STATE OF THE ART IN ADVANCED EXPOSITORY WRITING: ONE GENUS, MANY SPECIES

Bernice W. Dicks

The survey and samples that follow are subject to two limitations and one assumption that I have applied in approaching the identity of the advanced composition course as it exists really and ideally. First, two limitations: I have not included material or ideas for "Honors" courses for first-year students, nor have I given much attention to "advanced" courses required for prospective teachers. Second, I have assumed that most freshman composition courses, no matter what they are called, have essentially the same characteristics: they are either "straight" writing courses, or they are literature-based courses with some emphasis on writing. The prevailing general description of advanced composition applies throughout: a course in expository writing beyond the first-year level.

A bibliography search (the Humanities Index, the College English index, and the College Composition and Communication index, mainly) revealed that over the last twelve years there have not been many articles on the subject of advanced composition. Even the thirty volumes of CCC yield few items. This is not to say, however, that the CCCC has ignored the matter: all along, workshops of the conference have been devoted to the problem of defining the species "advanced composition" and, in 1966-67, to establishing guidelines, an abstract of which was distributed in 1979 at the ATAC organization meeting.

In October 1954, CCC reported on the "Composition Career (of All Students) after the Freshman Year": the partici-
pants concluded that "a required advanced course in composition is desirable, but difficulties in scheduling such courses were recognized. It was felt that an advanced course in writing in the last two years has a good chance of success because the student is more mature, has more information, can integrate his information better, has more motivation for improving his writing, and merits more attention."¹ A year later, the workshop participants were "unanimous in [their] opinion that advanced courses in composition are necessary for all students beyond the freshman year."² Also in 1955, there was a workshop in "Imaginative Writing in Advanced Composition" that came to eight conclusions about "creative writing" courses; the phrase "advanced composition" does not appear in the body of the report.³ I mention this oddity only to indicate the confusion that seems to have prevailed in discussion of the subject from the beginning.

The February 1956 issue of CCC carried two brief items that dealt with advanced writing courses: in "Metaphor and Exposition," Harry R. Garvin described his attempts to deal with "his role of rhetorician, the teacher of vivid writing," through the use of student writing to illustrate "vivid and dead metaphor" and "warmed-over and fresh diction." In "College and the Writer," J. Donald Adams urged the reader to break loose from fiction-based, poetry-analyzing courses for writing students. In neither article is there help in defining what advanced composition should be.⁴

In 1958, CCCC discussed "The Advanced Course in Expository Writing: Aims, Texts, and Methods."⁵ After summarizing the descriptions given by participants of existing advanced courses, the variety of practices regarding texts (predictably, "both a rhetoric and a book of readings [or] a rhetoric only [or] a book of readings or current magazines only [or] no text at all"), the workshop report ends as follows: "The course is difficult to describe because it is actually several courses: a multiple-section required course on some campuses, a small elective course on others; occasionally a course oriented to a particular vocational goal, such as teaching; and, rarely, a remedial course." With a certain degree of pride, the writer adds that advanced writing courses are "currently gaining ground...." The workshop recommended that the 1959 CCCC offer two workshops, one for the required version of advanced composition and one
for the elective version. However, CCCC apparently did not act positively on the recommendation.

In 1960 and 1961, the emphasis changed to the "Gifted Student"—meaning freshmen, actually, and not addressed to the question of the upper-level students who have already taken the first-year course and who want (and probably need) more work in writing.\(^6\)

In 1962, there was a workshop on "Teaching Advanced Composition for Teachers" that yielded three descriptions of courses of this variety: Virginia Burke gave details of a "required advanced course at Wisconsin [that] involves the reading and close rhetorical analysis of classic and modern essays, the writing of twelve one-thousand word themes, a study of various semantic problems and techniques, and thorough practice in the evaluation of student writing." Francis Christensen reported that "after a semester of systematic grammar [his students] turn their attention to composition. . . ." He stated that "he teaches control of the structure of a sentence plus the careful arrangement of sentences in a paragraph. . . . In addition to twenty assignments, many brief 'finger exercises' further illustrate how a writer may use words to control the ebb and flow of an idea." And Jane Lynch described a course built on "many examples of literature-based expository writing. Prospective teachers are expected to show original observation based upon the literary text. Considerable attention to theory is blended with the writing experiences, but the research paper and 'creative' writing are ruled out. . . ."\(^7\) The comments provide some models that might be useful to a teacher confronted with developing an advanced composition course.

