



WRITING PROGRAM ADMINISTRATION

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In Memoriam: Linda H. Peterson (1948–2015)

In Memoriam: Charlie Moran (1936–2015)

Narratives, Administrative Identity, and the Early Career WPA

Moving from the One and Done to a Culture of Collaboration: Revising Professional Development for TAs

Community Engagement in Writing Program Design and Administration

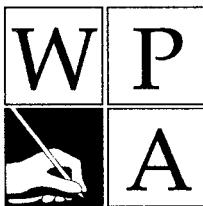
Defining and Developing Expertise in a Writing and Rhetoric Department

What Remains and What Sustains: Companions in Mission, Colleagues in Action, WPAs for Life

Towards an Ecology of Sustainable Labor in Writing Programs (and Other Places)

Sustainable Infrastructures and the Future of Writing Studies

WPAs in Action: Composition Condition



Writing Program Administration

Journal of the
Council of Writing Program Administrators

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The Council of Writing Program Administrators is a national association of college and university faculty who serve or have served as directors of first-year composition or writing programs, coordinators of writing centers and writing workshops, chairpersons and members of writing-program-related committees, or in similar administrative capacities. The Council of Writing Program Administrators is an affiliate of the Association of American Colleges and the Modern Language Association.

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WPA: Writing Program Administration publishes empirical and theoretical research on issues in writing program administration. We publish a wide range of research in various formats, research that not only helps both titled and untitled administrators of writing programs do their jobs, but also helps our discipline advance academically, institutionally, and nationally. *WPA: Writing Program Administration* is published twice per year: fall and spring. Possible topics of interest include:

- writing faculty professional development
- writing program creation and design
- critical analysis and applications of discipline or national policies and statements that impact writing programs
- labor conditions: material, practical, fiscal
- WAC/WID/WC/CAC (or other sites of communication/writing in academic settings)
- teaching multimodal writing
- teaching in digital spaces
- theory, practice, and philosophy of writing program administration
- outreach and advocacy
- writing program assessment
- WPA history and historical work
- national and regional trends in education and their impact on WPA work
- issues of professional advancement and writing program administration
- diversity and WPA work
- writing programs in a variety of educational locations (SLAC, HBCU, two-year colleges, Hispanic schools, non-traditional schools, concurrent work)
- interdisciplinary work that informs WPA practices

This list is not comprehensive. If you have questions about potential work for *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, please query the editors. We are particularly interested in publishing new voices and new topics.

Submission Guidelines

Check the website for complete submissions guidelines. Please include the cover sheet available at <http://wpacouncil.org/info-for-authors>. In general submissions should:

- be between 3,000–7,000 words; longer and shorter pieces will rarely be considered
- follow *MLA Style Manual and Guide to Scholarly Publishing* (most current edition)

-
- have identifying information removed for peer review: author name(s), track changes, comments, and properties cleared throughout
 - include a short running head with page numbers
 - include an abstract (200 words max) as part of the manuscript, following the title and preceding the body of the text
 - have an accurate and correctly formatted works cited page
 - include the cover sheet
 - be saved as a .doc, .docx, or .rtf file. Do not send .pdf files. If you have special formatting needs, contact the editors.

More information regarding the formatting of the manuscript (specifically endnotes, tables, and pictures) is available at <http://wpacouncil.org/node/1812>. Manuscripts that don't conform to the requirements will be returned to the author with a request to reformat.

Reviews

WPA: Writing Program Administration publishes review essays of books related to writing programs and their administration. Publishers are invited to recommend appropriate books to bookreviews@wpacouncil.org. If you are interested in reviewing texts, please contact the book review editor at bookreviews@wpacouncil.org

Announcements and Calls

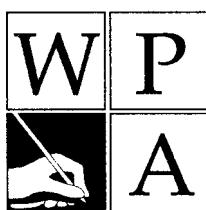
Relevant announcements and calls for papers and/or conference participation will be published as space permits. Announcements should not exceed 500 words, and calls for proposals/participation should not exceed 1,000 words. Please include contact information and links for further information. Submission deadlines in calls should be no earlier than January 1 for the fall/winter issue and June 1 for the spring issue. Please email your calls and announcements to journal@wpacouncil.org and include the text both in the body of the message and as an MS Word or RTF attachment.

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Correspondence relating to the journal, submissions, or editorial issues should be sent to journal@wpacouncil.org

Subscriptions

WPA: Writing Program Administration is published twice per year—fall and spring by the Council of Writing Program Administrators. Members of the Council of Writing Program Administrators receive a subscription to the journal as part of their membership. Join at <http://wpacouncil.org/join-renew>. Active members have access to online versions of current and past issues through the WPA website <http://wpacouncil.org/journalarchives>. Library subscription information is available at <http://wpacouncil.org/library-memberships>.



Writing
Program
Administration
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Letter from the Editors

Welcome to the Fall 2015 issue of *WPA: Writing Program Administration*. We hope that you enjoy reading the articles presented here.

In this issue, we recognize two colleagues who passed away this year: Linda H. Peterson and Charlie Moran. The two of them exemplified the core values of the organizations of which they were a part. They live on in their scholarship, the people they mentored, and the people they taught. Thanks to Lynn Z. Bloom for compiling the “In Memoriam: Linda H. Peterson” and Missy-Marie Montgomery, Zan Goncalves, and Nick Carbone for compiling the “In Memoriam: Charlie Moran.” The journal is honored to offer these tributes.

We begin this issue of the journal with Amy Ferdinandt Stolley’s piece “Narratives, Administrative Identity, and the Early Career WPA,” a compelling examination of the disciplinary narratives that inform our identities. Stolley urges early career WPAs to resist and speak back to disciplinary commonplaces in order to find places for themselves in the WPA literature, profession, and work.

Next, we feature “Moving from the One and Done to a Culture of Collaboration: Revising Professional Development for TAs” by Lauren Obermark, Elizabeth Brewer, and Kay Halasek. Similar to Stolley’s piece, this work pushes back against a common narrative—that of the singular TA training course—and proposes sustained professional development that recognizes continuing pedagogical needs of teachers.

In “Defining and Developing Expertise in a Writing Department,” Elizabeth Wardle and J. Blake Scott explore issues of expertise, especially within departments that have faculty who don’t have traditional Writing Studies academic credentials. They present two professional development efforts, geared towards creating a program to help faculty gain interactional expertise.

Finally, Veronica House explores ways in which WPAs can create sustainable, civically-engaged vertical writing curriculum and writing programs in “Community Engagement in Writing Program Design and Administration.” House offers a model for WPAs who want to design and implement a service-based curriculum in their own writing programs.

As the journal has in the past, we reproduce here the three plenaries from the 2015 CWPA Conference hosted in Boise, Idaho; they are lightly edited by each author to help them move from a spoken piece to a written piece. Each of the plenaries explores the conference theme: Sustainable Writing / Program / Administrators. Beth Boquet's keynote asks us to

think about who and what sustains us across time in doing the work our institutions call on us to do (and sometimes the work they'd rather we not do) and . . . to think about what remains of us—any of us, all of us—when we are gone, whether on a temporary or permanent leave-taking.

Seth Kahn reminds us that we are all part of the same system, all interconnected, and doing the right thing sustains us all. Finally, Cheryl E. Ball discusses what sustainability, specifically sustainable electronic publishing, in the changing landscape of scholarship, needs to address.

Writing program administration—and institutional change—often happens in small, seemly inconsequential moments that actually turn out to be the *kairotic* moment for changing our program or how we work in our institution. To capture those, we present a new section of the journal: WPAs in Action—Vignettes from the Field. These small stories will run less than 1,000 words, and we invite you to submit your vignettes to us for inclusion.

In our inaugural WPAs in Action—Vignettes from the Field, Nate Kreuter describes the circumstances leading up to “a showdown,” as he puts it, over an outdated writing policy that ultimately allowed him to change both the discussion and understanding of writing at his campus on a campus-wide level.

The book review section closes the journal. As always, Norbert Elliott and Jacob Babb have carefully selected materials that will enhance the work of WPAs. We hope you enjoy them. At any time, feel free to contact Norbert and Jacob at bookreviews@wpacouncil.org.

