
Whose Line Was it Anyway?

Collaboration & Intellectual Property
— in Writing Centers —

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The Issue: *Autonomy* of Student Writing

- ❖ Minimalistic collaboration used in some writing centers intends to ensure that the resulting writing is 100% student work.
- ❖ A '*pervasive cultural concern with intellectual property rights*' breeds distrust of collaboration (Clark 157).

Research Questions

1. Are ideas discovered during sessions partially the intellectual property of the writing adviser?
2. Should students cite advisers as sources?

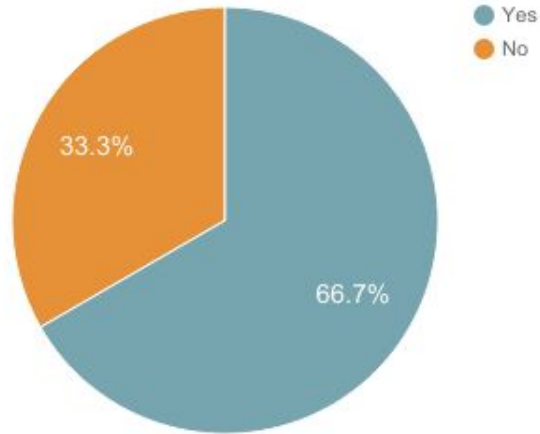
It is important to define collaboration & plagiarism so advisers can understand their impact.

Research Methodology

- ❖ IRB training and approval
- ❖ Survey questions
- ❖ Survey participants
- ❖ Analyzed and coded results
 - Statistical analysis
 - Themes

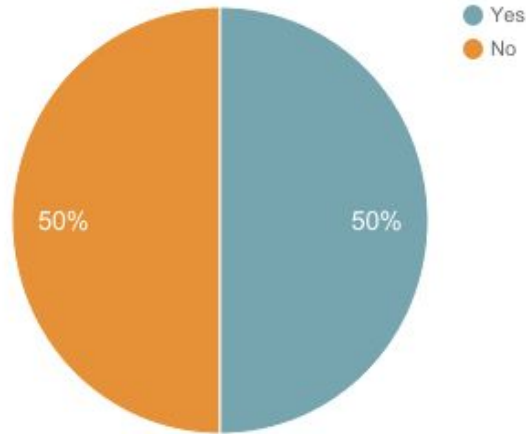
Statistical Results

Do you think students should cite advisers as sources?



Statistical Results

Have you ever personally felt that your ideas were being appropriated in a session?



Overarching themes

Empowerment

Effective Communication

Balance

Rules

Empowerment

- ❖ Students become better writers
- ❖ Moral & ethical understanding
- ❖ Motivation of the writer
- ❖ Can collusion lead to empowerment?

Effective Communication

- ❖ Equal effort and work
- ❖ Adviser guides students
 - Readerly response & questioning
 - Generating of ideas
 - Exploring point of view

Balance

- ❖ Refusal to collaborate
- ❖ Imbalance
- ❖ Minimalism
- ❖ Accountability
- ❖ Influencing ideas
- ❖ Social construction of knowledge

“It is such a valuable model for all learning at the end of the day. We’re all responsible for our own learning but we’re social creatures and our social construction of reality is more important than our individual construction of reality. When they’re collaborating they need to be learning through teaching others. Wisdom doesn’t take flight until the end of our lives and is nothing more than having lived a little. Knowledge plus experience equals wisdom.”

“The idea of a center informed by a theory of knowledge as socially constructed, of power and control as constantly negotiated and shared. and as collaboration as its first principle presents quite a challenge. ... such a center presents a challenge to higher education, an institution that insists on controlled individual performance, on evaluation as punishment. on isolation...” - Andrea Lunsford

Rules: Academic Honor Code

- To do my own work...without giving or receiving inappropriate aid
- To avoid behaviors that unfairly impede the academic progress of other members
- To take reasonable and responsible action in order to uphold...academic integrity.

Rules

- ❖ Ambiguity
- ❖ Creation
- ❖ Types of plagiarism

Is There True Minimalism?

If advisers wonder about being cited, are they truly minimalistic?

When is it most productive to exchange ideas?

Ideal: 'Centers serve as sites of collaboration that challenge hierarchies and traditional ways of producing knowledge ...' (Lunsford and Ede 370)

Limitations & Recommendations for Further Research

Collect a larger sample

Survey student writers

Conduct follow-up interviews

Consider analyzing data by discipline

Develop questions based on the four themes

... & Implications ... ?

Workshop

Pairs: one person is the writing adviser & one person is the writer

- ❖ Scenario 1
 - The writer comes in with a comedic screenplay and is struggling to complete several of the jokes. The adviser gets excited and blurts out their own punchlines over the course of the session and the writer uses them in their script.
- ❖ Scenario 2
 - The writer comes in with a prompt and as they are brainstorming ideas the adviser helps by paraphrasing what they're hearing the writer say. The writer only writes down exactly how the adviser phrases their ideas instead of writing it down in their own words.

Thank you!

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