Writing Center and Library Collaboration: A Telephone Survey of Academic Libraries

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Available at: https://works.bepress.com/ltodorinova/1/
Writing and researching are highly interrelated processes and there is much overlap between the goals and responsibilities of writing center staff and librarians. There is little evidence, however, that partnership between writing centers and libraries has been instituted as standard practice in academic institutions. The purpose of this study, therefore, is to explore the current state of the relationship between the writing center and the library. A telephone survey was administered to librarians in a sample of 268 academic institutions. The results indicated that only 26.7% of libraries actively collaborate with their university’s writing center. A strong majority of the non-collaborating institutions (74%) expressed a willingness to do so in the future, while 85.7% of the collaborating institutions thought that the program was effective in increasing the writing and researching skills of students. In the libraries where collaboration was either not possible or not desirable, the main reasons, which were interpreted from the librarians’ responses, included lack of resources, a disconnect between theory and practice, and cultural issues.
WRITING CENTER AND LIBRARY COLLABORATION: A TELEPHONE SURVEY OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

by
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A Master’s paper submitted to the faculty of the School of Information and Library Science of the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Information/Library Science.

Chapel Hill, North Carolina
April 2010

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Introduction

Library instructors often experience situations where, in their effort to help students with research, keyword searching, and citations, they have to address critical thinking skills that may be the province of other campus agents, such as writing center mentors. Bibliographic instruction involves the imparting of critical thinking skills that are directly akin to the writing process itself, in constructing, phrasing, and evaluating topics, as well as executing the research process in formulating, writing, and citing the intellectual product. Due to the greatly interrelated and dynamic nature of the research process itself, such overlap is unavoidable. However, the literature also suggests that writing and information literacy are often set against each other: writing is viewed as a creative and dynamic enterprise and information literacy, as a technology-driven task.

The purpose of this paper is to examine the extent to which libraries and writing centers are collaborating in the academic world today. The main question addressed in this paper, therefore is: what is the current relationship between writing centers and libraries?

The need for an explorative survey is necessitated by the lack of general consensus in the literature concerning the association between libraries and writing centers. Currently, studies in this area paint a scattered and rather conflicted picture. The literature enumerates examples of such collaborations throughout the academic world, which leads us to expect to find them commonly occurring. However, it also recurrently shows the need to institute collaboration as standard practice, suggesting
that there is a lack of such programs, or at least, a profile of institutions that are not willing to engage in them (Elmborg & Hook, 2005). There is also disagreement, in general, as to the value of information literacy to academia. Several scholars have pointed out the lack of understanding of the relationship between writing and researching, which is often viewed in terms of unequal hierarchy (Norgaard, 2003).

Freshmen composition courses have been the standard vehicles for library instruction since the restructuring of academic course work in the 1960’s (Barclay & Barclay, 1994). The relationship between writing and information literacy, however, has not been extensively studied or understood. This gap in theoretical understanding is evident in the literature pertaining to collaborative efforts between the library and the writing center of academic institutions. As Rolf Norgaard (2003) points out, very little has been written about information literacy and writing center collaboration, outside of anecdotal reports on local experiments and practices. Although there is a plethora of studies addressing the similarities between the critical and evaluative skills required in both the processes of writing and researching, there is little empirical evidence showing that collaboration between the two units has been instituted as standard practice in undergraduate education.

The importance of information literacy to the success of college students is rarely questioned. In reality, however, bibliographic instruction (BI) has had a difficult history in instituting itself as an unquestioned constituent of undergraduate education. This difficulty has partly been because information literacy has not been integrated into wider educational processes. In fact, it is not until the recent emergence of electronic resources that the importance of librarians in instructing research skills has become
obvious (Farber, 1999). For at least the last twenty years, librarians have been actively trying to promote their services not just in imparting technical skills, but helping students think critically and actively about research (Ellis & Whatley, 2008). There has been some resistance, both to the technological changes librarians have been promoting and their role in imparting these skills to students. Farbler (1999) claims that it is the college or university administration that has been least prone to seeing “a legitimate educational role for librarians.” The author also suggests that it is mainly older, larger and most prestigious colleges that have questioned the role of librarians as instructors.

The history of bibliographic instruction, therefore, has been marked by a struggle in asserting innovation, which continues today. Although librarians’ roles in training students and faculty in technology has been acknowledged, it is uncertain that their role as active educators who can promote critical thinking has followed. The relationship between information literacy and writing exemplifies this perfectly, as BI is not often treated as an interdisciplinary exercise into the relationships between sources, content, and meaning. The problems that can be found in the history of BI are, in part, a product of the scholarly uncertainly into the relationship between writing and researching. They may also, as has been suggested, be affected by the academic culture in large universities and the rate at which initiatives are endorsed and implemented.

Importance of Study

Collaboration between the writing center and the library can be justified in both practically and theoretically. In examining the current state of their relationship and making suggestions for its improvement, this paper could help practitioners in the field who are looking to enhance library services. Increasing the effectiveness of
bibliographic instruction, in turn, will benefit English composition instructors and students. It will also add to the value of the writing center, by making it more visible to students. Currently, most instructors require that their classes visit the library, but writing center consultations are largely extra-curricular. Many students who may need writing help are not likely to receive it because they are not made aware of the writing center’s services. Additionally, in examining the great overlap between library instruction and the writing center, in terms of helping students with writing, researching, and citing, the two entities can consider the benefits of cross-training in improving their services. This can decrease the strain on time and resources felt by both library and writing center staff.

**Literature Review**

This literature review consists of articles published between 1988 and 2008 in journals, conference proceedings, and books. It addresses a number of issues regarding collaboration between writing labs and libraries: (1) the relationship between writing and researching in practice, (2) the theory behind that relationship, as it informs perceptions of information literacy, and (3) importance of peers and writing as a social activity. A number of representative cases from the multitude of accounts of collaboration are also examined, along with the various patterns and trends they exhibit.

*The Relationship between Writing and Researching*

The beginning of collaboration between writing centers and libraries is difficult to identify. In the preliminary chapter of *Centers for Learning: Writing Centers and Libraries* (2005) James K. Elmborg states that writing centers and libraries have been
leading “parallel lives” for the past twenty years. Other scholars, like Barclay and Barclay (1994) and Sheridan (1995) have traced the roots of efforts to link the two in academic libraries as far back as the 1960s and 1970s. The lack of consensus as to the history of collaboration between these two units, however, extends beyond the time of its origin. It is also evident in the extent to which scholars, in fact, view their history as parallel. While Elmborg assumes the similarities and overlaps between the roles of libraries and writing centers, Barclay and Barclay point out that not all scholars agree on the benefit of combining bibliographic instruction (BI) with freshman writing courses, and feels that it is necessary to empirically defend it: “While the traditional acceptance of freshman writing as a ‘natural ally’ of BI suggests that freshman writing has a paramount role in BI, the movement toward course-related, across-the-curriculum instruction suggest that freshman writing is not as important today as it was in the past” (p. 213).