Finally, we would like to thank the reviewers listed below. These are the scholars who have reviewed manuscripts for us since we took over the journal in July 2014. They have given generously of their time and expertise to the journal and the manuscripts submitted to the journal. Having heard numerous horror stories about reviewers from friends in other academic disciplines, we are consistently humbled by the generous nature of the feedback our reviewers provide and the kindness and support they provide authors. We are grateful for their tireless work, quick responses, and diligent and thoughtful feedback.

Letter from the Editors

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Amy C. Kimme Hea	Elijah Mayfield	Michele Eodice
Andrea A. Lunsford	Elizabeth Vander Lei	Michael Callaway
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Finally, we'd also like to thank Joel Wingard, who volunteers to copyedit the page proofs. His generosity is appreciated. We wish you well in the 2015–2016 academic year and hope to see you at conferences. We look forward to working with many more of you as the year continues. As always, please don't hesitate to contact us at journal@wpacouncil.org. This email reaches all of us.

Best,
Barb, Lisa, and Sherry

In Memoriam: Linda H. Peterson (1948–2015)

Linda Peterson's exuberant intelligence, gracious generosity, warmth, and openness to ideas, experiences, people, and the natural world infuse the recollections of all who have been deeply fortunate to have known her as a WPA colleague, scholar, teacher, inspiration, friend.

ELAINE MAIMON

Linda Peterson is an inspiration—to scholars of literature and composition, to women (partly through her role as English department chair at Yale), to everyone who wants to make the world better. Linda understood the importance of teaching students to become writers and critical thinkers. She had a graceful, no-nonsense way of refusing to separate teaching and research. Linda was committed to CWPA's values—to its integration of scholarship, teaching, and administration in a scholarly context. I remember CWPA Board meetings but, even more vividly, fun-filled dinners with Linda as president. Her exuberant intelligence helped to create the organization's *ethos*, which continues to define CWPA as it has expanded in size and influence. WPA was originally established to build a bridge between MLA and CCCCs. Linda Peterson was an exemplar of that early connection.

LYNN Z. BLOOM

CWPA's founding movers and shapers were to a person creative, imaginative, visionary, energetic, collegial; their collective DNA gave CWPA a jump start as a vital and respected professional organization. As CWPA vice president (1984–1986) then president (1986–1988), Linda Peterson collaborated in keeping CWPA on track and on target even as its mission and modus operandi were evolving. Linda oversaw the evolution of the Summer Workshop into a manageable length (in 1985, reduced from ten days to five), in initiating the first Summer Conference (1986 at Miami

University of Ohio which became WPA's institutional home for the next two decades), and in transforming the *WPA: Writing Program Administration* from a newsletter to a print quarterly. If people don't know these facts, it's because Linda, ever courteous, thoughtful, low key, and good humored, didn't brag—she just did the work, with devotion, graciousness, and delight.

LOUISE Z. SMITH

Generosity underlay Linda's scholarship. *Traditions of Victorian Women's Autobiography* and *Becoming a Woman Writer* generously acknowledged the roles of gender while foregrounding other affiliations such as religious, political, economic, and social. Her books explored how rhetorical traditions open to accommodate an individual's experiences: One domestic memoir focused on a conversion narrative while another traced professional development at odds with family life; writer-as-hero trajectories appear alongside artistic collaboration within families. Theory wars were not for her; rather, she pragmatically worked within and across theories and disciplines, trenchantly employing what illuminates her subject. Invested as she was in autobiography, Linda nevertheless warned of pedagogical dilemmas entailed in that RhetComp staple, the autobiographical writing assignment. Her legacy includes a voice of wit, warmth, "profound civility" as *Yale News* observed, and openness to scholarly possibilities.

DONALD MCQUADE

I remember Linda, always, as Elegant, with a capital E. She wrote with a distinctive presence of mind and a poised touch, her subtle inquiry conveyed through a graceful style that made her sentences dance. Her thinking in writing, both nimble and rigorous, reflected her generous, perceptive, and smiling openness to engaging a colleague or an idea. A wide audience has experienced the rich pleasures of her intellectual company and the enormous pleasures of reading her prose. We honor her dual legacy, building the CWPA into a robust and durable professional organization and unraveling the intricacies of Victorian autobiography. She will always remain in my mind's eye.

JOHN TRIMBUR

During a consultant-evaluator visit I made with Linda many years ago, we were both impressed—awestruck really—by the long-standing vitality of the institution's WAC program. When Linda asked what sustained its high momentum, our hosts said it was “because we all voted for it.” I remember Linda’s delight at this answer and how its heartfelt sense of accountability made evident the deep bonds of trust and shared purpose that sustained the faculty’s common work. Linda was delighted to find such unmitigated good will in others, reassured by the presence of fellow humans who worked so conscientiously together and behaved so well over such a long period of time, just as she always did, without guile or self-aggrandizement, but simply a natural part of living.

BARBARA CAMBRIDGE

As an intelligent and centered colleague, Linda Peterson stimulated thinking in a gracious way. Linda’s reasoning and modeling led me early on in my career into insights about evaluating writing programs and, over time, into making intentional career choices. Her radiant smile characterized a personality that was never haughty and always collegial. Linda once described to me tubing on a river before a CCCC meeting. She enjoyed the beauty of the surrounding nature, the elation she felt on the water, and the camaraderie of her co-adventurers. The stimulation of a fine university, the satisfaction of scholarly research, and the commitment to her colleagues as department chair paralleled that personal adventure. Linda balanced her personal and professional pleasures with design and delight.

BILL SMITH

I see Linda in deep conversation with Win Horner, leaning into each other, gliding through a CCCC’s crowd. Twice I worked with Linda, who became my role model. As a CWPA consultant evaluator team, we evaluated Texas Tech in the ’80s. For three days, I watched her interact with the university community from students and faculty to college and university administrators. From her, I learned how to listen, value space, and encourage people to speak to us and to one another. Later, Linda taught an advanced writing workshop for us at Utah State. She amazed our students, who felt privileged, challenged, and in the presence of an exceptional thinker. Each evening, she evaluated the day; then she smiled and talked quietly, almost

reverently, about Fred [her husband] and his latest essay or journalism trip. I hear her voice, her laugh, and am thankful she taught me. I admired Linda. I envied Fred.

Lynn Z. Bloom is Board of Trustees Distinguished Professor Emerita and the Aetna Chair of Writing at University of Connecticut. She was president of CWPA from 1988–1990.

Barbara Cambridge is Interim Executive Director of the National Council of Teachers of English and is Professor Emerita of English at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis (IUPUI). She was president of CWPA from 1992–1994.

Donald McQuade is Professor of English and Vice Chancellor Emeritus at the University of California, Berkeley. He was a founding board member and secretary of CWPA.

Elaine Maimon is President of Governors State University and a founding board member of CWPA.

Louise Z. Smith is Professor Emerita of English at UMass Boston and was editor of College English from 1991–1998.

William E. Smith is Professor Emeritus at Western Washington University. He was editor of WPA: Writing Program Administration from 1983–1988.

John Trimbur is Professor and First Year Writing Associate Director in the Department of Writing, Literature, and Publishing at Emerson College. He served on the CWPA executive committee from 1987–1990 and on WPA: Writing Program Administration's editorial board from 1986–1988.



In Memoriam: Charlie Moran (1936–2015)

ANNE HERRINGTON

Charlie Moran was the quintessential WPA: He had vision, he was a collaborative leader, and he knew how to build sustainable programs. One of Charlie's enduring legacies to UMass is the university writing program, a program that Charlie conceived and led from 1982 until 1990, although in an interview with former graduate student Mya Poe, Charlie, the quintessential collaborator said about creating it, "I didn't do this myself!"

He built that program around key principles that remain sound today. I think he would want us to remember these:

- We learn to write by writing and receiving feedback.
- The primary texts of a writing course should be students' writing.
- Writing is central to intellectual life in all disciplines and thus, the development of students' writing abilities is the responsibility of all faculty.

Two corollaries that Charlie modeled by example: 1) teachers of writing should be writers themselves and 2) teachers of other writing teachers should be writing teachers themselves.

Charlie's impact on the profession comes not only through his work at UMass and his scholarship but also through the work he did on so many committees of our key professional organizations and in the generosity of spirit he manifested in all he did and with all of us with whom he worked.

