CHAPTER 9.

CRIPPING WRITING PROCESSES: COMPOSING (NEURO)DIVERGENTLY

Ada Hubrig
Sam Houston State University

Anna Barritt
University of Oklahoma

In this chapter, the authors describe **works-in-progress** *as a pedagogical intervention used in online, any time learning and hybrid learning. Specifically, the authors respond to ableist assumptions about the writing process by encouraging writing process practices that more suitably accommodate diverse learners in sustained thinking about a topic, and more advantageously meet the demands of online learning. In describing their "better practice," this chapter addresses the themes of accessibility and inclusivity and practices adapted from classic composition strategies.*

FRAMEWORKS AND PRINCIPLES IN THIS CHAPTER

- **GSOLE Principle 1.1:** All stakeholders and students should be aware of and be able to engage the unique literacy features of communicating, teaching, and learning in a primarily digital environment.

GUIDING QUESTIONS BEFORE YOU BEGIN READING

- What might all writing instructors need to know about the theory and practice of "cripping," as a framework that foregrounds social justice and resilience for marginalized students who are disabled and neurodivergent?
- How might we recognize, appreciate, and honor neurodivergent learners' thought processes in our classroom contexts and spaces?
- What assumptions does your own writing pedagogy make about your students and their learning?

DOI: https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2024.2241.2.09

- How can the writing process respect students' agency, ownership, and ways of thinking about who they are as writers?

INTRODUCTION

> I want us to examine how we—as WPAs, teachers, and colleagues—operationalize and reinforce ableism in the very design of our programs.
>
> – Remi Yergeau (2016, p. 156)

A Glimpse into Ada's Experience

In an informal, interdisciplinary mentorship group of undergraduate and graduate neurodivergent students, Ada (they/them) commiserated with others about sites of struggle we experienced in our education as autistic and otherwise neurodivergent students. A frequent topic of dismay in our group was this thing called "the writing process." As something of the de facto organizer of our group and the writing studies person, I listened patiently as one of my compatriots expressed her frustrations: "I don't think they get that I don't write that way! I end up writing my whole paper first, and then go back to jump through all the extra hoops they ask for."

Being asked to move through formal stages of brainstorming and outlining, then making a rough draft, revisions, and a final draft was often anxiety inducing for neurodivergent students, who would frequently describe it as "jumping through extra hoops" to please their neurotypical professors, rather than the productive, useful exercises they were meant to be. One student would draft her essay weeks ahead of time, only to reverse engineer documents for the brainstorming and outlining assignments. As a neurodivergent person, I (Ada) identified with these students' struggles. Throughout my education, the more stream-of-consciousness rough drafts I would first create were clearly unacceptable to my teachers, who believed I was not putting in the required effort to meet their demands, despite the fact that I was often spending much more time drafting than seemed to be normal. My rough drafts were often incomprehensible to instructors, so it would appear to them that I had made more or less complete essays; I, too, would then engage in this reverse engineering of "products" that I could use to meet drafting requirements throughout my educational career. Could I make an outline first? No. But I'd draft a more completed form of my essay and go back and produce required artifacts like an outline. I noted that in contexts outside of classes, I was rarely required to do this. Noting this disconnect between how we were expecting students to write and how we are expected to "perform" the writing process in composition, I wondered how else we could frame the writing process.

A Glimpse into Anna's Experience

~~I, Anna, (she/her) am neurotypical (I think). But I am also a lifelong procrastinator who needs the pressure and chaos of an imminent deadline to perform.~~ I, Anna, (she/her) began writing this chapter thinking I was neurotypical. Shortly before the final editing stage, I was formally diagnosed with ADHD, confirming my lifelong suspicion that I was neurodivergent. There have been many instances throughout my undergraduate and graduate education in which professors required a fully developed rough draft before the final deadline. I acquiesced and met their demands, but I was never satisfied with my project when this process was imposed upon me, and it was reflected in my grade. Despite my own negative experiences, I found myself prescribing a linear writing process to my own composition students. Shoehorning students' writing processes into a presentable draft that instructors can assess is just what we do, right? I always believed that my own chaotic prewriting and revision process was an exception to the rule, and that I should exert the same kind of teacherly control that past writing instructors had done with me. However, I was struck by a student evaluation I came across during my time as an assistant writing program administrator. It was this comment that helped me begin to see that perhaps I am not an outlier, and that there is a need to make space in composition pedagogy for the many ways students engage with the writing process. The student in our program (but not in my class) wrote:

> [This class] sucked. I think the course is tailored to a specific writing/research method that is especially uncommon in students with ADHD or autism. When I write a paper I write it from start to finish as it is going to be written. This means that it takes a lot more time for me to finish a paper, but it takes a lot less time for me to edit it. Requiring a rough draft a week before the paper is due only benefits students who write faster and sloppier papers and edit details later. Frankly, this expectation for a specific work style in a gen ed course is a bit unrealistic and ableist.

I found the comment jarring. I have always felt that my own chaotic writing process, which does not follow the standard procedure of rough draft, revision, final draft, was an anomaly. Suddenly I saw my own feelings reflected back at me, except the complaint was in a way lodged at me as administrator who oversees the requirements of first-year composition (FYC) courses.

Towards (Neuro)Divergent Writing Processes

We share these stories about autistic/neurodivergent experiences with a degree of hesitation, knowing too-well how anecdotal evidence of disabled peoples'

experiences are often narrativized in institutional settings and used against us/them (Dolmage, 2017; Hubrig, 2020; Kerschbaum, 2015). We approach this work considering carefully anecdotal evidence about neurodiversity, and echo Margaret Price (2011) who argues, "[w]e must resist facile conclusions about our students based upon their diagnosed, self-identified, or suspected neuroatypicalities, and focus instead on ways that their writing and ways of knowing might change and inform our practices" (p. 56). Together, we (Anna and Ada) work to better respect and honor students' ways of knowing, their ways of engaging in the writing process.

