Second Annual Summer Seminar for
Composition Research

Data-driven Inquiry: Process, Methods, Results

July 29-August 10, 2012


Purpose and Focus: The program is designed to support members of our field who would like to engage in different kinds of research but have not had the opportunity to develop their expertise in understanding, choosing, and using particular research methods, effecting quantitative and qualitative analysis, carrying out critical analysis with (and of) statistics and statistical software, and preparing for publication of research. Research is broadly—and provisionally—defined here as systematic or replicable inquiry in response to a research question that can generate interpretable data, inquiry that is grounded in previous research and designed to extend existing knowledge and, through scholarly publication or other public contribution, to be extended itself. This year’s focus will be on data-driven research: process, methods, results. Future seminar themes will include longitudinal/student writing development, action research, ethnographic research, archival research, and institutional research.

Program leaders: Charles Bazerman, Cheryl Geisler, Christina Haas (additional national faculty will be announced as we determine project-specific issues).

The program’s key on-site features will include:

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<td>• Overview: major theories and research methods, formulation of feasible research questions, gaps in composition’s current research landscape, definition of research and its relationship to assessment.</td>
<td>• Overview: data treatment and analysis, focused on coding options, systematic treatment approaches, key software options and uses (Wordstat, Nvivo, QDA Miner).</td>
<td>• Practice session: data analysis in small groups.</td>
<td>• Workshop: developing preliminary coding schemes for participants’ data.</td>
<td>• Discussion: participants’ data collection, questions they can ask of the data, what that shows about what else they need to know, and how to obtain it.</td>
<td>• Overview: understanding and using parametric and non-parametric statistics.</td>
<td>• Workshop, statistical analysis: what do we really need to know? Excel, SPSS.</td>
<td>• Discussion: case study, critiquing existing empirical work.</td>
<td>• Overview: strategies for addressing challenges to research in specific institutional contexts; case study.</td>
<td>• Discussion: issues in ethical research; case study.</td>
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Other details: The specific program will be tailored to the research projects defined by applicants. The work of the group will begin in the February-July 2012 period: forming a
cohort, distributing readings, sharing information about projects, preliminary guidance from team leaders on IRB contact and data collection. This will be followed by a virtual seminar in advance of the summer seminar to discuss methods for further data collection: what else researchers might need to know and how to obtain it.

Peer review and consultations with team members will be ongoing throughout the seminar, starting with an initial meeting and ending with presentation of projects during the final two days.

Participants will leave the summer seminar with a concrete plan for completing the project they bring to the program, as well as an ongoing support network, including the program cohort and the team members.

**Who Should Attend:** We welcome new and seasoned composition teachers and WPAs from all types of institutions and writing positions, including two-year and four-year colleges and universities, writing centers, writing across the curriculum programs, or centers for teaching excellence. Participants may be researchers looking to expand their repertoire of methods, or new researchers.

**Costs:**

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<td>Program fee (includes all materials, access to the library and Internet while at Dartmouth)</td>
<td>$1,500</td>
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<td>Housing* for the full seminar term (single rooms in dormitories)</td>
<td>$650 approximate</td>
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<td>Meal plan* (flexible)</td>
<td>$100-300 approximate</td>
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<td>Athletic passes to all facilities; on-campus parking</td>
<td>$5 a day each</td>
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We will offer a $100 discount on the fee for 2012 CWPA conference attendees.

**About Dartmouth:** Dartmouth is in Hanover, NH, a beautiful New England town. Dartmouth offers an excellent summer location, with serious facilities, resources, and a work atmosphere, alongside recreational and cultural events for off-time: hiking, lakes, bicycling, concerts, films, speakers, and performances. There are many day care/summer camp opportunities for participants who might want to bring family; we’ll provide a directory. Dorms can accept non-seminar participants.

Access to Dartmouth is quite easy from Boston Logan (Dartmouth Coach is direct to campus every 2 hours). There are also flights into Manchester NH or Lebanon NH and Burlington VT, and an Amtrak train, Greyhound bus, and Dartmouth Coach from NYC.

**For More Information:** Please write to Christiane Donahue (christiane.donahue@dartmouth.edu) with any questions. Deadline for applications is December 15, 2011. Accepted participants will be notified January 2, 2012. The application is attached and is also available at [http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/events/](http://www.dartmouth.edu/~writing/events/)

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* The housing/meal plan is optional, but if a participant is in Dartmouth housing, the meal plan is required. The housing cost is an estimate based on 2011, because Dartmouth is reviewing its summer housing and has not yet released actual fee structures for 2012.
Previous participants’ commentary on the Dartmouth Summer Seminar:

“This is the best opportunity for professional development I have had since graduate school. I feel like you've given me both the direction and confidence I lacked.”

“This was the most significant professional development experience I have had. It is a perfect experience for young to mid-career professionals.”

“I learned more in those two weeks than I learned in my graduate program. It was an intense focus solely on composition research for two solid weeks.”

“In addition to several "ah ha" moments, I left the conference with a new approach to and understanding of research and research tools that can help me answer questions I've been trying to ask for quite a while.”

“Very thoughtful professionals giving me insightful feedback. I wish I could have that happen all the time.”

“The obvious professional feedback we got was the sense of being treated as professionals and the interest these major scholars showed in our work.”

“It was absolutely brilliant and just what I needed to re-engage with research in a positive, creative way following what's been an especially trying period of change at the university. Working so closely with such a passionate and interesting group of colleagues was more rewarding and intellectually stimulating than I could have imagined beforehand, and I'm sorry not to be having the benefit of that unique experience all year long!”

“The Dartmouth Summer Seminar was one of the most rewarding professional experiences of my career.”

“I felt engaged intellectually and socially on common projects, even though our individual projects were different. I felt I was studying things I should have studied in graduate school, in the way I should have studied them. I met kind, smart, motivated people from all over the place who wanted to get the most from the classes and collaborations.”

“The opportunity to talk with leaders in our field and get their thoughtful advice and encouragement about my project, as well as knowing I can now contact them in the future, dramatically exceeded my expectations.”