LISA LEOPOLD
Monterey Institute of International Studies

Teaching Writing Within the Disciplines: A Viable Approach for English for Academic Purposes (EAP) Instructors

This case study of an adjunct-model English for Academic Purposes (EAP) writing course linked to a policy-analysis course describes an effective approach for putting "specificity" into practice in EAP curriculum design. The rationale for interdisciplinary collaboration, the positive learning outcomes from the EAP writing course, the learning transfer to the policy course, and the pedagogical implications are described in detail. It is suggested that the EAP instructor work primarily with texts within students' disciplines, teach the universal principles of well-written discourse implicit in the text type, and teach students to analyze those features of the text that vary according to the audience, context, and rhetorical situation. The findings and pedagogical implications add to the current body of research about curriculum design in EAP and the positive learning outcomes appear to negate the argument that EAP instructors need specialized training in learners' fields to teach disciplinary writing courses.

Introduction

With less than 5% of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) teachers holding a degree or having employment experience in the field in which they currently teach (Orr, 1995, based on survey data, as cited in Master, 1997), language courses taught by instructors with a novice command of their students' disciplines is commonplace. However, the degree of subject-matter expertise that language instructors *should* command to teach writing courses in another discipline remains debatable. Ewer (1983) and, more recently, Dudley-Evans (1997), for example, claim that the language instructor should possess an educated layman's knowledge of the discipline. Moreover, Dudley-Evans (1997) claims that it is important for the language instructor to understand "the view that the subject teachers present of the disciplinary culture" (p. 63). Exactly how much content knowledge the language instructor should possess may depend upon a wide array of factors, including, but not limited to, the students' language proficiency and level of expertise within the discipline, the teaching methodology adopted by the instructor, and the de-

gree of specialization within texts and tasks (Robinson, 1991). Taking a slightly different stance, Hutchinson and Waters (1987) and Ferguson (1997) deemphasize the necessity for language instructors to command content-specialist knowledge and claim that it is more important for the language instructor to exhibit other competencies, including "(a) knowledge of disciplinary culture, (b) knowledge of the epistemologies of different disciplines and (c) knowledge of genre" (Ferguson, 1997, p. 88) and "(a) a positive attitude towards the ESP context; (b) a knowledge of the fundamental principles of the subject area; (c) an awareness of how much they probably already know. This can be summed up as 'the ability to ask intelligent questions'" (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987, p. 163). Hyland (2007) claims that it is critical for teachers to possess knowledge of genre and understand the ways language shapes meaning in texts.

At the opposite end of the spectrum, some researchers argue that English language instructors should not attempt to teach writing outside their disciplines, because of the nearly impossible challenge of mastering the conventions of an unfamiliar discourse community and the potential harm that can result from mismatches in instructor expectations or feedback provided to students (Abbott, 1983; Blue, 1988; Spack, 1988). Others point out that learning the specific conventions of their discipline may be too difficult for students (see Hyland, 2006) and even hamper their ability to adapt to unpredictable assignments (Widdowson, 1983). Goldstein, Campbell, and Cummings (1994) raised the possibility that students might not trust the writing course if they deem their writing instructor to be lacking sufficient mastery of the content. Their research suggested that certain professors could be uncomfortable with the writing instructor's making substantive comments about the students' ideas; they might expect the writing course to address only sentence-level concerns with the students' writing.

The argument that English language instructors should not teach writing outside their disciplines is supported by a social constructivist view of genre in which meaning can be discerned only in relation to the rhetorical situation or context, not solely from text type (Coe & Freedman, 1998). In fact, many social constructivist theorists claim "universal principles of effective writing" do not exist, nor can they be taught without regard to context, audience, and purpose (Bazerman, 1997; Coe, 2002; Helscher, 1997; Journet, 1997). Therefore, training in genre analysis may not be sufficient if language instructors are not also steeped in learners' disciplines and thus competent in making rhetorical choices that are influenced by context, audience, and purpose.

However, while many would agree that training in learners' disciplines would likely benefit English for Academic Purposes (EAP) instructors, such training may not be feasible for the majority of EAP instructors who are tasked with teaching discipline-specific English courses. If such training is deemed necessary, the EAP instructor may be relegated to "remedial" work with students if his or her competence in handling more complex disciplinary texts and tasks is questioned. Moreover, the argument that EAP instructors should refrain from teaching disciplinary writing presupposes that their students will receive sufficient disciplinary writing instruction from instructors in their dis-

ciplines. This may be an erroneous assumption if content experts do not see it as their role to provide writing instruction (Goldstein, Campbell, & Cummings, 1994; Lea & Street, 1999; F. Wehling, personal communication, January 4, 2008).