Centering neurodivergent experiences, then, we ask: Is it possible that drafting requirements are doing harm? We are not suggesting that we abandon the rough draft or a composing process; rather, we challenge writing instructors to question why we require a rough draft, and to question what counts as evidence of student effort, especially within the context of online writing courses. We propose a more open drafting system we call "works-in-progress," coupled with any time online workshops that allow for more divergent drafting processes.

SCHOLARSHIP, THEORIES, AND PRINCIPLES THAT GUIDE OUR APPROACH

We come to this work as writing scholars interested in cultivating what Elizabeth Brewer calls "a culture of access" (Brewer et al., 2014) that centers disabled positionalities and experiences to transform pedagogical approaches. We echo Allison Harper Hitt (2021), who argues that issues of disability and neurodivergence are often positioned in writing studies as an obstacle that can be overcome. Hitt establishes how this orientation toward "overcoming" disability is often deployed with the expectation that disabled students alter their practices, rather than writing instructors confronting the ableism of our own pedagogy and practices. We echo disability scholars in writing studies in reorienting the field's understanding of disability, as Tara Wood and colleagues (2014) argue, "Disability's presence, like the presence of students with race, class, or gender differences, is not a 'problem' but rather an opportunity to rethink our practices in teaching writing" (p. 148). That is, rather than seeing disability and neurodivergence as an issue needing to be solved in the writing classroom—and in an attempt to respect neurodivergent writers' processes—we imagine how we can center disabled ways of knowing in our pedagogy.

We begin this work by imagining how we might become more receptive and more inclusive to (neuro)divergent composing processes. To that end, we turn to the National Council of Teachers of English's professed commitments to

students' rights to their own language. We turn to the Conference on College Composition and Communication's *Students' Right to Their Own Language*. We truncate the long history of this document: originally drafted in 1971–1972, the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* statement was printed in *College Composition and Communication* in 1974, reaffirmed in 2003, an annotated bibliography was added to the document in 2006, and it was again reaffirmed in 2014. We imagine how individual instructors might take up *Students' Right to their Own Language* in regard to neurodiversity.

Throughout the statement's long history, the document emphasizes variance and variety of *spoken* language, though it also explores the importance for variances with written language. The statement discusses "dialects" of the English language, and insists that variants of the English language each follow their own rules of correctness. We push back against the framing of Black Englishes as "dialects," understanding that many of the examples in the statement refer to Black Englishes, which we recognize to be full languages in their own right and point to the *This Ain't Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice!* document created by the 2020 CCCC Special Committee on Composing a CCCC Statement on Anti-Black Racism and Black Linguistic Justice, Or, Why We Can't Breathe. While we highlight this reference to "dialects" as one shortcoming of the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* statement, we also point out that in the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* statement the central argument that a teacher's role in language learning should be to assist students in further developing their own language skills—"in short, to do what they are already doing, better."

As we reflect on the purpose of the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* statement, we appreciate the main focus on honoring students' language practices. But we also feel the ways the statement has been taken up—usually in terms of students' word choice, grammar, syntax, and other features of writing—are admirable, but ultimately too limited in that these articulations do not do enough to honor the students' language *processes*. We extend this line of thinking from language practices to include not only the words that are spoken or written on the page, but the processes students employ to *write words* on the page. We believe that a student's right to their own language must also include student's rights to their own language *processes*. We seek to better understand the nuances and differences writers exercise in their writing process, including differences in the composing processes of neurodivergent writers.

Let's consider the words of neurodivergent scholar Amy Gaeta (2020), who describes their own writing process and critiques of that process as something akin to stream of consciousness, recording what they think. They describe how this is received poorly by their instructors:

> Multiple professors told me this was my problem—I didn't know how to write. But, there is no other way that I can write. One thing that is misunderstood about neurodivergent people is this: it is not our preference to think and process differently, it isn't just more comfortable for us. We cannot think and process any other way. (Gaeta, 2020)

In Gaeta's account of their experience, we read a lack of respect for neurodivergent processes, and we see this failure to respect neurodivergent processes as "anti-autistic ableism" (Osorio, 2020). In response, we seek another way of framing writing processes, one that might support writers like Gaeta, respecting not only their own language in terms of word choice, but their language in terms of process. In other words, we extend the mandate that teachers should support learners in what they are doing, better, to the writing, drafting, and workshopping process. We believe this extension of the central argument from the *Students' Right to Their Own Language* statement has important repercussions for language instruction for neurodivergent learners and disabled learners more broadly, honoring not only their *words* but their *processes,* recognizing process is a part of language.

Interconnected and inextricable to our concerns about neurodivergent writing processes are the ways writing is racialized in our classrooms. As Asao Inoue (2015) argues, "As judges of English in college writing classrooms we cannot avoid this racializing of language when we judge writing, nor can we avoid the influence of race in how we read and value the words and ideas of others" (p. 33). We understand that the ways in which we read and evaluate language cannot be separated from the racializing of language: the embodied experiences of neurodivergence and disability cannot be separated from embodied experiences of race and ethnicity. We also strive to better respect students' writing processes as an issue of justice more broadly. As Christina Cedillo (2018) establishes in their account as a Chicanx, disabled, neurodivergent professor of writing and rhetoric, the ways race, ethnicity, and disability shape how the embodied process of writing is received are inseparable from one another. Cedillo writes:

> Writing, which was once all I ever wanted to do for a living, now feels oppressive, mentally and physically painful every time I have to do it. I often spiral and shut down, driven to bed to avoid facing my failure. Years later, I am a teacher of writing and I can't even follow my own advice to get things done. I'm a charlatan just trying to make it from one day to the next. I don't think this profession is really for me. (2018)

We read, throughout Cedillo's account—both the glimpse of their story we've offered here and the larger context of their article—a centering of White, neurotypical, nondisabled ways of knowing and writing, as well as a privileging of White, neurotypical, nondisabled process in writing instruction. We move to respect a wider range of writing processes in the classroom to decenter not only nondisabled ways of composing, but to decenter Whiteness as well.