PETER ELBOW

Charlie gave strong and creative administrative leadership. He set up the UMass writing program in such a politically savvy way that there was almost no bad feeling or even tension between the literature folk and the comp folk. How rare and precious.

He was a master at providing both structure and freedom. I've long cherished his unique form of focused freewriting (an exercise to be used only after students are practiced and comfortable with pure freewriting—nonstop, private, and no topic). He started by giving the class an interesting or perhaps startling fact. The one I like to use is this: "when I ask my first year students to write about important moments in growing up, we often hear more about fathers than mothers." Then he would ask them to do focused freewriting for ten minutes (still private and more or less no stopping): Then he asked them to write as many more-or-less single freewritten sentences as they could, each one beginning with, "This might mean . . ." He emphasized quick and creative and sometimes controversial thoughts. This helped students harness the freewriting muscle for creative, imaginative, and sometimes analytic thinking.

CYNTHIA SELFE AND GAIL HAWISHER

Sometimes it just doesn't make any sense to wait until a person is gone before we recognize all they've contributed. This is especially true for people who give a great deal: those who pioneer fields, shape the profession's fundamental direction and tenor, contribute generously of their time and effort to colleagues both junior and senior.

People in the field of computers and composition felt this way about Charlie Moran, who we proudly considered one of our own. In 2003, the *Computers and Composition* journal broke with the professional habit of naming awards for colleagues who had already died and named an award for Charlie, who was very much alive. We created The Charles Moran Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Field, in honor of the twentieth anniversary of the journal. Charlie was a living role model to us, and we wanted to recognize his exemplary scholarship and professional service to the field.

Charlie contributed so many publications to the field—books, articles, chapters—even as he supported the growth of the journal as a valued member of the editorial board. Charlie sat with us over countless dinners and drinks, presentations and committee meetings, workshops and institutes. He was what we all wanted to be: innovative and experimental, active and engaged, committed to good teaching, open to all sorts of possibilities and experiences, gentle and yet wickedly funny.

BRUCE PENNIMAN

The Western Massachusetts Writing Project, which Charlie co-founded in 1992 and served as site director until 2003, was the site of our longest and deepest collaboration. Like many other teachers, I call the Writing Project my professional home.

I participated in WMWP's second summer institute in 1994. Soon after, Charlie asked me to join the leadership team. Many others could say the same. We all grew into leadership because Charlie encouraged us to tackle problems and design solutions, even in areas where we had limited experience.

Eventually I had the awesome responsibility of stepping into Charlie's shoes as site director. I have tried hard to emulate his practice of creating supportive spaces for others to lead, and I am very grateful to have him—present tense—in my life.

MISSY-MARIE MONTGOMERY

I found out about Charlie's death early one morning before co-facilitating a collaborative workshop we were holding on our campus when Zan Goncalves (a friend from graduate school whom I hadn't seen in years) told me the news.

Charlie was a true mentor for me in graduate school. I was a single mom at the time and a first generation college student, so graduate school was a foreign planet to me. I immensely doubted my ability to navigate this world. Charlie's courses were never easy, but they were so intellectually interesting and engaging that I was fascinated. I vividly remember passing Charlie in the halls of Bartlett one day; he commented on something I'd written for class, telling me that I was smart and insightful. It was his casual comment that I carried in my pocket—that kept me in graduate school.

Sixteen years ago, with Charlie's enthusiastic letter of recommendation in my file, I applied for the job I have now, a job I love. And this morning, as my friend shared the sad news, I wanted to weep, and I wondered how I'd be able to go in to the workshop at all. But of course I had to. And what better place to be at that moment than in a room filled with people fired up to be talking about teaching. I could feel Charlie there.

PAUL LEBLANC

Charlie was my mentor, my guide, eventually my colleague, and my friend. Yet Charlie was something far more than a mentor. With the curiosity and

In Memoriam: Charlie Moran

delight he brought to almost everything he did, we worked side-by-side with him, and he convinced us that what we were doing was more than just useful. Charlie made all of us who worked with him feel like *we mattered*.

We wrote together, and he was generous to share the authoring credits when so often he was the source of the intellectual and stylistic substance of whatever piece we were doing.

I learned from him that it is always about doing good work for students and being with quality people and never about status. Most of what I know about mentoring was modeled by Charlie. He set the standard.

Anne Herrington is Distinguished Professor Emerita of English at the University of Massachusetts Amherst and a former director of the university writing program and the Western Massachusetts Writing Project.

Peter Elbow is Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Massachusetts Amherst. He is the former director of the writing program.

Cynthia L. Selfe is Humanities Distinguished Professor in the Department of English at The Ohio State University. With Gail Hawisher, she is co-founder and executive editor of Computers and Composition Digital Press/Utah State UP, which has won multiple awards for its born-digital publications.

Gail E. Hawisher is University Distinguished Professor Emeritus of English at the University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaign and founding director of the University of Illinois Center for Writing Studies and the University of Illinois National Writing Project site. She is founding co-editor, with Cynthia Selfe, of Computers and Composition Digital Press.

Bruce M. Penniman is site director of the Western Massachusetts Writing Project in the Department of English at the University of Massachusetts Amherst.

Missy-Marie Montgomery is Professor in the Humanities Department at Springfield College.

Paul LeBlanc is President of Southern New Hampshire University.

Zan Goncalves is Associate Professor and Coordinator of Composition at Franklin Pierce University, Rindge, New Hampshire.

Nick Carbone, who in 2007 received the Computers and Composition Charles Moran Award for Distinguished Contributions to the Field, works for the Bedford/St. Martin's imprint of Macmillan Learning.

Thanks to Missy-Marie Montgomery, Zan Goncalves, and Nick Carbone for helping compile and edit these recollections.

Narratives, Administrative Identity, and the Early Career WPA

Amy Ferdinandt Stolley

ABSTRACT

This essay argues that narratives of WPA work, read collectively, are restrictive and disciplining for graduate and junior WPAs who read these texts as they are beginning to form their own administrative identities. After examining the complicated lore that shapes WPA advice narratives, I argue that it is important for early career WPAs to resist and speak back to these texts, specifically those arguing against pre-tenure work, in order to create space for counter-narratives that explore the liminal space(s) of administrative positions that fall outside the traditional senior WPA role. Offering counter-narratives not only supports early career WPAs as they shape their professional identities, but it also invites new ways of understanding the nature of WPA work for all WPAs, regardless of rank or experience.

In “The Postdisciplinary Politics of Lore,” Patricia Harkin argues that the stories we tell about our work can function as a sort of map of the profession, making visible “the intersections and relative configurations between our itinerary and the itineraries of others” (136). Harkin claims that if we read professional narratives over and through each other, much like the “textbook transparencies in which the viewer sees relations among several anatomical systems,” we can better compare our unique institutional experiences to draw more general conclusions about the work we do as writing instructors and program administrators (136). This mapping also illustrates how stories of individual WPAs’ administrative successes and failures have shaped our understanding of best practices in writing program administration. The WPA Outcomes Statement 3.0, which “attempts to both represent and regularize writing programs’ priorities for first-year composition,” demonstrates such a mapping. Each iteration of the WPA Outcomes State-

ment has both synthesized and problematized our assumptions about the purpose of first-year writing courses (“The Outcomes Statement History”) while concretizing the informal knowledge learned from our narrated experiences into benchmark policies and guiding principles enacted in programs across the country.

We can map these narratives in a different way, though, focusing not on how they shape the field but rather on how they chart a course that shapes the identities of early career WPAs. I argue that narratives of WPA work, read collectively, are more restrictive and disciplining than we might imagine, especially for early career WPAs.¹ We must be mindful, especially as we mentor early career WPAs, of how narratives by more experienced WPAs might restrict new WPAs as they develop their professional identities, and we must consider ways that we might reframe our understanding of the relationship between WPA work and the identities of those who choose it. While it is necessary for all WPAs to question, respond to, and resist (if necessary) these narratives to create space for additional perspectives, I argue that this is an especially important task for early career WPAs whose status as newcomers enables them to raise questions about WPA identity not yet fully considered by WPA practitioners and the field of WPA studies.

