



Intellectual Creativity in First-Year Composition Classes: Building a Case for the Multigenre Research Project

Heidi Wall Burns, Michael MacBride

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Today's first year composition classrooms are largely reflective of the writing pedagogy that has been used for the last 200 years. Unfortunately, this methodology does not meet the research or writing needs of today's college and university students. Burns and MacBride were determined to make their first year composition courses more relevant to their students and sought a way to revolutionize their syllabus to do so. Building on the work of Tom Romono, Nancy Mack, Camille Allen, Sirpa Grierson, Melinda Putz (and others), Burns and MacBride set out to determine if a multigenre research project could better teach their students research, writing, and critical thinking skills than a traditional research-based essay. The findings of their semester-long study indicated that not only does a MGRP teach these skills, but it far surpasses a traditional essay in teaching engagement, intellectual creativity, and transferable writing skills. Burns and MacBride demonstrate two different ways to integrate a multigenre research project into the college composition classroom.

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