REPORT OF THE CCCC STANDING GROUP FOR BEST PRACTICE IN ONLINE WRITING INSTRUCTION (OWI)

THE 2021 STATE OF THE ART OF OWI REPORT

December 2021

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Report Notes

***This report is titled 2021 because the research and report were written in 2021. Though revisions and edits happened in 2022 and the report was released in 2022, the report illustrates the decade between the initial report (2011) and this report (2021)

***The original working group consisted of 16 people but the survey data and report was analyzed and written by the 11 people listed on the front of the report.

***Special thanks to UNC Charlotte, which served as the IRB of record and hosted the 2021 survey, and to NCTE, which hosts the OWI Standing Group.

***This report exists in three versions: a short executive summary version, a version with the executive summary and results reporting, and a full report including the executive summary, results reporting, and raw data. All three versions of the report can be found here:
https://sites.google.com/view/owistandinggroup/state-of-the-art-of-owi-2021

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Introduction

The initial 2011 State of the Art of OWI report was created by the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC) Committee for Best Practice in Online Writing Instruction (OWI), formed in 2007. (The name of the committee subsequently changed to the "Committee for Effective Practices in Online Writing Instruction.") Originally a formal CCCC committee (now a standing group), the committee was initially charged by CCCC to complete the following tasks:

- Identify and examine best strategies for online writing instruction using various online media and pedagogies primarily used for the teaching of writing in blended, hybrid, and distance-based writing classrooms, specifically composition classrooms, but including other college writing courses.
- Identify best practices for using online instruction specifically for English language learners and individuals with disabilities in coordination with related CCCC committees.
- Create a Position Statement on the Principles and Standards for OWI Preparation and Instruction. In consultation with the Assessment Committee and the Task Force on Position Statements, review and update the 2004 Position Statement "Teaching, Learning, and Assessing Writing in Digital Environments."
- Share best practices in OWI with the CCCC membership in a variety of formats.
- Identify best practices for using various online media and pedagogies (e.g., networked classrooms, e-mail and Internet-based conferences, peer-reviewed papers) for the teaching of writing with both synchronous and asynchronous modalities while taking into consideration currently popular learning management environments;
- Identify best practices for training and professional development of online writing instructors.

Creating the 2011 State of the Art of OWI report was an integral part of these charges and the impetus for forming the 2013 Position Statement of Principles and Example Effective Practices for Online Writing Instruction (OWI), https://ncte.org/statement/owiprinciples/. The 2011 State of the Art of Online Writing Instruction project surveyed 297 fully online and hybrid writing instructors (using two separate surveys) to gather findings about instructor pedagogy, training, supplemental support, and satisfaction as well as experiences with multilingual students and students with disabilities.

A decade has passed since the initial report, and online writing instruction and research in online pedagogy has expanded. The CCCC sponsored OWI Standing Group still operates, and two OWI specific community groups have emerged, The Online Writing Instruction Community (2015) and The Global Society of Online Literacy Educators (2016). In addition, an entire annotated bibliography dedicated to OWI specific research exists, The Bedford Bibliography of Research in Online Writing Instruction (OWI) (updated last in 2019), which boasts over 500 citations (Harris et al., 2019). The field has also faced the effects of the 2020 COVID pandemic, which forced many instructors to participate in emergency remote instruction, including teaching and learning in digitally mediated spaces for the first time. While teaching and scholarship in OWI has expanded over the past decade, there remains a need for multi-institutional, longitudinal research into OWI practices as well as scholarship that is replicable, aggregable, and data-supported (RAD) (Haswell, 2005).

The 2021 State of the Art of OWI report seeks to meet this need and to facilitate the continued expansion of OWI scholarship by reporting on the experiences of online writing instructors. It also compares results reported ten years ago with results derived from our 2021 survey. The report offers an update on instructor experiences, attitudes, and concerns that emerged in a survey of 235 writing instructors/administrators/scholars with experience in digitally mediated teaching environments, including hybrid, online (synchronous or asynchronous), and any combination of modalities, including hyflex.

While the CCCC 2011 OWI survey was developed around the Sloan Consortium pillars, the field of writing studies now has the benefit of writing-specific frameworks, including the 2013 Position Statement and the 2019 Global Society of Online Literacy Educators (GSOLE) Online Literacy Instruction Principles and Tenets. The 2021 survey was thus based on the 2011 survey but also informed by foundational principles, tenets, and best practices for OWI as they have emerged in recent years.

The 2021 State of the Art Working Group

In 2016, the CCCC Committee for Effective Practices in Online Writing Instruction was disbanded and formed into the official CCCC OWI Standing Group, which continues the valuable work of the original OWI Committee (though, unlike the committee, the Standing Group has no task-oriented charges from CCCC and instead researches topics of interest to the working group).

The OWI Standing Group members include leading scholars in areas critical to OWI: accessibility, multimodal writing, hybrid writing instruction, multilingual writing instruction, user design, assessment, contingent labor equity, teacher preparation and mentoring, program development, and much more. The group's expertise attracts newcomers to our annual Cs workshops and panels. Since cultivating a sense of community is crucial to the mission of advising CCCC members on OWI research, effective practices, and emerging trends, committee members interact during the year through ongoing projects and active working groups.

At the 2021 CCCCs OWI Standing Group business meeting, a working group was formed to create a revised report of the [2011 State of the Art of Online Writing Instruction](#) survey and report, in order to create a 10-year picture of the developments in OWI, including the shift to emergency remote instruction during the COVID-19 pandemic beginning in 2020. The 2021 State-of-the-Art of OWI Working Group consisted of the following 15 scholars:

- Jessie Borgman, (Chair of the CCCC OWI Standing Group), Arizona State University
- Cat Mahaffey, (Associate Chair of the CCCC OWI Standing Group), University of North Carolina Charlotte
- Jason Snart, College of DuPage
- Jennifer M. Cunningham, Kent State University
- Natalie Stillman-Webb, University of Utah
- Lyra Hilliard, University of Maryland
- Mary Stewart, California State University, San Marcos
- Casey McArdle, Michigan State University
- Heidi Skurat Harris, University of Arkansas at Little Rock
- Scott Warnock, Drexel University
- Joanna Whetstone, (Communications Chair of the CCCC OWI Standing Group), Lakeland Community College
- Dan Seward, The Ohio State University
- Sushil Oswal, University of Washington
- Joanne Giordano, Salt Lake Community College
- Catrina Mitchum, University of Arizona
- Ashlyn Walden, UNC Charlotte

The members of this Working Group were a diverse collection of scholars who have extensive experience in OWI and Online Literacy Instruction (OLI).

Most of the Working Group members currently teach at public four-year colleges or universities (73%). Two members currently teach at two-year community colleges, and one teaches at a private, four-year university.

Within those institutions, our members bring a range of modality experience.

- All but one have taught **asynchronous courses** for at least six years, and over a third of the working group has 16 or more years of asynchronous teaching experience.
- 80% have taught **hybrid courses** for at least six years, and nearly 10% of the working group have more than 20 years of hybrid teaching experience.
- Ten working group members have up to five years of experience teaching **hyflex courses.**

Working Group members have taught a wide range of courses. Everyone has taught first-year composition, and the majority have also taught research composition or upper-level writing. Group members have also taught developmental writing, literature, creative writing, film, web authoring, technical writing, and several types of graduate-level courses including writing, education courses, and rhetoric courses focussed on OWI.

Working Group members have authored over a dozen books about OWI and more than 80 chapters and articles about OWI and related topics. Their review work spans the major journals in Writing Studies and many of the significant publishers of writing/rhetoric books. The authors of this report have won awards for their publications and work, both on campus and as part of the broader field. In addition, Working Group members have secured nearly $100,000 in funding for various grant projects.

Members of the Working Group have facilitated dozens of faculty development activities nationally and internationally and have themselves engaged in many professional development workshops, courses, and seminars. A number of them created the first online writing courses at their institutions, often taking the lead in also teaching these courses and training the first cohorts of faculty to do so.

Members have served as key leaders in OWI, online literacy instruction (OLI), and online learning in organizations such as GSOLE, CCCCs OWI Standing Group, The Online Writing Instruction Community, CCCCs Committee for Best Practices in OWI, and Quality Matters (QM). Finally, the expertise of the group is augmented by its members' involvement with educational technology projects, ranging from authoring a webtext development project to creating a start-up for securing grants for campus technologies.

Executive Summary

In this section, we begin by revisiting the 2011 report's emergent themes, and then we share the 2021 report's emergent themes. These themes are arranged by category, though readers will note that the two reports' categories differ somewhat. For a detailed discussion of these differences, please review the section below on [2021 Survey Methods](#).

The 2011 report outlined emergent themes related to each of its six major categories (we quote directly from the 2011 report.

1. **Pedagogy**: Teachers and administrators, to include those in writing centers, typically are simply migrating traditional face-to-face writing pedagogies to the online setting—both fully online and hybrid. Theory and practice specific to OWI has yet to be fully developed and engaged in postsecondary online settings across the United States.

2. **Training**: Training is needed in pedagogy-specific theory and practice in both fully online and hybrid settings, but particularly in fully online settings because of its unique complete mediation by computers. In most cases, it appears that "writing" and how to achieve strong writing and identifiable student results are left out of online writing instructional training.