Studies that analyze learning transfer from language courses to other courses within students' disciplines shed some light on this debate of whether writing can be successfully taught by nonspecialists in students' disciplines. Indeed, if such writing skills can be transferred, then it would appear that EAP instructors' writing courses could prove more helpful than harmful. In a recent study, James (2006) analyzed university students' learning transfer from a content-based language course to a wide range of subject-matter courses. He found some, albeit minimal, learning transfer for all skills (e.g., listening and reading comprehension, speaking, writing, study skills, and affective outcomes). Learning transfer was positively influenced by: (a) external demands that required or afforded opportunities for learning transfer to occur, (b) the existence of challenging situations or personal weaknesses that learning transfer could support, (c) the similarity between the two courses, and (d) the timing of parallel instruction or tasks within the two courses. Learning transfer might be even greater if the language course were more closely aligned with students' disciplines, as in an adjunct-model language course that is paired with a content course. Adjunct-model EAP courses are arguably one way for language instructors to compensate for their lack of content expertise (see Johns, 1997), allowing the content and language specialists to each remain strong in their respective disciplines (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989).

Though significant scholarship has been published on *whether* EAP instructors should teach writing outside their disciplines, the aim of this case study is to offer insights to EAP instructors who *do* teach writing outside their disciplines. This case study describes one approach of putting "specificity" into practice in an adjunct-model EAP course linked to a policy-analysis course. "Specificity" here refers to a teaching approach that recognizes the variability among disciplines, identifies the goals of particular language learners, and explores the conventions of different discourse communities (Hyland, 2002). I write as the EAP instructor and administrator responsible for designing and evaluating the effectiveness of the EAP curriculum at an international graduate school in California. Though I have educational training and several years of experience teaching English for Academic Purposes, I have no formal training in international policy studies, our students' area of specialization. This study explores international graduate students' learning transfer from an adjunct-model EAP writing course to a policy-analysis course and focuses on the following research question:

What is the impact of an adjunct model of disciplinary writing instruction on students' learning transfer to their content class?

A comparison is drawn between international students' performance in the policy-analysis course with that of students taking the policy-analysis course

without concurrent enrollment in the adjunct writing course. In the following sections, I highlight the rationale for interdisciplinary collaboration, students' learning outcomes and transfer, and pedagogical implications for teaching writing within the disciplines.

Rationale for Collaboration, Context, and Participants

The rationale for this interdisciplinary collaboration between the policy and language schools stems from the success of content-based language education in general (Brinton, Snow, & Wesche, 1989; Snow & Brinton, 1988), and from adjunct-model courses in particular (Kasper, 1997; Song, 2006; Winter, 2004). Knowing that greater interdisciplinary collaboration in the traditional language curriculum was needed to equip students with the transcultural and translingual skills to remain competitive in today's society (MLA, 2007), I decided to revise the curriculum after receiving feedback from students in Fall 2006 and Spring 2007 that highlighted significant mismatches between their EAP and policy courses. I gained the support of one faculty member in the policy school before approaching the dean of the policy school with my proposal for a joint course. The policy professor and I were willing to collaborate on a voluntary basis, without additional remuneration or release time, and the dean approved it.

Before Fall 2007, the policy-analysis and EAP Content Writing course were completely autonomous, with minimal overlap in course goals and little interaction between the policy and language professors. Policy Analysis is a required course for all students seeking a master's degree in International Policy Studies; Content Writing is mandatory for those international students who meet the graduate school's minimum 550 paper-based TOEFL score but whose academic English writing skills are the weakest (based on an in-house placement exam). Content Writing is the first in a sequence of three credit-bearing academic writing courses offered in the English for Academic Purposes program. Students taking the EAP course in Fall 2007 and Spring 2008 came from South Korea, Japan, Afghanistan, Georgia, China, Taiwan, Kazakhstan, and Uganda and had 0 to 15 years of professional experience in a policy-related field outside the US.

In the adjunct model beginning in Fall 2007, all students taking the EAP course were enrolled in the same section of the policy-analysis course. The policy professor and I collaborated to craft the same instructional guidelines for all writing assignments in both our courses, a practice that is consistent with the recommendation that the types of papers students write in language courses ought to resemble those they write in their content classes (Ferris & Hedgcock, 1998; Grabe & Stoller, 1997). Due dates for these assignments were streamlined so that students received feedback on the first draft of their policy memo and op-ed assignments from me before submitting their revised versions to the policy professor. All reading assignments about policy analysis (taken primarily from Bardach, 2005) were assigned in both courses to provide students the same framework for analyzing and crafting a policy memo. Additional readings about the policy process were assigned only in the policy course; articles

about policy writing (taken from Smith, 2005, and other sources) were assigned only in the Content Writing course. The policy professor and I collected several examples of policy memos and op-eds and each provided detailed comments about the strengths and weaknesses of these texts. We both designed classroom activities with these model texts to provide explicit guidance for students learning the rhetorical conventions of their discourse community, a practice suggested by Bazerman (1997). Finally, we each audited the other professor's class as much as possible.

Teaching Genre in the Language Classroom:
The Case of the Policy Memo

This section outlines the rhetorical conventions of the policy memo, a genre taught in both the EAP and policy-analysis courses, and describes one way EAP instructors can teach students to write effectively within their disciplines. (The following observations stem from critical analysis of several policy memos, multiple discussions with the content professor, and external sources, as cited).