EXPERIENTIAL KNOWLEDGE AND THE EARLY CAREER WPA

One of the more vexing questions for composition scholars since Stephen North published *The Making of Knowledge in Composition* in 1987 has been the role that experience, which he calls *lore*, plays—or should play—in establishing knowledge within the field. As Richard Fulkerson has explained, North himself expressed “ambivalence” about *lore*’s value as an epistemological tool, arguing for its necessity while questioning the validity of claims established by experience alone (Fulkerson 50–51). North’s choice to include *lore* as part of his taxonomy gives credence to its value alongside other types of inquiry, but the ill-defined or poorly implemented methodologies inherent in *lore*-based epistemologies raise questions about *lore*’s ability to establish “credible truth claims” that influence how we approach our work and think about ourselves as writing teachers and writing program administrators (Fulkerson 50).

These “credible truth claims” create what Melissa Ianetta refers to as “rhetorical commonplaces” within the field—ideas or principles repeated so often in our publications and conference presentations that the repetition itself illustrates “what we value” and how “we organize these values into administrative strategies” (180). For example, amongst WPAs, Edward White’s so-called White’s Law, “Assess thyself, or assessment will be done

unto thee,” has been repeated so often in publications, at WPA conference presentations, and on the WPA-L listserv that not only the phrase, but also the message behind it, has become part of our collective knowledge. We understand the value of assessment because we remember White’s Law, but more to Ianetta’s point, White’s Law helps us see what WPAs value in their professional identity: autonomy and agency for both the writing program and the WPA.

Because White’s Law is informed by both a theoretical understanding of assessment and practical expertise, it has taken on the status of a “credible truth claim” like Fulkerson describes. However, it is not only White’s status as a senior scholar in the field that creates such a credible truth claim; it’s also the fact that his admonition is borne out through others’ experiences—both by those who followed his advice and those who did not—that has elevated his statement to a rhetorical commonplace amongst WPAs.

Narratives and collective experiential knowledge can align neatly with certain aspects of our professional identities, but significant truth claims repeated in WPA narratives do not always match the experiences of some WPAs and can sometimes be at odds with the values and choices WPAs make. Chief among these is the oft-repeated mantra, “Don’t take an administrative position before tenure.” The difficult experiences of some narrative writers suggest that administering a writing program without the safety net of tenure is a dangerous proposition that should neither be offered by senior administrators nor pursued by hopeful applicants (Horning 48). Krista Ratcliffe and Rebecca Rickly’s afterword to their collection, *Performing Feminist Administration in Rhetoric and Composition*, offers early career WPAs a list of thoughtful, nuanced, and fundamentally hopeful pieces of advice from five well-respected senior WPAs. For example, “Watch people . . . Listen to how they talk to/about others . . . Locate good role models and bad, and know the difference, especially if the good and bad inhabit the same body” (222). Near the end of the list, readers are met with this: “DON’T DO IT WITHOUT TENURE!!!” (224; emphasis original). The all-caps exclamation undercuts the supportive nature of this advice for those who *do* choose administrative positions before tenure, and this admonishment, while well-intentioned and seemingly supported by the knowledge built from the field’s narratives, can have negative emotional ramifications for those who choose to follow this career path.

Take, for example, the contributions to the “Symposium on Mentoring the Work of WPAs” in the Fall 2011 issue of *WPA: Writing Program Administration*. Joyce Olewski Inman explains that despite the advice of a well-meaning mentor, her choice to take a full-time WPA job while still a graduate student isolated her from both her potential mentors and the field itself.

She confesses, “I feel pressured to explain the situation and how it came to be—to apologize for accepting the position of WPA. I suppose part of me is ashamed” (152). Kathryn Johnson Gindlesparger echoes Inman when, as part of the same Symposium, she describes the “intersection between tenure and administration” as a “shame [she has] to choose” (155). It is clear why they position their choices to take a pre-tenure/non-tenure-track WPA position as a disgrace when others argue vehemently against such decisions: The advice of our mentors, whom we respect and admire, often contradicts our training, our professional goals, and our identity as writing program scholars and administrators. When both Inman and Gindlesparger interpret their experiences as WPAs without the possibility of tenure as somehow “shameful,” we see another rhetorical commonplace in our work: Pre-tenure WPA positions are always risky. However, when this commonplace is raised to the level of a truth claim, it functions as a regulating force saturated with emotional ramifications for those who are in the process of constructing their professional identities as WPAs.

Like Inman and Gindlesparger, my best job offer was a full-time WPA position (though mine was pre-tenure, tenure-track), and as I grappled with that decision, I received similar, discouraging advice. Rather than feeling shame, however, I have felt frustration in my colleagues’ dismissal of my choice to take a WPA job without tenure, and through that frustration, I’ve felt as though I’m outside of the field, looking in. These narratives and the advice they promulgate function as regulating forces that subtly position WPAs as the object of critique, and as a result, I have felt the disapproving gaze (perhaps real, perhaps imagined) of others because I chose to take an administrative position before tenure. Yet because the subject of the gaze (in this case, the non-tenured WPA herself) is always able to be watched, her visibility, as Michel Foucault posits, “assures the hold of the power that is exercised over [her]. It is the fact of constantly being seen, of being able always to be seen, that maintains the disciplined individual in [her] subjection” (187). In this example, the narrative *cum* truth claim arguing against pre-tenure WPAs either restrains the subject from making choices that go against conventional wisdom or disciplines those who choose to take on these positions pre-tenure with shame or isolation.

NARRATIVES AS COMMUNITY (AND IDENTITY) NORMING

When we listen to stories and tell our own, we begin to understand how we fit within a larger community of WPAs, but when we rely on narratives to structure our understanding of what it means to do the work of a WPA, we run the risk of constructing an identity of ourselves as WPAs that

is based on others' experiences instead of our own. As North noted, lore "form[s] an important part of a Practitioner's identity, the outward signs of community membership: When I do these things in this way, I declare myself a Practitioner" (30). Particularly for early career WPAs, storytelling can offer an opportunity to try on a particular professional identity while simultaneously validating her membership amongst more seasoned WPAs around her.

As WPAs, we've written and read so many narratives outlining the perils of graduate and/or pre-tenure administrative work that their collective message creates an oft-repeated commonplace: Writing program administration is disappointing, soul-crushing, and often career-destroying work. When we write about our good days on the job, we explore what we did that worked and how it could be implemented in other programs and different contexts (see, for example, contributions to Irene Ward and William J. Carpenter's *The Longman Sourcebook for Writing Program Administrators*). Yet we don't often write about what those good days feel like or how those experiences shape our professional identities. Instead, we write about how we struggle, argue, and bargain with colleagues and other administrators to protect our programs and by extension, ourselves. We resign ourselves to the notion that "WPAs must choose to act in the face of despair and hopelessness" despite our tireless efforts (Micciche, "More" 443). Our jobs can't always be so dangerous, at least not every day, but the narratives, read together, establish a truth claim that suggests the opposite.

Why are these the stories we tell about our professional lives? Why do we paint ourselves as heroes who saved the program or hapless victims unable to withstand institutional forces to protect our programs and ourselves? As Donna Strickland notes in *The Managerial Unconscious in the History of Composition Studies*, the complicated nature of the work itself creates the need for WPA narratives. Strickland notes that historically, WPAs have resisted the notion of themselves as managers because, as "traditional humanist intellectuals," we often "distrust management as, at best, nonintellectual, and, at worst, soul-murdering" (10). Situated in this context, our storytelling practices make more sense: If we are ambivalent or resistant to the complicated role we play in the university system as WPAs, a more simplified, reductive means of storytelling can elide the conflict we feel in that role. Thus, we tell stories that paint us as the romantic hero who defends the program against administrative whims or the tragic martyr who sacrifices herself for the good of the program or her own ethical principles.² The stories allow us to ignore the fact that as WPAs, we are agents with institutional power in systems we find troubling and instead portray a less complex and arguably less honest portrait of the work of the WPA.

Using stories of suffering or heroism to argue against the work of pre-tenure WPA positions is problematic not only because of the ambiguous way lore is constructed and functions within the field but also because these stories have consequences on how we make meaning of ourselves as we do this work (whether or not we have tenure). When a junior WPA blends the commonplaces of WPA narratives into her own professional identity, she may feel constrained by the hero/victim binaries the WPA narratives demonstrate. She may also feel that martyrdom is inevitable, that she must have to choose between sacrificing herself for the good of the program or walking away to maintain her autonomy and agency. Moreover, when seasoned WPAs tell stories of suffering and victimhood, or power and victory, the early career WPA may consider her own experiences—and tell her own story—in a similar way, not necessarily because that's how she experienced it but because this narrative arc shows that she has earned her WPA stripes and is a vetted member of the community.