3. **Supplemental Support**: Online writing centers are not developed by enough institutions to handle the needs of students in both fully online and hybrid online settings. To that end, training is insufficiently developed to the unique setting because it is, as mentioned above, migrated primarily from face-to-face settings.

4. **English Language (EL2) Users**: The needs of EL2 learners and users are vastly unknown and insufficiently addressed in the online setting—both fully online and hybrid.

5. **Students with Disabilities**: The needs of students with various kinds of disabilities have not received sufficient and appropriate consideration in light of writing courses in online settings, although the hybrid setting indicates somewhat of a beginning. Teachers and administrators do not know what they are responsible to do or how

to do it for any particular variation of learning or physical disabilities relative to the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) or to a particular student's specified needs.

6. **Satisfaction**: Instructors are dissatisfied with the levels of support they receive regarding technology, course caps, training, pay, and professional development/interactions relative to OWI in both the fully online and hybrid settings. Such dissatisfaction can lead to poor teaching, low expectations for students and for an online course, and insufficient retention of experienced instructors at a time when OWI continues to grow.

The 2021 report identifies the following emergent themes:

1. **Pedagogy:** Most survey respondents indicated that the course design process was collaborative, involving an instructional designer, faculty, and/or subject matter expert. More faculty seem to be involved in the design process than were involved in course design processes as reported in 2011. However, fewer than half of the 2021 survey respondents indicated consulting research on distance education and/or surveying students and incorporating their input into course design. These latter two areas could be better incorporated into the course development process; emphasis could be placed, for example, on studying/surveying students as web users in addition to incorporating existing effective distance learning practices as an intentional part of the design process.

2. **Training/Support:** Student resources including tutoring, library help, and writing center resources have increased significantly since 2011, as have modality options (more synchronous and asynchronous classes are now offered). Training and preparation continue to be a problem for instructors teaching online courses, however. Most training still focuses on using the learning management system. Fewer respondents (29%) indicated that they were offered online faculty development webinars or that training was mandatory, which is a departure from the 2011 study which reported that (48%) of respondents who taught fully online indicated some type of mandatory training. Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that they did not receive any training specific to OWI. A majority of respondents who did receive training did not receive any payment (59%), which is comparable to the 2011 Report which found that (63%) of respondents who taught fully online did not receive payment.

3. **Access:** More focus has been placed on student access, including access to technology (computer/internet) and access to content (help for students with learning challenges). When looking at other access elements, such as working with students who are non-native speakers of English and complying with ADA requirements for students with disabilities, many survey respondents seemed under prepared. Only (37%) of respondents offered more text-based communication for ESL students, and only (48%) viewed their courses as ADA compliant. These areas need improvement, and emphasis should be placed on training and aiding instructors in creating more accessible courses.

4. **Student Preparation/Appeal:** Only about half of the survey respondents indicated that they prepared students for the commitments of distance education by setting expectations for workload or time commitments. Fewer than a quarter of respondents noted that their institution prepared students to learn in digital environments by giving them any sort of formal training, such as how to use the learning management system. Survey respondents also indicated that they felt that the benefits or greatest opportunities for students who take online courses were location (93%) and flexibility with time (85%).

5. **Instructor Perceptions/Satisfaction:** Respondents indicated "flexibility in scheduling" (77%) and "no commute" (69%) as the top reasons they enjoyed teaching online, while they disliked "dealing with technical problems" (52%) and the added time it takes to prepare online courses. The majority of respondents indicated that they would be expected to provide reasonable support for teaching in online environments (93%), and that they would be expected to develop a sound online course (82%). Respondents also believed that they would be expected to interact with students (69%) and hold office hours (65%). Participants indicated the valued qualities for online writing instructors were:
    - "Willingness to follow-up with students promptly" (79%)
    - "Skills in developing clear sequences of assignments well in advance of deadlines" (74%)
    - "Ability to establish a presence online" (65%)

The survey results indicate that training remains a significant issue, both for prospective online teachers and for students registering for online courses, making this topic a key area for future research. One related issue that stands out is the need for distinctions between designer and subject matter expert. The idea of "design" is often relegated to the domain of instructional designers, suggesting that online teachers aren't able or aren't willing to

claim and/or practice this skill set, despite the fact that (82%) of 2021 respondents identified themselves as adept in using classroom technologies. This likely complicates faculty views of training for OWI vs. training for technologies like learning management systems.

Some good news is evident in the growing prevalence of online access to tutoring and other support services for students. It seems that the call from researchers over the past decade to align access with course delivery has been influential. The bad news is that ADA compliance remains a major concern, and best practices for enhancing success for ESL students need continued attention. Furthermore, expanded definitions of access (learning preferences, content delivery in multiple modes, etc.) remain an area for further focus and research.

2021 Survey Methods

In the May 2021 State of the Art of OWI Working Group meeting, members decided to determine the current state of OWI by replicating the 2011 survey instrument. We were interested to discover if, or how, strategies and approaches to online writing instruction had changed over the last ten years, in addition to if, or how, perceptions of OWI have changed. Primary IRB approval was obtained through the University of North Carolina, Charlotte (IRB-22-0098). Once all of the questions on the survey were finalized, the survey was opened from September 7, 2021 to October 5, 2021. The survey was made available via several listservs in North America such as the Writing Program Administration listserv and TYCA (Two-Year College English Association) listserv, as well as being shared via social media from multiple accounts and organizations around OWI (The OWI Community, GSOLE, etc.). In addition, within the survey recruitment script, we invited amplification by asking respondents to forward the survey to "applicable colleagues, listservs, and social media groups."

Determining the Question Bank

To make the 2021 survey faster for participants to complete, we reduced the number of questions from the 2011 survey from 77 questions to 44 questions, which included the addition of 5 new questions. Due to more outlets to advertise the survey (social media sites, listservs, etc.), we decided to run the survey for a shorter time (one month vs. the four months that the original 2011 survey was open), distributing it from September 7, 2021 to October 5, 2021. The committee met several times synchronously via video conference to discuss questions from the initial survey; we also compiled notes asynchronously via Google Docs.

Questions were eliminated from the 2011 survey through three rounds of voting exercises using Google Forms. In order to account for changes within the last ten years since the initial survey, the group decided to add new questions to the 2021 survey. During the second round of 2011 survey question cuts, the members of this working group were given the opportunity to add three suggested questions for the 2021 survey. There were 14 new questions suggested from working group members during this round of voting. For round three, a new Google Form survey was created with the 10 questions from round two that scored too high to cut but not high enough to keep. Then team members were asked to select 6 questions to keep for the final survey. Thus, 38 questions remained from the original survey and 14 new questions were added.

Following the three rounds of voting and the dissemination of the new question suggestions, survey question wording was updated to account for developments in technology and changes in terminology over the last ten years. For example, question #20 of the 2011 survey asked respondents to "Please indicate the extent to which the following virtual tools and online teaching strategies are used in your writing course(s)." Option choices were updated with new tools: Zoom replaced Skype, and Twitter, TikTok, and Instagram replaced MySpace. Dated technologies, such as RSS feeds (a web feed format that publishes frequently updated works) were removed.

Then we refined the 14 new questions, allowing all working group members to comment and suggest edits. After that, similar questions were combined, resulting in five new questions on the 2021 survey (these five new questions are in bold on the 2021 survey which can be found in Appendix A).

Lastly, one of the original 2011 survey questions asked about online teaching experience: "How many total years have you been teaching online writing courses?" Because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which forced numerous instructors to shift to emergency remote instruction, we decided to add the option: "I had not taught online prior to the COVID-19 pandemic." This would allow researchers to sort survey responses by those who identified as having taught online prior to the pandemic versus those who had not, in order to report more nuanced survey findings. We surmised that those who had taught online only as part of the shift to remote instruction in Spring of 2020 would likely have different perceptions than those who had pre-COVID OWI experience.

The final survey contained 44 questions: 38 original 2011 survey questions, 5 new questions, and one follow-up question that allowed us to gather contact information of participants willing to participate in future interviews and/or

focus groups. In total, 285 participants consented to the survey, but not all who consented completed the survey. We used the data from respondents who completed 50% or more of the survey, which left 235 respondents. There were 87 volunteers for future research (Appendix A).

Providing Key Terms to Respondents

Due to the many terms used to describe online teaching and its various modalities, key terms and definitions were provided for respondents. Online instruction has always involved multiple modalities, and the delivery methods of online courses can look quite different and be called by different terms, based on the institution. The COVID-19 pandemic has also prompted a rethinking of how online modalities are defined. The pandemic even produced a new term, hyflex, which represents a modality in which some students and/or the instructor are onsite and other students are participating virtually (some synchronously and others asynchronously).

The group developed definitions for each modality, based on our experience and on how modalities were defined in various public-facing course catalogs at institutions across the country. The primary modalities below are the ones we developed and offered to our survey respondents: Face-to-Face/Onsite, Online Synchronous, Online Asynchronous, Hybrid/Blended, and Hyflex.

Face-to-Face/Onsite: Instruction is delivered through real-time interaction in a physical classroom on an institutional campus.

Online Synchronous: Instruction is delivered through real-time interaction with set meeting times via video conferencing software. There is no interaction in a physical classroom on an institutional campus.

