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Not 'all writing is creative writing' and that's OK: inter/disciplinary collaboration in writing and writing studies

Abstract:

In the discipline of creative writing in Australia, questions of disciplinary identity have previously focused on distinguishing creative writing from literary studies. Fewer have questioned exactly what academics mean when they talk about 'writing' as a discipline. When the term 'writing' is used synecdochally to mean 'creative writing' or 'writing in a general sense', other kinds of writing risk becoming invisible or undervalued. This often results in writing programs targeted at fiction and creative nonfiction writers aspiring to publication. While there is nothing inherently wrong with this, our collaboration, which we label 'horizontal mentoring', across sub-disciplines in writing – creative writing and technical communication – has resulted in fruitful investigations into disciplinary identity. We draw on a reflective practice methodology to answer the questions: how has our collaboration helped us develop a more nuanced understanding of writing? How might this collaboration help advocate for writing in the Australian context? How can our collaboration help develop diverse students as writers? We conclude with a vision for an inclusive and welcoming disciplinary identity and pedagogical practices that engage diverse student cohorts.

Biographical note:

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Ariella Van Luyn is a Lecturer in Creative Writing at the University of New England. She is a novelist, short story writer, and researcher. Her research interests include online writing pedagogy, historical fiction, community narratives, and practice-led research. Her work appears in numerous literary and academic journals including *Southerly*, *TEXT*, and *New Writing*.

Keywords:

Writing Studies – creative writing – rhetoric – composition – professional writing – writing pedagogy

Introduction

Some twelve years ago, David McVey (2008) asserted that 'all writing is creative writing'. Advocating for kinds of writing work in higher education other than fiction and creative nonfiction, McVey (2008: 289) suggests that all composition involves the creation of a new text and are therefore creative acts. This paper does not seek to disagree with this assertion. Rather, Beck and Ariella's collaboration, which crosses technical and creative writing under the larger banner of writing, points to the ways that terminology slippages elide meaningful disciplinary distinctions which have significant implications for the visibility of other modes of writing. In the past, questions of writing disciplinarity and disciplinary formation have often taken the form of attempts to distinguish *creative* writing's distinct theories, practices, and methods from those of literary studies or other disciplines (Dawson 2005; Myers 1996). On the ground, though, academics in writing also grapple with disciplinarity in everyday contexts – responding to casual enquiries about what we do, and talking with students about what writing and studying writing mean. Take as an example Beck's recent interaction with a student at a major university recruitment event:

At the B.A majors showcase, a student walked up to me as I stood in front of the Professional Writing table. "I've just started back at university after a break," they said, "and I'm worried about writing. Should I go line up at the Writing table?" They pointed to a table nearby, where creative writing academics spoke enthusiastically to aspiring fiction and creative nonfiction writers under a banner that simply read "Writing", the local name for the broad writing major which emphasised creative writing. "Or do you know what options there are to help me with academic writing here?" Luckily for that student, they'd come to the right place – I teach the academic writing class, but I'd also gone out of my way to locate the academic writing services and resources scattered across the campus: off the top of my head, I could direct the student to my class, to the peer writing centre, to learning support, and to specific resources in the library relevant to writing in their major.

This interaction revealed the opacity of writing as an umbrella term for this key stakeholder. It begs the question: what are we, as academics, talking about when we talk about writing?

This question has been at the centre of Beck and Ariella's inter/disciplinary collaboration. We are both teacher-scholars of writing, institutionally co-located in writing programs, but with distinct focuses and professional identification with creative writing (Ariella) and technical communication (Beck). We term our collaboration 'inter/disciplinary' because while we have both been institutionally labelled as lecturers in writing, we have found through our work together that we have distinct disciplinary identities. The example above demonstrates the significance for students, and by extension academics, of an opaque use of the term writing. Institutionally, writing can function as both an umbrella term encompassing creative, professional, and academic writing *and* as a shorthand for creative writing. This synecdochic use, and the common slippage between the umbrella term and the shorthand, presents creative writing as a default position from which other modes of writing always diverge, and to which

other modes of writing are subordinate (you might think here of the recent controversy over whether men's AFL should be re-termed AFLM in light of the success of the women's competition, AFLW). While this shorthand is understandable given the history of writing studies in Australian universities, it nonetheless forecloses opportunities for welcoming teacher-scholars of writing and allied support organisations such as learning centres across the university into the broad disciplinary field. For this reason, when we use the term 'writing' in this paper, we mean it as an umbrella term. We use adjectives, such as *creative* writing or *technical* writing, to distinguish kinds of writing encompassed under this umbrella.