In 1963 a workshop took up "The Undergraduate Advanced Composition Course" only to report—predictably—that there was no agreement on "what Advanced Composition should be, or is" or the "objectives . . . , the content, the order of topics, the number or length of essays, the emphasis various factors in composition should get, or what related material to bring in." Nor was there agreement "about the sorts of topics to assign, or whether to assign topics . . . about in-class versus outside writing, examinations, and certainly not about criteria for grading [or about the] optimum size of effective texts."\(^8\)
At the CCCC meeting in 1963, there was a discussion of "The Graduate Course for Training College Teachers" that reported such recommendations as these: the "content" of the course should include "rhetoric, logic, structural linguistics, psychology of learning, evaluation of student and professional writing, and criticism of composition textbooks;" the students should read "CCCD and NCTE journals and books dealing with the art of teaching and the profession of English."

A workshop on "Composition Aims in Advanced Writing Courses" in 1964 suggested that such courses have "objectives of two basic types: functional objectives, which aim at making students more skillful writers, and objectives which aim at improving the individual himself, his sensitivity, his reading, his self-knowledge, and his critical ability ... the student's style, his sensitivity to language, to pace, tone, and rhythm, and his command of rhetoric resources such as the elements of argumentation." A discussion of the "Content of the Advanced Composition Course" (1965) addressed itself to definition of the course as well as to its purpose, content, population, selection of students, size and "teacher load." The participants stressed quality of writing as the primary focus of the course and recommended flexibility "in material and methods," but with "a basic organizational plan." They went so far as to propose the format for an advanced composition course: it should focus "on discursive prose," precise and appropriate language usage, "special writing problems," and the study of "smaller units of composition (the paragraph and sentence);" it should also feature both free choice of topics and "personal supervision . . . so close as to amount almost to tutorial help" within small classes. Finally, the advanced composition teachers should have a light teaching load to make time for these pursuits.

The questions of guidelines and training for advanced-composition teachers were the meat of the "Invitational Workshop on Advanced Composition" in 1967, which was one of the two meetings that produced the "Guidelines and Directions for College Courses in Advanced Composition" published in CCC in December of that year, a statement to which I shall return later in another connection.

At this point, let me digress slightly and quote the recom-
mendation about the "training" that an advanced composition teacher should have: "Master of Arts in English, with an emphasis in composition which would provide minimal academic training plus a period of 'internship'... Three specific subject matter courses were viewed as basic: modern grammars and rhetoric; history of the English language; analysis of prose styles."
The future advanced composition teacher should write constantly and widely "under close supervision," should be "a competent and disciplined writer," have "a strong liberal arts background," be "familiar with a variety of ideas and experiences, preferably through direct encounter," be "interested in what other people are interested in so that he can actively participate in what he is reading and editing," and be "'dumb like a fox'. . . ." Finally, this paragon of an instructor should publish "at least some of his own work"—for all which accomplishments, the report concludes, the teacher should have "rank and salary commensurate with his special competence. . . ." 12 I must pause and wonder: if we can ever define advanced composition, will we ever be able to staff it?