Online Asynchronous: Instruction is delivered through a digitally-mediated platform (such as a learning management system) with no real-time interaction in a physical classroom on an institutional campus.

Hybrid/Blended: Instruction is delivered through both real-time interaction (with or without physical presence) and an asynchronous digitally-mediated platform environment (such as a learning management system).

Hyflex: Instruction is delivered in multiple modes and students and instructors can choose how they participate. Hyflex modes can include: face-to-face/onsite instruction, online synchronous instruction, online asynchronous instruction, and/or hybrid/blended instruction. The definition of hyflex varies by institution. This digitally-mediated instructional mode term originated during the COVID-19 pandemic.

While the 2011 survey was distributed to two separate populations—those who taught in fully online settings and those who taught hybrid courses—we determined that there were too many modalities to distribute separate surveys for each and that determining who to send the surveys to would prove too challenging. Instead we decided to identify and define key terms at the start of the survey and ask participants to identify their primary mode of instruction before taking the 2021 survey. These definitions were given in question #2 of the 2021 survey so that participants could identify their primary modality and keep that primary modality in mind when answering the questions.

Reporting the Results

The tables in the executive summary below report the number of individuals out of the total number of respondents for each question who selected a specific response. For example, for some questions survey respondents were given the option to select "all that apply" from a set of choices, like Q15:

> Q15: How were these courses developed? Please check all that apply.
>
> ☐ Subject area expert
> ☐ Faculty collaboration
> ☐ Consulting research
> ☐ Student-needs surveys
> ☐ Other, please specify

There were 229 people who responded to this question. But because each respondent could select anywhere from 1 to 5 of the options, the total *responses*, not *respondents*, could be quite high. Thus, reporting the percentage of any given option against all the choices made could be misleading, whereas reporting the number of times each respondent selected a given option out of the total respondents, not responses, is, we feel, more accurate.

So, we report that 176 or 77% of respondents, out of the 229 who answered this question, selected "subject area expert," for example. If we calculate the percentage based on how many times "subject matter expert" was selected relative to all the selections made, which is substantially higher than 229, that percentage drops considerably, and, we feel, underrepresents the role that subject area expertise plays in course development.

The 2021 results are categorized below based on the 2021 survey sections, which are comprised of the following (and loosely based on the 2011 survey sections):

- Background/Institutional History
- Course Activities and Elements
- Pedagogy Influences
- Tutoring
- Student Experience
- Instructor Experience
- Continued Participation

Limitations

All research comes with limitations, and this survey and report are no exception. Survey research is often limited because respondents self-report their responses, and there is always the potential for confusion about question phrasing and/or terminology. Though we gave definitions about given modalities (face-to-face, online sync., online async., hybrid/blended, hyflex) in order to avoid confusion about delivery format, we understand that terms such as "student interaction" could take on different meanings.

For example, one possible wording confusion occurs in Q32 where we asked "What expectations are set with the faculty who teach online/hybrid/blended courses?" Respondents could check all that applied from a list. It surprised us to discover that one choice—"Certain kinds of/a certain amount of interaction with students are expected"—was only selected by 69% of survey respondents. Does that mean that over 30% of respondents did not have "student interaction" as a perceived expectation for online writing instruction? Or does that mean that there is no expectation "set" in some very rigid or formal way at a departmental level with online writing instructors for interaction with students? Perhaps survey respondents interpreted "interaction" as something more like "synchronous class meetings" or even the general idea of students working in groups as might happen in a typical face-to-face class. Maybe student interaction actually *is* a clear expectation, but that expectation is not articulated in terms of "certain kinds" and/or a "certain amount." It's hard to know for sure, but the point is that we recognize, generally, that this is the kind of question (or response option) that might shape respondent survey data in unhelpful ways. In sum, we acknowledge that subtleties of survey question, and option response, wording are inevitably going to shape the data we gather.

Further, early in our survey we asked respondents to choose their "primary" delivery modality and to answer questions through that lens for the rest of the survey:

> 3. We understand that many people teach across many modalities but for the purposes of this survey specifically we are asking you to identify what you feel is your **primary** teaching modality from the options below based on the definitions above in question 2.
>
> - Face-to-Face/Onsite
> - Online Synchronous
> - Online Asynchronous
> - Hybrid/Blended
> - Hyflex

It is possible that the narrower lens of answering questions with reference to a primary teaching modality shaped the way that respondents might otherwise have answered questions were they to think in terms of the breadth of their teaching across multiple delivery modes. There are a number of reasons we asked respondents to identify a primary teaching mode, however. First, we wanted to avoid the complicated logistics of having to send out multiple surveys, each tailored to a single delivery mode (the 2011 survey project involved one survey for "online" writing instructors and a separate one for "hybrid" writing instructors). Part of our concern, too, was that survey respondents might answer questions about "online" instruction in a particularly negative way if their only association with that delivery mode was the abrupt turn to remote learning that began in early 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic rather than other experiences they may have had with teaching in digital environments. Instead, we wanted survey respondents to answer questions based on their primary mode of delivery; this could also be useful for future research which might look to correlate survey responses based on what delivery mode respondents chose as primary.

The pandemic played a significant role in the limitations of our survey. In 2011, there was no pandemic, online instruction was tapering off from the boom experienced in the late 2000s, and not nearly as many instructors and administrators had online teaching experience. We knew the pandemic would have an impact, which is why we asked participants to indicate if they had taught online prior to the pandemic. Of the respondents, 53 (23%) had not taught online prior to the pandemic, so many of the perspectives expressed about online teaching may be through the lens of emergency remote instruction. Some respondents may have been jaded from ill-fated online teaching experiences of 2020. As an experienced group of online writing instructors, we know that lack of training, support, and experience

severely impacts one's experience teaching online, and we saw that manifested in some of our survey respondents' answers. Lack of OWI specific and course design specific training were clearly an influence in our survey respondents' answers, as many had experienced a year of online teaching thrown together at the last minute.

Another limitation of our study was something that happens with all survey research: incomplete surveys. We had 283 people consent and begin completing the survey, but 48 of those 283 responded to less than half the questions. We determined to report on the answers for only the respondents who completed 50% or more of the survey, which left 235 responses that contributed to the data set.

Replicating the original 2011 survey also meant including open-ended questions as were used in the 2011 survey; however, the open-ended questions were more likely to be left incomplete by respondents.

- Q13=75
- Q14=78
- Q26=171
- Q28=151
- Q29=112
- Q37=85

The two other questions that were not open-ended but were also most skipped were:

- Q43=152: participation in OWI related communities/support groups

- Q36=173: ranking question on important elements of OWI training

It is not surprising that these two questions were skipped, as 23% of survey respondents had not taught online prior to 2020, had likely received very little training, and did not know of the OWI specific support groups and resources available. In the case of the other open-ended questions, participants likely sought to reduce time spent on the survey. A future survey might be even shorter or not include open-ended questions, or questions with "other" as an answer choice.

Additionally, Q36 asked respondents to rank a list of types of training as most (1) to least (8) helpful. Moving forward, if this question were included, it would need to be revised for simplicity and allow respondents to skip or not rank particular items. Several respondents indicated in Q37, the follow-up question for open-ended feedback to Q36, that Q36 was difficult to navigate and that

ranking training options that an institution does not offer is confusing and difficult.

Finally, although our intention was to replicate the 2011 survey, the 2021 survey included only half of the question bank of the original. Some questions were cut because they were not as relevant to contemporary online instruction. It was also hoped that reducing the survey length would increase response rate, although that did not occur: in 2011, there were 297 survey respondents and in 2021 there were 235 survey respondents. However, it is important to note that the 2011 survey was open for three months and the 2021 survey was open for only one month. Although in many ways the 2021 survey was more focused than the 2011 survey, not replicating the entire question bank may have prevented some potentially useful comparisons.

Results and Discussion

The following text synthesizes the results in each section of the survey and provides an overview of the significant data points from each section. For a more detailed look at the data, please see the appendices.

Background/Institutional History

In this first section, survey respondents were asked to consent to the survey and describe their institutional position, primary mode of teaching, rank, and courses most frequently taught. The questions in this section included:

Q1. Do you consent to this survey?

☐ Yes
☐ No

Q2. In online instruction, there are many definitions that describe how instructors teach in digital spaces. Please read the following definitions and consider them for your teaching situation and for the purposes of this survey. Indicate how often you teach in each of these modalities. (Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely, Never).

A definition of each term was provided for the following delivery modes (see "Providing Key Terms" above).

☐   Face-to-Face/Onsite

☐   Online Synchronous
☐   Online Asynchronous
☐   Hybrid/Blended
☐   Hyflex

Q3. We understand that many people teach across many modalities but for the purposes of this survey specifically we are asking you to identify what you feel is your **primary** teaching modality from the options below based on the definitions above in question 2.

☐   Face-to-Face/Onsite
☐   Online Synchronous
☐   Online Asynchronous
☐   Hybrid/Blended
☐   Hyflex

Q4. Please check all that apply

☐   I am a graduate teaching assistant
☐   I am an adjunct instructor/professor
☐   I am a full-time non-tenure track instructor/professor
☐   I am a tenure-track professor
☐   I am a tenured professor
☐   I am an administrator
☐   Other (please specify)

Q5. How many total years have you been teaching (please include all teaching experience)?

