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Karen Rowan TSSA Winter 2012

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TSSA One-Page REPORT

Name, Department, and Email address:

Karen Rowan, English Department, krowan@csusb.edu

Name and Date of conference attended:

Conference on College Composition and Communication, March 21-24, 2012

Teaching Skill(s) Studied:

My study focus for this Teaching Study Skills Award was on approaches to designing translingual and multilingual pedagogies, particularly for writing classes. A translingual approach to writing instruction “sees difference in language not as a barrier to overcome or as a problem to manage, but as a resource for producing meaning in writing, speaking, reading, and listening” (Horner, Lu, Royster, and Trimbur 303). As such, translingual and multilingual pedagogies explicitly advocate a shift away from viewing language difference as a deficit (i.e., constructing international and multilingual students as lacking) and towards viewing language difference as a resource that can be productively engaged in our teaching to the benefit of all students. In order to make this shift, however, we must learn how to translate theoretical and pedagogical commitments into classroom practices.

To this end, I attended a half-day workshop, “Making Translingual Pedagogies a Reality: Redesigning Syllabi, Assignments, Feedback, and Program Mission Statements,” and several conference sessions, including “Of Gatekeepers and Keymasters: Designing Programs and Pedagogy for Multilingual Writers,” “Generation 1.5 Students’ Transition to College Reading and Writing: Strategies for Placement, Teaching, and Program Development,” and “Taking a Multilingual/Translingual Approach to Teaching and Tutoring Writing at Hispanic-Serving Institutions.”

Impact on Current Teaching (How was this info applied)?

As I noted above, the key challenge facing faculty interested in multi- and translingual pedagogies is to translate theoretical commitments into classroom practices. In the sessions I attended, I found that many of my colleagues nationally are still working to bridge that gap, such that many of the presentations I attended focused on arguing for multi- and translingual pedagogies more than on describing thoroughly articulated multi- and translingual pedagogies. Even so, the sessions I attended were productive, and I am currently using what I learned at this conference (and through further research) to develop a multilingual/translingual focus for English 306: Expository Writing, which I am scheduled to teach in Spring 2013.

Date Submitted: 1/15/13