The policy memo is an internal document that defines a problem, evaluates a series of policy options according to chosen criteria, and recommends the most viable course of action to a principal, or decision maker. Therefore, a thorough analysis of the principal's needs, interests, and sphere of influence is tantamount to writing a well-crafted policy memo. When composing a memo for a particular principal, the analyst must frame the problem as the principal sees it, choose the most viable options and appropriate criteria according to the principal's sphere of influence, and justify a recommendation for any alternative that scores low on an important criterion to the principal. This means that memos about the same general issue are often written differently depending on the principal to whom the memo is directed.

In addition to these variable features, which are dependent upon the audience and context, it can be argued that most policy memos also exhibit certain universal rhetorical patterns. The policy problem is usually defined in terms of deficit or excess, is quantified whenever possible, and should be framed in an unbiased way so that multiple solutions are possible (Bardach, 2005). In the background section of the policy memo, the negative consequences resulting from the policy problem are described and cited with credible evidence to justify why the problem is urgent, serious, and worthy of the principal's attention. Alternatives for solving the problem and criteria for evaluating the alternatives are objectively defined for the policy context. Outcomes are projected for every alternative and analyzed according to all criteria. Finally, the recommendation emphasizes the advantages of the chosen option in comparison to other alternatives and illustrates how the disadvantages can be overcome or are relatively insignificant (F. Wehling, personal communication, January 4, 2008). The background and analysis are written objectively, whereas the recommendation includes persuasive, intensifying, and hedging terminology. Therefore, it is important to train students in the writing skills that are universal to the genre, such as justifying a claim with credible evidence, using appropriate objective or

persuasive terminology, and developing argument/counterargument strategies for presenting a convincing recommendation.

It is precisely this distinction between "variable" and "universal" features of the genre that the language and content professors may wish to address differently in their courses. Without training in genre analysis, the policy professor may find it difficult or even unnecessary to teach the academic writing conventions that are universal across all well-written memos (Lea & Street, 1999; F. Wehling, personal communication, January 4, 2008). However, language instructors' training in genre analysis prepares them well for teaching these universal conventions. Because the content professor, often unlike the EAP instructor, has the disciplinary expertise to guide students in analyzing different audiences and contexts, such an approach would seem beneficial.

On the other hand, language instructors are often expected to teach subject-specific conventions, since writing cannot be divorced from its audience and context. I argue that the language instructor should explicitly teach the universal features of the genre and still train students to write for different audiences and contexts. The challenge for language instructors is to discern which "universal" academic English skills are needed to write well within the discipline, select authentic materials to illustrate these universal rhetorical conventions, and teach students to be their own ethnographers so they learn how to adapt their writing to different audiences and contexts. For example, to teach my students how to frame their policy problem in light of their principal's paradigm, I used the example of "illegal immigration to the US" as a potential memo topic and consulted with the policy professor to identify the primary stakeholders involved in this issue. Each stakeholder held a different perspective on the impact of illegal immigrants to our society: as threatening our national security, burdening our health-care and social-services systems, or being victimized and exploited for their cheap labor. Students were divided into teams and each team had to read a different article about illegal immigration and write a one-sentence definition of the policy problem from their principal's perspective. When we analyzed each team's problem definition as a class, students could readily see how their choice of principal influenced how the same topic, "illegal immigration to the US," was framed differently.

Assigning an "audience analysis" paper is another way to prepare students to write differently for different audiences. To analyze the audience for their policy memo, students responded to a series of prompts regarding the extent of their principal's expertise about their memo topic, the information their principal would most likely lack to make an informed decision, and the positions of the stakeholders likely to influence their principal's decision. I used this paper to assess whether or not the students had thoroughly researched and addressed their principal's needs and interests in their memo, which is a researching skill that the policy professor highlighted as being extremely important (F. Wehling, personal communication, January 4, 2008).

Through exercises such as these, EAP instructors can and should be responsible for teaching students the cognitive skills—or the questions writers must ask themselves about their audience—to write for their particular context,

in addition to the universal characteristics of the genre that may not be taught within the content course. This approach allows both professors to offer useful guidance to students within their respective fields of expertise. EAP instructors are not overburdened with having to immerse themselves in a new and unfamiliar discipline, but, as certain scholars have pointed out, EAP professors must be willing to learn the "conceptual framework" of the discipline or genre in which they teach (Hutchinson & Waters, 1987), which can be learned in part through careful analysis and scrutiny of texts in consultation with the content specialist (Bhatia, 1993). Without training in the discipline, however, it is difficult for an EAP instructor to teach writing embedded in a particular context, but it is possible to train students in developing the skills needed to analyze the impact of their rhetorical decisions.

A similar approach may be feasible in a class where students come from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds. The EAP instructor could collect several authentic texts from students' disciplines and consult with content professors (using surveys and focus groups) to identify any broad similarities among these genres. Any similarities among the texts would form the basis of the "universal" writing instruction in the class. The EAP instructor could then divide students into teams with a similar disciplinary focus and pose a set of textual-analysis questions regarding aspects such as the strategy the author uses to begin the text, the length of paragraphs, the use of citations, and the types of pronouns in the text. Teams from each discipline could present their findings to the class. The instructor could then lead students in a discussion about the implications of these findings. For example, the instructor could ask students to extrapolate from their findings about the author's positioning of himself in the text and any particular strategies he uses to build credibility. Through careful scaffolding, instructors can guide students to discover universal and variable features of texts within their disciplines and teach them to critically analyze the author's rhetorical choices.