A space that is uniquely poised to embrace students' rights to their own processes of language, especially neurodivergent students' processes, is the online classroom—more specifically, the any time classroom. Online Literacy Instruction Principle #1, established by the Global Society of Online Literacy Educators, foregrounds universal accessibility and inclusivity, including the ability of "all stakeholders and students [to] be aware of and be able to engage the unique literacy features of communicating, teaching, and learning in a primary digital environment." As we work to expand the work of CCCC's *Students' Right to Their Own Language* statement, we also work to extend the OLI Principle #1, pushing this principle's commitment to accessibility and inclusivity in online literacy instruction to also respect neurodivergent students' ability to engage in their own writing processes, not just one typically valued in the "brainstorm, outline, draft, revise, copyedit" steps that dominate most college writing classrooms. As we will discuss later in this chapter, the affordances of asynchronicity position instructors to "crip"—intentionally centering the embodied experiences of disabled people to challenge ablenormative understandings, imagining new possibilities beyond existing systems, and creating more just spaces (McRuer, 2006, p. 32)—many of the intrinsically ableist features of the traditional classroom in favor of more inclusive pedagogy, including how we teach and assess the writing process.

COURSE CONTEXT AND LESSON

Anna teaches FYC at the University of Oklahoma, a large public research institution in the Midwest. Students are typically highly prepared and represent the highest test scores in the state. The writing program curriculum is based on rhetorical education, enacted through the teaching of key concepts such as rhetorical listening, critical inquiry, and the questioning protocol of stasis theory in order to exercise deliberation and participate in public life. In the first course of the two-course sequence (Comp I), students practice "slowing down" argumentation and focus on excavating the values, beliefs, and worldviews that motivate individuals and groups. Building on this groundwork, the second course of the sequence (Comp II) asks students to select a public controversy to investigate throughout the semester, beginning with an analysis of the issue's history,

context, and stakeholders. Using stasis theory to identify what is at stake for different individuals and groups, students then work to discover the heart of disagreement in a public controversy and identify what kinds of arguments—i.e., what stasis category—stakeholders are making about the issue (arguments of fact, definition, quality, or policy). Eventually, students craft an argument to an indifferent or resistant stakeholder with the goal of persuading them to change their mind or actions. Throughout the course sequence, students are expected to produce drafts of each major essay project that receives feedback both from peers and the instructor.

In the spring of 2021, Anna taught Comp I in a hybrid blended format, with one day in-person, one day on Zoom, and the equivalent of one day of any time learning. Though there was some wiggle room as to what day was designated for which modality, Anna was required to hold at least two synchronous class sessions due to mandates imposed by upper administration. Anna was then assigned to teach Comp II in the summer of 2021, though to do so fully asynchronously. The nature of summer session courses meant that many students had returned home and were in different time zones, were working full time, and were juggling family obligations. The deadlines for drafts and final projects were also in rapid succession due the condensed schedule (eight weeks). We see these constraints as access barriers, where students were ultimately assessed by their compliance rather than their writing. And we believe that they make the affordances of asynchronicity all the more important.

In the fall of 2020, Ada began teaching composition classes at Sam Houston State University. SHSU is a regional research state university with over 20,000 students and has recently been designated a Hispanic Serving Institution. Moving to a new city and beginning teaching in a new context, mid-pandemic, proved to be a difficult transition, and Ada's students were also (quite understandably) struggling to make progress in their online classes during this difficult time. Because of various pandemic-related struggles, Ada chose to structure their Composition I and Composition II online classes as any time learning, but also found—through informal surveys to the class—that they really wanted a deeper sense of connection to the class itself and to one another. Ada began to imagine what it would mean to crip this class in this any time learning context.

Partly because of the newly asynchronous nature of our online composition courses, we both found ourselves thinking carefully about constraints of time. We echo the disability studies concept of *crip time* introduced by Allison Kafer (2013) and expanded on by Ellen Samuels (2017). In short, crip time establishes that time is not experienced in a standard way, but that disabled people experience time (and constraints of time) quite differently. Kafer (2013) explains that "rather than bend disabled bodies and minds to meet the clock, crip time bends

the clock to meet disabled bodies and minds" (p. 27). Wood (2017) has explored crip time in the writing studies classroom, arguing that "we must pay attention to how we construct time; otherwise, we may enforce normative time frames upon students whose experiences and processes exist in contradiction to such compulsory measures of time" (pp. 260-261). We write alongside Wood as we think more critically about how our course expectations draw on ableist norms and expectations of how students experience time and labor. For instance, as our own vignettes as well as Gaeta's experiences demonstrate, the drafting process may take more time and look altogether different than their nondisabled peers. As another example, in contrast to the typical stage of brainstorming in the writing process that is expected to happen in the beginning of the process, the perspective of crip time invites us to reconsider this stage entirely, as the student in Anna's program suggests by stating that they write a paper "from start to finish as it is going to be written." In short, typical composition classrooms do not acknowledge the needs—and timing considerations—of neurodivergent people.

Returning to Wood's point about constructing time, then, this reorientation towards disability also caused us to carefully reimagine the drafting process and peer response workshops—a staple of our synchronous, in-person writing classrooms—and how we might reinvent both drafting and writing workshops as an asynchronous, more neurodivergent-friendly process. We noted the difficulty many students had expressed with the drafting process and workshops. As we worked to create our any time, online composition classes, we sought ways to better respect the languaging and drafting processes of neurodivergent writers in our classes.