☐   1-3 years
☐   4-6 years
☐   7 or more years

Q6. How many total years have you been teaching online writing courses?

☐   I had not taught online prior to the COVID-19 pandemic
☐   2-3 years
☐   4-6 years

☐　　　7 or more years

Q7. At what type of institution do you work? Please check all that apply.

☐　　　2-year community college
☐　　　4-year college
☐　　　4-year university
☐　　　2- or 4-years graduate school
☐　　　Professional school
☐　　　For-profit institution
☐　　　Non-profit institution
☐　　　Completely online
☐　　　Traditional, brick & mortar with some online courses
☐　　　Other (please specify)

Q8. What type(s) of online writing course(s) do you teach? Please check all that apply.

☐　　　Integrated reading and writing
☐　　　Basic writing
☐　　　Co-requisite writing
☐　　　First-year writing
☐　　　Professional/technical writing
☐　　　Advanced academic writing
☐　　　Creative writing
☐　　　Writing-intensive courses in other disciplines
☐　　　Writing courses for non-native speakers of English
☐　　　Other, please specify

Q9. How many students are enrolled in your online writing courses?

☐　　　10 or fewer per course
☐　　　11-20 per course
☐　　　21-30 per course
☐　　　31-40 per course
☐　　　41-50 per course
☐　　　More than 50
☐　　　I don't know

When respondents were asked to declare their primary modality for teaching, 38% noted that they teach primarily face-to-face/onsite, 13% selected online synchronous, 34% selected online asynchronous, 13% selected hybrid/blended, and 2% selected hyflex. The original report did not ask about synchronous online, and it noted that "synchronous" was taken to mean "oral face-to-face methods rather than computer-mediated synchronous platforms" (SoA Report, 2011, p. 12). It has been 10 years since the initial survey, and given the advancement in video conferencing technologies, the use of online synchronous courses has grown extensively in undergraduate and graduate program course offerings. Therefore, synchronous can now mean synchronous time during a video conference without face-to-face time in a brick and mortar classroom.

The respondents held different positions: approximately 57% of respondents identified as student/adjunct/non-tenure/full-time faculty, while 42% identified as tenure track or tenured professors and 13% as administrators. These numbers are similar to the 2011 survey, with 57% non-tenure faculty and 46% tenured/tenure track faculty. Of the total respondents to the 2021 survey, 23% noted that they had not taught online before the COVID-19 pandemic. A majority of respondents, 54%, noted that they have been teaching online for six years or less. This is a bit of a shift as the original survey found that 74% of respondents had been teaching 6 years or less.

For the question regarding institutions, respondents who teach at two-year community colleges stayed around the same at 30%, but the large shift came from the four-year university. In the 2011 survey, 47% of respondents identified as being at a four-year university, but in the current 2021 survey, 64% identified as being at a four-year university. In the 2021 survey, respondents were able to also select non-profit spaces (26%) and traditional brick and mortar institutions with some online courses (31%), but in the original survey, such selections were in different questions, so respondents may have selected non-profit, four-year, traditional brick and mortar, and others as a few could overlap.

In the 2011 survey, 86% of respondents noted that they teach first-year writing, which was higher than the 79% of respondents to the 2021 survey. The largest jump occurred in those who noted they teach professional and technical writing online: in 2011, only 25% said they teach these courses online, but in the updated survey, 51% identified as teaching professional and technical writing courses online.

The biggest takeaways are that more OWI courses are being taught synchronously online, and more non-tenure-line faculty are teaching online classes.

Course Activities and Elements

This section included four questions related to the course activities and elements instructors used in their online writing courses.

In the 2011 report, instructors were asked about their course design experience, their online training, and their methodology for developing online courses. The 2021 survey focused more on the tools that instructors implemented, the strategies or tools that they used in online courses, and the training they received to teach online.

The questions in this section included the following:

Q10. What elements do your online/hybrid/blended course(s) include? Please check all that apply.

☐ Announcements/email through the learning management system
☐ Synchronous meetings discussion
☐ Asynchronous meetings discussion
☐ Synchronous peer response workshops (discussion forums or individually assigned peer reviews)
☐ Asynchronous peer response workshops (breakout rooms, small group meetings, pairing off during class)
☐ External peer response spaces (Eli Review, Google Suite, etc.)
☐ Synchronous group work
☐ Asynchronous group work
☐ Reading response discussion (synchronous or asynchronous)
☐ Reading response short essays (synchronous or asynchronous)
☐ Student facilitation and/or presentation
☐ Synchronous student conferences
☐ Asynchronous student conferences
☐ Collaborative writing (synchronous or asynchronous)
☐ Other, please specify

Q11. Which of the following statements are true for you? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I was given a pre-designed course
- ☐ I was given a course template, but have made adaptations to it (for example, changed assignments)
- ☐ I worked alone to design the online components of my course
- ☐ I have participated in formal training for online teaching
- ☐ I have participated in formal training for online course design
- ☐ I am considered an expert in online course design
- ☐ I worked with one or more instructional technology specialists who share responsibility for the design of the course
- ☐ I collaborated with colleagues in the department to design the course and its interface
- ☐ I am considered an expert in the content of the course
- ☐ Course designs are unique to individual instructors
- ☐ Course designs are intended to be replicable such that future instructors use significant parts of the course materials/tool generated by the instructor/course development team

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Q12. Please indicate the extent to which the following virtual tools and online teaching strategies are used in your writing course(s). (Frequently, Occasionally, Rarely, Never)

- ☐ Online distribution of course materials, use of learning management system, or other online platform such Google Drive
- ☐ Learning modules designed by course instructor/department
- ☐ Learning modules designed for the campus (perhaps by Library, Honor System, or Center for Teaching and Learning)
- ☐ Video lectures
- ☐ Instructional videos
- ☐ Lectures via PowerPoint or MSWord documents
- ☐ Links to websites
- ☐ Audio modules
- ☐ Instructor-designed quizzes/exams
- ☐ Audio feedback
- ☐ Video feedback
- ☐ Multimodal student submissions (non-text based student responses to assignment prompts) (e.g., Voicethread, Kaltura, Images, Websites, etc.)
- ☐ Responses to student work using LMS feedback tools (commenting, highlighting, strikethrough, etc.)
- ☐ Course website outside of course management system (e.g. Wordpress, Weebly, Google Sites/Classroom)

- ☐ Wikis
- ☐ Blogs
- ☐ Social networking sites such as Facebook, Twitter, TikTok, or Instagram
- ☐ AI - augmented reality
- ☐ Virtual reality
- ☐ Mobile devices/smartphones
- ☐ Synchronous video tools (Zoom, Google Meet, Webex, MS Teams)
- ☐ Interaction through third-party tools (i.e., Slack, Discord).
- ☐ Interaction through LMS tools (messaging, chat, etc.)

Q13. What other activities and/or elements, if any, do you use in your courses? (open ended see Appendix C for responses)

Q14. What other elements/tools, if any, do you use in your courses? (open ended see Appendix C for responses)

In Q10, respondents were asked about the elements they used in their courses. Elements were provided in a list and respondents could select multiple options. In addition, there was an open-ended "Other" category that a few respondents (4 %) used to share additional thoughts and to indicate other elements that were part of their course activities.

Respondents indicated that they used asynchronous tools more than synchronous ones, with "announcements and email through the campus learning management system (LMS)" being the most frequently used element (86%). Collaborative elements, including peer review and response, discussion, and workshops, were frequently used as well. However, "peer response groups" (80%), "Asynchronous peer response workshops (discussion forums or individually assigned peer reviews)" (79%) were at the top of the list followed by "Synchronous peer response workshops (breakout rooms, small group meetings, pairing off during class)" (44%). Synchronous (42%) and asynchronous group work (52%) was selected by roughly half of the respondents. The least selected were "external peer response spaces (Eli Review, Google Suite, etc.)" (24%) and "asynchronous student conferences" (26 %).

Q11 asked respondents to reflect on their course design experience. Answers ranged from "I was given a pre-designed course" to "I worked alone to design the online components of my course." This question also asked how much formal online teacher training respondents received and whether or not the

course design process was collaborative. Of the 235 respondents who completed 50% or more of the survey, 234 responded to this question.

In the 2011 report, less than 50% of respondents had received formal online teacher training, with two-year community college respondents most often receiving formal training. Their online courses were developed through process-centered and social constructivist methods.

In the 2021 survey, 76% of respondents indicated that they participated in formal training for online teaching, with 69% indicating that they participated in formal training for online course design. Most respondents worked alone to design their online course (75%), with some reporting that they were given pre-designed courses (19%). Only a small percentage of people (18%) wired with an instructional designer on their campus and roughly a third (34%) worked collaboratively with their department colleagues to design their courses.

Question 12 asked respondents to discuss the tools and strategies they used in their courses using a four-point Likert scale (frequently, occasionally, rarely, never) to rate pre-listed selections. Of the 235 respondents who completed 50% or more of the survey, 231 people responded to this question.

The most frequently used tools and strategies were those inside the learning management system, such as online distribution of course materials through an LMS or other online platform (frequently = 94%), learning modules that were designed by the course instructor/department (frequently = 81%), links to websites (frequently = 78%), responses to student work using LMS feedback tools (frequently = 73%), synchronous video tools (frequently = 54%), and interaction through LMS tools (messaging, chat, etc.) (frequently = 52%).