The repetitiveness of the materials suggests not only that advanced composition people were repeating themselves but also that much of what they were saying is applicable to the situation of any writing teacher. When, in 1969, yet another workshop set out to answer the obvious question, "What is advanced composition?" it concluded—hardly surprisingly—that "Advanced composition eludes abstracts definition" and then went on to summarize the participants' versions of courses under that title. "The label," the writer continued, in terms that still apply, usually refers to an undergraduate level course ostensibly designed for a progression in writing experiences of students who have met or waived the requirements of a preceding college course in written composition, required of freshmen. In one institution that has offered a major in composition for approximately fifty years the advanced composition major may elect advanced composition as one of his required number of courses in advanced writing. In another institution the course provides professional writers the opportunity to prepare their manuscripts for publication. In a small college all students are required to take six hours of advanced composition, but
of two varieties—advanced writing for the English major, but a continuation of basic writing skills for the non-major. In an institution that has a large enrollment in the technical fields, teachers and students are expressing a preference for advanced composition over technical writing. Most of the institutions represented offer a required three- or six-hour advanced composition course for English majors, particularly the major qualifying for teachers certification, and offer also a parallel elective course in advanced composition for students who elect it and meet its prerequisite requirements.13

It was interesting that this was the first report to address itself also to the identity of most practicing advanced composition teachers: "scholars in another area of specialization associated with language and literature, who by circumstances or inclination, or both, subsequently developed professional competence and stature in the teaching of composition, mainly by teaching it."14 And it was in this workshop that substantial mention was made of a technique that has since become fairly common in advanced composition courses for non-professional writers: "the requirement of specific pieces of writing slanted toward a publication audience and further controlled by the demands of a publisher's market . . ." as a motivational device.15 Indeed, some instructors based the grade for the course on the fact of acceptance for publication—a practice that struck me as punitive; later I shall present course descriptions that call for the students to show proof of an attempt to publish, which seems less harsh.16

The 1970 version of the advanced composition workshop dwelt upon three "Issues": "the nature of an advanced composition course;" "grading practices;" and "revision techniques." Advanced composition here is "merely a continuation and extension of Freshman English, differing in that it had a more highly motivated student, in that it presented a more structured treatment of style, and in that it offered a variety of writing experiences."17 The use of "merely" is curious in light of earlier treatments of the subject in which advanced composition was intended to be much more than a sequel to the freshman course.

In the last report of a workshop (1971) in the run of CCC,
I found a prettily alliterated statement of purpose for advanced composition courses: "The attainment of a conscious, careful, concentrated, calculated craftsmanship."  

My reaction to the experience of reading through the workshop reports was nicely summed up by Duane C. Nichols in an article in CCC in December 1970: he confessed to have no idea of "what [advanced composition] is now"; "beyond the fact that advanced composition is a non-fiction writing course for which freshman English is a prerequisite, few generalizations can be made." What, then, can teachers do when confronted with the task of designing an advanced composition course, whether they are asked to do so by students or by administrators? After all, most of us come into the field, as Nichols put it, "by accident and despite the general failure of graduate English Departments to recognize the need for training in composition or rhetoric . . . ," and because advanced composition is a course that "thrives . . . because it gives interested students a chance to write about the things that matter and to receive intelligent comment about that writing." In other words, many teachers may well have to devise an advanced writing course of some sort as it becomes more difficult for freshman English to correct the shortcomings of grade- and high-school education and as concern over the writing ability of our students accelerates across the campus, bringing departments other than English to the realization that "something must be done"—preferably by the English Department.  

There are some articles bearing useful suggestions. Writing in College English in October 1963, Donald M. Murray describes advanced composition as "that course which typically appears as a requirement for the English major in his junior year. It is called Advanced Composition, Junior Composition, or Creative Writing, and it tries to improve the student's writing ability beyond the point to which freshman composition and the preparation of term papers have taken him. It is the course which usually gives him a chance to experiment in the writing of short stories or poems or essays or plays." What Murray proposes is the use of Henry James's "The Art of Fiction" as the entrée to writing prose fiction: he recommends that the course begin with discussion of the contents of James's essay and with suggestions for application of James's precepts: "fiction is a serious affair, deal-
ing with the life one has really felt;” “keep a notebook and cultivate perceptiveness. “Try to be one of the people on whom nothing is lost!’;” “fidelity to life;” “the need for selection;” “a specific, fundamental idea to start with (a donnée) and some plan for execution;” an ‘angle of narration. . . .”23 The hope for the course is “that the students who have gone to school to James will write stories that are both more honest and better controlled than when they began.” Professor Murray concludes with the observation that “Probably any author who is both standard fare in the literature courses and articulate on the subject of his art might” serve as the focal figure in this species of advanced composition course: Hemingway, for one, and Ezra Pound, via his letters, for “the poetry phase of the course. . . .”24