Narratives function differently for early career WPAs than they do for more seasoned administrators. In *Doing Emotion*, Laura Micciche cites Sarah Ahmed to explain the “stickiness” of narratives, arguing that the emotions described in and created by professional stories have a tendency to attach to the reader and shape their own perspective and experiences (28). Those just starting in the field have fewer of their own experiences to contextualize or counter-balance others’ stories. When narratives are shared by scholars whom we respect and wish to emulate, it’s particularly difficult to imagine constructing a WPA identity that isn’t colored by the disappointment, discouragement, and (sometimes) despair they describe. Micciche claims that narratives can function like a sticky adhesive, but I would argue that when an early career WPA reads a narrative that has an emotional tenor that does not match her own experiences, that narrative functions more like a solvent, unsticking her from the narrative, the rhetorical commonplace it reifies, and the field itself.

REWRITING NARRATIVES IN THE MARGINS

As a field and as individuals who are always in the process of building and refining our professional identities, we must interrogate our assumption that pre-tenure administration is always dangerous. Pre-tenure and non-tenure-track WPA work has become—for better or worse—a material reality. In their 2007 survey of WPAs, Jonikka Charlton and Shirley K Rose report that the number of WPAs at the Associate rank fell from 44% to 28% between 1986 and 2007 while the number of pre-tenure, non-tenure-track, and graduate WPAs rose from 30% to 42% in that same time period

(123). We must not assume that colleagues are being forced to take on these positions; instead, we might listen to those who actively choose WPA work as part of their graduate study and early professional lives to understand their choices more fully. As Jonikka Charlton notes in *GenAdmin: Theorizing WPA Identities in the Twenty-First Century*, “The fact that I *choose* to be a WPA, that I *am* a WPA . . . defines a large part of who I am” (Charlton et al. 26). When WPAs actively choose WPA work and claim administration as part of their professional and scholarly identities, they embody a different kind of agency than the WPA who has the work foisted on her. As more people make similar choices, the field would do well to reconsider its advice about pre-tenure work and focus instead on mentoring early career faculty to find ways to thrive in their positions rather than second-guessing the choice itself.

This mentoring could begin first by unpacking and, when necessary, critiquing the narratives themselves, paying attention to how “disciplinary narratives and tropes produce affects and feeling subjects” (Micciche, *Doing Emotion* 26). When we actively critique and discuss narratives within our academic communities, we accomplish several things. First, and perhaps most importantly, we shift the disciplining gaze so the object of study is not the early career WPA herself; instead, the early career WPA’s gaze (and the gaze of her senior and peer mentors) is directed back to the texts, allowing her the opportunity to resist the narratives, if desired, as she constructs her own identity. Additionally, when early career WPAs speak back to the narratives, they have a chance to envision their place in the field based on their experiences, circumstances, and choices rather than others’ narratives.

When we critique narratives, we also open up our mentoring relationships to move beyond the problematic yet common expert-apprentice model that often silences the mentee. Instead, we can create the opportunity for an “interdependent model of mentoring” that “provide[s] benefits for mentors and mentees” (Ratcliffe and Schuster 248). An interdependent model of mentoring allows early career WPAs to push back against commonplaces that do not match their own experiences, and it invites more experienced WPAs to participate in an important mentoring strategy Krista Ratcliffe and Donna Decker Schuster discuss: listening that “facilitate[s] genuine communication” and understanding (251). If Winifred Bryan Horner is right and the mentoring relationship requires both questions and those willing to answer them (17), we might expand our notion of mentoring to create space for the questions more experienced WPAs might have of early career WPAs: “What made you choose this? What can your experiences teach me about newer generations of WPAs? What can I learn about my own experiences from listening to you?”

CONSIDERING COUNTER-NARRATIVES

By fostering a type of mentoring that moves beyond the expert-apprentice model, we create space for counter-narratives to emerge that, as Linda Adler-Kassner encourages, tell stories rooted in our principles that explain “*why* we do the work that we do and motivate us to persist in it” (10). Rather than reiterating narratives’ tropes, counter-narratives may invite us to “consider how to construct metaphors for composition in renewed language that resists positioning ourselves as principals of our own subjection” (Micciche, *Doing Emotion* 41). One word that is being used increasingly by WPAs to describe their work is *liminal*. Julie Nelson Christoph, Rebecca S. Nowacek, Mary Lou Odom, and Bonnie Kathryn Smith explain that gWPAs occupy a “difficult and liminal position” as graduate students and administrators simultaneously (94); Talinn Phillips, Paul Shovlin, and Megan Titus argue that *liminal* most accurately describes those who “engage in the high-stakes work of j- or sWPAs but typically have an untenurable institutional rank: graduate student, contingent faculty, support staff, etc.” (44). Finally, Tara Pauliny applies the term to the untenured WPA who “finds herself in an inherently queer position: She is an administrator who is both authorized and de-authorized; she is an integral part of the institution and a potential means of disruption” (1).

When we listen to those who occupy these liminal spaces, we begin to see a counter-narrative emerging that more fully examines the lived experiences of early career WPAs and generates new knowledge about WPA work. To hear these stories, though, it helps to reframe how we think of *liminal* by looking for what is valuable on the margins of rank and tenure. While we might at first understand Pauliny’s terms *de-authorized* and *disruption* as negatively constructed notions of our identities, there is rhetorical potential in that space. Below I offer my own counter-narrative, a beginning perhaps, that illustrates the rhetorical opportunities I’ve found in administration before tenure.

As a graduate student, I served as a gWPA in my institution’s program, and like Phillips, Shovlin, and Titus, I recognized that among my peers, no one else seemed to want the job of graduate WPA work (55). But I did. I saw myself as the link between the WPA and my fellow graduate students, and I liked getting to see the nuts and bolts of how a writing program worked. I felt confident in my role, assured that I was both contributing to and learning from the program work I was doing. Midway through my first semester as gWPA, I could see that my fellow grad students assumed I was suffering, in part because of the narratives of gWPA work they were reading as part of their coursework. One classmate tried to commiserate with me, saying,

“We talked in class today about how graduate WPA work is so difficult. You must hate your job.”

I was surprised that my classmates associated me with these gWPAs’ stories—I didn’t hate my job; in fact, like Irvin Peckham, I enjoyed it and had to “[wonder] about the angst . . . I have heard expressed . . . in conferences or read about in rhetoric and composition journals about the difficulties of WPAing” (190). For me, the demands of program administration interested and engaged me, and, like Doug Hesse described: “I [liked] being busy on this stuff” (408). I found that I was better at my own research because my gWPA role offered a chance to leave the isolation of the dissertation process to work with and learn from others, and it actually gave me something more to say once I sat back down to write. Yet because I was new to the role and my administrative identity was in its infancy, my classmates’ comments were unsettling. Was I doing the work badly because I didn’t experience the emotions and conflict the narratives predicted I would? Although their response illustrates the stickiness of narratives that I described earlier, those moments of dissonance, for a time, were destabilizing. As I tried to reconcile my experiences with the narratives, I started conversations with classmates about what my *real* experience was like, hoping to show them that I didn’t, in fact, hate my job and that, while it was challenging, I felt that I was learning through my contributions to the program. For me, the dissonance between my experience and the narratives created an opportunity for conversation about the nature of our program, graduate WPA work, and myself as an early career WPA.

As I continued in my gWPA role through my last two years of graduate school, I was overwhelmed by the possibility and uncertainty of the job search. Not unlike my peers, I faced a competitive job market while juggling my own professional goals and desires, the advice of my mentors, the warnings of the narratives, and my own material and family needs. Like Charlton, I saw (and continue to see) administration as part of my professional identity, so it was not a stretch for me to take an administrative position early in my career. I did so eagerly but cautiously.