The most infrequently used tools and strategies were those outside of the LMS, such as virtual and augmented reality (infrequently = 93% and 93% respectively), social networking sites (infrequently = 65%), and interaction through third party tools (i.e., Slack, Discord) (infrequently = 60%). These responses demonstrate that online writing instructors are comfortable using the tools provided by their institutions and are less likely to venture out to use third-party tools or social media and virtual reality in their online classes.

Some of the reasons that instructors stayed primarily within the confines of the LMS were included in responses to Q13 and Q14, both open-ended questions that asked participants about other activities, elements, and tools they use in their courses that were not previously listed in other questions. To view participant responses to this open-ended question in detail, please see Appendix C.

One respondent wrote of technological tools, "As few as possible. While tech is important, the PDC I was given is more like teaching tech than Eng/FYW. Basically, there's too much tech going on and it complicates the transition from high school to college, and for non-traditional adults returning to college."

Other respondents, however, expressed clear displeasure with using tools within the LMS. One respondent wrote, "I primarily use an external website to host my courses. I use my LMS only for grades and mass emails/ communication. Students are required to use many different kinds of digital media–infographics, website building, free video making/editing software etc." Another respondent was unhappy with their LMS: "I wanted to explain that I feel some resentment to [sic] course management templates/tools because I've been augmenting my classes with email, class listservs, and social media for years. For me, some of the bells and whistles (required rubric, etc.) are just not what I want."

Responses to questions about course activities and elements, including formal online training, show that few online instructors participate in formal training for online course design or teaching, although the majority of them are in charge of developing and teaching their own courses and content. Further study of demographic factors, particularly instructor rank and years of experience teaching online) might shed light on which populations are receiving online professional development and which are not. In addition, given the preferences for asynchronous tools native to the LMS work, correlating instructor rank and years experience with synchronous/asynchronous activities inside or outside the LMS might yield insight into which instructors feel comfortable across a range of tools and modalities and which prefer to use asynchronous LMS elements.

Pedagogy Influences

In Q15 we asked about how online writing courses were developed. We wanted to know if courses were created with involvement from a subject area expert, or experts, most likely individual faculty who would be teaching the course. Was there any faculty-to-faculty collaboration? Did instructors conduct their own course design research as part of the process? Did student-needs surveys inform course design?

Q15. How were these courses developed? Please check all that apply.

☐ Subject area expert

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☐ Faculty collaboration
☐ Consulting research
☐ Student-needs surveys
☐ Other, please specify
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Survey respondents were able to choose any aspects of course development that applied. In addition, there was an open-ended "Other" category that a few respondents used to share additional thoughts and to indicate other elements that were part of course development.

Most respondents (77%) indicated that a subject area expert was part of the course development process; 67% of respondents indicated that faculty collaboration was part of the course development process; 40% of respondents indicated that consulting research was part of the process, and 34% of respondents indicated that student-needs surveys informed course development (14% of respondents offered additional input via our "Other" option).

In the 2011 OWI report, 81% of respondents to the question about course development indicated that fully online writing courses were developed by a "subject area expert." In our survey, this percentage dropped slightly, to 77%. It is somewhat surprising to see a decline in course design input from a subject area expert; one might assume such input would become an ever greater part of OWI course design processes as online instruction itself becomes more commonplace in higher education.

Faculty collaboration seems to have increased as part of the course design process, based on comparison between the 2011 and 2021 OWI surveys: from 46% in 2011 to 67% in 2021. And faculty-to-faculty collaboration may include informal efforts, as one respondent comment suggests: "Most of our courses are developed by individual faculty and informal collaboration." Faculty collaboration is likely a beneficial part of any course design process, not just online writing instruction, since it allows for multiple perspectives and it broadens the knowledge base. Some respondents may have also included "collaboration" as an aspect of course design even when that collaboration was not necessarily faculty to faculty. For example, one survey respondent indicates that a "faculty course developer collaborates with non-faculty instructional designer."

"Consulting research" as part of the course development process also increased from the 2011 and 2021 OWI surveys, from 32% up to 40%. This again might reflect a decade's worth of scholarship and online teaching materials now available that might not have been so ubiquitous before.

In qualitative comments we collected via the "Other" short answer option to Q15, a number of respondents addressed training. One notes, for example, that course development is the product of "Years of faculty development elsewhere." Another respondent mentions "internal training," while still another notes "Our institution also has training about on-line classes," and yet another mentions "Institutional requirements and training." However, there are also a number of qualitative comments indicating that training and support is less robust in some circumstances. One respondent noted, "I was told to develop the courses & then I created a course and revised it year after year until I got it to be an optimal learning space. I had to train myself with OWI books and webinars, etc." Another wrote of the course development process simply: "trial and error."

The next question, Q16, asked about the pedagogical and online writing instruction principles that respondents perceived to most influence their teaching of writing online.

Q16. Which of the following pedagogical or theoretical principles, if any, are most important in your online teaching of writing? Select no more than three (3).

- ☐ Students need to write to express themselves and their ideas
- ☐ Writing is a social process
- ☐ Writing should attend to audience, purpose, and occasion
- ☐ Writing cannot be taught; it can only receive reader response
- ☐ Writing is a process
- ☐ Writing and revising are recursive acts
- ☐ Writing and revising are generative acts
- ☐ Peer feedback is necessary for writing improvement
- ☐ Even with OWI, face-to-face interaction with students is important

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For this question, respondents were allowed to choose only three options from the nine options presented. Of the available choices, most individuals selected "Writing should attend to audience, purpose, and occasion" as one of their important pedagogical or theoretical principles (78% of respondents). The next most important principle chosen was "Writing is a process" (53% of respondents). "Writing and revising are recursive acts" was the third most important principle chosen (47% of respondents).

Very few respondents indicated that face-to-face (f2f) interaction with students was important: only 22 respondents (9%) chose this option. Despite

being the least frequently chosen option for Q16, 10% of respondents indicated that f2f interaction with students was one of their top three pedagogical principles, which may have been because these 10% of participants taught hybrid courses where they had both f2f and online time. It is possible that some respondents were including synchronous video interaction as "f2f interaction." Perhaps more likely, though, is that some respondents were thinking about online writing instruction through the lens of the recent, dramatic shift to "online" (or more correctly, "remote") instruction that COVID-19 necessitated. Those respondents may have considered online instruction in terms of pivoting quickly from fully onsite, f2f teaching to remote teaching, and for many instructors and students alike, preserving (or recapturing) some element of "f2f interaction" seemed important.

Of interest in the results generated by Q16 holistically is that the principles informing online writing instruction were probably the same as those that inform writing instruction generally. Not surprisingly, for example, most of our survey respondents indicated, as most composition teachers probably would, that "Writing should attend to audience, purpose, and occasion" is a core pedagogical principle (78%).

Perhaps fully onsite, f2f writing instruction would see "Writing is a "social process" as more important than our OWI survey indicated (that option was only chosen by 38% of respondents). But over half of our survey respondents still indicated that the "Writing is a process" principle is important (53%).

We should also keep in mind that because respondents could choose only three options, there might have been some choices that would have been a fourth for those taking the survey and could thus have seen a percentage uptick. Also, unlike with the 2011 survey, we did not offer an "Other" option for open-ended responses or an open-ended follow-up question. (The follow-up question in the 2011 report read: "Which one of the pedagogical principles in Q23 above is most central to your work in OWI? Why and how?")

This "core principles" question is certainly worth additional research, including instructor interviews or focus groups, since it would be interesting to better understand how survey respondents made their three choices. For example, the principle that "Peer feedback is necessary for writing improvement" was selected by only 22% of respondents as one of their top three choices. That might seem surprisingly low, for writing teachers, but perhaps when respondents opted for "Writing is a process" (which 53% selected) or even "Writing is a social process" (which 38% selected), they felt those options included peer feedback as part of a larger process.

To review survey respondents' answers for those who chose the "Other" option, please see Appendix D.

Tutoring

In this section we asked survey participants about the availability of tutoring and other writing resources as part of their online courses. There were two questions in this section: one about what supplemental resources were available, and the other on what kinds of services were offered by writing centers and libraries.

Q17. What supplemental online writing instruction or online writing tutoring opportunities, if any, exist at your institution? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Resources/guidelines available for students to consult (on citing sources, proofreading, etc.)
- ☐ Writing center consultants available for asynchronous consulting
- ☐ Writing center consultants available online in real-time
- ☐ Outsourced writing tutoring with commercial companies
- ☐ Turnitin or other plagiarism detection services
- ☐ Other, please specify

Q18. Please indicate which of the following resources are available on your campus. Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Writing Center: Online text-based resources
- ☐ Writing Center: Online video resources
- ☐ Writing Center: Online scheduling
- ☐ Writing Center: Face-to-face appointments
- ☐ Writing Center: Online synchronous appointments (chat) with tutor
- ☐ Writing Center: Online asynchronous exchanges (email or web-based) with tutor
- ☐ Library: Online resources
- ☐ Library: Online text-based resources
- ☐ Library: Online audio resources
- ☐ Library: Online video resources
- ☐ Library: Online synchronous appointments (chat) with librarian
- ☐ Library: Online asynchronous exchanges (email or web-based) with librarian
- ☐ Other, please specify

In the 2011 report, the survey participants reported a distinct lack of online support for hybrid and online students. Less than half (49%) of respondents indicated that their institutions had writing center consultants available for asynchronous support, and even fewer institutions (25%) offered real-time online writing center tutoring. Those numbers rose significantly in the 2021 data, with 81% of respondents reporting the availability of asynchronous tutors and 86% reporting real-time tutor availability.