As part of this reflection on the drafting process in terms of crip time and neurodivergence, we asked ourselves, *what if instead of focusing our efforts on convincing students of the value of the rough draft, we rethink how we define process and revision?* We turned to other neurodivergent writers and disability scholars for answers. We considered, for example, Shawn Patrick Doyle, author of the blog Good Writer Bad Writer (https://goodwriterbadwriter.com), who often documents his experience writing with and through ADHD. Despite years of negative associations with writing, Doyle has found that for him, the key to unlocking the generative potential of ADHD relies on "planning for the storm," as he puts it. Doyle writes,

> The brain works much faster than the fingers can type. Ideas do not occur linearly in the order that is best for the reader to understand them. Writers need to manage this storm of ideas, capture the best points, and order them on the page. . . . I find that the key to managing this storm is to know it

> will come and put a plan in place to capture as many of these thoughts without having to worry about the order and structure of ideas. (2014)

In similar language, Griffin Keedy and Amy Vidali have coined the term "productive chaos"—a term that invokes "both mess and motion, an intentional juxtaposition pointing to the normative nature of the writing process and embracing the creative and threatening value of chaos and disability" (2016, pp. 25-26). Keedy and Vidali show us the discomfort writing instructors may feel when working with students who have very different thinking and/or writing processes, perhaps due to neurodivergence. If instructors can resist the impulse to "correct" what might present as disorganization or procrastination, we might begin to see the potential.

Keedy and Vidali further describe this concept:

> Productive chaos means allowing and even anticipating writing not as a formulaic process but as a highly personal and productive, if sometimes painful, creative act . . . Embracing disability in supporting writers and writing is a many-layered intervention that sometimes comes together into an engaging work of art and always challenges our common definitions of the writing process. (2016, p. 26)

What we want to emphasize from blogger Doyle and scholar-teachers Keedy and Vidali is that *process still matters*. A disability-centered approach to drafting does not mean we have to abandon the spirit of process and revision. What we do think it means is that we should *expand our definitions of process,* embracing the similar, yet subtly different term "progress." We can move away from shaming students for procrastinating or allegedly maintaining poor time management skills, and lean into "the storm" or the "productive chaos," to better honor neurodivergent ways of composing. To this end, we shifted our focus to "works-in-progress" (rather than "rough drafts") as well as created space for any time discussions of "works-in-progress" to better account for neurodivergences and crip time in our online writing classes. And, as we know from our understanding of students' rights to their own language, even a subtle shift from "process" to "progress"—ignoring our own student process could make a substantive difference for our writers.

Better Practice

Our suggestion for a more inclusive writing process begins with a "Works-in-Progress" (WIP) rather than a full rough draft, and moves toward an any time

writing workshop that makes more affordance for crip time, specifically relying on the asynchronicity of our courses, in the drafting process. In this section, we share our experiences with assigning the WIP in our courses and running any time writing workshops with the assignment. We will also offer generalized TILT assignment sheets—first for the "Works-in-Progress" assignment and second for the any time workshop that accompanies the WIP—that may be integrated into any writing course with room to customize for a specific essay project.

Re-framing the Writing Process: "Works-in-Progress" Rather than "Rough Drafts"

How do we allow for multiple writing processes in our writing classrooms that respect a variety of languaging processes while also honoring the progress that individual writers are making? Our interests and experiences with neurodivergent writers (and, in Ada's case, being a neurodivergent student and scholar) has led us to question conventionally held wisdom about the singular, capital "W" "Writing Process." We echo Jimmy Butts (2017), who argues that writing processes vary, not only across context, purpose, and audience, but also across individual writers. Butts points to the origins of our current process of crafting a full rough draft as a byproduct of the typewriter, where making revisions to a complete text at a time—rather than a more recursive revision process afforded by modern word processors—was an imperative set by technological limits (2017, pp. 109-112).

In moving away from this norm of "beleaguered revision" (Butts, 2017, p. 109), we instead imagine how we might thoughtfully engage students in their own emergent drafting processes, as unique and varied as our students are. While we can certainly share strategies that they might use in the writing process, we want to move away from the belief that there are concrete, universal steps in the writing process. This is why we ask students to submit a "work-in-progress" (WIP). While this means some students might turn in a traditional rough draft, this also allows for Keedy and Vidali's "productive chaos" in a conscious attempt to create space to honor the writing processes of neurodivergent writers. While WIPs do have certain labor-based guidelines (see "Rationale for the Works-in-Progress," below), they are also explicitly left more open-ended, and invite this "chaos" of composing. We are happy to receive stream-of-consciousness writing, bulleted lists or outlines, writing that more closely resembles a journal entry, diagrams or maps, a video discussion of their idea, or any other form that students are comfortable composing, enabling their own unique writing process.

The Work-in-Progress (WIP) draft functions as a practice that we recommend adopting in the composition classroom, rather than a specific lesson.

WIPs are thus highly context-specific; they can and should be adapted for the nuances of an instructor's particular essay assignment. For example, if we were focusing on the use of sources in the essay, we might ask to see an attempt at that task in some form so we can offer feedback on that particular task. For the first WIP due for Anna's summer Comp II course, for instance, she included a brief overview of why she was asking for a non-traditional draft (since students had already taken Comp I where more traditional rough drafts were assigned), an overview of how students might go about creating their WIP, and a list of minimum criteria, as demonstrated in Anna's artifact below.

Rationale for the Work-in-Progress

Everyone's writing process is unique. Personally, I struggle with the concept of writing a full "rough draft" that undergoes many rounds of revision before I submit a "final draft," which tends to be the writing process teachers and professors expected of me when I was in college. My brain works a bit more chaotically. I prefer to gather a lot of ideas, quotes, and concepts, and roughly organize them in the general structure I imagine for the paper. Then, I spend several hours "binge-writing" and voila! There's an essay! However, this does not mean that I don't value revision or that I don't believe writing can't be improved beyond the first draft—quite the contrary. What it does mean is that I value all forms of writing and thinking. I ask us to draft "works-in-progress" rather than "rough drafts" to respect our unique writing processes.