As a graduate student and job-seeker, I was trained to read and understand administrative structures, and as I moved through the interview process, I saw that there are environments (often at smaller colleges or universities) where administrative work is valued structurally within the university. When I interviewed for my current position, I learned that the university offered one course release per semester for WPA work, and each composition course counts as 1.5 courses toward the 3/4 teaching load, effectively offering a 2/2 teaching schedule that would afford time for both administrative work and scholarly projects. Perhaps even more valuable than release

time, I was assured that the work I would do as WPA would be understood as fundamentally scholarly in nature, and curricular and assessment work that would be categorized as service at some institutions would count toward my scholarly production.

The assurances made during the interview process have borne out, but had I followed the narratives' advice alone, I never would have taken the job. By reading the institutional structure carefully, I was able to see a different structure that might make pre-tenure administrative work possible and even desirable, rather than dangerous. At a research-intensive university where administrative work is deemed to be service alone, accepting a WPA position may have been a more dangerous choice with long-term professional consequences for the WPA. However, when I framed the narratives' warnings against pre-tenure work not as monolithic, but rather as institution- and program-specific, I had more room to interpret both the narratives and the job offers I received.

Once hired, I worried that my inexperience or perceived lack of power might be a disadvantage, but in my first years as an untenured WPA, I found my limited knowledge about the institution to be a starting point for conversation and change. When a colleague resisted the curricular revisions I proposed because "we tried that before and it didn't work," I found an opportunity to ask questions to better understand the historical context. Through our conversation, we were able to consider ways in which my proposal could succeed. I could have viewed my inexperience as a liability, but instead I embraced the disruption of my identity as a junior administrator as Pauliny describes.³ By leveraging my newness, I was able to foster discussions that would have been impossible for someone not situated on the margins. Moreover, my role as an untenured administrator in the university system complicated the notion that institutional power is directly tied to tenure. Without tenure, my goal was not (and could not be) to secure traditional notions of power. Instead, I aimed to build my capacity to influence others through *ethos*-based authority built on the margins.

I recognize that by framing my experiences as a g- and jWPA as a counter-narrative, I run the risk of over-simplifying the nature of untenured WPA work, particularly for those more marginalized than I have been. Worse, I could fall into the trap of positioning myself as the hero of my own story, which I most certainly am not. I do not mean to say that untenured administrative work is without its risks; my early career has had many political, intellectual, and emotional challenges, but I consciously do not interpret these experiences as a consequence of my junior administrator status. I have been challenged in my early career because academic work is itself challenging, regardless of my administrative responsibilities or rank. WPA

work has become more familiar the longer I've done it, but its political, intellectual, or emotional challenges haven't gone away because my rank has changed.

It could be said that too much emphasis on identity—either for graduate students preparing for WPA work or those early career WPAs acclimating to the role—promotes a solipsistic view that distracts us from the ethical questions we as WPAs have a responsibility to address. By focusing on our own identity as WPAs, we run the risk of ignoring fundamental questions of fairness raised by the ongoing challenges of contingent labor, economics, and institutional politics. As Strickland notes, writing programs can be seen as sites of class struggle, so when a WPA has to tell an adjunct his class is cancelled a week before the semester starts or when budget cuts decimate graduate student funding, we bristle at the perceived injustice of the system. If we focus on how these situations impact our administrative identity alone, if we consider only how *we* are victimized by these situations, we miss an opportunity to theorize, organize, and problem solve to build a system that doesn't create victims of those with less power than we. Yet we cannot divorce identity—or ourselves as feeling subjects—from the conversation. The uncomfortable emotion we experience when faced with the difficult responsibilities of WPA work can (and should) motivate us to work for change, not so that we feel better, but so that we *do* better. If we leverage a more nuanced, complex understanding of our marginalized (yet still, at times, privileged) WPA identities, we might work toward creating a more just writing program for all those who labor in it. We cannot do that, however, without acknowledging, reflecting on, and complicating the emotional nature of our professional identities through the narratives we write.

If early career WPAs are indeed on the margins looking in on our institutions and the larger field of WPA studies, we might listen to liminal WPAs' stories to create more detailed maps that complicate and advance theories of WPAs and their work. Those of us who feel as though we populate the margins of our field for whatever reason—age, race, class, sexual orientation, or geography—must embrace the opportunity to tell our stories, to expand our understanding of how to best work for the good of our programs, and to do so in a way that is congruent with our personal and professional identities. Rhetoric and composition, and WPA studies specifically, is built on a culture of collegial support, collaboration, and individual agency. If these are our values, if these are the defining commonplaces of our field, then we would do well to tell narratives that are aligned accordingly.

NOTES

1. For the purposes of this argument, I'm using the term *early career WPA* to describe those who are in the beginning of their administrative careers, particularly graduate WPAs (gWPAs) and pre-tenure WPAs. As Christoph et al. note, gWPAs often find themselves in an admittedly "difficult and liminal position" because they must negotiate their identities as graduate students and administrators without being fully one or the other (94). I would argue that pre-tenure WPAs occupy similar space because they are perceived by their colleagues (and themselves, in some cases) to be both powerful (because they have an administrative position) and vulnerable (because they are untenured).

2. See also Banks and Alexander, as well as Charlton et al., for further complications of the hero/victim binary.

3. Part of Pauliny's disruption came from her embodied queerness, too, calling us to further interrogate the ways that other elements of our identity, like sexual orientation, race, class, and gender, intersect with, complicate, and (in some cases) amplify our liminal administrative identities (Craig and Perryman-Clark, Dew).

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Moving from the One and Done to a Culture of Collaboration: Revising Professional Development for TAs

Lauren Obermark, Elizabeth Brewer, and Kay Halasek

ABSTRACT

In this article, we argue for a model of TA professional development that is collaborative with TAs themselves, ongoing throughout a TA's time in graduate school, and distributed across departmental and institutional locations. We present an example of a sustained professional development program for experienced TAs teaching composition at a large state university. Seeking to address the gap in TA professional development scholarship that extends beyond initial training and the composition practicum, we profile the professional development programs implemented during our tenures as WPAs over the course of two years. The programs designed were based on surveys and focus group interviews and, as such, responded to local needs and increased TA buy-in in the programming offered.

—I felt like teaching support was fairly strong in my first term, but after that there was little support.

—Initial training is often good, but in continual, ongoing support with teaching classes I had taught before, I often wanted more opportunities for professional development.¹

Our epigraphs, written in the comment section on a survey we distributed to graduate student alumni in fall of 2012, point toward an issue familiar to many WPAs. Despite the prevalence and history of graduate teaching assistants (TAs) teaching writing courses at many universities, the field continues to struggle with how to prepare them meaningfully for the teaching they will do in their immediate future as TAs and for the responsibilities they will take on as they move forward in their careers. In their WPA:

Writing Program Administration article, E. Shelley Reid, Heidi Estrem, and Marcia Belcheir argue for a professional development (PD) program that spans the graduate school careers of these teachers: “Just as we have long known that no one writing course can inoculate college writers forever, no ‘one-shot’ approach to pedagogy instruction (‘the’ TA seminar, for example) can be expected to succeed in dramatically altering students’ root practices” (34).² Although we as WPAs agree with Reid et al.’s call for sustained instruction in composition pedagogy during graduate school, we also recognize that the actions we take at our own institutions to move away from the one-shot approach to pedagogy instruction may not be immediately clear. Reid et al. suggest an approach based on local needs, and they charge the WPA community to

Go gather data—not just impressions—from your own TAs. . . . What new (or old) learning do they value? How do they talk about teaching when you’re not in the room? To what degree do they change as they move beyond their first year of teaching? How do their responses differ from the TAs we studied? (62)

Our research answers this call to gather data. We share and analyze data collected in our program at a large state university from 2011–2012, discussing how we used these data to create new forms of professional development for TAs from 2011–2013. Moreover, we focus on how professional development might better meet the needs of experienced TAs and how WPAs might refine or create programming that facilitates TA development as they move beyond their first year of teaching. This is a focus overlooked by scholarship in the field that mainly addresses initial training, PD, and coursework for inexperienced TAs teaching first-year writing (FYW) (Bullock; Dobrin; Ebest “When Graduate Students Resist”; Restaino). Beth Brunk-Chavez calls this typical model into question and points out that “our field understandably gives more attention to that ‘unstable cadre of graduate assistants’ who are considered unstable primarily because they are new to the teaching of writing. But what about the rest of our faculty?” (153). At our institution, a large part of this faculty is experienced TAs, those who are no longer new to the teaching of writing and thus receive much less formalized attention through PD programming. As a way to acknowledge the needs of these experienced TAs, we build on the extended writing pedagogy education laid out by Reid et al. Our suggested approaches to PD reject what we have come to think of as the one and done model of TA training.