The study by Barclay and Barclay is not the only one that has brought this into question, if only to ultimately defend, the relationship between bibliographic instruction (BI) and freshmen writing. Others, like Bodi (1988), have questioned whether teaching critical thinking skills is the appropriate realm of library instruction. Barclay and Barclay’s paper is important to note because it presents one of the first attempts to defend the basic relationship between the two concepts (writing and information literacy) in a methodological and empirical way. It serves to contrast the overwhelming majority of studies in this area, which have relied on specific case-by-case examples of the benefit of collaboration between writing centers and libraries. Although Barclay and Barclay do not evoke such collaboration directly, but, rather, focus on establishing the
role of instruction within English Composition in general, their insights are important because they present an effort to study such relationships in a manner independent of institutional context.

BI evolved “as something more than a library tour,” simultaneously as traditional ways of teaching English Composition by focusing on grammar and literature were abandoned in favor of a process-oriented approach (Barclay & Barclay, 1994). Writing started to be viewed less as a mysterious ability and more so as a “hands-on” and active skill, which involves constant drafting, reformulating, and revising. Although information literacy also began to be approached as more than a simple library orientation or field trip, it did not, unfortunately, acquire the reputation of a “process,” along with its counterpart. Nevertheless, as the authors point out, with this restructuring in academic coursework, both writing and BI received a more central and active role in undergraduates’ education. Barclay and Barclay also go so far as to contend that BI has some relationship to critical thinking skills.

The purpose of Barclay and Barclay’s study is to determine the extent to which freshman writing is used as a vehicle for BI, as well as librarians’ perceptions of the usefulness of this pairing. The paper explores the hypothesis that the two are “natural” allies, in light of arguments that composition skills are not as important as they used to be. The authors also seek to determine if in fact the relationship between BI and composition is not natural, what alternative vehicles there are for the imparting of information literacy to students. Although the authors betray a bias in favor of BI and writing collaboration, the benefit of this study is that it gives accurate space to presenting the counter arguments. Moreover, the study shows how paradoxically the
literature views such collaborations by pointing out that the while most of it has “dwelt on the virtues of using the freshman writing course as a vehicle for BI,” there has been very little empirical support for this belief. Librarians have traditionally assumed that there is a relationship between BI and freshmen writing skills, but have not been diligent about providing evidence for it.

The design of the study (Barclay & Barclay, 1994) involved a sample of 1360 institutions, obtained from the Carnegie Foundation’s 1987 Classification of Institutions of Higher Education. A random number generator was used to identify 272, or 20% of the total sample, in order to provide for an appropriate rate of return (estimated at 50%). The questionnaire yielded a response from 149 institutions and the data was coded for the number of students who received BI (presumably, according to the librarians being surveyed), as well as the form in which this instruction took place. The results reveal that 39% of freshmen did receive some form of BI (236, 487 students) and, moreover, 61% of librarians conducting these sessions ranked freshmen writing as being “very important” to information literacy.

Scharf et al. (2007) provide some empirical support for the presumed similarities between information literacy and composition. Their study shows that, aside from the fact that such collaborations are found in practice, there may be a quantifiable relationship between the two, as found in students’ writing samples. The authors also point out the parallels between writing and researching and state that “both writing and information literacy are iterative processes that require evaluation of information, critical thinking and reasoning, revision and integration” (p. 463). The study examines one hundred undergraduate seniors’ writing portfolios, in order to observe writing
variables, such as critical thinking, and their relationship to information literacy variables, such as citation, evidence of independent research, etc. The authors scored the writing variables using the evaluations of 13 humanities instructors and compared the results to the scores in the information literacy scale, obtained by faculty and librarians and developed according to ACRL Standards. The purpose of the study was to show that it is, in fact, possible to assess information literacy using writing samples, due to the inherent similarities in the two processes. The results show a correlation between the writing scores and the information literacy scores and suggest that there is a quantifiable relationship between composition and information literacy skills.

It has been suggested that the relationship between writing and information literacy is rooted in critical thinking abilities. Ellis and Whatley (2008) provide an overview of how critical thinking and library instruction have been associated in the last twenty years, using articles sampled in popular Library Science Databases and published between 1986-2006. They also isolate various examples in order to show that the scholarly research in this field has been implemented in several institutions. Ellis and Whatley’s article is an example of the paradoxical tone of the research: it shows, through the examination of the programs in various colleges and universities, that critical thinking and information literacy are being integrated into the curriculum and that collaborations are taking place across campuses. However, the authors also leave us rather uncertain of the larger, theoretical principles, surrounding the necessity of their integration. As the authors themselves point out in the literature review, scholars have found it difficult to enumerate a definition of critical thinking and show it as theoretically rooted it in information literacy.
Theory and Perceptions of Information Literacy

The fact that most librarians view the relationship between writing and information literacy as important does not answer the question of what, precisely, that relationship is. Clearly, freshmen’s writing is somehow correlated with information literacy, but it is very difficult to represent this relationship as grounded in theoretical principles. Elmborg prefaces his book about the collaboration between writing centers and libraries, Centers for Learning (2005), by stating that proof for the benefit of these programs is almost always narrative, collected by looking at case-by-case examples and attempting to extract general themes from them. Given the diversity of educational settings, academic cultures, and institutional resources, this approach is inherently problematic. Nevertheless, Elmborg does present some theoretical justifications for this phenomenon in his discussion of writing and researching as process, specifically, by pointing to constructivist theory.

Both libraries and writing centers have evolved towards a process-based approach to education, based on their observations about the reality of student work. Constructivist theory anticipates this iterative movement by suggesting that “knowledge is created (or built) by each individual through a scaffolding of concepts” (Elmborg & Hook, 2005). According to scholars like Lev Vygotsky and others, language is the key element of this scaffolding. Therefore, if we accept that writing is a method of learning about the world (through the active effort of stating what one knows or believes about it), then writing is a recursive and fluid process, which is as explorative as research. Both writing and research require an assessment of what one already knows, followed by the emotional and cognitive investment to build upon it. Therefore, the two processes
are intertwined and simultaneous—and not fragmented “steps” to approaching a
discrete task.

