Writing Across the Curriculum Program: Supporting Writing Instruction in Science
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Why a WAC Program?
- Science faculty cite a variety of barriers to incorporating writing assignments into their courses:
  - Time required for marking
  - Ability to provide formative feedback
  - Ability to maximize limited TA resources
- About half of the post-secondary institutions in North America have Writing Across the Curriculum (WAC) programs.
- The UBC WAC Program (est. 2015) aims to:
  - Support science educators in teaching and mentoring science writing
  - Encourage increased use of writing in science courses
  - Create a cross-departmental community of faculty who use writing in science courses

Who Is Involved?

Educator Workshops
The WAC Program has developed four educator workshops:
- Writing assignment and assessment design (12 participants)
- Providing effective feedback on writing assignments (20)
- Strategies for student success (16)
- Teaching succinct and accurate science writing (26)
- 61 UBC educators (faculty, postdoctoral fellows, graduate students, course coordinators) have participated in these workshops.

One-on-One Consultations
The WAC Program offers consultations to educators (and class visits) to provide guidance and feedback on:
- Writing assignment/assessment design
- Strategies to help students with the writing process
- TA training related to teaching and assessing writing

Community of Practice
The WAC Program hosts a monthly Lunch and Learn where participants, along with invited guest experts, discuss topics including:
- How to motivate students to get help with writing
- Using writing in large classes
- Designing effective student peer review
- Reducing jargon in science writing

Future of the WAC Program
The program is:
- Expanding to the Communicating Across the Curriculum Program (CxC) to support oral and multimedia communication.
- Looking for research collaborations: evidence-based practices for teaching science writing are lacking.
- Developing online workshops and expanding our website resources for UBC Science educators.

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Participant Feedback
"Glad to have more resources for myself and to share with students."
[Most valuable aspect] "Gaining insight on various perspectives, coming from multiple faculty from many science departments at UBC."
"Your facilitation of the segment on giving feedback was presented in a manner that TAs could easily relate and your suggestions to our handout on providing feedback has significantly improved it."

Want to Know More?
Website: www.scwrl.ubc.ca/wac
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