In October 1970, Paul Briand described his advanced course in an article entitled “Turned On: Multi-Media and Advanced Composition.” Briand undertook to solve what he saw as the main problems in any writing course: “subjects for theme writing,” “theme discussion in class,” “the teaching of theme writing,” and “theme reading.” He graded the papers by means of tape recordings: the students wrote and recorded their papers and turned in both forms; Briand commented in writing on the mechanics and recorded his responses to “larger more abstract matters. . . .” For class discussion, he showed video-tape recordings of himself commenting on representative themes; he also edited a paper (using an overhead projector) as the class watched. To deal with “the teaching of theme writing,” he lectured for twenty minutes on a given principle, using three slide projectors and three screens to list the principles and to produce a theme from thesis through the revising and editing processes. To generate topics, he produced “six idea-saturation programs” using the three-screens-and-slides approach as well as film clips. The course was expensive—between three and four thousand dollars—and therefore hardly practical for most teachers whose departments are strapped for xerox money.25

In the May 1974 issue of CCC, Donald C. Stewart presented his version of “An Advanced Composition Course That Works.” His scheme was to offer the students “four options”:

1. “for students who are insecure about their writing abili-
ties . . . prescribed assignments which progress from ex-
plantaions of the ways they acquired their attitudes toward writing to extended analogies and meditations."

2. "for the student who would rather react to the prescribed writing assignments, some point made in the reading, or a position generated by class discussion," six individual papers due on the same schedule as the "prescribed" themes.

3. "for the aspiring professional writer[s] . . . papers on various topics of their own choosing" with the "goal [of] publication of their work in acceptable popular, scholarly, or technical publications."

4. for the student who preferred a large undertaking, "a semester-long project" that generated "a series of papers" intended for publication.

Students were permitted to shift options "on any writing occasion;" class time was devoted to "lectures, readings, and responses" on such topics as the "history and growth of English departments and composition courses" and the connections between composition and literature, composition and rhetoric, and composition and linguistics as discussed by Corbett and Tate.26

A version of Stewart's third option constitutes the core of Michael P. Orth's advanced composition course as described in CCC in May 1976. "In a ten-week quarter, I lead students through six papers, culminating in a carefully planned article aimed at a specific audience and market. I mail the final papers to the newspapers and magazines the students designate, and twenty percent of them are published." The papers are between one and two thousand words in length and must be "honest . . ., full of digested facts presented to make some point. . . ." Class time is distributed among workshop situations, in-class writing, and lectures on "the concept and elements of style; . . . my notions of the proper process of writing as process," and the avoidance of "jargon and doublespeak. . . ." Workshops include a student editorial board that reviews articles and "group writing" on an "argument paper."27
Donald C. Stewart returned to *CCC* in 1980 with other ideas for advanced composition, suggesting that writing "for publication" is a practical task that might engage students' interest particularly when combined with any "real" writing task: "writing a letter to the student paper, preparing a job application statement for a real job that the student wants, preparing revisions in the constitution of an organization to which the student belongs." In Kansas, where Stewart teaches, advanced composition "is a requirement for certification of the secondary English teacher": for that reason, he was concerned with the problem of "sharpening ... their evaluative capabilities." So he arranged to have "them read, evaluate, and grade [his] freshman papers." He discovered that the cooperation of the two groups developed "audience consciousness" in both and made student selection of topics somewhat easier: the freshmen addressed campus issues with which the upper-level students were conversant. The method was relatively simple: "one person in the [advanced] class [acted as] scribe for each paper. That person made marginal notations and wrote the terminal comment offered by the class." Secret ballots for grades assured "consensus" and defused potential hassles. On the whole, Stewart found the system both workable and valuable for the students. 2 8

Obviously, only instructors who teach both first-year and advanced courses at the same time can take advantage of the suggestions.