An article by Rolf Norgaard (2003) is behind much of the theoretical framework
of this study. Although it is not an empirical study, it presents an important attempt at
looking at this problem from an interdisciplinary view. Norgaard approaches the issue
from his own background in rhetoric and composition and depicts information literacy
through the lenses of various theories in that field. The author points out that very little
has been written about information literacy and writing collaboration, outside reports on
local experiences and practices. Examining the issue from the borrowed perspective of
rhetoric theory may help researchers understand it better. Looking at this issue from the
standpoint of a tradition as old as rhetoric is clearly valuable in giving information
literacy an academic voice. The theories Norgaard uses to examine the relationship
between rhetoric and composition and information literacy are situated literacy, relevant
literacy, and process-oriented literacy. The latter is perhaps the most important
theoretical approach to information literacy and the one that is most relevant to this
paper. Currently, information literacy is viewed as a product, not a process, and is
perceived as merely a “look up skill.” In order to defend the need for collaboration
between libraries and writing centers, the parallels between researching and writing
should be examined and the “evaluative and integrative concerns” of information
literacy should be made explicit (p. 126).

The process-oriented model is a reaction against traditional, formalist, product-
oriented rhetoric, which focuses on a generic approach to composition and sentence
structure and stresses grammatical correctness and mechanics. This model has
dominated American education since the nineteenth century and has only recently been challenged, as Barclay and Barclay’s paper has already pointed out. Although the product-oriented approach is somewhat out of style in academic institutions today, it is still heavily utilized, especially in relation to research paper assignments, which are often given to students as de-contextualized “tasks,” following a linear model of organization and execution. In following the example of “new” rhetorical theory, as Norgaard points out, information literacy can overcome this product-based model by arguing for a new perspective on researching, not as “a formalistic tool for the communication of already discovered ideas but as a vehicle for inquiry and as a process of making and mediating meaning” (p. 127).

Other scholars have also approached the notion of writing and information literacy as iterative processes. In Building an Instructional Portal: Channeling the Writing Lab, Owen G. McGrath (2002) points out that one of the fundamental concepts behind the construction of many virtual writing labs is that “writing is not a simple stage-like process flowing linearly from outline to final draft” (p. 200). McGrath’s study of U. C. Berkley’s Online Writing Lab (OWL) is particularly interesting because it shows one specific benefit to combining library instruction and writing center programs. Librarians have been proficient in using and maintaining content management and communication technologies and could extend these services to writing centers. The online environment may be one of the best methods of such collaboration because it is cheap, effective, and anonymous, which may reduce students’ anxiety in approaching both the writing center tutor and the librarian. Moreover, because both information literacy and writing can be viewed as processes, having a virtual framework that
supports the recursive and complex nature of these processes may be the best approach to organizing the nuances of the research process.

Programs such as Writing across the Curriculum (WAC) have been successful in combining both the theoretical and practical benefits of viewing writing and information literacy through a process-oriented model. Sheridan’s work (1995) has been particularly interesting in examining writing and information literacy through a collaborative learning model. This model views the two not only as mutually-supported processes, showing that both writing and research are about "discovery, questioning, organization, and process," but by claiming that they are, in fact, social activities (p. 24). This view recognizes the essential importance of viewing the librarian and the writing tutors as social agents, who are removed from the educational hierarchy of student and teacher, and can, potentially, influence students in new ways.

Moreover, considering the social implications of writing and information literacy places the research paper assignment back in its real-world context. It recognizes that writing and researching are skills that empower and connect students to “larger social constructs, both local and global” (p. 5). It may also be helpful to consider the two from yet another rhetorical perspective: the theory of persuasion. As much a theory as it is an art, persuasion stems from an oral tradition that is thousands of years old and forms the basis of modern politics and language. Students' writing often lacks the element of persuasion simply because students themselves are not shown its importance and relationship to everything else. Another application of this concept may be found in communication theory and the “sender, message, receiver” model. It can be argued that, in the case of writing, the central component is the sender, while in research
it is the receiver (the person we are trying to persuade or inform). However, the interactive relationship between the three remains a factor and causes us to examine the whole integrated process, in its relationship to its immediate, as well as universal, contexts.

The complicated nature of the writing and research processes may often be difficult to convey to students. In their study on undergraduates’ perceptions of information literacy, Melisa Gross and Don Latham (2009) evoke Sheridan’s description of the writing process as “messy”. This is also one of the difficulties of approaching the subject from a theoretical standpoint. The study by Gross and Latham address the paradox between low skill levels and high confidence levels in undergraduates' perception of their own information literacy. Undergraduates’ tend to view information literacy as a set of skills or “tools” for completing a given task, but that is out of context in their own educational attainment and something that is “common sense” and able to be obtained by anyone. These notions may be preventing students from obtaining the knowledge necessary to succeed academically. The findings of this study, therefore, point to the importance of reexamining the ways in which information literacy is perceived.

Bordonaro and Richardson (2004) use the constructivist concept of knowledge as “scaffolding” to show the need to expand the view of information literacy as “more than one time meeting” between faculty, students, and librarians. This study is important because it depicts information literacy as a continuous process that transcends the limitations of the classroom itself and allows for it to be integrated with other campus partnerships and in other settings, such as the writing center. The authors administered
a survey, consisting of both open-ended and pre-formulated rating items, to 27 students in an education course to determine the level of confidence the students perceived in their own information literacy skills. The survey was followed by a class period devoted to library instruction and an activity testing the students’ knowledge of library concepts, such as how to find journals, criteria for evaluating web sources, etc. The students were also asked to summarize what they learned during the library session, as well as to fill out a “research plan,” indicating how they will approach their assignment. Finally, after receiving feedback from the librarian, the students were required to keep a journal of their activities in the research process and to complete a post survey at the end of the course.

The students’ performance was co-graded by the librarian and the professor. The pre and post survey results reveal an increase in the students’ confidence and self-described knowledge of print and online resources. The two major findings of this study are that 1) scaffolding supports the research process and 2) reflection shapes the research process. One of the most important points Bordonaro and Richardson make is that scaffolding, or the process of searching, finding, and evaluating information, is a process that is dependent upon peers, librarians, professors, and other professionals. In other words, many different parties have to be introduced into the educational continuum, in order for the goals of information literacy and knowledge construction to take place. Moreover, the importance of reflection, which can also be derived from this study, suggests, again, the process-oriented nature of information literacy and that deriving meaning from content is non-linear and recursive.

*Importance of Peers: Writing as a Social Activity*
Aside from the characteristics of information literacy and writing that have been discussed above, a number of authors have addressed the social nature of writing and the importance of peers. Librarians and writing tutors are viewed as elements outside of the formal educational hierarchy. As such, they may be in a unique position to help undergraduates succeed in their education attainment. Casey Jones (2001) examines the relationship between writing centers and improvements in writing ability through a survey of relevant literature. His findings reveal that, just as is the case for studies relating to writing center and library collaboration, there has been a great lack of empirical research in the area and that for years professionals have relied on a blind trust in the merits of writing centers.