This trend was also true for library consultations. In 2011, 38% of respondents reported the availability of synchronous appointments and 57% reported asynchronous consultations, compared with 81% for synchronous and 76% for asynchronous appointments among 2021 respondents.

A similar increase was observed in responses about specific writing center resources. In 2011, 50% of institutions offered online, text-based writing center resources, while 74% of institutions in 2021 did so. In both cases, text-based resources remained more prevalent than video resources: 15% of writing centers in 2011 offered video resources, compared with 50% of writing centers in 2021.

Interestingly, it seems that online library resources were more common than writing center resources: 87% of 2011 respondents reported having online, text-based library resources, which was remarkably similar to the 89% of respondents who reported online text-based library resources in 2021. In contrast, video resources have become much more common in libraries: only 37% of 2011 respondents reported library video resources, compared with 78% of 2021 respondents.

Finally, the use of TurnItIn or other plagiarism detection services increased. In 2011, 53% of respondents said their institutions used these services, and in 2021 that percentage rose to 66%. In contrast, the use of outsourced writing tutoring with commercial companies remained static: 22% of respondents in 2011 said their institutions used these services, as did 20% of respondents in 2021.

To review survey respondents' answers for those who chose the "other" option, please see Appendix D.

Student Experience

This section included 13 questions that captured perspectives on student experience related to five key areas: student preparedness, expectations of faculty support, access issues (ELL students, ADA compliance), and classroom technology and tools.

The first two questions in this section asked about student preparation for online learning:

Q19. What expectations are set with students about taking these online writing courses? Please check all that apply.

☐ Regular access to technologies required to complete the course (broadband Internet connection, MSWord®, LMS technologies (Blackboard, Canvas, D2L, Moodle, etc.)
☐ Availability for frequent, regular, and informed contributions to online discussions
☐ Specific number of hours per week to complete reading, writing, response/research assignments
☐ Regular availability via email (to receive class announcements & correspondence from teacher/classmates)
☐ Completion of course requirements
☐ Peer review
☐ Informed participation in online discussions
☐ Productive facilitation of online discussion
☐ I don't know
☐ Other, please specify

Q20. In what delivery formats does your program/course offer a student orientation to online courses? Please check all that apply.

☐ Face-to-face
☐ Face-to-face and asynchronously
☐ Asynchronously
☐ Audio/video
☐ We/I don't offer it because another program on our campus handles it
☐ We/I don't offer it
☐ Other, please specify

When considering what expectations were set for online students, 97% of participants reported that regular access to technologies like broadband, the LMS, and word processing software were essential, followed by an expectation of completing course requirements (94%) and regular availability via email (91%). Roughly half (56%) set expectations of hours per week to complete course readings and assignments, and most expected students to

interact with classmates through peer review (78%) and online discussions (74%).

Access to online learning orientation through various formats seemed to be of issue, since 22% of respondents reported that neither they nor their institution offered any sort of orientation specific to online students. Even though asynchronous orientation opportunities was the most frequent choice, only 36% of respondents selected it.

The next two questions focused on classroom technology and tools.

Q21. Which of the following describe technology adoption and use in your classroom? Check all that apply.

- ☐ I consider myself adept with using learning technologies.
- ☐ I regularly test new technologies in my classroom.
- ☐ I avoid adding new technologies because I don't feel comfortable with them.
- ☐ I have the freedom to adopt new technologies as I deem appropriate.
- ☐ I must get approval from my administration before I adopt new technologies in my classroom.
- ☐ I enjoy adopting new technologies.
- ☐ My university limits the technologies we can use.
- ☐ I only use university-supported technologies.
- ☐ I choose technologies that enhance student engagement.
- ☐ I limit technologies to protect student online privacy.
- ☐ I limit technologies to protect instructor online privacy
- ☐ I limit technologies to enhance student accessibility.
- ☐ I limit technologies to enhance instructor accessibility.
- ☐ Cost

Q22. How, if in any way at all, are student course-related problems addressed in your online course? Please check all that apply.

- ☐ Community building activities early/across the semester
- ☐ Incorporating media that allow students to have some other encounters with each other (building personal web-pages so students can "see" what classmates look like, for example)
- ☐ Communicating a reasonable amount of flexibility for the larger more sophisticated projects (acknowledging that things do/can go wrong)
- ☐ Instructor office hours in chat room

> ☐ Informal portions of discussion board
> ☐ Work closely with IT department to correct technical problems quickly
> ☐ Other, please specify

Based on the results, most instructors (82%) considered themselves adept with learning technologies and had the freedom to choose technologies (83%) they deemed appropriate for their classes. When asked about how they choose classroom technology, 70% said they aim to enhance student engagement; however, only 46% considered student accessibility issues related to classroom technologies, and only 35% considered student online privacy issues.

When asked about addressing course-related issues for students, the most frequent solution (70%) was to communicate a reasonable amount of flexibility and acknowledge that things can and do go wrong. Only 59% of respondents offered virtual office hours and less than half (47%) offered informal discussion forums to address student issues in an online course.

The next seven questions in this section focused on access as related to English as a second language and ADA compliance:

Q23. What strategies are used to accommodate students who are English language learners?

☐ More asynchronous delivery
☐ More text-based communication
☐ More audio-based communication
☐ Providing more instructions and/or feedback in more than one mode
☐ I do not have ELL students
☐ Other, please specify

Q24. To what extent are your online writing courses accessible to students with various disabilities (ADA compliant)?

☐ Highly Accessible
☐ Somewhat Accessible
☐ Minimally Accessible
☐ Not Accessible
☐ I don't know

Q25. Does your institution provide guidance on how to make online writing courses accessible to your disabled students (ADA compliant)?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know

Q26. What pedagogical and/or practical strategies do you use to accommodate students with disabilities? (open ended see Appendix C for responses)

Q27. What strategies do you use to ensure access for all types of learners in the online writing courses you teach? (ELL, students with physical challenges, students with learning challenges, etc.) Check all that apply.

☐ Providing content in multiple formats for multiple learning styles
☐ Video Captioning
☐ Transcripts
☐ Universal Design
☐ User-Centered Design
☐ Other, please specify

Q28. What are your major challenges in teaching students with various disabilities? (open ended see Appendix C for responses)

Q29. What would you like to know about teaching students with disabilities in online settings? (open ended see Appendix C for responses)

Regarding support that specifically considers the needs of ELL students, 60% reported providing additional support in the form of instructions and feedback in more than one mode, but only 37% offered more text-based communication, and only 14% offered more audio-based communication. Interestingly, 20% indicated that they do not have ELL students in their courses.

When considering ADA compliance of their courses and course materials, 48% viewed their courses as highly accessible, and 44% rated theirs as somewhat accessible. Only 2% believed their courses to be minimally

accessible, but 6% simply don't know how accessible their courses were. This large number of highly or somewhat accessible rankings aligns with the reported 73% who said their institution provided guidance on accomplishing ADA compliance.

Respondents reported a wide variety of strategies to accommodate students with disabilities, including providing transcripts and captions for course videos, using accessibility checkers, applying universal design methods, and offering content in multiple formats. Some major challenges included the labor involved in captioning videos, the inability to know which students need accommodation, and the understanding that many students do not report their disabilities. It was difficult to fully capture the myriad elements that respondents desire to know more about, but it was clear that many did not fully understand how screen readers work or how to design their courses for all learners, regardless of ability.

The two questions in the next section focused on expectations for faculty support in online courses.

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Q30. In your experience, what are the greatest opportunities for students who are instructed in online settings? Please check all that apply.

☐ Opportunity to develop writing through writing
☐ Convenience allows students to compose writing and response on their own time
☐ Participating in written discussions
☐ Flexibility in terms of time
☐ Flexibility in terms of location
☐ Student facilitation and/or presentation
☐ Recorded student conferences
☐ Collaborative writing
☐ Other, please specify

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Q31. What measures has your institution, your department, and you as an instructor taken to address diversity, equity and inclusivity issues *specifically* in online writing classes?

☐ Training in accessible digital design
☐ Guest speakers who are / represent BIPOC populations
☐ Anti-racist statements
☐ Anti-racist workshops/training

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☐ Other, please specify

When asked about benefits or greatest opportunities for students who take online courses, 93% pointed to flexibility in location and 85% pointed to flexibility with time. Another highly ranked opportunity was allowing students to compose on their own time (84%), and half of the respondents saw value in having students participate in written discussions through online learning.

For this 2021 update of the 2011 report, we added a question about actions around inclusivity, diversity, equity and accessibility (IDEA). While 70% of respondents had taken workshops or training in IDEA, only 60% reported training in accessible digital design. Sixty-four percent reported that their institution or department had written anti-racist statements, and 48% had invited guest speakers who represent BIPOC populations.

Instructor Experience

In this section we asked survey participants about their training and preferences in teaching online or hybrid writing classes.