Purpose

For every major project, you will submit a "work-in-progress" draft that you will receive feedback on from your peers and from me. These drafts should demonstrate the project objectives in whatever form that may take for you. For some, that may mean writing a **cohesive draft** from start to finish, complete with an introduction, body paragraphs, transitions, etc. For others, it may mean a **detailed outline**, plugging in quotes and short commentary that helps you imagine the essay in its entirety before you write cohesive sentences and paragraphs. Or, you may be a visual thinker, so creating some sort of **diagram**, **map**, or **matrix** may help you imagine connections between your ideas that you can then translate to a cohesive, written essay.

If you are not in tune with your own writing process, I encourage you to use this first work-in-progress draft to explore. However, please keep in mind that your classmates and I will be giving you feedback. Your draft should be substantive (as outlined in the criteria below) so that we can help further your thinking and give you as much constructive feedback as possible.

If you have any questions about the work-in-progress draft, don't hesitate to reach out. Remember, you are more than welcome to write a conventional rough draft of the essay. The loose guidelines of this work-in-progress draft are meant to be helpful, not a hindrance. That being said . . .

- You should include a minimum of 1,200 words (of the 2,500–3,000-word final essay) in some form throughout the draft (or equivalent in another modality).
- The four key stakeholders/stakeholder groups you have found to be invested in and/or affected by the issue should be identified.
- It should be clear that you are applying stasis theory to the issue's debate, including key arguments and stakeholder positions.
- You must include a Works Cited page that lists the sources you intend to include in the final draft (eight sources minimum), with each entry correctly formatted in MLA.
- (Optional) If you have any questions or concerns you would like your peer reviewers to keep in mind, please include those either on the draft itself or as a comment on your assignment submission.

For the first WIP, most students submitted a traditional rough draft, though a few took advantage of the open-ended nature of the assignment and created outlines. As the semester progressed, Anna kept the WIP assignment description relatively the same apart from making changes to criteria that matched the needs of the current essay project. More and more students began to embrace the affordances of the WIP. One student uploaded several pictures of their hand-drawn notes of how they envisioned structuring the essay and an accompanying Word document with potential quotes to include in the final draft. Another student created what they called a "rough draft table," complete with topic sentences for each paragraph of the essay, direct quotes and a summary of the source material, and commentary that mapped out the student's goal for every paragraph. This process for assembling their thoughts was so different from anything Anna had seen before. Outlines are common, but the way in which the student segmented their thinking into categories with proposed ideas for how to analyze and synthesize sources painted a picture of a mind at work in an exciting and innovative way. In a survey of the WIP assignment at the end of the course, this student expressed the following,

> I loved how I had the freedom to organize my paper how I wanted. In regards to my writing process I thought it really helped me figure out how I wanted to write paper. Putting all my ideas and information onto a paper really helped me see the end result.

The student's drafting process certainly looked like "productive chaos" to her, but she and the student's peers were still able to offer constructive feedback that helps the student connect the dots, resulting in an excellent final essay.

In Ada's classes, changing expectations for drafts led to a reverse of what had become a pandemic trend. Since the pandemic began, more and more students were not turning in their rough drafts. But after changing to the WIP model, nearly every student turned in their WIP. In a mid-semester check-in that followed Boston University's "start / stop / continue" (https://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-resources/start-stop-continue/) model for midterm feedback, many students remarked that they appreciated the greater degree of flexibility this offered them (Boston University Center for Teaching and Learning, 2023). Students' remarks touched on how this flexibility not only helped disabled students, but students managing family life, work outside of school, and many other aspects of students' lives.

In office hours, one student who had chosen to disclose her neurodivergent status to Ada shared that she was especially appreciative of the WIP model, commenting that this feedback early on helped her better understand the goals of the assignment. She pointed to how she often felt instructors had *secret* objectives for their assignments, but having feedback on a draft early on helped her feel she was better meeting the goals/criteria for each essay.

In both of our experiences, the freedom and flexibility of the Work-in-Progress was generally well-regarded by most students, as they found it to be beneficial for their thinking and writing process. Some students still chose to submit a traditional rough draft, which was acceptable and fell within the criteria of the WIP assignment. And, as we evaluated these WIPs and provided feedback, we appreciated how this approach to drafting allowed for neurodivergent composing processes, which we will elaborate on in the final sections of this chapter.

Work-in-Progress TILT Assignment Sheet

Purpose

For the Work-in-Progress assignment, you will make a good-faith effort to meet the objectives of the project in whatever form that may take for you. For some, that may mean writing a cohesive draft from start to finish, complete with an introduction, body paragraphs, transitions, etc. For others, it may mean a detailed outline where you plug in quotes and short commentary that helps you imagine the essay in its entirety before you write cohesive sentences and paragraphs. Or, you may be a visual thinker, so creating some sort of diagram, map, or matrix may help you imagine connections between your ideas that you can then translate to a cohesive, written essay.

The purpose of this assignment is to help you explore and develop a writing process that works for your own learning needs and preferences, which is essential to your success in this composition course and future college and professional contexts. Specifically, you will:

- Understand writing as a process of exploration.
- Develop a flexible and effective strategy for composing.

In completing a WIP draft, you will practice important skills of a successful writer, including planning, drafting, and revising, though the ways in which you go about practicing these skills (and the form they take) will depend on your own writing process.

Task

1. Begin by reviewing the essay assignment description, including the minimum requirements.
   - Develop a Work-in-Progress draft that demonstrates your ideas, plans, and/or attempts at the essay project.

Criteria for Success

Though the WIP is an open-ended assignment that may be completed according to your drafting preferences, there are some requirements.

- You have submitted a WIP assignment.
- You have included author's notes.

Asynchronous Works-in-Progress Workshops

As we continue to reflect on crip time and how we might better respect the language and composing practices of neurodivergent students, we turn our attention to asynchronous writing workshops as a key element of our "works-in-progress" practice.