Through our data collection and resulting program development, which we detail in this article, we argue for a TA professional development model in English departments that is:

1. collaborative and engaged with the TAs themselves, valuing their expertise and experiences. TAs should be consulted as programming is developed and their expertise utilized in a variety of ways so they come to understand themselves as participants in the design of the programming, and ultimately as serious, reflective, and professional teacher-scholars.
2. ongoing, and thus breaking the accepted pattern of the one and done training. Developing the skills and strategies for teaching writing should be communicated and understood as an ongoing learning process.
3. distributed across departmental and institutional locations, acknowledging that PD in teaching is not just a WPA endeavor. Distributing PD in this manner contributes to institutional memory in programs with high WPA turnover and leads to increased sustainability in PD programs.

Our conclusions are embedded in the local context of our research site, but we also offer a TA PD approach that has broader applications and implications, an approach we hope others will further develop and adapt.

LOCAL EXIGENCIES: A PORTRAIT OF OUR INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT

Throughout their tenures in our department, TAs may teach a variety of courses, but all begin by teaching first-year writing, English 1110, typically for one year. During that first year in our program, TAs complete the required departmental training for 1110, which includes a pre-semester, week-long orientation and training session; semester-long teaching practicum that includes an introduction to composition pedagogy; and a class observation by a WPA. TAs are also given a syllabus template for the course, which centers around Rossenwasser and Stephen's *Writing Analytically*. While the first-year writing (FYW) syllabus does allow the flexibility to select certain readings and design the course thematically around those texts, TAs neither create their own assignments nor the plan for semester-long arc of instruction.

In their second year in the graduate program, TAs may request to be assigned another course, including second-year writing, a 2000-level general education composition class largely populated by sophomores and juniors. Required of all undergraduates in the university as part of the

general education curriculum (GEC), the second-year course is taught across departments universally as 2367 and is the only course in the university's Writing Across the Curriculum program. The GEC statement for 2367 demands more sophisticated composing, a focus on diversity and the US Experience, and more thorough introduction to advanced academic research that builds on the skills acquired in 1110. TAs also have more control in the course design; they move from using the standard syllabus template in first-year writing to designing their own syllabus for second-year writing (SYW) that meets general programmatic and GEC requirements, such as the inclusion of a scaffolded research project.

By the time these TAs are eligible to teach SYW, they have developed a core set of skills and strengths on which to build. At the same time, even within a group of TAs with a shared training program and similar set of teaching experiences in FYW, we found demonstrable differences in individuals' senses of preparedness and autonomy. Some TAs had previous teaching experience from MA programs or from working as classroom teachers in secondary school contexts, and these individuals often felt relatively well prepared, adaptable, and ready for a new challenge in SYW. Others still felt like novices, particularly because they had never been asked to develop their own syllabi.

RESPONSIVE METHODS FOR DESIGNING A LOCALLY RELEVANT PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

With our varied audience in mind, we put in place a PD methodology that continually evolved to respond to TA needs. As scholars such as Jeff Grabill and Doug Hesse suggest, we developed a methodology that was reflective and responsive to the population we were researching. During our two-year project, we collected a variety of quantitative and qualitative data, with each stage of our research leading us to collect further data and refine our understanding of the needs of TAs. Because our methods of data collection communicate and shape the philosophy of our PD, we discuss our methods in detail throughout the article, but we offer here a brief overview of the three tools we designed to enact our responsive methodology.

Needs Assessment Survey of Graduate Students

We began with a survey in the summer of 2011 asking TAs first to rank their professional development interests and then share particular successes, challenges, and concerns about teaching SYW (Appendix A). We conducted this survey electronically using a departmental graduate student email listserv. Fifty-two TAs participated, roughly half of whom had taught

SYW previously. The remaining respondents anticipated teaching SYW in the future.

Focus Groups of Graduate Students

The 2011 survey supplied us with quantitative data, but TAs's discursive responses, especially their comments about challenges and confusion surrounding the course, motivated us to collect more detailed responses. To prompt this, we conducted focus group interviews (see outline of questions in Appendix B). Once again, we used the departmental listserv to identify and contact participants. Twelve TAs participated (six each in an experienced group and an inexperienced group). We conducted the focus groups with the assistance of a senior consultant from our university teaching center. The focus group interviews were audio recorded, and during each session, we took notes on large sheets of paper, which eventually helped us categorize the data. After the interviews, the audio recordings were transcribed and the notes saved. We coded both the transcripts and the meeting notes for recurring themes.

PhD Alumni Survey

An addendum to our research was a survey of department PhD alumni. We conducted this brief electronic survey nearly a year after holding the focus groups. To do this survey, we reached out to the last five years of graduates (2007–2013) from the department (Appendix C). We used this survey to determine the current teaching commitments of these alumni and their impressions of how well the department prepared them for those commitments. The survey garnered twenty-two responses.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS COLLABORATIVE

Data collected through these various tools first lead us to advocate for PD that is collaboratively designed with TAs themselves, valuing their input and experiences. As we researched approaches to the PD of graduate students, drawing on scholarship from educational development (introduced to us by our university teaching center, which we will discuss in more detail later), we realized a common error in PD happens before programming even begins: Participants are not asked for their input. In the terminology from educational development, this points to the necessity of a “needs assessment” (McClelland 22).³ Understanding the context of the work of the writing program itself is also part of the heuristic for designing and reviewing TA development programs proposed by Kathi Blake Yancey. In the first of her twelve questions Yancey asks, “What are the characteristics

of the TAs for whom the program is designed?” (66). While we had a general idea, we had never directly asked.

An essay in *Pedagogy* by Estrem and Reid (which draws on the same data discussed in their *WPA: Writing Program Administration* article) provides one framework for why collecting data from composition TAs, particularly through interviews, is a valuable and necessary practice. Estrem and Reid detail their interview methodology, suggesting that it “opened up new possibilities for imagining alternate spaces for our mentorship of TA instructors” (450). Similarly, we discovered that assessing TA needs through both discursive and conversational means allowed us to create developmentally appropriate PD. Further, engaging the concerns and feedback of TAs positioned them as collaborators in their own professional development and helped them identify more readily as professionals. In “Using Interviews in Development Programs for Beginning TAs,” James Shaaffer and Lawrence McGill similarly advocate for the use of interviews with TAs, whom they note “really seemed to enjoy talking with us about teaching” (105). This simple observation points to an implicit yet far reaching benefit in assessing the needs of TAs before planning PD. Sometimes this is their only formalized chance to talk about teaching in a reflective and thoughtful way, even though teaching is frequently a significant part of their graduate careers and likely will continue to be in their post-graduate school lives. By thoroughly assessing and attending to the needs expressed by the TAs in the SYW program, we demonstrated that their input and experiences were taken seriously and showed them that teaching itself is a valuable site of reflection, critical discussion, and scholarship.

Diversifying Modes of Professional Development through Collaboration

The dynamic and often participant-guided nature of focus groups allowed these interviews to become complex and thought provoking conversations for all involved, thus facilitating a more collaborative approach to data collection and interpretation. We see ourselves as having employed the focus group interviews in the spirit of the work of Cynthia Selfe and Gail Hawisher who advocate for approaching interviews as “conversations . . . in which all participants—researchers and informants—understand that they are engaged in mutually shaping meaning” and ultimately working toward a more “participatory model of research” (36–37). Focus groups afforded just such an opportunity to talk with both experienced and inexperienced TAs to get a deeper understanding of what had been expressed in the needs assessment survey. On a practical level, this participatory model of research resulted in buy-in from the TAs. Programs we sponsored were fairly well

attended and the responses to the programming, according to formal and anecdotal evaluations, were almost unanimously positive. But perhaps most importantly, because we made the active decision to engage with these TAs as professional colleagues and teachers, they saw themselves that way, too.