Although a major oversight in the Jones paper is that it does not relate, or even envision, the relationship between writing centers and bibliographic instruction, the author addresses issues that are very similar to what other scholars have already pointed out about the issue. One of the main contributions of the articles is that it perpetuates the view of writing as a “process” and it places it in “an active social context” (p. 3). He also addresses the concept of writing centers as providing “anonymous” help to students, which can certainly be applied to libraries. The power that both, therefore, is in the fact that because they are structurally outside of the formal student-instructor relationship, they can break down interpersonal and disciplinary boundaries. They can take learning out of the abstract and make it literal. By engaging students in conversations about their work, they can teach them the art of being reflective professionals. Jones’ study shows that the effectiveness of the writing center is because it portrays writing as a fluid, social process.
A study by Nancy Oley (1992) shows the importance of getting outside help and some of the implications of the social nature of learning. The purpose of the paper is to address the quality of students’ writing in introductory psychology courses. The author hypothesizes that students who receive outside help from a writing tutor, whether on a voluntary or involuntary basis, will perform better in their research assignments. A sample of 76 students was selected from all levels of remedial writing courses, in order to attempt to control for prior level of skill. Three class sections were assigned to voluntarily work with a librarian and writing tutor and, based on their initial choice, and the group that declined help was then forced to attend (part of that group for extra credit, the other part as a requirement for grade). The results revealed, as predicted, that the paper grades of students who received help (voluntary or involuntary) were significantly higher than the class sections that did not. This study shows that outside agents, such as librarians and tutors, can have a positive effect on the performance of students.

Case Studies

The case studies examining collaboration between writing centers and libraries are interesting, in that they do not present one single approach, but, rather, many and varied levels of collaboration. They also show a notable pattern: in general, smaller colleges and universities provide more examples of collaborative programs, as well as a greater and more involved extent of collaboration, than large ones. One hypothesis to explain this phenomenon would be that the amount of bureaucracy in large institutions can often serve as an obstacle to implementing “new” programs in general. Another could suggest that the size of the institution makes it difficult for all parties, librarians,
composition instructors, and writing center staff, to be well acquainted with each other and to seek out collaboration. Moreover, several case studies closely associate the ability of libraries to physically house writing centers with good relationships between the two, which is obviously not always possible to implement in large academic libraries with limited space, or even older colleges and universities, with well-established physical presence, and less impulse, or financial ability, to remodel.

Another reason that may lead to the scattered portrait of intercampus collaboration is that all writing centers—and all libraries, for that matter—are different, and therefore, have dissimilar needs and motivations. Some writing centers may have enough constituency and less inclination to advertise their services, as it may lead to an overcapacity of incoming students. Others may have the distinct sense of being under-represented in the campus community and have the impetus to brainstorm collaborative efforts with other campus units. It is difficult to generalize that “collaboration is good” in all cases. As the literature revealing the need to theoretically integrate writing and research as a process suggests, however, lack of collaboration due to resources or motivations of libraries and writing centers may, in fact, be problematic to the educational outcome of students.

Rachel Cooke and Carol Bledsoe (2008) depict the partnership between the library and writing center at Florida Gulf Coast University. The article addresses the benefits of having the library and the writing center located in the same physical space. The authors also identify five challenges that both librarians and writing consultants face: guiding students through the sequence of the writing process, helping them resolve uncertainties about guidelines, advising them in overcoming time constraints,
empowering them to be in control of their learning, and evaluating quality and preventing plagiarism. Cooke and Bledsoe argue that the writing center and the library have precisely the same goals with regard to user education and that cross-training on both ends can be a solution to this problem. The program at Florida Gulf Coast University is an example of a successful collaboration, prompted in large part by physical collocation.

Collaborative Instruction by Writing and Library Faculty (2000) by Deborah Huerta and Victoria McMillan describes a case of collaboration in Colgate University between writing instructors and librarians. Although it does not evoke the writing center, the paper is still applicable to this study as an example of a popular and emerging approach to co-teaching information literacy and writing skills. The experiment was motivated by the increasing need to improve undergraduates’ scientific writing and researching skills and the recognition that library anxiety and composition anxiety frequently follow each other. Science writing is a special case that makes the need for collaboration between library instructors and writing mentors even stronger, as it requires a special, and often difficult to obtain, set of skills.

The program described in this article is an ongoing process and its framework is not yet complete (Huerta & McMillan, 2000). However, Huerta and McMillan’s insights are important for this study because they present an attempt to teach writing and researching simultaneously. They recognize that the way that students view these processes is problematic and causes them unnecessary anxiety: “We knew that students approached research paper assignments in a linear fashion, assuming they would first do the research and then write the paper. We felt they might perceive their own intellectual
growth more clearly if they understood that the process was dynamic and recursive” (p. 3).

Elmborg and Hook’s (2005) *Centers for Learning* is rich in case studies of collaboration across different types of institutions. Practitioners from the University of Kansas Libraries contribute their own account and reflections of the program instituted there in 1998. This particular instance, a strong student demand prompted the establishment of multiple writing centers in convenient locations throughout campus. One such center was situated in the main lobby of a small campus library. The limitations to generalizing this approach are obvious, as not all institutions can standardize the collocation of the two programs. However the University of Kansas approach is important, in that the librarians recognize that collaboration can extend beyond the physical space and seek to take it to the next level:

> Space sharing is only space sharing, and it is often based on the goodwill or special interest of a small number of individuals. Understanding that many efforts to collaborate might seem counterintuitive to the historic, decentralized complexities of the institutional infrastructure collaboration must be designed as sustainable, able to thrive beyond changing generations of leadership. (p. 53)

As such, the collaborative atmosphere at KU today is in continuum, from space-sharing to close relationships between instructors, writing staff, and librarians.

In another chapter from *Centers for Learning*, Leadley and Rosenberg (2005) describe the extensive and sustained collaboration between writing center staff, librarians, and faculty at the University at Washington, Bothell (UWB). In many ways, the environment at UWB embodies the perfect conditions for collaboration and innovation: new institution, small student body, and a focus on a few technical disciplines. Nevertheless, Leadley and Rosenberg admit the initial difficulties in their
collaborative efforts, especially in maintaining frequent and open lines of communication between all parties involved. Moreover, the authors point out the need to constantly revisit the design of the collaboration in sight of new student needs and expectations, as they arise. The model of full collaboration is, above all, a user-centered approach, driven by demand in services and maintained by constant assessment of strengths and weaknesses. This requires a level of shared commitment to the task that not all institutions are either willing or capable of committing to. The case at UWB, just like the examples before it, is a fortunate example, limited in its context, and short of instituting a standard.

Summary of Literature Review

The literature examined in this paper points to several common features in the collaboration between writing centers and libraries, as depicted by the accounts of both scholars and practitioners. The relationship between writing and researching has been frequently observed in practice, but, as some of the studies suggest, it has not been thoroughly defended empirically. Moreover, the theory behind the correlation is scattered and interdisciplinary and there have not been many attempts to establish it as firm grounds for informing standard practice. There is also a common perception of writing as “process” and information literacy as “discrete skill” that has, in the past, prevented scholars from considering their common, integrated, and recursive qualities.