Echoing our consideration of crip time earlier in this chapter, we are interested in the "works-in-progress" practice as part of an any time online classroom because of the affordances it might make for accessibility. In the GSOLE Webinar, "Accessible Affordances of Asynchronicity: Cripping Online Instruction," Leslie R. Anglesey and Molly E. Ubbesen (2021) reflect on their own access needs as instructors as well as those of their students, especially as they were impacted by the 2020 shift to online learning. This resulted in a rich discussion of the affordances of the any time classroom and the ways in which asynchronicity counters much of the embedded ableism stemming from normative assumptions about what "time" and "engagement" often look like in the synchronous

classroom. Anglesey and Ubbesen (2021) argue that the synchronous classroom, whether in-person or digitally mediated, often comes with narrow views of presence, creating a narrative in which "students' bodies, behaviors, and dispositions represent their engagement in the course," which can become problematic when engagement is assessed for a grade. The any time classroom, on the other hand, offers students more control over their learning experience in ways that align with their needs and preferences. Asynchronicity allows instructors to crip attendance and to crip engagement—students may choose when, where, and how to engage with class content. While the freedom and flexibility afforded by any time classrooms may benefit a number of students who may struggle in a synchronous classroom for a variety of reasons, we argue from our experiences that it is especially beneficial for neurodivergent students, particularly in the drafting process.

Version 1: Running Asynchronous Writing Workshops through Canvas LMS

For Anna's Comp II summer course, she relied on features of the Canvas Learning Management System (LMS). As Ada will explain in the next section, though, asynchronous writing workshops can be facilitated successfully through other platforms outside of an LMS. Students received completion grades for fulfilling all steps of the workshop.

First, students were asked to submit their WIP drafts as .docx files to the assignment dropbox. When creating the assignment in Canvas, the "Automatically Assign Peer Reviews" feature was enabled. As long as students submitted by the deadline, they would automatically and randomly be assigned two drafts to review that would appear on their dashboard. It is also possible to manually assign peer reviews, which can be useful for research-based projects that the instructor would like to group thematically, but can be very time-consuming. Enabling "Anonymous Peer Reviews" is not recommended. In her experience, students are more likely to leave inappropriate feedback when anonymous, and this feature also prevents students from using the annotation tools in Canvas. Each WIP assignment (four total) had criteria specific to the essay project, but typically asked for a minimum word count, a Works Cited page, and optional author's notes included with the submission. In the future, she will require author's notes, as WIPs that included author's notes received more substantial feedback in the workshop. Requiring the notes ensures that students are thinking critically about what they have accomplished and what kinds of input might help them move forward. It also ensures deeper engagement from peers.

To receive full credit for the writing workshop, students were asked to answer several peer review questions specific to the essay project, offer one

compliment about a specific strength of the draft, make at least one concrete suggestion for revision, and respond to any author's notes. Students were encouraged to use the annotation tools available through Canvas DocViewer (automatically available through the Canvas Peer Review function as long as peer review is not anonymous) or leave their feedback in a summative comment. Because the course took place over an eight-week summer semester, students had only 48 hours to leave feedback. This short turn-around certainly contrasts with Anna's goals to enact crip time, but at the time felt necessary due to the truncated summer session. After the student deadline for leaving feedback, Anna read through the drafts, leaving each student a summative comment that focused on ways to develop the draft more fully or potential areas for focused revision.

After receiving instructor and peer feedback, students were asked to submit a full draft of the essay project by a particular date (note: Anna usually offered a full week). Some students had only minor revision goals to attend to if they submitted a more complete draft for the Work-in-Progress. Other students' final drafts differed greatly from the WIP submission. In either case, the writer had comments from two peers and the instructor to refer back to, as compared to a reliance on their own notes and memory of a traditional, synchronous, and talk-dominated peer review session.

Version 2: Running Asynchronous Writing Workshops through Google Docs and Flip

For Ada's 1301 and 1302 courses, students worked outside the LMS using free educational technology (including the video-based discussion tool, Flip, and Google Docs). Though unfortunately neither Google Docs nor Flip are integrated into Blackboard (the LMS at Ada's university), these two free-to-use programs allowed for a relatively smooth asynchronous writing workshop experience. Students received points for completing each step of the process.

First, students would be asked to share their "works-in-progress" drafts as a shared Google Doc in an established Google Drive folder, with their last name as the title (this made it much easier for peers to search for each other's work). Importantly, each of these documents were set so that anyone who accessed the folder had in-app permissions to comment on each other's work.

After sharing their files with their peers, students would record their own author's note video in Flip. In these videos (usually three to five minutes), students would be able to describe the feedback they would like to receive on the draft. While they were encouraged to ask about the specific features we were working on developing for that individual assignment (such as using sources in writing, using narrative to support a claim, etc.), students would share a range of

questions about their writing. Among the most common requests for feedback were concerns about "flow" (something of a nebulous idea that we worked together, through these videos, to define as a class), organization of the essay, and clarity of the main idea.

For our asynchronous workshop, students would be given usually a week (though sometimes more for larger projects) to read and respond to three to five of their peers' WIP assignments (the number was dependent on the course, the project, and the time we had to respond). For the first half of the semester, these were randomized (Ada randomized the groups in a spreadsheet), but students formed their own groups in the second half of the semester. Students would be asked to leave four to five comments in the Google Doc (that responded to the questions asked in the author's note video), as well as respond to their peers' Flip author's note. In student's video responses to the author's note, they would recap the comments and feedback they left for the author. These would usually be about one-to-two-minute videos that offered quick summaries of their feedback. Oftentimes, students would follow up asynchronously with questions for their reviewers, though this was not a required stage of the workshop process. Ada—as their instructor—was also able to give students feedback directly in response to their author's note on Flip.