In this paper, we explore how our inter/disciplinary collaboration has thrown into relief the distinct theories, frameworks, and vocabularies of writing's subdisciplines, as well as highlighted the importance of our common pedagogical practices and commitments. We respond to the questions: how has our collaboration helped us develop a more nuanced understanding of writing beyond seeing all writing as creative writing? How might this collaboration help advocate for writing in the Australian context? How can our collaboration help develop diverse students as writers? We see these questions as an opportunity to build and diversify the discipline of writing, rather than diminish creative writing. Our methodology is primarily reflective, drawing on our ongoing research and teaching collaborations as concrete examples of horizontal mentoring and insight into the possibilities of an expanded view of writing. We contextualise our experiences within the Australian institutional history.

(Creative) writing in Australian universities

Many Australian universities offer a writing major, most often situated within a larger multi-disciplinary School, although sometimes embedded in a literature program. More often than not, though, these majors are dedicated *creative* writing majors, perhaps with a course in workplace writing thrown in as a nod to the vocational turn and increasing emphasis on work-integrated learning in Australian universities. For example, shortly after being hired into a writing program in the same search, at one of our first faculty meetings, Ariella said that she had been drawn to the program because she saw in it 'a distinct creative writing sequence with a plan B'. 'Yes,' Beck replied. 'Creative writing with a plan B.' This conversation would turn out to be the beginning of a fruitful collaboration between academics with parallel but distinct expertise in the field of writing.

This assumption also reflects the unclear relationship between different kinds of writing in Australia. Nationally, writing programs are often described as 'integrated programs' that bring together creative, professional, and other modes of writing. These programs have a forty-year institutional history, one traced by Paul Dawson in his 2005 monograph, *Creative Writing and the New Humanities*. He argues that Australian writing programs – writing here synecdochally referring to creative writing – emerged as a response to the 'international crisis in English studies which accompanied the rise of Theory' (126), developing in three forms:

- As instruction in an art form, sitting alongside other fine arts (127).

- As a kind of applied literary studies: 'a "practical" approach to the study of literature in departments of English and Literary Studies' (126).
- As a mode of written communication 'alongside other genres such as journalism or advertising in new degrees in Professional Writing and Communication' (126).

In all three cases, the institutional location of creative writing is not an independent one – rather, the field is positioned by its relationship to other, somewhat cognate and typically more established, disciplines. The last two dominate the landscape now, although in many institutions, including Beck's current one, the differences between them aren't so clear-cut. At Beck's current university, for example, communication studies, creative writing, technical and professional writing, and literature all sit within the same mega-department, sharing an administrative structure and many committees, if not a disciplinary identity.

But it's also worth noting that even where terms are shared with the US, the meanings and orientations can be quite different. Take, for example, the case of professional writing. Dawson notes that three Australian institutions claim to have had the first tertiary writing program in the country – all Colleges of Advanced Education or Institutes of Technology, what would probably be called community colleges in the US. The Canberra College of Advanced Education, now the University of Canberra, introduced its professional writing diploma in 1970, the first named degree in professional writing in the world. The program, according to its founder, was originally to be titled 'Creative Writing', but this title was 'subsequently rejected in order to distance it from negative associations with American college programmes. 'Professional Writing' was agreed upon as the term most suited to an educational institution with a charter to provide vocational training' (Dawson 2005: 145). Dawson presents this program as an integrated one, but it's hard to take this at face value given the emphasis in his listing of courses: 'Journalism, copywriting, scientific and technical writing were included in the curriculum,' he writes, 'as well as fiction, poetry, drama and scriptwriting for radio, film and television' (Dawson 2005: 145). On the one hand, we have technical communication and journalism in a position of priority in the sentence; on the other, genres within creative writing (fiction, poetry, etc) outnumber the other modes (journalism, etc), signalling a focus within the program on creative writing, a focus also indicated by the original planned name of the diploma.