The literature also discusses an emerging approach to viewing the relationship between information literacy and composition, in terms of their social natures. Librarians and peers are outside of the established norms and limitations of the classroom and can, therefore, become important in changing the ways in which
undergraduates perceive (and misperceive) writing and research. Finally, several case studies were examined, which point out a common trend of institutional adoption of collaborative practices in small, liberal arts or technical colleges and universities. This suggests an additional hypothesis for the survey to follow in this study, namely, that such programs will be more difficult to find in large academic institutions. The aggregate of the literature annotated in this paper will be used as a lens to examine the current state of the relationship between the writing center and the library in academic institutions.

Method

The study used a telephone survey to collect data from academic libraries. Miller and Brewer (2003) define the survey process as a structured method for data collection with the intention to generalize from a sample to the given population. In the context of Library and Information Science (LIS), Wildemuth (2009) states that: “a survey, simply, is a set of items, formulated as statements or questions, used to generate a response to each stated item” (p. 257). Among the many uses of surveys in LIS research, surveys have been employed to examine attitudes, perceptions, and behaviors in many scenarios, such as library programs, worker satisfaction, and information behaviors.

Sample

A list of academic library institutions of varying size, age, location, degree-granting scheme, enrollment profile, and academic focus was obtained from the Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (CCIHE), which is available
online. A hybrid version of the latest (2005) edition of the directory was used, alongside the basic 2001, as the two provide complimentary information that may be beneficial for the analysis. The researcher gathered a sample of 30% of the total number of small and large academic libraries in the United States (268 of 893). This percentage was based on a previous study by Barclay and Barclay (1994), which surveyed, via traditional mail, 20% of 1360 institutions from CCIHE (272) and received 142 responses, which accounted for a fairly representative cross-section of the population.

Individual representatives from each institution were identified, where possible, and contacted. For the purposes of this study, a representative was defined as a librarian working in the bibliographic instruction or reference unit of the institution. Their affiliation was sufficient to ensure that they would be aware if collaboration between the writing center and the library exists; however, the representatives were also given the option to state that they do not know if it is occurring, or if it has in the past. In participating in this study, priority was given to librarians working in the BI department because of the connection between BI and writing centers, which was previously identified in the Literature Review. However, in the cases where a BI department was not formally designated, a reference librarian was approached instead.

These individuals were contacted by the researcher via telephone, based on the contact information provided on the website of the institution. If no phone contact was available for any member of the library staff of an institution, their participation was not considered viable. As it has been alluded to previously, because of the time constraint of this study, no pilot survey was administered. The sample of individuals was contacted directly by the researcher, who initiated the conversation by briefly stating the purpose
of the study, as well as giving an assurance of its brevity and the anonymity of their responses. No recording method was used except for note taking. Subjects’ comments were coded in an Excel spreadsheet.

**Sampling Technique**

Previous studies have used a random number generator to select the participating institutions from the general *CCHIE* directory (Barclay & Barclay, 1994). For the purposes of this study, however, a more deliberative sampling method was used. One of the research hypotheses presumes that there will be a relationship between the size of the institution and the likelihood that collaboration will be taking place. There may also be a connection between the physical location of the writing center in relation to the library and such interdepartmental initiatives. For example, as the literature suggests larger universities and colleges which do not collocate the writing center within the library will not likely exhibit collaboration between the two units, or actively promote it.

According to information obtained using the filtering method on the *CCIHE* website, as found in **Appendix I**, the population for this study consisted of 893 intuitions. *CCIHE* provides a much more detailed classification of institutional size, including numerous useful subcategories; however, due to the limitations of this study, it was only possible to examine the most general ones. The study also excluded two-year colleges. Moreover, it was not particularly relevant whether the institutions selected are residential (R) or non-residential (NR) and these numbers were added to the total number of the population (883). A list randomizer created a sequence of these elements. A quota sampling method was used to identify 30% of the total number of
Large (L) and Small (S) four-year colleges and universities, or the first schools in the random list. The sample retained the distribution of L and S institutions, as is found in the actual population (see Table 1 and Appendix I).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number of Colleges in the Population</th>
<th>Percent of Total Population</th>
<th>Number of Colleges in Sample (30% of Population)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Small</td>
<td>647</td>
<td>192.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large</td>
<td>246</td>
<td>75.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total:</td>
<td>893</td>
<td>267.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 1: Sample

Survey Questions

The purpose of this study was to examine the current state of collaboration between libraries and writing centers. The questions included in the telephone survey are informed by the previously reviewed literature and include the size of the academic institution, the location of the writing center in relation to the library, and the existence (or lack of) collaboration between the writing center and the library. The questionnaire consisted of 6 questions, 3 of which did not apply to all of the participants. The most important aspects of the answers collected were the closed-ended, routine questions. Additionally, the researcher employed the flexibility of the survey method in collecting optional comments from the subjects. For example, subjects were given the opportunity to elaborate on the extent of collaboration between the two units, as well as provide their opinion on its usefulness. The survey questions are provided in Table 2 (see Appendix II for full telephone consent script).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item Number</th>
<th>Survey Question</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Is there a writing center in your university or college campus?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Is the writing center located within a campus library branch?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>To the extent that you are aware, is there formal collaboration between the writing center and the library, as part of your bibliographic instruction program, or in individual consultations with students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If collaboration does not exist, do you think it would be a useful program to institute in the future? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If collaboration does exist, could you briefly elaborate on this collaboration? For example, is there 1) co-teaching with librarian and writing center tutor during library instruction classes, 2) writing center representative present during student-librarian consultations, 3) routine referral of services, 4) infrequent referral, or 5) no collaboration.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>If collaboration does exist, do you think that it has been productive in increasing the writing and researching skills of students? Why or why not?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 2: Survey Questions

Procedure

Using the sample frame of 268 institutions and a random list generator, the researcher consulted each individual college or university’s library personnel webpage to obtain the phone numbers of librarians working in the BI or Reference unit. This information was summarized in an Excel Spreadsheet. Where no contact information was available, the researcher located the general number for the library’s reference unit, instead. In order to ensure that the individuals contacted through the reference department were reference librarians, as opposed to students or assistants, a few screen questions were posed in the beginning of the interview. Most phone calls were administered between 11 AM and 5 PM Eastern Time, Monday-Sunday. The researcher also maintained a record of the institutions which had already participated, in order to eliminate redundancy.

