abstract
This study interviewed ten teachers and administrators who were fundamental to the establishment of the University of Winnipeg’s Writing Program. It examines the discourses of access and excellence that emerged in discussions of the Writing Program’s establishment and over time. Such discourses set up common arguments about the function of higher education, its purpose, and who it should serve. The terminology associated with both access and excellence implies a view of education dependent on academic standards and quality control. A discourse analysis of the interview transcripts resulted in five themes that showed varied approaches to conceptualizing access and excellence throughout the Writing Program’s 30+ year history.

icon words
ELITE
STANDARD
TRADITIONAL
QUALITY
ACADEMIC
QUALIFIED
ACADEMIC FREEDOM
RESEARCH
VS.
MASS
NON-STANDARD
NON-TRADITIONAL
ACCESS
VOCATIONAL
UNQUALIFIED
GOVERNMENT CONTROL
TEACHING

conclusions & recommendations
Reinvigorate a Writing in the Disciplines (WID) approach by:
• connecting with other departments to investigate what writing needs their students experience
• consulting with disciplinary faculty to help them include writing-based assignments & assessments in their curricula

Promote development of the Certificate in Writing, which pairs expertise in writing as something existing alongside other major fields of study in the Bachelor’s degree.

Foster connections between the Writing Centre and other parts of the university, pairing excellent student writers with writers in other classrooms and university programs.

Highlight the work of first-year writers in department-based publications, such as the newly formed Rooted in Rhetoric undergraduate journal.