The first question in this section asked about the departmental expectations of instructors who teach writing courses online.

Q32. What expectations are set with the faculty who teach online/hybrid/blended courses? Please check all that apply.

☐ Teachers will develop a pedagogically sound online course
☐ Teachers will provide reasonable support to students for succeeding in the online environment
☐ Online office hours will be required
☐ On-campus responsibilities will exist
☐ Certain kinds of/a certain amount of interaction with students are expected
☐ Faculty will be observed one or more times during a term
☐ Other, please specify

The majority of responses indicated that instructors believed they would be expected to provide reasonable support for teaching in online environments (93%) and that they would be expected to develop a sound online course (82%). Respondents also believed that they would be expected to interact with students (69%) and hold office hours (65%). Fewer respondents believed

that they were expected to have on-campus responsibilities (27%) or be observed at least once each term (25%).

The next question asked about the types of training, if any, instructors received before teaching online writing courses.

Q33. What types of orientation/training activities, if any, do faculty receive for these online/hybrid/blended courses? Please check all that apply.

☐ Summer institute for online teaching (run each summer and open to teachers across the campus)
☐ Online faculty development course(s) in OWI offered through your department
☐ Online faculty development webinar(s) in OWI offered through your department
☐ Ongoing workshops on various aspects of learning management systems (e.g., (Blackboard, Canvas, D2L, Moodle, etc.)
☐ Access to an instructional designer (at the department and/or college levels)
☐ Training on how to personalize a pre-designed course or master course (shared curriculum) at the department and/or college levels.
☐ Mandatory training
☐ Optional training
☐ Mentoring/shadowing with experienced faculty members
☐ Reduced teaching load during first term teaching online
☐ Other, please specify

The most common type of training participants indicated receiving was ongoing workshops related to their learning management systems (77%), followed by access to an instructional designer (69%), optional training (64%), and online faculty development courses (38%). Fewer respondents (29%) indicated that they were offered online faculty development webinars (29%), training on personalizing pre-designed courses (28%), mentoring with experienced faculty (24%), or summer institutes for online teaching (24%).

In a departure from the 2011 study which reported that 48% of respondents who taught fully online experienced some type of mandatory training, only 29% of 2022 respondents indicated that training was mandatory. Only 3% of respondents indicated a reduced teaching load as an option.

The next two questions asked about time commitment and compensation related to instructor training.

Q34. How many hours of training in OWI did you receive as part of your formal faculty training?

☐ Between 1 and 5 hours
☐ Between 6 and 10 hours
☐ More than 10 hours
☐ I did not receive any OWI specific training
☐ Other, please specify

Q35. How much do you earn per hour for your faculty training?

☐ Under $15/hr
☐ $15-$30/hr
☐ $30-$50/hr
☐ Over $50/hr
☐ I do not receive payment for training
☐ I did not receive any OWI specific training

Twenty-seven percent of respondents indicated that they did not receive any training specific to OWI. About 20% of respondents received 6-10 hours of training and 19% indicated more than 10 hours. About 16% received 1-5 hours of OWI training. A majority of respondents who did receive training did not receive any payment (59%), which is comparable to the 2011 Report which found that 63% of respondents who taught fully online did not receive payment. In 2021, those who did receive payment included $15-30 per hour (5%), $30-50 per hour (4%), less than $15 per hour (3%), and more than $50 per hour (1%).

The next two questions asked about the types of training that writing instructors value for online writing instruction and course design.

Q36. Rank the parts of training that you find most and least helpful (most helpful being 1).

☐ Summer institute for online teaching (run each summer and open to teachers across the campus)
☐ Ongoing workshops on various aspects of learning management system (Blackboard, Canvas, D2L, Moodle, etc.)

☐ Use of a dedicated instructional designer (at the department and college levels)
☐ Teachers developing an online course to be offered to students who are not already enrolled on campus also have a designer available to them via Extended Education and Outreach (another entity on campus)
☐ Mandatory training
☐ Optional training
☐ Mentoring/shadowing with experienced faculty members
☐ Reduced teaching load during first term teaching online

Q37. What other activities, if any, are essential for faculty training for online writing instruction? (open ended see Appendix C for responses)

For Q36, respondents were asked to rank a list of types of training as most (1) to least (8) helpful. For this question, items ranked 1, 2, or 3 were considered "most helpful," and items ranked 6, 7, or 8 were considered "least helpful." When asked to rank which resources were most and least helpful (Q36), most respondents (64%) ranked having a designer available to them and having access to optional training (49%) as most important. About 45% of respondents rated mandatory training as most important. Most respondents (62%) rated ongoing workshops as least important. Having the use of a dedicated instructional designer (47%) and a summer institute for online teaching (43%) were also ranked less important. Reduced teaching load during the first term teaching online and mentoring/shadowing with experienced faculty members were equally important. About 44% of respondents ranked having a reduced teaching load as most important, while about 43% ranked it as least important. About 37% of respondents ranked mentoring/shadowing as most important, while about 41% ranked it as least important.

Question 37 was an open-ended question, asking what other activities, if any, are essential for faculty training for online writing instruction. About 80 respondents provided an answer, with many identifying collaboration and communication, such as the respondent who wrote, "Collaboration and communication. Develop communities of peers who you can turn to for ideas and support." See Appendix C for more open-ended answers to this question.

The next question focused on the valued qualities of online instructors.

Q38. Rate what you perceive to be the importance of qualities below for an online writing instructor at your institution: [Very important, Important, Not Important, or Very Unimportant)

- ☐ Overall comfort with technology
- ☐ Technical proficiency with the interfaces available at our campus
- ☐ Advanced web design skills
- ☐ Ability to critically analyze available technologies and select the best ones for a pedagogical purpose
- ☐ Ability to establish a presence online
- ☐ Skills in designing "lecture" delivered in a number of modes (aural, visual, textual) and media (PowerPoint, digital video, learning module)
- ☐ Skills in developing clear sequences of assignments well in advance of deadlines
- ☐ Skills in designing and grading multimodal projects
- ☐ Skills in teaching rhetorical principles
- ☐ Skills in teaching meta-cognition or reflection
- ☐ Skills in using an archive of course materials effectively to promote learning
- ☐ Ability to adapt course plan to different learning styles
- ☐ Willingness to follow-up with students promptly
- ☐ Familiarity with theoretical rationale for online learning
- ☐ Participation in an active community of online teachers

When asked about which qualities are important for an online writing instructor (Q38), the majority of respondents (79%) rated "Willingness to follow-up with students promptly" and "Skills in developing clear sequences of assignments well in advance of deadlines" (74%) as very important. "Ability to establish a presence online" (65%) and "Skills in teaching rhetorical principles" (61%) were also rated as very important among the majority of respondents. Other items rated as very important by about half of respondents included: "Technical proficiency with interfaces" (57%); "Overall comfort with technology" (55%); "Skills in teaching meta-cognition or reflection" (54%); and "Ability to adapt course plan to different learning styles" (50%).

Slightly more than half of respondents rated the following as important: "Skills in designing 'lecture' delivered in a number of modes (aural, visual, textual) and media (PowerPoint, digital, video, learning module)" (57%); "Participation in an active community of online teachers" (51%); and "Ability to critically analyze available technologies and select the best one for a pedagogical purpose" (51%). Slightly less than half of respondents rated

"Familiarity with theoretical rationale for online learning" (49%), "Skills in using an archive of course materials effectively to promote learning"(48%), and "Skills in designing and grading multimodal projects" (47%) as important.

Much of what respondents rated as very important and important related to instructional design. Worth noting is that all items in Q38 but one were rated as very important or important. Alternatively, "Advanced web design skills" was the only item rated not important by 66% of respondents, which is consistent with results from the 2011 Report. We were unsure how to interpret this result and suspect that respondents interpreted "Advanced web design skills" as their ability to write code, rather than their ability to view themselves as an instructional designer. In the future, a more specific question about online instructors' self-perceptions as instructional designers would be helpful.

The next two questions asked about instructor preferences related to teaching online writing courses.

Q39. What do you like about teaching online writing courses? Please check all that apply.

☐ Flexibility in scheduling
☐ No commute
☐ More focus on students' writing and skills and less emphasis on students' personalities in a way that can lead to favoritism in face-to-face classes
☐ Other, expand on your answer

Q40. What do you dislike about teaching online writing courses? Please check all that apply.

☐ Anticipating student problems
☐ Dealing with technical problems
☐ Managing large class size that is sometimes given to online teachers because physical space is not a limitation
☐ Other, expand on your answer

Question 39 asked what instructors like most about teaching online. The majority of respondents (77%) liked the "Flexibility in scheduling" afforded by online writing courses, followed by "No commute" (69%). Fewer respondents (40%) indicated that "More focus on students' writing and skills and less emphasis on students' personalities in a way that can lead to favoritism in

face-to-face classes." Of the respondents who chose "Other," many cited increased student access and accessibility: "I actually feel like I get to know my online students better because I interact with them more often as individuals. I also like that it's simpler to make the course accessible to disabled students and provide options for interaction, especially those (like me) who prefer written communication."