Feedback on Discipline-Specific Writing Assignments

Some researchers have justifiably argued that providing feedback on students' disciplinary writing assignments may not only prove intimidating for the language instructor, but also detrimental to the students' performance if the language instructor lacks expertise in the content area (Spack, 1988). While differences in feedback provided to students by the content and language professors are likely, these differences are not necessarily contradictory, and certainly not harmful, to students, provided that the purpose of the feedback is communicated clearly to them. (I recommend that instructors explicitly outline the purpose of their feedback on students' assignments, as seen in Appendix A). If students understand the purpose of the feedback they receive, they can reap the benefits of both professors' suggestions. For example, the language instructor may praise a student's ability to support a claim with sufficient evidence, but the policy professor may critique the evidence if it lacks the perspective from a reputable organization, which is something only a disciplinary expert would know.

As expected, I discovered differences in the policy professor's and my

feedback on students' writing assignments. In a policy memo about whaling, a student wrote that the cost of forbidding all whaling activities would be $2.5 million per year. I commented that the student should cite this claim (since the data came from a particular organization). The policy professor commented, "This [the projected cost] will be much higher if 120 navy ships are involved." While clearly different, both comments can be helpful to the students' development as writers in accordance with each professor's domain of expertise.

In fact, after surveying all 11 international students enrolled in Content Writing during Fall 2007 about whether the feedback they received from their policy and EAP professors was (a) *similar and useful,* (b) *different but equally useful—focusing on different, yet equally important, features of writing, or* (c) *different and contradictory—perhaps rendering it less useful*, most students reported that the feedback they received from each professor was *different but equally useful* and only 3 students commented that they wished that the feedback had been more similar. From the Spring 2008 cohort, among the 3 students who responded to this survey question, 2 reported that the feedback was *different but equally useful* and 1 student reported that the feedback was *very useful.* Some students elaborated on their choice, stating that the EAP instructor "requires me to add support argument and exact citation and policy professor requires me to add more criteria to evaluate my option correctly" and "Feedbacks were useful and different which is fine, because EAPP instructor more focuses on writing skills and general analysis, when IP 503 instructor focuses on content." Based on this survey data, it is clear that the differences in feedback were not confusing to most students and may have even helped them succeed on their writing assignments.

Methodology

To explore the effectiveness of the adjunct model of disciplinary writing instruction, I engaged in teacher research. In teacher research, the teacher casts herself as researcher and may use student performance and feedback as indicators of the teaching and learning that has taken place. In this case study, I considered students' learning outcomes and learning transfer to their content class as indicators of the effectiveness of the adjunct model of disciplinary writing instruction. During the final meeting of the EAP class, students completed a survey that tapped into their perception of their learning outcomes and transfer from the adjunct-model writing course to the policy course. (See Appendix B for the complete survey.) All 11 students enrolled in Content Writing completed the survey in Fall 2007; 4 of the 5 students enrolled in Content Writing completed the survey in Spring 2008. I calculated the mean score and standard deviation for all questions to which students gave a numerical response on a scale of 1=low to 10=high. To assess students' satisfaction with the adjunct model course, I compared students' responses on the school's standard course evaluation instrument (based on a scale of 1=poor to 5=excellent) from when I taught the course before it was linked with Policy Analysis (in Fall 2006 and Spring 2007) with after the course was linked with Policy Analysis (in Fall 2007 and Spring 2008). To assess students' learning transfer, I analyzed

students' performance on writing assignments for their Policy Analysis class and compared the performance of the 11 students enrolled in Content Writing in Fall 2007 and the 5 students enrolled in Content Writing in Spring 2008 with the performance of the 17 students not enrolled in Content Writing each semester. Students not enrolled in the Content Writing course were either native speakers of English or nonnative speakers who tested at a higher English writing proficiency based on an in-house placement test taken at the beginning of the semester. In Fall 2007, I compared students' overall grades in the Policy Analysis course and on the policy memo and op-ed assignments. I analyzed the results for statistical significance using a Mann-Whitney U statistical test ($p < .05$; Z critical = 1.96) since the data were not all normally distributed (which is a condition for the t test). In Spring 2008, I compared students' performance on a graded draft of their policy memo, a revised version of their policy memo, and their overall course grade. (However, students did not write an op-ed for their policy-analysis course during Spring 2008). The policy professor informed me that the draft of the policy memo included five bonus points for students who participated in an in-class writing exercise. I analyzed these results for statistical significance using a Mann-Whitney U test ($p < .05$; Z critical = 1.96).

Results

Student Learning Outcomes and Transfer

The mean scores regarding students' perception of their learning outcomes and transfer are presented in Table 1 for a typical subset of the survey questions, based upon a scale of 1=low to 10=very high. As the mean scores indicate, students' self-reported learning outcomes and transfer to courses in the policy school were very high. Moreover, on open-ended questions, students wrote mostly positive comments: that the curriculum was successful in helping them to discern the important features of the policy memo, that they were able to apply the general writing skills learned in the EAP class without much difficulty to the particular context of their policy writing assignments, and that they were able to discover profound differences between writing in their native language and English.

