The theme for the 2004 Symposium is “Second Language Writing Instruction in Context(s): The Effects of Institutional Policies and Politics.” While the majority of work done in second language writing addresses instruction, the focus of much of this scholarship is on what happens in the classroom as opposed to how the institutional contexts outside the classroom shape instructional practices.

To help remedy this imbalance, this symposium will focus on institutional policies and politics and how they influence classroom practice. We refer here to policies on assessment, placement, credit, class size, course content, instructional practices, teacher preparation, and teacher support and to politics in terms of the relationships and interaction between second language writing professionals and their colleagues at the program, department, school, college, and university levels.

We seek proposals for 20-minute presentations that address how instructional policies and politics affect instructional practices. Each presentation should include (1) a description of a particular L2 writing instruction context, (2) an analysis of how institutional policies and politics shape the curriculum in this context, and (3) a discussion of implications for second language writing theory, research, instruction, assessment and/or administration as well as the professional development of second language writing specialists.

The presentation may be theoretical (e.g., theorizing key issues, principles or mechanisms), historical (e.g., examining an historical development in the field or at a specific institutional context), empirical (e.g., reporting results of survey research, institutional case studies, critical discourse analysis of institutional discourses), or reflexive (e.g., reflecting on specific experience to generate insights into how instructional practices interact with institutional politics and policies). We also encourage other, innovative approaches. The presentation may be based on original data or a re-analysis of existing data in light of institutional policies and politics.

Special Event: Graduate Student Conference on Second Language Writing. This is a special event that will be held in conjunction with the Symposium. It provides opportunities for graduate students to present their research and scholarship on second language writing and receive feedback from their peers. Any topic related to second language writing or writing instruction is welcome. All presenters for this conference must be full-time graduate students.


For more information, please visit: http://symposium.jslw.org/2004/.

Tony Silva and Paul Kei Matsuda, Chairs