



2008

Making it Through: From Start to Finish ... Faculty and Student Co-authorship Process

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Recommended Citation

Perry, Tara; Launius, Brian; and Peterson, Hayley, "Making it Through: From Start to Finish ... Faculty and Student Co-authorship Process" (2008). *Writing Research Fellows*. 27.

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WRITING COLLABORATIVE INQUIRY FELLOWSHIP

Closing Write-up for 2007-08

Researcher's Names: Dr. Tara Perry, Brian Launius, Hayley Peterson

Title: Making it Through: From Start to Finish... Faculty and Student Co-authorship Process

Research Questions:

RQ1: What is the process of co-authoring a writing project between professors and students?

RQ2: What are professor's perceptions of co-authoring a writing project with college students?

RQ3: What are student's perceptions of co-authoring a writing project with a professor?

RQ4: What communication processes are involved in student faculty co-authorship?

Method:

The qualitative method of data collection was utilized for this study. The researchers conducted two focus groups and seven face to face interviews with different subjects, professors and students. This study was conducted at a university in the Pacific Northwest.

We conducted one mini focus group consisting of three students which last about 2 hours. We then individually interviewed five students face to face for about one hour and a half each. We had a total of six women and two men.

We had one focus group of eight professors that lasted for 2.5 hours. We conducted two face to face individual interview's with professors. The individual interviews last about one hour and a half. We had a total of nine female and one male.

Key Findings:

At this time, the researchers are still coding, analyzing, and writing the current article. Therefore we can only share a preliminary summary of results at this time. Upon completion of the study, the research team will present the results and specifics of the findings.

The researchers found that the process for co-authoring entails several stages: forming, storming, norming, interpersonal relationship development, and performing. A number of benefits were found for both the faculty and students. The student benefits of writing with a faculty were: being able to understand the research process, networking, conference presentations, learning how to write scholarly work, developed lasting relationships, making classroom connections, etc. Students also mentioned a number of motivations that assisted them throughout their co-authorship process such as having a mentor for life, being held accountable which makes people more self-directed, and makes people interdependent, etc.

One of the major findings was that faculty benefited from having student perspective in developing ideas for the research study. The faculty have an opportunity to reflect upon how to better train and prepare students for the research writing process. Overall the faculty are able to

re-develop their curriculum based on the student perspective. Motivations experienced by faculty were to complete the project, publish the project, and accountability.

Implications for Further Study:

*At this time, the researchers are still coding, analyzing, and writing the current article. Therefore we can only share a preliminary summary of results. Upon completion of the study, the research team will present the results and specifics of the findings.

This study may encourage researchers to further develop qualitative and quantitative studies regarding how the co-authorship writing process is conducted. Given the lack of studies regarding collaborative writing, future researchers could focus specifically on the communicative aspect of writing.

Implications for Teaching and Learning:

*At this time, the researchers are still coding, analyzing, and writing the current article. Therefore we can only share a preliminary summary of results at this point. Upon completion of the study, the research team will present the results and specifics of the findings.

It is important to note that the collaborative co-authorship process between professors and students is a reciprocal process whereby both groups are working as partners and gaining benefits. For students and faculty, it is important that a partnership can be developed where both parties are respected. Professors can offer more opportunities for students to co-author research projects which can assist students to apply the classroom knowledge to real life situations.