Moreover, scores from the university's formal student evaluation instrument during the two semesters when the Content Writing course was linked with the policy course improved drastically as compared to the previous two semesters when the Content Writing course was taught independently of the policy course by the same EAP professor. In Fall 2006, the mean score among 15 students for "overall rating of the [Content Writing] course" was 3.47/5.0, and in Spring 2007 the mean score among 3 students was 3.33/5.0, which are both considerably below the university's minimum benchmark of 4.0/5.0. Students during these two semesters complained about the lack of synergy between their Policy Analysis and Content Writing courses on their course evaluations: "This course was very confusing for me, because the instructor's point were totally different than IP class professor" and "The course organization is not sequential, we had to [write] memo and op ed in our policy analysis class before learning how to [write] them on EAPP 375." However, once the Con-

Table 1
Results From Abridged Content Writing Survey

Survey Prompt	Fall 2007 (11 students)	Spring 2008 (4 students)
1. Before taking EAP Content Writing, I knew how to write a policy memo.	3.09	2.75
2. Overall, the EAP Content Writing class addressed important writing skills.	9.0	9.5
3. Overall, I improved my writing skills by taking the EAP Content Writing class.	8.8	10.0
4. In general, the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class were useful for written assignments in my IPS 503 Policy Analysis and Communications class.	9.09	10.0
5. In general, I applied the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class to written assignments for my IPS 503 Policy Analysis and Communications class.	9.45	9.25
6. In general, the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class were useful for written assignments in other courses I am taking in the policy school.	9.0	9.75
7. In general, I applied the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class to written assignments for other courses I am taking in the policy school.	8.82	9.5
8. Analyzing and discussing sample policy memos in EAP Content Writing helped me to write a better policy memo.	9.09	8.0
9. My EAP instructor's feedback helped me to write a better memo.	9.18	9.75
10. Written in-class exercises in EAP Content Writing (individually or as a team) helped me to improve my writing skills.	8.36	9.25

tent Writing course was linked with the Policy Analysis course, the mean score among 11 students for "overall rating of [Content Writing] course" increased in Fall 2007 to 4.55/5.0 and the mean score in Spring 2008 among 5 students was 4.80/5.0. Students wrote comments such as: "This course was very helpful in connection with Policy Analysis course" and "Each class professor presented a lot of new information." In fact, notwithstanding comments about due dates or timing of topics, no student wrote even one comment that could be perceived as a complaint or dissatisfaction with the Content Writing course during the two semesters when the policy and writing courses were linked.

The mean scores, standard deviations, and Z scores for students' performance on writing assignments in their policy course are presented in Table 2 for the Fall 2007 cohort and Table 3 for the Spring 2008 cohort.

Table 2
Students' Performance in Their Policy Analysis Course

Fall 2007	Policy memo	Op-ed	Course grade
11 students enrolled in Content Writing	Mean=85.27% *SD*=6.99	Mean=86.55% *SD*=5.22	Mean=90.01% *SD*=2.69
17 students not enrolled in Content Writing	Mean=82.59% *SD*=6.34	Mean=84.59% *SD*=5.47	Mean=88.79% *SD*=2.41
Mann-Whitney *U*	Z= -1.392	Z= -.594	Z= -1.294

Table 3
Students' Performance in Their Policy Analysis Course

Spring 2008	Draft of policy memo	Revised policy memo	Course grade
5 students enrolled in Content Writing	Mean=93.0% *SD*=5.10	Mean=92.0% *SD*=5.52	Mean=94.2% *SD*=2.08
17 students not enrolled in Content Writing	Mean=91.18% *SD*=5.96	Mean=93.18% *SD*=3.13	Mean=93.5% *SD*=2.31
Mann-Whitney *U*	Z= -.785	Z= -.278	Z= -.980

Although none of the results from the Mann-Whitney *U* test were statistically significant, perhaps because of the small sample size of the population, there appears to be a trend that international students enrolled in Content Writing perform better on most writing assignments in their policy course than their native English-speaking and nonnative speaking peers who were not enrolled in Content Writing, despite entering their graduate programs with a lower English writing proficiency. In fact, several international students enrolled in Content Writing even commented that their native English-speaking peers came to them with questions about writing the policy memo, and that they were able to teach them rhetorical conventions they had learned in their Content Writing class. One might suppose that the international students felt empowered by the expertise they were able to share with native English speakers about writing within their disciplines.

