU here <https://collegetocareer.gsu.edu/collegetocareer/how-this-works/> These assignment enhancements will support you in your own career exploration and help keep you focused on your career throughout your time at GSU. Support for all of your CTC work in this course will be provided by your English 1101 instructor and by the CTC Team.

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Engage in writing as a process, including various invention heuristics (brainstorming, for example), gathering evidence, considering audience, drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading.
- Engage in the collaborative, social aspects of written composition, and use these as tools for learning.
- Use language to explore and analyze contemporary multicultural, global, and international questions.
- Demonstrate how to use composition aids, such as handbooks, dictionaries, online aids, and tutors.
- Gather, summarize, synthesize and explain information from various sources.

- Use grammatical, stylistic, and mechanical formats and conventions appropriate for a variety of audiences, but in particular the formal academic audience that makes up the discourse community with which you will also become more familiar in this course.
- Critique your and others' work in written, visual and oral formats.
- Produce coherent, organized, readable compositions for a variety of rhetorical situations.
- Reflect on what contributed to your composition process and evaluate your own work.
- Articulate awareness of how literacies and career-readiness competencies might be valuable to potential employers.
- Articulate connections via writing between curricular, co-curricular, and extra-curricular activities and the career readiness competencies they acquire in their college experiences.
- Students will demonstrate their understanding of career-readiness by writing essays alongside short, informal writing exercises.
- Enable students to use writing to become effective communicators about their learning.

We are going to do a lot of writing in this course. My philosophy is that the more you write the more proficient you will become. Every reading, activity, and assignment you are asked to do is specifically chosen to help you become a better writer; there is no busy work in this class. The good news is that the writing and reading skills you acquire can transfer to work outside class. What you learn in this course can help you with writing in your other academic classes, with writing in your chosen career or workplace, and with community work or personal writing tasks. Communicating effectively through writing is an invaluable skill. You will be able to draw on your own experiences and interests throughout the course and I will introduce you to other ideas and approaches to those ideas. In addition, we will use technology to accomplish our writing tasks. These technology skills are also transferable to your other courses and your chosen career.

Required Textbook and Readings

Lopez, Elizabeth Sanders, Andrea Jurjević, and Megan E. Malone. *Guide to First-Year Writing for English 1101*. Top Hat Ed, Fountainhead, 2020. ISBN 987-1-64485-268-2.

This text, available as an electronic text in the TopHat platform, is required and will help you be successful in this course. Note that this edition is designed specifically for English 1101 and can't be substituted for another edition of this text. The text can be purchased from the GSU Bookstore or directly through Top Hat. Directions for access are provided on our course iCollege site. To ensure you get the correct edition, note the ISBN number above and follow the instructions provided for purchase. You will be completing work from the textbook as part of your course grade and this work will be connected to our class iCollege site. Individual access must be purchased.

I may assign additional readings during the term that will be available from the library online, on the web, or on our class iCollege site.

Course Access

All course materials including the syllabus, schedule, assignment handouts and rubrics, and video/audio instruction will be posted on iCollege. This course will have one site for all English 1101 materials and a companion CTC iCollege site for additional support. All instructions

and assignments required in English 1101 will be listed clearly week by week in the English 1101 iCollege site.

Grading and Assignment Breakdown

Assignment	W eight
Essay 1: Narrative Assignment: Story Telling and Career Literacy (3 pgs.)	15%
Essay 2: Primary Research Essay: Networking and Reporting (3 pgs.)	20%
Essay 3: Argumentative Essay (4 pgs. plus a Works Cited page)	20%
Final Project: Portfolio, Digital State Your Story Narrative, and Career Reflection	20%
Weekly/Daily Writing, Activities, and Surveys	25%
Total	100%

Appendix F Georgia State

English 1102 Composition

Instructor:

Term:

Email:

Class Meetings:

Virtual Conference Times:

CRN:

Course Catalogue Description

This course is designed to increase the student's ability to construct written prose of various kinds. It focuses on methods of organization, analysis, research skills, and the production of short expository essays. Readings consider issues of contemporary social and cultural concern. *A passing grade is a C.*

Course Learning Outcomes

By the end of this course, students will be able to:

- Analyze, evaluate, document, and draw inferences from various sources
- Identify, select, and analyze appropriate research methods, research questions, and evidence for a specific rhetorical situation
- Use argumentative strategies and genres in order to engage various audiences
- Integrate others' ideas with their own
- Demonstrate appropriate use of grammatical, stylistic, and mechanical formats and conventions for a variety of audiences
- Critique their own and others' work in written and oral formats
- Produce well-reasoned, argumentative essays demonstrating rhetorical engagement
- Reflect on what contributed to their writing process and evaluate their own work