So much for articles in *CCC* and *CE* specifically addressed by title to advanced composition. Obviously, the hypothetical neophyte in the advanced composition business could adapt any of the models for freshman English or the less numerous formats for "advanced" courses to the needs of "advanced" students (which all too often means only farther along in their college careers than year one). They could simply use the same format they developed for first-year courses, requiring a "harder" textbook, more writing, and increased one-on-one attention. For example, when I first taught advanced composition, I was using Donald Hall's *Writing Well* with my first-year students; I assigned Peter Canavan’s *Rhetoric and Literature* for the advanced class. In subsequent incarnations of the course, I have moved up to Winterowd's *The Contemporary Writer* and D'Angelo's *Process and Thought in Composition*. But before I get into the question of textbooks, let me report on some models I collected.
by the simple expedient of writing and asking for them.

Of the sixty responses I received, most fall into what is apparently a standard pattern for advanced—and most other—composition courses: there is a writing textbook, sometimes teamed with a reader and a handbook. Students write and revise anywhere from five to twelve papers during the course, frequently involving a conference with the teacher over the rough draft or the revision (or both). Occasionally the teacher will include a limited amount of fiction: for example, Anne Warner at Agnes Scott includes a literary criticism component in her advanced course and assigns James’s The Turn of the Screw; class discussion includes “interpretation, review, character analysis, technical analysis, comparative, contextual, [and] psychological study.”

In the fall semester of 1979-80, Indiana University offered a total of five versions of “Advanced Expository Writing”: two of the sections listed no texts and indicated the use of student papers for discussion. Two required that tried and true friend, Elements of Style. One assigned Lattimore’s translation of Homer’s Odyssey for “a community of interest” and “the writing and revising of three brief papers.”

At some institutions, advanced composition or advanced expository writing is only one dish in a smorgasbord of writing options after the first year. Charles Davis, Director of Composition at the University of Arizona, sent me materials describing the writing courses for the spring: “Sophomore Composition” (four sections), assigning variously Writing Well and A Writer’s Reader; Popular Writing in America; and A Writer’s Reader and Elements of Style. “Advanced Composition” (two sections) emphasizes “expository and argumentative writing” for “already competent writers who plan to enter graduate and professional schools or who will do a great deal of writing in their careers;” the text is Corbett’s Classical Rhetoric for the Modern Student (second edition). (The remaining courses include six sections of technical writing, five of business writing, one of business report writing, one of advanced scientific and technical writing, and one of advanced English composition for international graduate students.) Indeed, in some schools, such courses as technical writing and creative writing are the advanced
composition courses—as at Denison University, for example, where a creative writing advanced course appears alongside a course called "Expository Writing" designed for "students who have completed or passed the proficiency exam for English 101" and another course, English 236, entitled "Writing for Science and Social Science Majors," in which the texts are *The Lives of a Cell*, *Social Problems* 79/80, and *Focus: Biology.*

Auburn University offers three versions of "Advanced Composition;" the University of Rochester lists four "Advanced Writing" courses: "The Essay" comes in three essentially similar formats based on an essay anthology, student essays, a writing text and a handbook in one combination or another. The fourth is "Preparation of Scientific Papers," which combines "extensive reading and analysis of exemplary papers in the literature of biology or some other science" with writing articles, reviews, abstracts, and research-grant proposals.