Conclusions and Discussion

This case study presents preliminary insights and findings that could prove helpful to EAP instructors teaching discipline-specific writing courses. Contrary to the view that writing within the disciplines be taught solely by content specialists, this article outlines how EAP instructors can exploit their strengths and training in genre analysis, rather than remain handicapped by their lack of expertise in students' disciplines. Specifically, the EAP instructor should conduct an analysis of the rhetorical patterns of the texts he or she teaches, interview content specialists for the range, flexibility, and constraints of the rhe-

torical choices writers must make according to their audience and context, and design a process-oriented writing curriculum that allows students to develop the universal writing skills for their discipline. Writing assignments that are tailored to students' disciplines can strengthen their mastery of writing conventions within their field. When providing feedback on writing assignments, EAP instructors should clearly communicate how their feedback may contrast with the content professor's feedback. By adhering to this instructional approach, EAP instructors may be more successful at preparing students to write well within their disciplines.

However, this particular adjunct-model approach is not without its limitations. As Snow & Brinton (1988) have correctly pointed out, this model requires an extraordinary commitment on the part of both the content and language professors to integrate their curricular objectives. The feasibility of such a model also depends upon the availability of a suitable content course in which disciplinary writing is expected of students. If students expect the EAP professor to command a certain level of expertise in their content area, they may pose questions about the content that have no direct bearing on the EAP instructor's learning objectives for her course, and this could be another challenge for the EAP instructor. Moreover, without clearly communicated objectives about the role of feedback provided to students on their written assignments, there is always the risk that students may be confused by differences in instructor expectations. Since instructor expectations on assignments have been found to vary considerably (see Lea & Stierer, 2000), the EAP professor should consult with several content experts to differentiate those rhetorical conventions that are universal to the genre from those that vary according to a professor's expectations.

Furthermore, this instructional approach may be criticized in the same way pragmatic approaches to EAP instruction are criticized (see Canagarajah, 2002; Harwood & Hadley, 2004). That is, if students are expected to conform to a set of guidelines for writing their policy memos or op-eds, this presupposes that these guidelines that reflect mainstream (i.e., Anglo American) conventions are, in fact, worthy of conformity. Moreover, following a set of guidelines too closely may inhibit the development of students' writing skills. Rather than present "recipes" students must follow, the EAP instructor can lead students in an analysis of various models of the genre, drawing students' attention to the impact the author's rhetorical choices have upon readers, so that students are prepared to analyze the impact of their own rhetorical choices. Researchers have pointed out that a genre-based instructional approach that draws students' attention to how the writer's rhetorical choices affect the relationship with their readers can help students develop these rhetorical skills in their own writing (Cheng, 2008; Hirvela, 2004).

Another challenge with narrowly focusing on a genre is that the assignment is never purely "authentic" in the way that workplace genres are (Dovey, 2006). The audience is simultaneously the content professor, the EAP professor, and the imagined "principal" to whom the student is addressing his or her policy memo. Initially this dichotomy posed a challenge to students and

instructors alike, because I, the EAP professor, lacked the content knowledge that the "intended" audience and content professor would likely possess, and it proved difficult for students to cast themselves as real analysts and write for a principal whom they did not know. They were more familiar with (and likely to consider) their professor's expectations than their principal's concerns. To overcome this challenge of divergent audience expectations, a team of policy professors and I collaborated to revise the policy memo guidelines. The new set of guidelines includes a "context" section in which students research and report the determinants leading to the policy problem, the positions of key stakeholders involved in the policy problem, and an analysis of the past policies that have been proposed to address the problem. While this section would not typically be included in an "authentic" policy memo, it is included in our revised guidelines so that:

1. Student writers are more explicitly guided in the critical analysis of their audience and the constraints influencing their principal, which include the success or failure of past policies.
2. Student writers establish the linkage between their proposed alternatives and ones that have been considered in the past.
3. Student writers are not forced to "display" their knowledge to either professor in any other section of the policy memo. Both professors can reasonably evaluate the policy memo with the additional information presented in the context section, thus rendering the remainder of the policy memo more "authentic."

These challenges notwithstanding, this genre-based instructional approach has shown initial signs of success in helping students to strengthen their disciplinary writing skills.

Author
Lisa Leopold is assistant professor of English for Academic and Professional Purposes (EAPP) at the Monterey Institute of International Studies, where she teaches discipline-specific courses to graduate students studying translation and interpretation, international policy studies, and international business.

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Appendix A
Your Policy Memo:
How Your EAP and Policy Professor May Differ in Feedback

This document was written by the EAP instructor after interviewing the content professor and analyzing his comments on many student policy memos. The content professor revised the document before it was presented to students.

EAP

Executive Summary: Did you state the purpose of the memo clearly and succinctly? Did you outline the organization of your memo, specifically previewing each of the main sections?

Policy Problem: Did you articulate a clear deficit or excess when defining your policy problem?

Background: Did you use sufficient, credible evidence (mostly from primary sources) to illustrate why this problem is urgent? Is your background section well organized? Are the cause-and-effect linkages of the policy problem supported with substantial evidence?

Definition of Alternatives: Did you clearly and objectively define each of your policy alternatives?

Definition of Criteria: Did you clearly, objectively define each of your criteria and show how they will be measured and weighted? Do they include the necessary criteria of effectiveness and cost? Are evaluative criteria presented before practical criteria?

Policy

Executive Summary: Did you state the purpose of the memo clearly and succinctly? Did you outline the organization of your memo, specifically previewing each of the main sections?