We are going to do a lot of writing in this course. My philosophy is that the more you write the more proficient you will become. Every reading, activity, and assignment you are asked to do is specifically chosen to help you become a better writer; there is no busy work in this class. The good news is that the writing and reading skills you acquire can transfer to work outside class. What you learn in this course can help you with writing in your other academic classes, with writing in your chosen career or workplace, and with community work or personal writing tasks. Communicating effectively through writing is an invaluable skill. You will be able to draw on your own experiences and interests throughout the course and I will introduce you to other ideas and approaches to those ideas. In addition, we will use



technology to accomplish our writing tasks. These technology skills are also transferable to your other courses and your chosen career.

Required Textbook and Readings

Lopez, Elizabeth Sanders, Andrea Jurjević, and Megan E. Malone. *Guide to First-Year Writing for English 1102*. Top Hat Ed, Fountainhead, 2020. ISBN 987-1-64485-269-9.

This text, available as an electronic text in the TopHat platform, is required and will help you be successful in this course. Note that this edition is designed specifically for English 1102 and can't be substituted for another edition of this text. The text can be purchased from the GSU Bookstore or directly through Top Hat. Directions for access are provided on our course iCollege site. To ensure you get the correct edition, note the ISBN number above and follow the instructions provided for purchase. You will be completing work from the textbook as part of your course grade and this work will be connected to our class iCollege site. Individual access must be purchased.

I may assign additional readings during the term that will be available from the library, on the web, or on our class iCollege site.

Course Access

All course materials including the syllabus, schedule, assignment handouts and rubrics, and video/audio instruction will be posted on iCollege. All instructions and assignments required in English 1102 will be listed clearly week by week in the English 1102 iCollege site.

GRADING AND ASSIGNMENT BREAKDOWN

Assignment	Weight
Essay 1: Visual Analysis (3 pgs.)	20%
Assignment 2: Rhetorical Precis and Bibliography	20%
Essay 2: Research Paper (5-6 pgs.)	20%
Final Project: Multimodal Project	15%
Weekly/Daily Writing and Activities	25%
Total	100%

Appendix G Pedagogical Training- Sample Course Syllabus

Course Description

This pedagogical training course helps prepare graduate students for teaching writing and research in the college-general classroom, but with a specific focus on the first year and undergraduate classroom. This course explores and investigates various teaching and research methods to include both primary and secondary and assists students in preparing and applying their own pedagogical practices. The assigned readings offered in this class introduce and direct individual and class discussion and reflection on topics, concerns, and issues that inform and impact pedagogical choices. The class will also present best practices on research and composition according to local, regional, and national standards.

Learning Outcomes

- Join scholarly conversations and debates on the teaching of writing and research
- Develop and apply various teaching and research methods
- Prepare to teach first-year writing and additional undergraduate coursework
- Gain confidence teaching
- Become knowledgeable on current topics and issues surrounding writing and research

Some Suggested Reading

Wendy Hayden “ ‘Gifts’ of the Archives: A Pedagogy for Undergraduate Research”

Lisa Beckelhimer “Through a New Lens: Students as Primary Researchers”

Douglas Downs and Elizabeth Wardle. “Teaching about Writing, Righting Misconceptions: (Re)Envisioning ‘First- Year Composition’ as ‘Introduction to Writing Studies’”

Robert L. Davis and Mark Shadle “Building a Mystery: Alternative Research Writing and the Academic Act of Seeking.”

Joshua Daniel-Wariya and Lynn C. Lewis. “The Possibilities of Uncertainty: Digital Archives as Cunning Texts in a First-Year Composition Curriculum.”

Lynn Z. Bloom “The Sunshine of Serendipity: Illuminating Scholarship of Genre (a New Canon) and Generosity (Yes You Can)

Doreen Piano “Making Sense of Disaster: Composing a Methodology for Place-Based Visual Research”

Kim Donehower “Serendipity and Memory: The Value of Participant Observation”.

Assignments

Weekly Discussions- Students will respond to weekly prompts and two peers each week.

Pedagogical Narrative- This short 2-3 page assignment asks students to reflect on their experiences in the classroom either as a student or a teacher or both.

Research Assignments- Students will complete various research assignments in and out of class to familiarize themselves with various methods of research inquiry.