By professional writing, then, these programs seemed to mean professional in something like the old Olympic sense; any writing for profit constituted professional writing, such that, for example, students entering Canberra's Diploma of Professional Writing started their degree with a short story class, aiming to get the resulting piece of fiction accepted for publication. A major challenge, according to the program director, was finding venues for this work (Hay 1974). Students went on to study journalism in the next semester. These kinds of programs cater for an imagined student who is primarily interested in literary modes of writing, albeit more lucrative forms than short stories. In the US, however, 'professional writing' specifies any writing undertaken in the workplace by writers who do not necessarily define 'writer' as their primary professional identity, including e-mails, grants, and other workplace texts.

Working on the assumption that Australian writing programs cater to students who do indeed aspire to be novelists and short story writers, this 'creative writing with a Plan B' appears to respond to the reality of life as a practising creative writer. Myers (1996: 5) acknowledges that [creative] writing may not qualify as a profession because 'it is neither the full-time occupation nor the primary source of income for most writers'. This statement is reflected in the recent survey of Australian writers and publishers conducted by Macquarie University; on average, in 2015, writers earned \$12,900 p.a. from their work as a practising author (Thorsby 2015: 2). It is hardly surprising then that tertiary educators designing creative writing programs wish to equip their students with secondary skills – and in turn, not surprising that program administrators have reached for the umbrella term 'writing' as an easy shorthand to describe these programs. However, the unstated but strong emphasis on creative writing within these programs both reflects and reinscribes a series of assumptions about imagined students, the nature of writing programs, and disciplinary formation, assumptions that in our view unnecessarily circumscribe the scholarly and pedagogical work of the writing discipline in Australia.

Alongside this, we do see other modes of writing in Australian universities, often with other institutional homes:

- Peer writing centres or academic writing classes may be housed in student support centres (for one discussion of teaching writing within student support, see Jan Skillen's 2006 discussion of 'Teaching Writing from the Centre').
- Academic writing classes may be taught in disciplines across the university, often developed by linguists (as Susan Thomas discusses in her early history of the University of Sydney's Writing Program in 2013) – for example, there are discipline-specific writing classes housed in schools of business, linguistics, health, and more, many of which focus on generic academic literacies as much as discipline-specific writing knowledge.
- Writing Across the Curriculum and related initiatives might be housed within Writing (for example, Roslyn Petelin discusses administering such programs at QUT and UQ in a 2002 article) or in other areas of the university such as teaching and learning centres.

This list is not exhaustive, by any means, but it does demonstrate that writing and writing instruction is and has been happening across the university. Yet many of these teacher-scholars working in the broader field of writing are not affiliated with writing programs, or do not identify with the current disciplinary formation of writing. Our ongoing conversation across our respective disciplines has allowed us to see both differences and commonalities across these diverse disciplinary fields and institutional locations. Our collaboration has shown us how bringing diverse understandings and practices of writing together, institutionally and disciplinarily, can strengthen research, teaching, and practice across modes of writing.

Horizontal mentoring and/as collaboration

Ariella and Beck met as newly-hired lecturers in the Writing program at the University of New England in mid-2017. We were hired in the same search, having responded to the same advertisement, but we brought with us very distinct focuses and levels of experience – Ariella came from a continuing appointment at another Australian university, while Beck had recently graduated from a US institution; Ariella is a creative writing specialist, Beck a specialist in rhetoric and technical communication. Early in our appointment, we worked together on a grant proposal to establish a digital storytelling lab at UNE, drawing on our common interest in multimodal writing. We envisioned this research and teaching space as one which could accommodate digital work across a rich range of genres, modes, and contexts. As we worked on the proposal, we came to realise that while we did not share a disciplinary identity, frameworks or theories of writing, methods or pedagogies, nor a vocabulary, we nonetheless shared an orientation to the teaching of writing which could serve as the foundation of a fruitful inter/disciplinary collaboration.

Since 2017, we have established an on-going research and teaching collaboration which we understand as a horizontal mentoring relationship, a term Pamela VanHaitsma and Steph Ceraso use to emphasise the importance of non-hierarchical relationships in peer mentoring practices (2017: 211), and the ways that horizontal mentoring relationships are a necessary complement to other formal and often power-laden 'vertical' mentoring relationships (2017: 213). Their goal for this model is for early-career feminist scholars in writing studies to not just 'make it' (a term taken from Baliff and Davis' *Women's Ways of Making it in Rhetoric & Composition*), but to make it *together*, 'in conversation and collaboration with supportive peers' in any institutional location (2017: 215). While we have engaged in many, if not most, of the horizontal mentoring practices VanHaitsma and Ceraso identify, as peers with divergent expertise and disciplinary identities, our collaboration has been marked by a commitment to learning *with* and *from* each other. This on-going collaboration has had a distinct impact on our values as teacher-scholars of writing and our shifting relationships with the umbrella discipline of writing in which we work, ultimately leading to our belief that a more integrated approach to writing studies in Australia will strengthen the broader discipline.