The University of Maine at Orono offers "Advanced Professional Exposition," which is designed "to help students improve their writing skills in preparation for careers and professions" and is offered "primarily [to] juniors and seniors in business, scientific, technical, and professional disciplines who have mastered the fundamentals of standard written English. . . ." Assignments include definition *per se*, definition of problems, informal proposals, researching information, letters of inquiry, technical descriptions, formal proposals, abstracts and summaries, and progress reports. "Advanced Writing," which has a prerequisites "the semester freshman course, and. . . . " Descriptive and Narrative Writing," was "planned . . . as a series of experiments of freedom and discipline . . . for 'good writers'." Virginia Steinhoff, allowing the class to create the course as they went, required as texts Walker Gibson’s *Persona* and the Christensens’ *Notes Toward a New Rhetoric*; she recommended Didion’s *Slouching Towards Bethlehem*, Thomas’s *Lives of a Cell* and White’s *Essays.*

Brown University offers poetry-writing, fiction, and journalism courses under the "advanced" rubric as well as "English Composition, Advanced Course," which asks students "to develop and bring to completion an original work or series of works in prose, verse or drama;" it is open only to seniors and graduate students.
The "Advanced Writing" course at Newcomb College, Tulane University, is specifically patterned upon John Trimble’s precepts, and perhaps even on his syllabus for "Advanced Expository Writing" at the University of Texas—Austin. Both courses require a good deal of writing—10 and 12 papers respectively—as well as in-class discussion of student work and a heavy emphasis on editing, not to mention a good amount of reading in such texts as *Contexts for Composition*, *Writing with Style*, and *Revising Prose*. The clientele is intended to be, in Trimble’s words, "17-20 people eager to polish their style, increase their fluency, learn how to edit, and receive maximum feedback on their writing," some of which feedback occurs in required conferences.37

I acquired two examples of what I call the “intense” advanced course (I owe the adjective to my own advanced composition students). One is offered by Sam Watson at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte: "Advanced Expository Writing." The reading list is formidable: *Writing Without Teachers*, Plato’s *Gorgias* and *Phaedrus*, *Readings in Classical Rhetoric*, *Zen and the Art of Motorcycle Maintenance*, *Teaching Composition: Ten Bibliographical Essays*, *The Contemporary Writer*, *Contemporary Rhetoric*, and *Measuring Growth in English*. Then comes a list of journals of which the students should be “aware”—*Philosophy and Rhetoric*, *The Rhetoric Society Quarterly*, six specialized journals of the Speech Communication Association, and the obvious English and composition journals. To sum up, Watson teaches a rhetoric course of considerable density that bears similarities to his course, "Rhetorical Theory," the syllabus of which he sent to me. In his comments to the students, Watson defends what may seem to be a thorny path to writing better: "‘Rhetoric’ is the discipline which underlies composition pedagogy, and we will begin with a survey of classical rhetorical theory and doctrine. Frankly, I will be unconcerned if our work in this area seems immediately to have little relevance to current classroom concerns. The stuff is interesting in its own right, and I think its relevance will become clear as the course progresses."38

The other example of an “intense” course came from Ohio Wesleyan University, where there is a writing major: "Advanced Composition" appears under both the “Creative” and “Non-
"Fiction" listings; the syllabus sent to me by Ülle E. Lewes is for English 50, the "non-fiction" version. The texts are Hirsch's *The Philosophy of Composition*, Lanham's *Style: An Anti-Textbook*, and Miller's *Word, Self, Reality—yoked*, for what struck me as a relenting of the pressure, with Newman's *Strictly Speaking* and *Elements of Style*. Class time is devoted to discussing the "various—and sometimes conflicting—[sic] theories" and to "some sort of experiment in writing." "Members of the class will also be assigned a longer or more complex writing task to do at home every week."39

Just briefly, here are a few more unusual versions:

At Queens College, Charlotte, NC, "Advanced Composition" is a course in reading and then writing descriptions, poems, short stories, personal essays, caricature, a children's story, a choice of a play or an article, and satire, which may be poetry or prose or "a short scene from a play...."40 At Florida State, there is an "Advanced Article and Essay Workshop" in which there is no assigned text but a great deal of writing and discussion of student work, which should be slanted toward publication, and frequent conferences.41 North Texas State University provides two upper-level courses: "Specialized Expository Writing" is limited at present to "Legal Writing," but is planned eventually to deal separately with "Medical Writing," "Business Writing," and others. The university's "Advanced Expository Writing" course is taught on a tutorial basis and focuses on "logical and rhetorical principles" as well as "analyzing [and] criticizing models."42

I have received three descriptions of advanced courses that were geared to the students' academic and professional interests—the students' papers must address subjects in their major fields. At the University of Southwestern Louisiana and at the University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, the students are encouraged to write with the intention of submitting at least some of their work for publication. Hence, the courses spend a fair amount of time considering the question of audience as well as of logic and organization. At Baylor University, the approach is rhetorical and practical, including work on interviewing and job researching.43
To sum up as briefly as possible: the models I collected, thanks to the generosity of those who sent them, as well as the literature I found elsewhere, indicate that there is a multitude of species available to teachers of advanced expository writing: we can invent, imitate, cull, combine. . . . Unfortunately, the wealth of models suggests again that advanced composition may well prove impossible to define once and for all: if, as Peter Dowell at Emory wrote to me, "the content is at the discretion (or whim) of the individual instructor," then we really are no farther along toward a statement about the course than we were when CCCC started out in 1954 to pin the creature to the wall.44 Maybe a sentence from a letter from R. W. Daniel at Kenyon points out part of our problem: "The course has not proved to be very advanced, because most of the students are not."45 In the midst of the materials scattered across the study and office as I worked, it occurred to me to wonder if we aren't beginning at the wrong end: perhaps we should first define the true advanced composition student (see results of my questionnaire*). Or perhaps an observation from Mary Dobbie, Senior Lecturer at Columbia University, might give us a notion of what will both attract students and help them along: "I am giving a 'Workshop in Advanced Grammar' this term, and I find my students are taking it to improve their writing."46 Perhaps what the students really want is to back up, in effect, and start over with smaller units.

I turn to an attempt at indicating the range of texts available to teachers of advanced composition. One way for me to deal with the matter is simply to refer you to the expanded version of the responses to a 1979 survey by Michael P. Hogan of teachers of advanced composition: here is a collection of readers, rhetorics, handbooks, research-paper guides and assorted other books that are in use around the country in "our" course. The range and variety are enormous—like those of the course itself (see results of my questionnaire*).

There is also the more-than-obvious recourse of reading reviews of composition texts in the February CCC; in Larsen's now abandoned "Selected Bibliography of Research and Writing about the Teaching of Composition" in the May CCC; in College English, English Journal, English Studies, the CEA Critic, PMLA (occasionally), and the Chronicle of Higher Education. We might keep an eye on the semi-annual bibliographies (the best in the
business) *Research in the Teaching of English* and consider some of the state journals such as *Arizona English Bulletin, Kansas English, The Journal of English Teaching Techniques, The Journal of Basic Writing*, and CEA Newsletters. Perhaps at some time an article like Karen Steiner's "A Selected Bibliography of Individualized Approaches to College Composition" might inspire an advanced composition teacher to try something that has worked in a freshman or other writing course. 47

There are almost too many obvious possibilities: we all receive dozens of ads for textbooks, new and revised; we all talk to publishers' representatives: we should badger the publishers through their field personnel about advanced composition textbooks—that is, if we're not ready to write them ourselves. I am just faintly surprised that the representatives who come to see me seem non-plussed by my interest in an "advanced" text: the representative from Oxford University Press simply pointed at my copy of Mina Shaughnessy's *Errors and Expectations.*