Based on the feedback each author received, they would then be tasked with completing their essays. Because of the nature of the WIP, that meant some students were already working from full drafts, while others were working from an outline or a couple paragraphs. Ada would ask students to post their essay on Blackboard (because of external institutional pressures to have artifacts for course assessment). Students would use the comment box alongside their submission to also post the three most important insights they used in the final drafting process from the feedback they received, and how their completed essay responded to those insights as a way to give Ada a framework for responding to their work.

Through both of our experiences, we are encouraged by the mostly positive reception to the WIP and workshop, and we've found it's helpful to:

- tailor the WIP instructions to the writing assignment, to be sure it still highlights the writing task(s) central to the goals for the assignment (see the Assignment Sheet below)
- include author's notes to help guide students through the workshop process, ensuring feedback that is more relevant and useful to the student and
- articulate the usefulness of reflection in asking students to retrace what they learned about writing through the WIP process.

WIP Writing Workshop TILT Assignment Sheet

Purpose

Now that you have explored your own writing process in the Work-in-Progress draft, it is time to workshop your draft with your peers and instructor. Receiving feedback not only helps you imagine new paths for your own writing, but engaging with your peers' WIP drafts exposes you to other ways of composing.

The purpose of this assignment is to help you to continue to develop and refine your writing while learning about others' unique writing processes, which is essential to your success in this composition course and future college and professional contexts. Specifically, you will:

- Improve synthesis of your ideas.
- Clarify your claims.
- Develop methods for evaluating others' writing.

By participating in the WIP writing workshop, you will practice important skills of a successful writer, including giving and receiving feedback.

Task

1. Read the WIP drafts assigned to you, paying careful attention to the author's notes.
2. Using the platform (ex. Canvas DocViewer, Google Docs, Flip), give feedback on your peer's draft.

Criteria for Success

- You have left four to five comments on a peer's draft that responds to their author's notes.
- You have asked one to two generative questions that will further your peer's thinking and drafting.

REFLECTION ON PRACTICE

As we reflect on our emerging works-in-progress workshop, we focus on challenges we've encountered with WIPs, mostly related to the ideas that, first, some students who struggle with the degree of choice they are given and, second, the ways that WIPs reshape peer review and writing feedback. We note that some students did not respond well to the freedom of the WIP; the degree of freedom was overwhelming and some simply asked us as instructors, "but what do you want me to do?" To meet this challenge, we've tried to continually emphasize that writing a more formal, complete rough draft is still always an option. At the

same time, we believe this freedom to be a useful challenge, asking students to contemplate their own writing processes.

Closely related to some students struggling with a greater degree of freedom for the WIP assignment was the point that students similarly struggled to give peer feedback. As one student described,

> I was not really a big fan of reading other people's work in progresses because everyone has their own style in which they did the work in progress . . . read[ing] one which described what he was going to do rather than just writing what he was going to write [was challenging].

While the WIP workshop is a learning curve for us as instructors, as well, we are encouraged by the progress we've made so far. One measure that helped a great deal with the challenges of the WIP workshop was to ask students to craft author's notes; as a preface for their own feedback, these notes gave their peers helpful guidance on what kind of feedback the author was hoping for or what aspects of the assignment they may still have felt uncertain about. Some of the kinds of feedback students asked for in author's notes included:

- Being vulnerable in admitting they were still trying to find their main idea or argument, and asking for further discussion about the ideas they were communicating to help them find a focus.
- Asking readers if specific ideas in their WIPs were clear/unclear, including asking readers to say in their response what the reader thought the author was saying in the reader's own words.
- Asking where they might expand on ideas or add details.
- Pointing out places in their WIPs where they felt "stuck" and asking for suggestions on how they might proceed.

For students who had written more than the minimum, asking if there was writing they should consider cutting or sections/ideas that were unhelpful.

These author notes allowed students to ask thoughtful questions that helped them develop their writing, regardless of what stage of development their WIP was in.

Despite the challenges of using WIPs as compared to "rough drafts" or "outlines" of the past, we are committed to more fully explore WIPs as a better, more inclusive practice that centers the needs of neurodivergent learners. We believe it's a practice that moves us toward a classroom where neurodivergent students' writing and thinking processes are proactively integrated into the structure of the course. This is the "centering" of disability that we argue for. So often disabled students are only "accommodated" or "tolerated."

Though not all students love the WIP assignment at first, we think exposing students to this way of thinking is beneficial, on top of the obvious win for neurodivergent students. In addition to WIPs complementing the writing process for written assignments, they could similarly be used in multimodal assignments, such as the open-media assignment described by Orchard et al. in this collection (Chapter 12). Aside from the continuing benefit to neurodivergent learners, WIPs used in this context provide the flexibility necessary for multimodal composers working across different composing platforms.

CONCLUSION: MOVING BETTER PRACTICES ACROSS MODALITIES

Though we have focused this chapter on the affordances of the any time classroom for cripping the writing process, the WIP and any time feedback can be integrated into any writing classroom—be it synchronous, asynchronous, or hybrid. Synchronous classrooms most often require peer review activities to be completed during scheduled class time, asking students to read a draft, compose a written response, and then verbally discuss their feedback. Such strictures often provoke anxiety in students who may read, write, or speak at non-normative paces, but also have the potential to limit how deeply students can engage with their peers' work. Synchronous classrooms can easily forgo in-class peer review in favor of the any time workshop, regardless of the type of drafting process required.

Of course, we encourage synchronous instructors to adopt the work-in-progress model as well. The WIP is also easily adaptable to any installment of FYC. Ada and Anna both introduced the assignment in a Composition II course, where students typically have already had experience writing rough drafts. Assigning the WIP to students with an existing knowledge of what works and doesn't work for their own writing process allows them to experiment with new ways of composing and revising; however, introducing the WIP in a Composition I would certainly benefit students as well, particularly neurodivergent students.