Policy problem: Did you articulate a clear deficit or excess when defining your policy problem? *Is your policy problem correctly framed in terms of the principal's interests and sphere of influence?*

Background: *Does your background clearly articulate the urgency of the policy problem from your principal's perspective? Does it show why the problem should demand your principal's attention?* Did you use sufficient, credible evidence (mostly from primary sources, and *preferably not from advocacy organizations unless their bias is accounted for in the analysis*) to illustrate why this problem is urgent? Is your background section well organized? Are the cause-and-effect linkages of the policy problem supported with substantial evidence?

Definition of Alternatives: Did you clearly and objectively define each of your policy alternatives? *Are these alternatives the most viable, logical options? Do they fully represent the scope of the policy problem and your principal's interests/sphere of influence? Are the alternatives sufficiently distinct, that is, not overlapping?*

Definition of Criteria: Did you clearly, objectively define each of your criteria, show how they will be measured and weighted? *Are these criteria the most appropriate for your policy problem and for your principal?* Do they include the necessary criteria of effectiveness and cost?

Analysis of Outcomes: Does your analysis sufficiently cover every criterion for every outcome, without incorporating any additional criteria? Is there sufficient evidence (factual, expert testimony, comparative) to support your analysis? Are you as precise and objective as possible with your analysis, without resorting to ambiguous terms—like "expensive" —with no indicator of **how** expensive?

Matrix: Does your matrix clearly represent the weighted subscores and total score for the outcome of every alternative? Is there a legend which specifically defines each symbol according to normative values (i.e., low, poor, fair, high, excellent) which applies to every criterion? Does your analysis of outcomes clearly correspond to the scores in your matrix?

Recommendation: Have you explicitly recommended the highest scoring alternative? Have you highlighted the advantages of this alternative and shown how its disadvantages can be overcome or are relatively insignificant? Have you compared this alternative to each of the other alternatives? Have all criteria been accounted for in your recommendation section? If the highest-scoring alternative has won by a slight margin over another, have you provided sufficient justification for why this alternative is superior? Have you used "hedging" and "persuasive language" appropriately?

Citations: Have you accurately cited all sources in Chicago style?

Analysis of Outcomes: Does your analysis sufficiently cover every criterion for every outcome, without incorporating any additional criteria? Is there sufficient evidence (factual, expert testimony, comparative) to support your analysis? Are you as precise and objective as possible with your analysis, without resorting to ambiguous terms—like "expensive" —with no indicator of **how** expensive? *Is your analysis of the outcomes judicious or as accurate as possible? Is uncertainty properly accounted for in the projection of outcomes? Are all major stakeholders' reactions accurately accounted for when measuring political impact, for example?*

Matrix: Does your matrix clearly represent the weighted subscores and total score for the outcome of every alternative? Is there a legend which specifically defines each symbol according to normative values (i.e., low, poor, fair, high, excellent) which applies to every criterion? *Have you selected the appropriate style of matrix—using symbols or numbers—to represent your analysis? Is the appropriate degree of certainty—or uncertainty—of outcomes accurately portrayed in your matrix?* Does your analysis of outcomes clearly correspond to the scores in your matrix?

Recommendation: Have you explicitly recommended the highest-scoring alternative? Have you highlighted the advantages of this alternative and shown how its disadvantages can be overcome or are relatively insignificant? Have you compared this alternative to each of the other alternatives? Have all criteria been accounted for in your recommendation section? Have you used "hedging" and "persuasive language" appropriately *according to the context of your policy problem?* If the highest-scoring alternative has won by a slight margin over another, have you provided sufficient justification for why this alternative is superior? *If your alternative scores low on a criterion that is extremely important to your principal, despite having received the highest aggregate score, have you provided sufficient justification for why you are still recommending this alternative?*

Citations: Have you accurately cited all sources in Chicago style? *Are the sources credible, nonbiased, and representative of the scope of the policy problem?*

Appendix B
Content Writing Skills Survey

This is the survey students were asked to complete at the end of the Content Writing course.

Please take time to respond as accurately and thoroughly as possible to the following questions. Your responses are very important and may be used for making modifications to the course and as data for a research article and/or conference presentation. Please answer N/A (not applicable) for any question which does not apply to you.

	How well did the EAP Content Writing class address the following writing skills on a scale of 1=very poor to 10= excellent?	How much did you improve the following writing skills as a result of taking the EAP Content Writing class on a scale of 1=not at all to 10=a lot?	How important were the following writing skills for the written assignments in your IPS 503 Policy Analysis and Communications class on a scale of 1=extremely insignificant to 10= extremely important?	How important were the following writing skills for written assignments in all the courses you are taking in the policy school on a scale of 1=extremely insignificant to 10= extremely important?
General Writing Skills				
Organizing your ideas				
Developing your ideas by providing examples or evidence				
Evaluating the credibility of sources used for research				
Writing with greater clarity				
Writing with greater concision				
Writing more coherently				
Writing less abstractly and more concretely				
Using appropriate register and vocabulary				
Using "hedges" and "intensifying" terms appropriately				
Avoiding plagiarism				
Paraphrasing or summarizing a text into your own words				