When answering Q40 about what they disliked about teaching online, more than half of respondents indicated that they disliked "Dealing with technical problems" (52%). Fewer respondents disliked "Managing large class sizes" (31%) and "Anticipating student problems" (22%). Many respondents (46%) chose "Other" and provided qualitative feedback indicating that they least liked the lack of community/connection and student engagement. One respondent shared, "Less opportunities for connection and interaction with students. Students who stop communicating are harder to track down in an online space." Another respondent, addressing difficulties exacerbated by the pandemic, wrote, "It's harder to build community. Online teaching also did not work for many students during the pandemic. It seems to work effectively when students have chosen it." Increased time needed to build and deliver online courses was another common qualitative response. For example, one respondent included, "Extra cognitive load and time required to manage the course site," and another simply wrote, "Time!"

The last two questions focused on context and modality for teaching writing and participant preference for modality.

Q41. In what context do you most prefer to teach writing?

☐ Asynchronous Online/Remote
☐ Synchronous Online/Remote
☐ Onsite
☐ Blended/hybrid (both synchronous and asynchronous components)
☐ I am open to any or all of these contexts

Q42. Based on your response to question 41, If you had a choice, would you continue teaching in the modality you preferred?

☐ Yes
☐ No
☐ I don't know
☐ Other (open-ended)

When asked about their preferred context when teaching writing (Q41), 34% of respondents reported that they are open to any or all contexts. About 24% of respondents prefer teaching writing onsite, 21% prefer teaching asynchronously online or remotely, and 13% prefer teaching hybrid or blended courses with both synchronous and asynchronous components. Only about 9% of respondents prefer teaching writing synchronously online. When asked instructors if they would continue teaching in their preferred modality if they had a choice (Q42), the majority (80%) would continue teaching in their preferred modality; 7% were unsure, and 2% answered "No."

Question 43 asked about participation in OWI-specific or distance education groups/organizations.

Q43. What communities do you participate in that are directly focused on developing your OWI pedagogy and/or practice? (check all that apply).

☐ The Cs OWI Standing Group
☐ The Online Writing Instruction Community
☐ The Global Society of Online Literacy Educators
☐ The Online Writing Centers Community
☐ The Online Learning Consortium
☐ Quality Matters
☐ Other_____(fill in)

Of the 235 respondents who completed 50% or more of the survey, 152 people responded to this question. The top three were, The Online Writing Instruction Community (53%), followed by The Global Society of Online Literacy Educators (44%), and Quality Matters (33%). See Appendix B for the full list and respondent answers.

The last question, question 44 asked for willingness to participate in future research (either a focus group or interview). Of the 291 survey participants 87 people shared their names and contact information for a follow-up meeting or email exchange. Having this number of willing interview participants will allow us to conduct interviews and focus groups in phase two of this research project.

Areas for Future Research

In the Executive Summary above, we provided general summaries of the data pertaining to these areas: Pedagogy, Training/Support, Access, Student Preparation/Appeal, and Instructor Perceptions/Satisfaction. We see all of these areas as providing great opportunities for future research. As noted, training and preparation for both students and faculty continues to be an issue as does the lack of consulting distance education and OWI specific research prior to designing online courses. More emphasis on the student user experience could be explored. Access is definitely an area that can continue to be researched, specifically given the results of the survey and the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on online courses. For example, only (48%) of survey respondents indicated that their course was ADA compliant and only (22%) of respondents reported that neither they nor their institution offered any sort of orientation specific to online students. These are issues of access that need further research.

While we have offered some analysis of the survey data in this report, we are also aware that there is significant work still to be done. We decided that it was neither feasible for, nor entirely the purview of, this particular report-writing group to perform extensive analysis of survey data or speculate about what the data might indicate. Instead, we have provided what we hope is a useful summary above and will suggest a few areas for future research.

Our hope is that the field of online writing studies writ large can now use this data for more extensive and targeted analysis, including potential cross referencing and comparison. Scholars in the field might also use the survey data in conjunction with other data sources to further explore aspects of online writing instruction. We see this report as a valuable resource for the overview and analysis it does provide, but also—perhaps even primarily—it is a rich data source for the field to now explore in greater depth. All of the de-identified raw survey data can be found in Appendices B, C, & D, which will allow researchers to analyze and assess data points that are useful to their own OWI research.

Additionally, some of this raw data will be revisited, as we plan to conduct follow-up studies in the future. As part of our 2021 survey we asked if respondents would be interested in follow-up interviews or focus groups, and 37% of the respondents indicated such interest. Therefore, following the completion and publication of the current report, a set of the current survey researchers will begin what we envision to be a Phase II of this project, in which we will reach out to survey respondents to set up interview and/or focus group opportunities. Through these more in-depth, potentially less structured conversations, we hope to explore aspects of the survey in order to

gain a fuller picture of how instructors understand their work as online writing educators.

We will also investigate how respondents understood some of the survey questions in an effort to discover if what we *thought* we were asking was in fact what respondents interpreted us to be asking. This qualitative follow-up should be interesting for the insight it provides about how, or if, respondents understood our survey questions in unanticipated ways, a challenge of any survey research. As noted in the limitations section, questions 36 and 37 presented some confusion for our survey takers, so exploring useful training for online faculty remains another fruitful area of possible future research.

One example of this that we are interested in learning more about via focus groups and/or interviews relates to Q38 in our survey in which we asked respondents to rate the importance of certain qualities for an online writing instructor. Among the least important instructor capability as identified by survey respondents was "Advanced web design skills," only 1% of respondents identified this as "very important" and (14%) identified this as "important"; fully (66%) identified "advanced web design skills" as unimportant and (19%) ranked it as "very unimportant." However, over (50%) of respondents identified "Skills in designing 'lecture' delivered in a number of modes," "Skills in developing clear sequences of assignments," and "Skills in designing and grading multimodal projects" as important or very important, and (74%) identified "Skills in developing clear sequences of assignments" as "very important." In the future, a more specific question about online instructors' self-perceptions as web designers would be helpful.

All this is to say that while instructors may not perceive themselves as advanced web designers (or they at least do not rank that skill as very important to their teaching), there is clearly an element of design that *is* important for effective OWI. Of course, many survey respondents may not have ranked "Advanced web design skills" as important to their work simply because of the qualifier "advanced." Were this option reworded just to "web design skills" perhaps more respondents might have ranked it as important or even very important. What we might tease out in conversation with survey respondents is what they perceive "web design" to entail. Did this particular term suggest to many respondents highly technical skills like coding, for example?

Additionally, we were unsure how to interpret the results for Q32, which asked about departmental expectations of instructors who teach writing courses online. In response, 69% of respondents indicated that "Certain kinds of/a certain amount of interaction with students are expected." We are unsure whether the 31% who did not select this option believed they would not be

expected to interact with students at all or if they were conflating "interaction" (e.g., any communication, including email) with "synchronous interaction" (e.g., real-time video sessions). Potential follow-up focus groups or interviews that investigate respondents' understanding and interpretation of this question would be helpful.

Another area that is promising for future research derives from our questions about course development. In Q15, for example, we asked how online writing courses were developed, with the following options that respondents could choose (respondents could choose any/all that applied):

☐ Subject area expert
☐ Faculty collaboration
☐ Consulting research
☐ Student-needs surveys
☐ Other, please specify

Seventy-seven percent of respondents indicated that subject area experts were part of the course development process. But that leaves almost a quarter of courses being developed with *no* subject area expertise, at least according to the way that our survey respondents responded to our phrasing of this question: an alarmingly high number and certainly worth further investigation.

We wonder about how respondents understood the phrase "subject area expert," because our question did not specify who the subject area expert could be. Did that imply to respondents that *they themselves* had to be directly involved in course development? For example, as one respondent even indicated in qualitative "other" feedback: "the expert [was] me." Could there be a subject area expert who was not the person (or people) who ended up teaching the course?

Another aspect of course development alluded to in some of the qualitative data we gathered related to pre-made courses or what some respondents identified as "templates." One respondent referred to teaching from a "Pre-made course by admins and experienced professors for FYW" and another mentioned "Top-down requirements from administration."

Further research could be extremely valuable in the area of "template"-driven course design and/or instructors having to adopt pre-made materials. This might be usefully coordinated with questions about subject area expert involvement (or lack thereof) in the course development process.

We also wonder (as noted in the limitations) what the impact of the pandemic might have been on the data and how follow-up research would provide more information. For example, participants liked teaching online because of the "flexibility in scheduling" and "no commute" but surely there are other reasons, and it seems possible that the COVID-19 pandemic impacted those responses. Additionally, cross-tabulated data such as training and support in relation to instructor satisfaction or position/rank in relation to view of online courses would prove interesting. It would also be interesting to perhaps cross-tabulate this survey, which was taken by instructors and administrators, with previous surveys done on student satisfaction in online courses taken by students. We see this kind of cross tabulation as an area rich for future research.

In terms of this document's structure and future research, some analysis has been included in the above sections to act as support for administrators seeking to use this data to make the case for more resources and greater investment in OWI at their institutions. So while the initial audience for this text may be those already associated with OWI, we are aware that as institutions examine their post-COVID-19 pandemic data concerning their online offerings, this document can confirm pain points when it comes to requesting future support. It is important to note that as OWI evolves, we can utilize the research and data collected in this survey, and other research around OWI, to make the case for more support and greater access when it comes to online offerings. A return to pre-COVID-19 pandemic thinking would undermine the knowledge gained over the past decade and significantly limit future OWI research.

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