Our ultimate wish is for writing instructors of all modalities to become more attuned to the generative potential of centering disability in our pedagogy—remembering that it's not instructors doing disabled students a favor when we make our classroom accessible, but rather that disabled students do us a favor when they demonstrate to us the ways in which are classroom spaces have foreclosed access (Hubrig, 2021), challenging us to develop better, more inclusive practices. While our practice is something of a Work-In-Progress itself, we have found initial success in making the drafting process more accessible by

experimenting with the Work-in-Progress assignment and subsequent asynchronous writing workshops. To return to Yergeau's insight which opened our article, we see this process as working to examine the ableism of our practices that center nondisabled experiences—like Anna's anonymous student who highlighted that ableism for us.

Our "better practice" is by no means the only way to make the online writing classroom more inclusive, but we believe that honoring students' right to their own writing process is one step toward cripping the composition classroom.

- **In-Person and Online, Real-Time Learning:** Synchronous classrooms can easily forgo in-class peer review in favor of the any time workshop, regardless of the type of drafting process required.
- **Online, Any Time Learning:** This practice is intentionally designed to leverage the affordances of any time learning, because real-time peer review can provoke anxiety in students who may read, write, or speak at non-normative paces, but also have the potential to limit how deeply students can engage with their peers' work.
- **Hybrid Learning:** For hybrid courses, this practice works best between real-time, in-person meetings, leveraging the affordances of the online, asynchronous periods of learning time.

REFERENCES

Anglesey, L., & Ubbesen M. (2021) *Accessible affordances of asynchronicity: Cripping online instruction* [Webinar]. Global Society of Online Literacy Educators. https://gsole.org/webinars/2021-2022-series

Boston University Center for Teaching and Learning. (2023). *Getting feedback from students*. Boston University. https://www.bu.edu/ctl/teaching-resources/start-stop-continue/

Brewer, E., Selfe, C. L., & Yergeau, R. (2014). Creating a culture of access in composition studies. *Composition Studies, 42*(2), 151-154.

Butts, J. (2017). The more writing process, the better. In C. E. Ball & D. M. Loewe (Eds.), *Bad Ideas about Writing* (pp. 109-116). West Virginia University Libraries. https://textbooks.lib.wvu.edu/badideas/badideasaboutwriting-book.pdf

CCCC Special Committee on Composing a CCCC Statement on Anti-Black Racism and Black Linguistic Justice. (2020). This Ain't Another Statement! This is a DEMAND for Black Linguistic Justice! *Conference on College Composition and Communication.* https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/demand-for-black-linguistic-justice

Cedillo, C. (2018). What does it mean to move? race, disability, and critical embodiment pedagogy. *Composition Forum, 39*. https://www.compositionforum.com/issue/39/to-move.php

Conference on College Composition and Communication. (2003). Students' right to

their own language. https://cccc.ncte.org/cccc/resources/positions/srtolsummary
Dolmage, J. T. (2017). *Academic ableism: Disability and higher education.* University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.9708722
Doyle, S. P. (2014) Writing with ADD. *Good Writer Bad Writer*. https://goodwriterbadwriter.com/2014/07/08/writing-with-a-d-d/
Gaeta, A. (2020) Writing and resisting: Owning your neurodivergent process. *AntiAbleist Composition, 1*(1). https://antiableistcomposition.wordpress.com/2020/03/05/561/
GSOLE Executive Board. (2019, June 13). *Online literacy instruction principles and tenets*. Global Society of Online Literacy Educators. https://gsole.org/oliresources/oliprinciples
Hitt, A. H. (2021). *Rhetorics of overcoming: Rewriting narratives of disability and accessibility in writing studies.* National Council of Teachers of English.
Hubrig, A. (2020). Narrativizing dis/ability: Deconstructing institutional uses of disability narratives. In A. R. Carr & L. R. Micciche (Eds.), *Failure pedagogies: Learning and unlearning what it means to fail* (pp. 223-237). Peter Lang.
Hubrig, A. (2021, April 19). Access from/as the start: On writing studies and "accessibility." *FEN Blog*. https://compstudiesjournal.com/2021/04/19/access-from-as-the-start-on-writing-studies-and-accessibility/
Inoue, A. B. (2015). *Antiracist writing assessment ecologies: Teaching and assessing writing for a socially just future.* The WAC Clearinghouse; Parlor Press. https://doi.org/10.37514/PER-B.2015.0698
Kafer, A. (2013). *Feminist, queer, crip.* Indiana University Press.
Keedy, G., & Vidali, A. (2016). Productive chaos: Disability, advising, and the writing process. *Praxis: A Writing Center Journal, 14*(2).
Kerschbaum, S. (2015). Anecdotal relations: On orienting to disability in the composition classroom. *Composition Forum, 32*(1).
McRuer, R., & Berube, M. (2006). *Crip theory: Cultural signs of queerness and disability*. New York University Press.
Osorio, R. (2020). I am #ActuallyAutistic, hear me tweet: The autist-topoi of autistic activists on Twitter. E*nculturation: A Journal of Rhetoric, Writing, and Culture*. http://enculturation.net/I_Am_ActuallyAutistic
Price, M. (2011). *Mad at school: Rhetorics of mental disability and academic life* (Illustrated ed.). University of Michigan Press. https://doi.org/10.3998/mpub.1612837
Samuels, E. (2017). Six ways of looking at crip time. *Disability Studies Quarterly, 37*(3).
Wood, T. (2017). Cripping time in the college composition classroom. *College Composition and Communication, 69*(2), 260-286.
Wood, T., Dolmage, J., Price, M., & Lewiecki-Wilson, C. (2014). Moving beyond disability 2.0 in composition studies. *Composition Studies, 42*(2), 147-150.
Yergeau, R. (2016). Saturday plenary address: Creating a culture of access in writing program administration. *Writing Program Administration, 40*(1), 155-165.