Ethical Issues

The responses of individuals were entirely anonymous and private and subjects were informed of this consideration in the beginning of the phone interview. Moreover, data on the individual level was not collected, as the study aimed to only uncover and analyze the responses of librarians as a group, representing the variables, as outlined above. The researcher did not ask for personal names and only required that the subjects indicate their institutional affiliation, department, and job title, for the purpose of ensuring that their responses were appropriate for the study. The subjects were also
informed of the voluntary nature of their participation and that they could skip any questions they did not wish to answer.

**Results and Discussion**

During the timeframe of this study, 154 individuals were contacted (57% of the sample or 17% of the total population) to take part in the short, approximately 5-7 minutes, telephone interview. The remaining portion of the sample (43%) was not contacted because of time considerations. The response rate was 90% (139 total responses). The feedback reflects representatives from both small and large colleges and universities. The results are summarized in Table 3.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Corresponding Survey Item</th>
<th>Total Count</th>
<th>Percent of Total Responses</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Institutions with writing centers</td>
<td>131</td>
<td>94%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Writing centers located in the library</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>44%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 Collaborations</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>26.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 Do not collaborate, but would like to institute collaboration in the future</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>74%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 Currently collaborate with the writing center and find that it has been productive in increasing the writing and researching skills of students</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>85.7%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Table 3: State of Collaboration between Writing Centers and Libraries**

**State of Collaboration**

From the 139 participating colleges and universities, 6% (8 total) did not have an administrative unit to support the writing abilities of students. In several of the cases,
there was no “writing center” as such, but its essential functions were found under other titles, such as Learning Center or Academic Excellence Center. These units often addressed skills in many different academic disciplines, such as mathematics and sciences, along with writing and English Composition. In all such instances, and despite the label chosen by the university, these centers were coded as “writing centers,” if it was clear to the researcher that they addressed students’ writing abilities in some capacity.

Of the institutions which did have a writing center, or a similar unit, 44% were either located in a library, or shared some space within a branch of the library system, at periodic times throughout the semester. There were many different versions of this arrangement. In some cases, the writing center was in the library for a couple of hours per week. At others, the sharing of space was limited only to particularly active times in the semester, such as during exams. All of these scenarios were considered as exhibiting, in some form, the collocation of the two units. It was also indicated that it is far more common for writing centers to share space with libraries in larger colleges (56.8%), as opposed to small (30%).

The most important item of analysis for the study was the number of colleges and universities that exhibit some form of collaboration between the writing center and the library. The analysis revealed that 26.7% of institutions do participate in sharing resources, training, assembling instructional materials, co-teaching, or, in general, show evidence of being actively associated. Referral of each other’s services alone was not considered a form of collaboration. It was necessary also to clarify, in many cases, the meaning of the term and the kind of relationships that this study aimed to explore.
“Collaboration” in itself has rather vague connotations and is used to label many projects and activities in a manner that is not always appropriate. This, in fact, was one of the major limitations of the survey, which will be discussed in greater detail in the forthcoming sections (see Study Limitations).

Of the institutions which did not collaborate (73.3%), 74% thought that it would be useful to institute collaboration in the future. Conversely, of the elements of the sample which exhibited collaborative practices (30 institutions in total), 85.7% were satisfied with the results and believed that they were conducive to increasing the researching and writing skills of students.

**Findings for Small vs. Large Colleges/Universities**

One of the subtexts of this study, informed by trends observed in the course of compiling the literature review, aimed to reveal if there is a greater probability of finding collaborative practices in small, as opposed to large, academic institutions. From the sample of small colleges and universities surveyed (105 total) and from the portion of that sample which elected to participate in the survey and had a writing center (87), 20 academic libraries collaborated, while 67 or 71% of them did not. For the large subset of the sample (45 total), 44 of which had writing centers, 15 institutions collaborated with that writing center, while 29 or 65.9% did not. This may suggest that, in fact, it is more likely for large colleges to exhibit collaboration. The original study hypothesis, which predicted the opposite effect, placed much emphasis on the characteristics of the case studies, which, overwhelmingly, depicted small colleges as initiators in collaborations. It also suspected that the academic culture in small universities is more conducive to implementing programs of this sort, due to closer relationships among
faculty, librarians, and writing center administrators. A reexamined hypothesis, which considers the influence of resource availability as more important than cultural or other factors, will be discussed in the following section.

**Interpretation of Results**

The purpose of this paper was to examine the extent to which libraries and writing centers are collaborating in the academic world today. The results revealed that 26.7% of academic library institutions, from the 154 colleges and universities of small and large size that were surveyed, had some form of active collaboration between the writing center and the library. This indicates that the majority of academic libraries do not collaborate with their universities’ writing centers. The expectations prompted by the literature, therefore, contradict the observed state of interaction between academic libraries and writing centers.

It is clear from the **Literature Review** that collaboration between the writing center and the library is well-documented and successfully implemented in a number of case studies. Moreover, the theoretical framework connecting writing instruction and information literacy has yielded much discussion in academic circles. Based on this information alone, one would expect that a larger percentage of universities and colleges would be taking the initiative of implementing it, than is the case in actuality. The reasons for the incongruence, moreover, are not found in any lack of attention to students’ writing skills. Only 6% of the sample did not offer any form of writing support on their campus, which suggests that writing is considered to be relevant to academic success. Additionally, this information may also be perceived as an acknowledgment
that writing is difficult and students need more than what the standard academic curriculum alone can offer in order to be successful writers.

There are a number of factors that could explain the lack of commonly occurring collaboration, which the findings of the study seem to indicate. These explanations are, in part, prompted by the opinions shared by the librarians themselves throughout the study, and include: 1) lack of resources, 2) disconnect between theory and practice, and 3) obstacles to implementation inherent in academic library culture. These main three explanations, along with their interpretations, are discussed in the following sections.

Lack of Resources

From the percentage of the sample which did not collaborate (73.3%), general lack of staff and resources was the overwhelming reason expressed in the comments librarians shared at the end of the interview. Staff shortages and the fact that most Reference/Instruction librarians are already overloaded with responsibilities contributed to the problem. It was specifically in smaller institutions that this problem was most commonly reported. Librarians there often served multiple functions, both technical and public service, and, additionally, had faculty roles. The collocation of writing centers within libraries was also more commonly observed in large institutions, as opposed to small ones, in direct contradiction of the expectations from the literature. Finally, there were a number of collaborative practices in small colleges, which were very recently discontinued due to economic strains. Initiatives which have not had time to show gains in student progress are certainly likely candidates for termination in the current fiscal climate. Most of the librarians from the institutions with affected programs knew of no immediate plans to reconstitute these collaborations.
Even if relationships among campus entities are easier to initiate because of their proximity in smaller colleges and universities, these arrangements are not always easy to maintain. It was far less common for librarians in large academic libraries to attribute funding issues as hindrances for instituting collaboration. Frequently, these librarians had more concentrated and clearly delineated responsibilities, which may have made it easier for them to participate in collaborations. It appears that the availability of staff and resources may be a factor that is much more relevant to instituting new relationships than the actual characteristics of the institutions in question. The availability of satellite or permanent placements of the writing center within the library appears to be directly affected by institutional funding. This may explain why collocation of writing centers and libraries was more common in large academic libraries.