Our disciplinary histories

Beck

Beck's trajectory into the discipline of writing studies spans several disciplines and two continents. She undertook an Honours degree in Gender and Cultural Studies, conducting research in the broader area of the medical humanities. Upon moving to the US for a Masters in Women's and Gender Studies, she gravitated towards rhetoric as a field which accommodated her interests in feminist theory, scientific literacies, and social change, and which offered frameworks for understanding texts and assessing their effects in the world. Alongside her doctoral research in rhetoric, Beck undertook graduate coursework and teaching

in composition, studying composition theory and writing pedagogy, and designing her own independent writing classes. She went on to serve as Assistant Director of the Digital Writing and Research Lab, a unit within the writing department which researched and taught critical and practical digital literacies. Beck enjoyed teaching and valued evidence-based writing pedagogies, and so maintained awareness of research in composition studies to support her teaching and administration—but as a doctoral student and emerging researcher, she identified primarily as a cultural rhetorician of science, balancing her interests in Australian-style cultural studies with her institutional location in a Department of Rhetoric and Writing.

Questions of disciplinarity often arise in the twinned disciplines of rhetoric and composition (rhet-comp), especially as these programs have moved from being embedded in Departments of English to operating independently, as had happened at Beck's doctoral institution some twenty years earlier. These breaks resulted from the ongoing assertion by teacher-scholars in composition that teaching writing requires specialised expertise, expertise that often went unrecognised in departments that prioritised research in literary studies and devalued the work of literacy and composition scholars. As well as publishing research in rhetoric and composition, writing studies scholars in this disciplinary formation have documented the scholarly work of teaching composition, administering writing programs, and leading writing centres in professional statements (National Council of Teachers of English 2016; Council of Writing Program Administrators 2019), dedicated scholarly journals (such as *College Composition & Communication*, *College English*, *The Writing Center Journal*, and *WPA Journal*), tenure and promotion policies, and more. These questions of disciplinary formation continue to be explored, for example in O'Neill et al's *A Field of Dreams* (2002) which collects narratives of establishing independent programs—and some recent scholarship has argued for the inclusion of creative writing and journalism under the banner of US writing studies (Hesse and O'Neill 2019).

While this formation in some ways shaped Beck's graduate training – the PhD program in Rhetoric and Writing was administered by the Department of English, which meant a graduate advisor focused on literary studies rather than rhetoric and a mandatory stint teaching literature (because anyone can teach ~~writing~~ literature, right?) – in other ways it felt distant. Beck identified more strongly with the rhetoric side of rhet-comp, and relatively weakly with composition studies. Rhet-comp's breach with English literary studies had local institutional ramifications, but little bearing on Beck's relationship with the discipline.

Beck's graduate program included a strong emphasis on professionalisation, preparing students for work as faculty by supporting them to design and teach independent classes throughout their degrees, employing them as junior administrators of research and teaching facilities, and offering discipline-specific professional development workshops. At the same time, faculty in her program were careful to remind students that the institutions they would likely work for early in their careers might bear little resemblance to the research-intensive institutions where they were training. Upon graduating and accepting a position as Lecturer in Writing in a broad school of humanities, arts, and social sciences at a regional institution in Australia, then, Beck anticipated substantial changes in her work as a teacher-scholar as writing, but felt well-

prepared to adapt to this new context. But upon *arriving* in her new program, she was surprised to find a totally different disciplinary landscape: one in which a split with English seemed novel; in which creative writing dominated the curriculum in a clear sequence and other classes were both isolated and framed primarily in terms of creativity; and in which current-traditional and mechanical concerns about writing reigned.

In this context, Beck found it urgent to implement pedagogies which drew on the practical and theoretical frameworks in which she had been trained: to introduce pedagogies grounded in composition research; to place the practice of writing at the core of her classes; to perform disciplinary expertise in technical and professional communication; and to advocate for other modes of writing as equal with creative writing.