Now there is the *Journal of Advanced Composition.* We can work for the best in this venture to provide the articles, critical reviews and bibliographies that we all need to continue to do our jobs in a course that, as so many workshops and writers have insisted, is indeed badly needed—even though we may continue to struggle for a while with its shape and content.*

Southwestern at Memphis
Memphis, Tennessee

**NOTES**

*For results of the questionnaire on advanced composition practices, send one dollar for xeroxing and a self-addressed stamped envelope to Professor Bernice W. Dicks, Department of English, Southwestern at Memphis, Memphis, Tennessee 38112.*
1 "Composition Career (of All Students) after the Freshman Year," *Journal of Advanced Composition*, 5 (October, 1954), 114. Hereafter the journal title will be given as *CCC*. NB: I have made no attempt to alter the use of pronouns in quotations from my sources: to do so would have been unwieldy and confusing.

2 "Composition Career (of All Students) after the Freshman Year," *CCC*, 6 (October, 1955), 146.


4 "[Advanced Writing Courses] College and the Writer," *CCC*, 7 (February, 1956), 28-29, 5-7, respectively.


7 "Teaching Advanced Composition for Teachers," *CCC*, 13 (October, 1962), 77-78.

8 "The Undergraduate Advanced Composition Course," *CCC*, 14 (October, 1963), 190.

9 "The Graduate Course for Training College Teachers," *CCC*, 14 (October, 1963), 192.


11 "Content of the Advanced Composition Course," *CCC*, 16 (October, 1965), 197.

12 "Invitational Workshop on Advanced Composition," *CCC*, 18 (October, 1965), 199-200.

13 "Advanced Composition Courses," *CCC*, 20 (October, 1969), 254-
255.

14 Ibid.

15 Ibid.

16 Letter from Dr. Frances Teague, Department of English, University of Georgia, November 1, 1979; Michael P. Orth, "An Advanced Composition Course Aimed at Publication," CCC, 27 (May, 1976), 210-212.


20 Ibid., 392.

21 Ibid., 393-394, where Dr. Nichols addresses these points at length.


23 Murray, 27-29.

24 Murray, 30.


Letter from Dr. Anne B. Warner, Department of English, Agnes Scott College, n.d.

Materials from Dr. Michael C. Flanigan, Director of Composition, Indiana University, October 25, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Charles E. Davis, Director of Composition, University of Arizona, November 5, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Tommy R. Burkett, Chairman, Department of English, Denison University, n.d.

Materials from the Department of English, Auburn University, n.d.; from Dr. Rowland L. Collins, Chairman, Department of English, the University of Rochester, January 14, 1980.

Materials from Dr. Richard T. Brucher, Eh 17 Course Chairman, Department of English, University of Maine at Orono, December 6, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Virginia Steinhoff, Department of English, University of Maine at Orono, October 29, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Ruth Oppenheim, Coordinator, Department of English, Brown University, October 17, 1979.

Materials from Dr. John C. Schafer, Newcomb College, Tulane University, November 5, 1979; from Dr. John Trimble's appearance at CCC, Minneapolis, April, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Sam Watson, Department of English, University of North Carolina at Charlotte, October 22, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Ülle E. Lewes, Department of English, Ohio Wesleyan University, October 24, 1979.

Materials from Dr. Paul B. Newman, English Department, Queens College, Charlotte, North Carolina, n.d.

Materials from David Kirby, Director of Writing Programs, The Florida State University, October 24, 1979.

Materials from Dr. James T. F. Tanner, Chairman, Schedule Com-
material, Department of English, North Texas State University, November 12, 1979.

43 Materials from the Department of English, the University of Southwestern Louisiana, October 26, 1979; from Dr. T. C. Ware, Head, Department of English, University of Tennessee at Chattanooga, November 29, 1979; from Darrel Thomas Hanks, Department of English, Baylor University, October 3, 1979.

44 Letter from Dr. Peter Dowell, Department of English, Emory University, October 22, 1979.