- Interview Assignment- This research assignment asks students to create questions for a student interview to be done during class.
- Archive Assignment- This research assignment asks students to choose a traditional or digital archive to explore.
- Survey Assignment- This research assignment asks students to create, distribute, and analyze survey questions using a program such as Qualtrics¹⁰, or a free survey program such as survey monkey or google forms.
- Ethnography Assignment- This research assignment asks students to choose a location to complete an ethnographic observation.
- Annotated Bibliography- This research assignment asks students to utilize secondary research methods and explore databases and scholarly journals to locate recent (within the last 10 years) conversations on first-year writing pedagogies and curricula. Students should locate at least 5 scholarly sources and annotate each source with 2-3 sentence summary, 2-3 sentence analysis, 1-2 sentence reflection.

End of Course Pedagogy Presentation- This final assignment asks students to share a teaching method they have applied in the classroom, or one they plan on applying in the future.

¹⁰ Qualtrics is a web-based software program available for use at many R1 universities across the country. This program allows novice researchers to create surveys, view data, analysis, and reports without any prior experience or knowledge in programming knowledge and research experience.

Appendix H Sample Primary Research Methods Handout

What are Primary Research Methods?

Primary research methods are research methods that researchers use to conduct their own research to gather new data and complete an analysis of findings.

According to Doug Downs—

Primary research is “first-hand experience (not solely mediated access via other interpreters) with data (collecting and/or analyzing/interpreting) via methods recognized as valid (by consensus of a field of study, or arguably so).”

“To unpack a little there: *firsthand experience not solely mediated* via other interpreters is what *makes* the researcher "primary," in the scene, "the first" to do the work at hand, the proximate agent of that work. (Not to be confused with "the first" to ever do *such* work, just *this* specific work, whatever it is.) There's a sense of *directness* here that we oppose to the *indirectness* of secondary research. (That language even gets embedded in citation systems--an indirect citation is when you quote a source via another source.) There's also a sense of *uniqueness*: experiences, even those attempting to replicate other experiences, are original and unique, and thus so is the resulting data. Primary research can claim to be "original" because nobody else has had this exact experience (even as virtually all research is also derivative and often repetitive).

Focus on data via valid methods is what makes the "primary" experience *research* -- data emerge from methods; the systematicity of method is what lets us count experience *as* data.

At the end of the day, the authority claim of all research is "*I had an experience*" -- whether that's in the field, a lab, with a text, or intellectually via thought experiment or theory. What makes the experience recognizable as research is the validity of methods in collection and analysis of the data the experience generated. And that's what makes primary research primary.”

Common primary research methods are Interviews, Archival Investigations, Ethnographies, and Surveys.

What is an Interview?

An Interview is a planned and structured conversation, typically between two people, when one person asks questions, and the other person answers questions. Before interviews can occur, the interviewer first needs to ask, plan, and schedule the interview. Next, the interviewer needs to formulate the interview questions. The interviewer can ask closed questions or open-ended questions. A closed question is used to gather demographic, information, and/or simple yes/no questions. An open-ended question is used to gather more developed responses and does not warrant a yes/no response. After the interview is scheduled, and the questions are formulated,

the interview can occur. One of the most important parts of an interview is establishing a comfortable environment, engaging your interviewee, and partaking in active listening. It is important to take notes, and sometimes plan to record an interview. Additionally, more questions may stem from the original ones, so plan an appropriate amount of time for the interview to take place.

What is an Archive?

An Archive is a collection of materials and records (information), in any form (of media), such as articles, letters, pictures, newspapers, etc. either in print or in a digital space. Archives are considered primary sources of information. When conducting primary research, researchers investigate archives to draw conclusions about information for the first time.

What is an Ethnography?

Ethnography is the study and observation of people, communities, and cultures in their natural environment and is very common in the Anthropology field. Ethnographic observations are done through fieldwork which consists of first-hand observations, accurate documentation, and field notes. Ethnographic researchers then interpret and reflect on their field notes, and typically write out their findings.

What is a Survey?

According to Qualtrics¹¹, a survey is “a method of gathering information using relevant questions from a sample of people with the aim of understanding populations as a whole. Surveys provide a critical source of data and insights for everyone engaged in the information economy, from businesses to media, to government and academics.” Surveys are used by most disciplines to collect information first-hand from participants. There are many different types of surveys, and survey creators can use both closed and open-ended questions, although most surveys employ closed questions. After survey questions have been created and deployed, the researcher will need to manage the data collected. Some programs, such as Qualtrics, will create charts and graphs for closed questions, and compile the quantitative data. The open-ended questions will need to be coded by the researcher.