Ariella

Ariella's disciplinary identity is fairly typical of an Australian creative writing graduate from the last ten years. She was trained in creative writing at a university that offered Creative Writing as a major in a Bachelor of Creative Industries. Creative writing was housed alongside Literary Studies in one department, although the increasing individuation of these disciplines were evident as an undergraduate and honours student. The discipline appeared to be shifting from what Dawson (2005) defines as applied literary studies to something more like a Fine Arts model. What distinguished creative writing subjects from literary studies ones was the emphasis on the production and assessment of creative works; classes adopted a model of workshopping and the development of drafts were written with publication in Australian literary journals in mind. Her postgraduate research degree, as most creative writing PhDs in Australia, used a practice-led research methodology and consisted of a creative work and exegesis. During her postgraduate studies, she taught as a sessional academic, replicating the face-to-face workshop models of her previous study and leaning heavily on her own writing practice as the foundation for instruction. Her studies were undertaken with the aspiration to become a fiction writer. Much of this trajectory, and the practices of creative writing, were assumed, shaping her imagined future identity in unconscious ways.

It was not until Ariella joined a department of Literary Studies at a regional university as a Lecturer in Writing – the creative was missing from the title – that disciplinary identity required not only articulation, but advocacy. The pedagogical processes of creative writing, with its emphasis on skills development, workshopping, and drafting, were sometimes missing from the design of subjects – albeit with 'writing' in the title – which were typically designed for literary studies students by literary studies academics. A small group of students expressed hunger for a skills-focused approach to the development of creative work. Practice-led research methodology also required accommodation and explanation, particularly at milestones in research degrees. The Literary Studies department, as is the case in a number of Australian institutions, was also responsible for the large first year academic writing subject as part of its writing mandate. As she was appointed as a lecturer in 'writing in a general sense', Ariella also designed and taught in this unit, which, typically for a regional university with a small pool of staff members, rotated between staff in Literary Studies and Journalism, with intensive support

from library staff and learning advisors. While this rotation was due to pragmatic considerations, rather than any deliberate attempt to undermine disciplinary expertise, this stretch into a generic form in which she was not a specialist gave Ariella an appreciation of the distinctions between scholarly essay writing and creative writing.

It is important to acknowledge that this personal history is not intended as a critique of such practices or a diminishing of the expertise individual profile and casual staff with PhDs in creative writing, journalism or literary studies might bring to academic writing subjects. Rather, its purpose is to highlight institutional assumptions about 'writing in general' and their impact on disciplinary identity. Ariella's experiences, perhaps typically, reflect the disciplinary distinction between creative writing and literary studies that Dawson (2005) and Myers (1996) express. As Myers (1996: 4), in his distinguishing of creative writing from literary studies, states, the original intention in teaching creative writing at universities was to treat 'literature as a continuing experience rather than a corpus of knowledge... Its intention was the creation of new texts'. For Ariella, the creation of new writing was a central pedagogical principle of the creative writing discipline. In this very real sense, distinct disciplinary identity mattered.

What was invisible to Ariella until her collaboration with Beck was the way she had absorbed the embedded assumptions of the institutionally blurry use of the term writing. When we first started our collaboration, it became very clear that the kinds of texts we were best placed to support the creation of, and our research methods, were very different. What then did it mean for us to be institutionally co-located and given the same official title of lecturer in writing?

In our ongoing reflection on writing studies disciplinarity, we have found that we share an experience of coming to care about disciplinarity. For both of us, as postgraduate students housed in dedicated writing programs, albeit different types of writing, we absorbed our sense of our discipline/s by osmosis. When we graduated and moved into new institutions, we expected a change in research and teaching culture; we did not expect to encounter new and unfamiliar disciplinary formations, sedimented at the level of the institution.

Grappling with this unfamiliarity, and no longer taking our disciplinary identities for granted, we became aware of the urgent need to articulate and advocate for the specificity of our disciplines – to think of writing as not 'writing in general', but as an umbrella term that can embrace specialisations in a diverse range of writing modes, including creative writing, technical communication, writing in the disciplines, and more. This reorientation towards the field has implications for how we teach, how students can imagine themselves as writers, for the kinds of research we undertake, and for how our activities are benchmarked. Yet, we have a shared commitment to teaching that promotes the creation of new texts. Ariella and Beck's collaboration suggests not a dismantling of distinctions between writing modes, but rather a movement past conflicts between them. In advocating neither for 'creative writing with a Plan B' nor 'writing in general', and promoting instead a broader conception of writing studies, our work suggests a fruitful reimagining of the discipline of writing – one strengthened by uniting the rich body of scholarship and pedagogical practice which is currently fragmented across the institutional landscape.