*Disconnect between Theory and Practice*

The responses to the fourth item (“If collaboration does not exist, do you think it would be a useful program to institute in the future? Why or why not?”) were quite revealing in highlighting the reasons why collaboration between writing centers and academic libraries is not overwhelmingly popular. “We are doing two different things” was a frequent observation, as well as the idea that writing is not a “library responsibility” and that there is a difference between writing for content and writing for grammatical correctness and citation, where the latter is the role librarians should be taking. There was also the related, but somewhat different, notion that the writing center and the library have different missions, which do not intersect ideologically.
All of these comments seem to indicate that the ideas discussed in the literature are widely removed from actual practice in libraries. Despite the work of Barclay & Barclay (1994), Norgaard (2003), and others who have argued for the applied and theoretical unification of information literacy and writing instruction, the two appear to be disassociated in the experience of librarians. Moreover, many of the surveyed professionals did not perceive information literacy as a critical thinking skill that is akin to writing and drafting. The ability to read, process, and evaluate academic literature, in other words, was not viewed as the same thing as writing about it, but, rather—as the precursor to writing. The responses of librarians suggested that, in general, they prefer the separation of tasks. They did not seem to ascribe to their roles as educators, or, in general, as part of “academia.” Instead, many of them showed preference for delimiting their functions to what can be accomplished day-to-day and were not necessarily interested in larger educational themes.

Cultural Issues

Several of the underlying themes of this paper, informed by authors such as Elmborg and Hook (2005), Oley (1992), and Jones (2001), among others (see Literature Review) pointed to cultural issues as having an effect on the existence of collaboration within academic libraries. This is related to both what academic culture represents, such as a reluctance to accept change and a certain rigidity, as well as what elements outside the traditional academic structure can add and supplement to the educational experience of students. Elmborg and Hook (2005) also note the influences of changing leadership on the willingness of librarians to initiate new programs. This was frequently intimated in the comments of survey participants, who were in the
process of regrouping and re-envisioning services because of staff overturn. Because collaboration is so highly dependent on staff willingness, a congruence in personalities, and a motivation to initiate change, the constantly unstable personnel structure of many libraries may have an effect on collaborative practices.

Among the more surprising findings of this study, however, was the way in which librarians often perceived writing center tutors, especially student assistants, and how that was reflected in the commentary. It was perceptible that, in certain cases, librarians were unwilling to collaborate with undergraduate and graduate tutors and preferred to communicate with English Instructors, or individuals with a higher educational rank. As some of the writing centers in the small sub-sample of colleges were exclusively ran by students, this certainly presented an obstacle to collaboration. The unwillingness to work with student tutors who are outside of the academic hierarchy and, therefore, may, according to Oley (1992), Jones (2001), and others, have a positive effect on the writing performance of other students, is certainly problematic, as it is in direct contradiction with what has been already noted about the power of social learning and the influence of peers.

Study Limitations

One of the limitations of this study was its method. Certain measures were taken in order to ensure that the errors which surveys are prone to were contained. The quota sampling method was used as one way of increasing the representativeness of the sample and its ability to reflect the actual population. Still, due to the scarcity of time and resources, there was no way to ensure that the sample size was, in fact, representative. Another major problem was presented by the fact that it was not possible
to administer a pilot study to test the validity of the instrument. In the cases where it was necessary to contact the reference unit, as opposed to a pre-selected librarian, it was difficult to determine if the individuals who were included in the study were, in fact, the most appropriate respondents. It is possible that other librarians on staff had more thorough and accurate information. Finally, in terms of the content of this study, a major flaw was that the opinions and attitudes of the other parties, namely, writing center staff, faculty, and undergraduates, were not included, due to the small scale of this study. Future researchers, perhaps, can collect data on all of the stakeholders involved in these programs and create a more comprehensive and accurate picture of their involvement.

Part of the difficulty of this research, as has been noted by the literature review, is that it lends itself more easily to case study analysis, as opposed to a general survey. This does not, however, as has hopefully been shown, limit the usefulness of this paper. The disadvantages of the method are in large part prompted by the explorative nature of this study and will hopefully not affect the usefulness of the data in depicting the general landscape of collaboration between writing centers and libraries. The survey instrument was appropriate, despite its flaws, because of its ability to be self-administered to a large, remote, and relatively anonymous body of recipients. The combination of theoretical discussion and quantitative analysis also beneficial, as it allowed the results to have applied, as well as some abstract significance to the body of scholarship in this field.

There are several additional limitations inherent in the context and essential character of this study. The most significantly obtrusive factor throughout the research
has been time—both the short duration of the study itself, which has been under twelve weeks, as well as the actual time zone discrepancy in collecting information from subjects in remote areas of the country. It has been challenging to contact some individuals over the phone, due to these difficulties, as well as the researcher’s narrow window of opportunity during the weekdays to contact subjects. Despite these time constraints, however, the researcher has managed to collect information from a significant number of the original sample (154 of 268). Future research can remedy these contextual difficulties with more resources and opportunity to expand the sample size, in order to make an even more accurate representation of the state of collaboration in academic libraries.

There are a number of other methodological issues that should be noted. The Carnegie Classification of Institutions of Higher Education (CCIHE), which was used to extract the sample, has produced some inconsistencies, such as the inclusion of online colleges, as well as a number of educational institutions which have not provided a website or any form of contact information. The researcher was forced to ignore these instances, thereby limiting the random nature of the participating institutions. As it has already been alluded, the telephone survey method, which was chosen because it gave the researcher an immediate sense of the response rate, has been noted as an imperfect method of reaching all participants. Additionally, in the current technological climate, it is difficult to ascertain if telephone use is, in fact, librarians’ preferred method of interaction and if, instead, it would have been more conducive to reaching a better response rate to have approached the subjects via email, or other means.
More importantly, perhaps, there are several limitations that were imposed by the very nature of what this research sought to examine. The terminology of “collaboration” is problematic and the connotations of the word may have affected the subjects’ response to several items in the questionnaire. In Item 4, for example, the subjects were asked to reveal whether they personally felt that, “If collaboration does not exist, do you think it would be a useful program to institute in the future? Why or why not?” It may have been difficult to ignore the ubiquitously positive connotation of the term and, in fact, several of the subjects began by saying “Yes,” but ultimately acknowledged that the collaboration might not, after all, be appropriate for the context of their particular workplace.