¹¹ Qualtrics is a web-based software program available for use at many R1 universities across the country. This program allows novice researchers to create surveys, view data, analysis, and reports without any prior experience or knowledge in programming knowledge and research experience.

What is Coding and how do I code?

Researchers are often responsible for coding their collected findings and data. This process can be time-consuming, and researchers should allot a significant amount of time working through their data. When a researcher codes their data, they are drawing conclusions about the information they collected. According to *The Sage Encyclopedia of Communication Research Methods*, the “coding of data refers to the process of transforming collected information or observations to a set of meaningful, cohesive categories.” Researchers often create categories or themes for their collected data, and/or create charts and graphs to represent the categories and themes.

Appendix I First-Year Writing/Rhetoric and Composition Sample Syllabus

Writing and Research

Course Overview:

Writing and Research offers first-year writing students practice composing in the university and application outside of the academy. This course provides an overview of rhetoric in addition to primary and secondary research methods. This course aims to teach students how to become researchers and invites them to conduct first-hand research to gather and analyze documents and data. Students will choose topics of interest at the beginning of the semester and work through investigating, collecting, and analyzing data to produce well-reasoned argumentative papers that draw upon evidence from the data they collected and researched throughout the semester. Students will share their progress and work throughout the term with classmates and present their findings to the entire class at the end of the semester. Similar to other first-year writing courses, this course will introduce students to rhetorical concepts and prepare students for writing and research throughout their academic career and professional lives.

Course Texts: Professor's discretion

Suggested Text for course adoption:

Primary Research and Writing: People, Places, Spaces. Ed. Lynee Lewis Gaillet and Michelle Eble. Routledge, 2016.

Course Goals and Objectives:

- Learn rhetorical concepts and terms that enable students to identify and analyze the elements of an effective argument.
- Write/Develop/Create effective college-level assignments on a variety of academic and public issues, each of which articulates a central claim (thesis), draws on credible supporting evidence, and effectively addresses opposing viewpoints.
- Conduct primary and secondary research to find, assess, and use appropriate supporting materials.
- Effectively integrate source material from research into assignments via summary, paraphrase, and quotation.
- Document source materials correctly using MLA or APA style and understand basic principles of academic integrity.
- Work through a full range of writing processes—including invention, planning, drafting, revision, and editing—to produce effective college-level assignments
- Work with classmates to share ideas and critique each other's work in progress.
- Develop a clean, effective writing style, free of major errors, and adapt it to a variety of rhetorical situations.

Semester Assignments:

Weekly Discussions (10%) Discussion prompts encourage ongoing conversation and reflection throughout the week. A new discussion prompt should be posted/shared at the beginning of each week (typically Monday morning) and stay open for responses until the end of the week (Sunday evening). Students are required to post to the main prompt and also post to another student or two.

Research Literacy Narrative (10%) This assignment asks students to consider the research they have completed up to this point in their lives, and their comfort with research in general. The short writing assignment, 1-3 pages, invites student reflection, while also

Mini-annotated bibliographies (4 @ 5 % each for a total of 20%) This assignment asks students to conduct secondary research using scholarly journals, and popular sources, such as magazines and newspapers. These contribute to their exploratory analysis. For each mini-ann.bib entry, students need to include the source citation, a 2-3 sentence summary, a 2-3 sentence analysis, and a 1-2 sentence reflection. One source should be a non-print source, such as a political cartoon or a Ted Talk.

Exploratory Analysis (15%) This assignment asks students to combine primary and secondary research methods to investigate a topic/issue of their choice. Students first develop a research question that will direct their research investigations. Students will choose to interview, observe, survey, or explore the archives in addition to reviewing secondary research by investigating a conversation or debate by utilizing the sources from earlier course research. This assignment asks students to reflect on their research findings thus far while trying to answer their research question. This assignment helps students find direction for continued research and writing in this class. This assignment should include the student's topic, projected issue, research question(s), conditional research findings, and possible arguments.

Project Proposal (15%) This assignment asks students to justify their projects and research by providing a first-person rationale for researching their chosen topic, a mini-literature review based on their completed research, an outline for their final paper, a section that discusses their project work remaining, and a running bibliography.

Research Paper (15%) Students will write a sustained argument stemming from their research this semester. This paper aims to answer the research question(s).

Presentation (15%) This assignment asks students to present their work in a mode other than print. Within the presentations, students should present their arguments and research findings. Student presentations invite students to show their peers they have become a resource on the topic or issue they have spent the entire semester researching, and works to form confidence, and rhetoric and communication skills.

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