Collaboratively designing across disciplines

We offer a reflection on our design of a new editing skills subject to illustrate the strengths these diverse perspectives on writing bring to the field. Collaborating with Beck on the development of this class challenged Ariella's assumptions of the purpose of such a subject in the writing major and the students she imagined would be taking it. Ariella came to the subject with the assumption that it was intended for creative writers who either wanted to edit their own creative work, or work in the publishing industry editing commercial fiction or creative nonfiction. In some respects, this vision made sense in a major that emphasised the publishing, and other creative, industries in subjects and, to some extent, reflected the actual student body. Yet, articulating this imaginary student participant to Beck in the early stages of collaboration resulted in an expansion of the imagined student, and subsequently in the remit of the skills taught in the subject. Editing was re-conceived not just as a profession in commercial publishing, but as an everyday practice in any workplace, sharing a core set of practical, relational, and metacognitive skills which manifest differently in its diverse contexts. The result was an inclusion of content on universal design and web editing, alongside the expected text-based editing in Word using comments and track changes.

This re-visioning also resulted in a shift of emphasis from working with static texts with absent authors – either already published or drafts donated by practising writers – to collaboration. The practice of editing was understood as primarily relational. The subject was designed so that students were supported not only to glean authorial intention from texts, but through interaction with their author-peers. Other peers' work, rather than texts outside the classroom, became the primary learning resources: the subject's 'set texts'. This was a reorientation of the creative writing workshop model, rather than a complete shift away from it. The workshop model for teaching creative writing relies on peer feedback, fosters a process-model of writing development, and values other students' work as a site of instruction. However, the ability to form collegial relationships and make editorial decisions based not only on the text's publication outlet but also on an author's stated goals uncovered through extended interactions that mimic an editor-author relationship is generally not embedded in assessment tasks. In the new editing skills subject, learning activities centred around working with an author-peer to develop a text through structural and line editing, and to publish the work online after conducting a proofread and formatting using the principles of universal design. Individual assessment invited, and measured, students' ability to reflect on this process and justify their editorial choices, including on the ways communicating with an author and receiving feedback had shaped their editorial practice, rather than on the quality of the text produced at the end of the editing process. This pedagogy's emphasis on writing and editing as a social epistemology aligns with key scholarship in US writing studies (for example see the work gathered in Dryer et al 2015 and Roozen et al 2015), as well as local research on the way that postgraduate writers transition into their academic communities (for one example, see Carter, Guerin & Aitchison 2020) and resonates with Ruth Bridgstock's work on connectedness in higher education (Bridgstock & Tippett 2019). Our course design and its outcomes are discussed more fully in

our recent article on teaching editing skills to large online cohorts (Van Luyn, Wise & Cantrell 2020).

This represents a shift from the way Ariella had previously measured the value of student texts and the outcome of drafting, feedback, and editorial processes. Previously, Ariella had used a text's publishability and literariness as one (albeit not the sole) benchmark for its quality. This criteria had always sat somewhat uneasily with her, given her observations that few undergraduate students were yet equipped to meet this criteria, nor did it always reflect the student's own intention for the creative work, which was sometimes written for pleasure, self-expression, and therapy – all valid uses of the creative process but seemingly out of place, even risky, in this context. However, such a criteria makes sense in a university writing program orientated to produce novelists, short story writers, and fiction writers equipped for publication in the Australian literary landscape. In collaboration with Beck, Ariella replaced such criteria with ones that measured student's metacognitive skills, their ability to identify their own strengths and weaknesses, strategies for development and to trace their improvement in skills over the course of a semester.