Summary and Conclusions

Despite the aforementioned limitations, this study was able to collect useful data on the state of collaboration between libraries and writing centers. The need to explore this topic was prompted by the lack of consensus in the literature about the existence of such collaborations. In the course of the Literature Review and the subsequent survey, this paper examined the connection between the processes of writing and researching and pointed to several theoretical frameworks, as useful lenses for guiding this research. The researcher employed a telephone survey to collect data on the actual state of these collaborations. The results revealed that the majority of academic libraries surveyed (73.3%) do not actively collaborate with the writing center. A strong majority of the non-collaborating institutions (74%) expressed a willingness to do so in the future, while 85.7% of the collaborating institutions thought that the program was effective in
increasing the writing and researching skills of students. In the institutions where collaboration was either not possible or not desirable, the main reasons, which were interpreted from the librarians’ responses, included lack of resources, a disconnect between theory and practice, and cultural issues that may characterize academic libraries. This study hopes to inform future, more comprehensive, research into the relationship between writing and information literacy, which can be used to guide both practitioners in designing services and ILS researchers in the building of a stronger theoretical base in the field.

### Appendix I: Population

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Total Enrollment</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Average Enrollment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VS2: Very small two-year</td>
<td>581</td>
<td>13.20%</td>
<td>172,586</td>
<td>1.00%</td>
<td>297</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S2: Small two-year</td>
<td>575</td>
<td>13.10%</td>
<td>898,894</td>
<td>5.10%</td>
<td>1,563</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M2: Medium two-year</td>
<td>406</td>
<td>9.20%</td>
<td>2,132,672</td>
<td>12.10%</td>
<td>5,253</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Institution Type</td>
<td>Institution Type Description</td>
<td>Institution Type Code</td>
<td>Enrollment</td>
<td>Percentage</td>
<td>Full-Time Equivalent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------</td>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L2: Large two-year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>153</td>
<td>3.50%</td>
<td>1,807,311</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VL2: Very large two-year</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>71</td>
<td>1.60%</td>
<td>1,727,844</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS4/NR: Very small four-year, primarily nonresidential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>211</td>
<td>4.80%</td>
<td>141,376</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS4/R: Very small four-year, primarily residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>61</td>
<td>1.40%</td>
<td>52,481</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VS4/HR: Very small four-year, highly residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>160</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
<td>112,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4/NR: Small four-year, primarily nonresidential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>167</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>414,925</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4/R: Small four-year, primarily residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>172</td>
<td>3.90%</td>
<td>395,341</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S4/HR: Small four-year, highly residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>308</td>
<td>7.00%</td>
<td>612,354</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4/NR: Medium four-year, primarily nonresidential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>165</td>
<td>3.80%</td>
<td>1,252,048</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4/R: Medium four-year, primarily residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>157</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
<td>1,118,207</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M4/HR: Medium four-year, highly residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>115</td>
<td>2.60%</td>
<td>635,358</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4/NR: Large four-year, primarily nonresidential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>127</td>
<td>2.90%</td>
<td>3,010,618</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4/R: Large four-year, primarily residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>87</td>
<td>2.00%</td>
<td>1,938,139</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L4/HR: Large four-year, highly residential</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>32</td>
<td>0.70%</td>
<td>557,385</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ExGP: Exclusively graduate/professional</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>16</td>
<td>0.40%</td>
<td>19,779</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Special focus institution)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>806</td>
<td>18.40%</td>
<td>570,470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Not classified)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>21</td>
<td>0.50%</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All Institutions</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4,391</td>
<td>100.00%</td>
<td>17,570,569</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


Appendix II: Telephone Consent Script

Hello, my name is Lily Todorinova. I am a graduate student in the School of Information and Library Science at the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. I am conducting a survey on the state of the relationship between writing centers and academic libraries for my master’s research. My survey is targeted towards librarians
who provide instruction and/or reference services. Is this part of your job responsibilities?

[If the person says Yes, continue.]
[If the person says No, ask them if they could give you the name and phone number of the person at their institution who does this.]

Do you have a few minutes to speak with me about my research? Our discussion will take no longer than 10 minutes and it may take only 1 minute depending on how you respond to the questions. If now is not a good time for you, I can call back at another time.

[If the person says that they are not interested, thank them and hang-up. If they’d like to re-schedule, record this information and thank them for their time. If they are willing to take the survey now, proceed]

Next, I’d like to tell you more about the study and how your data will be handled. If you’ve ever participated in a research study before, what we’ll do next is similar to obtaining informed consent. After this, you can change your mind about participating if you like.

First, your participation in this interview is completely voluntary. This means that you do not have to participate in this study if you do not wish to do so.

The purpose of this study is to look at the state of collaboration between writing centers and academic libraries in higher education institutions. We estimate that approximately 268 reference or instruction librarians will complete this study.

You will be asked to complete a short interview about the relationship between writing centers and libraries. This should take about 5 to 10 minutes. You do not have to answer these questions if you do not want to. We can skip questions and you can end your participation at any time.

All the information I receive from you by phone, including your name and any other identifying information, will be strictly confidential and kept under lock and key. I will not identify you or use any information that will make it possible for anyone to identify you in any presentation or written report about this study. I will not associate your name with the data and will destroy the documentation containing your name and phone number as soon as our conversation is over.

The only risk to you might be if your identity were ever revealed. But I will not even record your name with your responses, so this cannot occur. There are no other
expected risks to you for helping me with this study. There are also no expected benefits for you individually either.

Do you have any questions?

I’d like to give you some contact information if you have questions later. You might consider writing this down. I can wait a few minutes if you need to get a pen and piece of paper.

You can call me at 260-418-6730 with questions about the research study. All research on human volunteers is reviewed by a committee that works to protect your rights and welfare. If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Institutional Review Board at 919-966-3113 or by email to IRB_subjects@unc.edu.

Do you still agree to be in this study?

Great! I’d like to start off by asking you:

1. Is there a writing center in your university or college campus?
2. Is the writing center located within a campus library branch?
3. To the extent that you are aware, is there formal collaboration between the writing center and the library, as part of your bibliographic instruction program, or in individual consultations with students?

If the answer is “No”:
4. If collaboration does not exist, do you think it would be a useful program to institute in the future? Why or why not?

[Thank you for your time and your participation in this study. It has been very valuable to this research.]
5. If yes, could you briefly elaborate on this collaboration? For example, is there 1) co-teaching with librarian and writing center tutor during library instruction classes, 2) writing center representative present during student-librarian consultations, 3) routine referral of services, 4) infrequent referral, or 5) no collaboration.
6. If collaboration does exist, do you think that it has been productive in increasing the writing and researching skills of students? Why or why not?

Okay, those are all of the questions I’d like to ask you. Is there anything else that you’d like to tell me about with respect to this topic?

Thank you for your time and your participation in this study.
References