Blending quotations from outside sources				
Writing accurate Chicago-style citations and endnotes				
Revising your writing				

Policy Writing Skills for the Memo

How to write an executive summary				
How to define your policy problem clearly in terms of deficit or excess to show its scope, urgency, and impact				
How to frame your problem appropriately for your principal's interests and sphere of influence				
How to illustrate your problem's urgency and severity with credible evidence from nonbiased sources				
How to provide brief, clear historical context for your policy problem				
How to illustrate the cause-and-effect linkages of your policy problem with substantial evidence				
How to clearly and objectively define your policy alternatives				
How to clearly and objectively define your criteria used to measure the outcomes of each alternative, indicating how they will be measured and weighted				
How to organize your analysis of the projected outcome of every alternative according to each criterion				
How to support your analysis with credible evidence, including statistics, facts, expert testimony, and comparative evidence				
How to replace ambiguous terms (such as "costly") with more precise indicators of measurement (such as "1 million USD")				

How to justify your recommendation of the highest-scoring alternative by showing how its benefits outweigh its costs, risks, or other disadvantages in comparison to the other alternatives				

Policy-Writing Skills for the Op-ed

How to write a descriptive title that captures the reader's attention				
How to write a hook that begins with a striking fact, personal story, or other rhetorical technique to grab readers' attention and illustrate the urgency of the issue				
How to establish your authority and credibility to write on the topic				
How to write for a general audience with varying degrees of background knowledge and differing perspectives on the issue				
How to use evidence to expose the urgency and scope of the problem				
How to state your recommendation clearly and persuasively				
How to justify your recommendation with solid arguments and evidence				
How to refute your opponents' arguments (not your opponents' character)				
How to conclude the op-ed by calling the readers to action and emphasizing the urgency of the issue				
How to use rhetorical techniques, such as anaphora, analogies, metaphors, vivid imagery, emotional appeals, sarcasm, etc.				
How to use the dash and other punctuation for emphasis				

Please rate your agreement to the following statements on a scale of 1=not at all to 10=very much.

1. Before taking EAP Content Writing, I knew how to write a policy memo.

2. Before taking EAP Content Writing, I knew how to write an op-ed.

3. Overall, the EAP Content Writing class addressed important writing skills.

4. Overall, I improved my writing skills by taking the EAP Content Writing class.

5. In general, the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class were useful for written assignments in my IPS 503 Policy Analysis and Communications class.

6. In general, I applied the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class to written assignments for my IPS 503 Policy Analysis and Communications class.

7. In general, the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class were useful for written assignments in other courses I am taking in the policy school.

8. In general, I applied the writing skills I learned in my EAP Content Writing class to written assignments for other courses I am taking in the policy school.

9. Analyzing and discussing sample policy memos in EAP Content Writing helped me to write a better policy memo.

10. Analyzing and discussing sample op-eds in EAP Content Writing helped me to write a better op-ed.

11. My EAP instructor's feedback on my memo helped me to write a better memo.

12. My EAP instructor's feedback on my op-ed helped me to write a better op-ed.

13. Written in-class exercises in EAP Content Writing (individually or as a team) helped me to improve my writing skills.

14. From the general, policy, and op-ed writing skills listed on the table beginning on page one, identify one or more skills (if any) to which you responded with a score of 8 or above.

Explain the following:

    a.   Why the writing skill is important or useful
    b.   How you applied the writing skill to a written assignment in one of your policy classes
    c.   What specific activity or activities in your EAP Content Writing class helped you improve this writing skill

15. From the general, policy, and op-ed writing skills listed on the table beginning on page one, identify one or more skills (if any) to which you responded with a score below an 8. Explain the following:

    a.   Why the skill was not very important or useful
    b.   Why you couldn't apply the writing skill very well to written assignments in your policy classes
    c.   What could have helped you master the writing skill better in your EAP course

16. The EAP Content Writing class is intended to heighten your awareness of general textual characteristics of policy memos and op-eds which can be applied to most circumstances. By learning about these textual characteristics, you are expected to be able to apply this style of writing to your own topic for your policy memo or op-ed. Please reflect carefully on this methodological approach and consider:

    a.   How successful was it? Did you learn more about the textual characteristics of policy memos and op-eds (like how writers use evidence to defend their claim or how they organize a policy memo or op-ed) from EAP Content Writing?
    b.   Were the general writing skills learned applicable to your specific context and situation? Do you recall instances when these textual characteristics were or were not applicable to your specific memo or op-ed?
    c.   How easy or difficult was it to apply the general skills learned in class to your particular memo or op-ed?
    d.   Was the feedback you received from your EAP instructor and policy professor *similar and useful*, *different but equally useful*—focusing on different, yet equally important, features of your writing, or *different and contradictory*—perhaps rendering it less useful? Support your claims with examples if possible.

17. What writing skills were not sufficiently addressed in the EAP Content Writing course which you would recommend adding to the curriculum? How would these skills help you improve your writing for your discipline?

18. What changes, if any, would you suggest to the approach to teaching policy writing at the [name of school]? What features, if any, would you keep the same? Explain your response.