The other benefit of the collaboration came from the validation of pedagogical research as an expected and esteemed aspect of writing studies. Research into the teaching of creative writing has always been part of the remit of creative writing research journals such as this one and *New Writing*. However, as a practice-led researcher, Ariella was trained and confident in methodologies such as experimentation through creative practice, self-reflection, journaling, and the textual analysis of already-published work alongside her own. Beck brought to the collaboration expertise in the design of interviews, focus groups, and surveys. This reflects wider trends in the Australian research landscape, which suggest pedagogical research is undervalued; the cessation of the Office of Teaching and Learning Grants for the Promotion of Excellence in Teaching and Learning in Higher Education in 2016 (Department of Education, Skills, and Employment 2019) is testament to this. Yet, as Beck stated repeatedly throughout the collaboration, 'Writing is a pedagogy field.' This affirmation, reflecting both rhetoric and composition's history (Russel 2006) and the commitments of Beck's community of practice, had a significant impact on the way Ariella conceived and designed her own research projects. Indeed, Beck and Ariella embedded research into the design of the editing skills subject, using the challenges of its development to generate research questions and the writing of a collaborative paper to reflect and improve on learning design (Van Luyn, Wise & Cantrell 2020).

Reimagining students

Considering writing as parallel but distinct disciplines that include equally creative writing and modes of professional and academic writing has implications for the way tertiary educators imagine their students and thus design their subjects. In her collaboration with Beck, Ariella became aware that she was designing creative writing subjects with a very particular student in mind: an aspirational writer of fiction or creative nonfiction. This imaginary was drawn from

reflecting on her own intentions as a student in a creative writing program, her experiences in the classroom, informal and formal student feedback, and her own vision for graduates of the programs into which she taught. As the Editing Skills example demonstrates, this had implications for the design of the subject's learning outcomes, assessment tasks and rubric, and learning activities. These imagined students may also inform programmatic design and overall course learning outcomes, as well as the different writing forms visible to students.

Imagining a more diverse student population can serve not only to attract more students to writing subjects but also better cater to aspirational creative writers. When writing subjects are designed not only with the intention of producing writers of literary fiction and creative nonfiction, emphasis shifts from valuing the perceived quality of written outputs to valuing metacognitive skills, collaboration, and the writing process. It also allows a wider range of student identities to be constructed in classroom settings. If the guiding pedagogical principles of writing units are an emphasis on writing and revision as the main learning activities, this is hardly a deviation from the creative writing workshop model. However, de-emphasising publishability and the quality of end product as the primary criteria in assessment, in favour of self-reflection and skills development, means creative writing subjects are better equipped to welcome students with varying degrees of ability and exposure to genres. This is not to say that genre models, ie published works of fiction and creative nonfiction, should not be set texts in creative writing subjects. Rather, the drafting, revision, and editing processes underpinning the development of such work, often invisible to novice creative writers when first encountering a published text, are emphasised in the creative writing classroom. Such genre models might also appear beside previous student work at varying stages of development. Nor is it to say creative writing students are not exposed to, or conduct research into, the nature of the evolving Australian publishing industry and commercial, independent, and self-publishing. It is merely that this information is not presented as most relevant to specialist *creative* writers, and not the only context in which writing might be shared. Writing as a whole is conceived as an act of communication between a writer and at least one other person, regardless of the means by which it is communicated. A de-emphasis on publishability as the end goal may also better serve students who join creative writing subjects for pleasure and fun.

Conclusion

Our collaboration has allowed us to imagine new opportunities for writing in Australia. Firstly, it has made visible a previously unrecognised but shared commitment to a number of disciplinary-distinct pedagogical principles. These include writing as the primary mode of student learning; the comprehensive integration of writing and revision into subjects; emphasis on writing process and metacognitive skills; and the primacy of writing as a practice and object of study. Interrogating what we mean when we use the term 'writing' in the Australian context allows us to look at the discipline differently, opening the door to different kinds of writing practices and teacher-scholars.

Significantly for the future of the discipline, we ask: how can we emphasise this shared commitment not just between creative and professional writing but other kinds of writing, including academic writing? What does it mean for our discipline if we make visible, and treat as equal collaborators, everyone invested in writing practices in the university, including but not limited to technical writers, creative writers, business communicators, linguists, and learning centre staff? We are not advocating for a collapsing of distinct sub-disciplinary identities, nor a dismantling of creative writing. Our personal histories demonstrate the importance of understanding and distinguishing modes of writing and associated knowledges and identities. Rather, we are suggesting the opposite: we are envisioning a future in which the house of writing is expansive and welcoming. Our collaboration suggests some of the gains of this approach, including a fruitful sense of writing as a social practice, catering to a more diverse and expanded range of students, preparing students for more and different careers and contexts where writing might take place, and an expansion of methods and topics for researching the teaching of writing. Welcome in.

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