Our methodology was driven by a desire to solicit rich commentary and feedback from the TAs and to engage them as collaborators in determining the content of our programming. In the end, our collaboration with TAs not only led us to revise the content of the programming but also to completely reshape the format of that programming. For instance, before holding our focus groups, we envisioned offering a series of topic-driven workshops, the topics determined by the survey data collected, so we viewed that as one form of collaborative PD. This was a step in the right direction; however, once we held our focus groups and collected more detailed, qualitative data from the TAs, we discovered as too limiting our assumption of workshops as the best or only mode for delivery of PD. For instance, TAs from both focus groups (experienced and inexperienced teachers of SYW) expressed an interest in more structured and supported time to talk to one another about their experiences and course plans for SYW. Additionally, TAs suggested reducing the number of sample syllabi on the SYW program instructor-support website and instead offering annotated syllabi that explained teachers' course decisions, such as why a teacher had selected a certain textbook or used a particular theme in a course. In short, TAs wanted increased community and reflection surrounding their work as teachers in SYW, not unlike what they would have experienced teaching FYW, but with a bit more freedom and flexibility.

We took up TAs's suggestions by 1) selecting successful former SYW teachers to annotate their syllabi and post them on the course website; 2) building discussion sessions, experienced TA-led breakout groups, and TA question and answer panels into our workshops; and 3) piloting in the spring of 2013 an optional, loosely structured peer-to-peer observation program where TAs could observe and collaborate with one another. These more diverse modes of professional development directly acknowledged feedback received from TAs resulting in increased collaboration between WPAs and TAs and foregrounding PD in teaching writing as integral to the preparation of all teacher-scholars.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS ONGOING: MOVING BEYOND THE ONE AND DONE MODEL

As our discussion of collaboration and the diverse modes of PD suggests, our data indicated that PD for TAs should not stop after their first semester

or first year of teaching. While this one and done approach to TA development in teaching is well established in English departments, our experienced TAs expressed concerns about its long-term effectiveness. Implementing ongoing PD rather than focusing it all at the front end of graduate school raised questions for us about how to better address the needs of TAs at different points in their development. To this end, our work with our university's teaching center brought to our attention Jody Nyquist and Jo Sprague's developmental model for thinking about TAs.⁴ Nyquist and Sprague propose three stages of TA development, which they term "senior learner, colleague-in-training, and junior colleague" (66). The characteristics of each stage are

[that] senior learners still identify strongly with students, but they function as experts who are capable of providing assistance; colleagues in training have begun to shift their identification to the role of teacher . . . and junior colleagues have reached a level of confident functioning in many parts of the role and may lack only the formal credentials. (66)

Nyquist and Sprague note that these stages of TA development can overlap, and they do not occur at the same rate or at the same time for all TAs.

Nyquist and Sprague's framework suggests that the needs of experienced TAs are different from their needs when they first start in the department. In particular, our data showed that as TAs develop, they often express an increasing interest in composition theory and pedagogy that they do not articulate in their first year. Experienced TAs's interest in composition theory and pedagogy was a marked shift from inexperienced TAs who sometimes were outwardly frustrated by (what they viewed as) theory presented during their early TA FYW training, teaching, and coursework. During that first year of teaching, where the majority of professional development is concentrated, most TAs, as Nyquist and Sprague explain it, are in "survival" mode as teachers, just looking to get through each day (66). TA resistance in English departments is well documented in studies by Sally Barr Ebest ("When Graduate Students Resist"; *Changing the Way We Teach: Writing and Resistance in the Training of Teaching Assistants*) and Jessica Restaino and is a common topic in casual conversations among WPAs. Our data illustrated, though, that as TAs move forward in their careers, this resistance lessens, perhaps because they are now more committed to developing themselves as colleagues and less as learners—that is, they are more interested in PD in composition theory and pedagogy because they have the survival part of teaching down. It is only after TAs are confidently surviving that they can shift toward developing critically informed teaching philosophies

and practices. For the TAs we worked with, the relevance of ongoing PD in composition became apparent to them as they designed and taught new courses, such as SYW, and as they cultivated a professional awareness about the role that teaching writing could play throughout their careers.

The Relevance of Composition Studies in Ongoing Professional Development

In a concrete way, our alumni survey verifies the relevance of ongoing professional development in composition. Over 75% of alumni respondents were teaching writing courses at their current institutions. Although they identified as having various specializations and the majority of them were not PhDs in rhetoric and composition, they taught writing either as their entire course load or in addition to courses in their areas of specialization. This figure was significant and certainly one we shared with TAs and English department faculty alike as we launched our more robust PD program.

Like the alumni, the current TAs also indicated the necessity of ongoing PD. In particular, as we analyzed survey data from the current TAs we realized that just because they had been trained to teach FYW did not mean they wanted less support as they moved on to teach SYW. We learned that 82% of the survey participants wanted to know more about the course objectives and goals for SYW. Related to that, nearly 90% of the participants felt unsure about how SYW was supposed to be more advanced than FYW. These percentages demonstrate that TAs did not feel confident in what the institution and program understood as the goals and purposes of SYW.

We also found that many TAs requested additional training in areas about which we assumed they felt confident, given their preparation for and experience in teaching FYW. For instance, 85% of participants wanted to know more about teaching the writing process, 65% wanted more training in planning in-class activities, and 61% were interested in learning more about grading student work. All of these topics were covered in detail when these TAs were teaching FYW, but a desire to further develop their knowledge and skills remained. Put simply, as the TAs developed, so did their needs. We were working with TAs who were in a variety of developmental stages; some still felt like Nyquist and Sprague's senior learners while others were well on their way to becoming junior colleagues as teachers of SYW. But no matter the stage, it was increasingly clear that that a one and done approach to PD in the teaching of writing was insufficient.

Our focus group data elucidated the demand for more PD that emerged in the survey. Some of the experienced focus group participants explained that they felt confused by the seemingly straightforward requirement that the general education statement, which outlines course objectives and

learning outcomes, be included in their syllabi. Questions articulated by the experienced TAs included “What are the goals of the course?” and “Do these goals necessitate a certain type of writing?” Further confusion surrounded how these goals and the corresponding writing was different from the FYW course. As one experienced TA put it, “What’s the difference, especially in terms of teaching writing, between FYW and SYW?” We asked TAs who had never taught SYW to spend some time reading and analyzing the General Education statement for the course, and their questions were fairly similar to their more experienced colleagues: “What’s the point of SYW?” “How do you define making the class ‘more challenging’ than FYW?” “What types of writing should you assign? Is that different than FYW?”

While the inexperienced TAs’ questions were understandable given they had not previously taught the course, the experienced TAs also asked many questions about the basics of the course. The experienced TAs in the focus groups indicated that they needed more time and support to understand the goals and outcomes of a course like SYW, especially in the context of how it aligned with their previous teaching experience. Perhaps more important than that, we needed to find ways to integrate PD about what sort of writing and writing instruction could accomplish these goals and reach these outcomes.

Ongoing PD was necessary, and especially ongoing PD with a heavy composition studies focus—what Reid et al. refer to as “writing pedagogy education” (34). While the inexperienced TAs had general questions about designing assignments and curricula, the experienced TAs expressed interest in composition theory and pedagogy explicitly. As one TA asked, “Why don’t we get exposure to more pedagogies from the field of composition and even the expertise of professors in the department?” One TA expressed concern that he simply was not doing enough toward the “teaching writing” end of SYW. This group of TAs agreed that they wanted more professional development in how to teach writing; in the words of one TA, “best practices” of composition should “anchor” any future events we hosted.

While we do not interpret our limited data to indicate a total disappearance of TA resistance, the data lead us to encourage more professional development in composition studies to situate TAs as professionals in the field. From our research, we conclude that as the experienced TAs grew in their understanding of their own career trajectories and commitments, they were able to connect to composition studies in ways that they simply could not as inexperienced TAs concerned largely with survival. By the time TAs enter their second year of teaching, they likely have a more developed sense of the academic job market, the role that the teaching of writing may play

throughout their careers, and a better sense of themselves as academics—all of which could contribute to composition studies becoming a more relevant part of their professional development.

Flexibility and Sustainability in Ongoing Professional Development

Based on these data, we revised the SYW program to create ongoing PD opportunities for TAs. First, we moved from offering just one SYW PD workshop each year to offering optional and more frequent workshops throughout the academic year. We tied these workshops to specific objectives and requirements for SYW and also used them as sites for developing and expanding what TAs already know from their training and experience teaching FYW. For instance, we offered a workshop in the fall of 2012 about developing diverse curricula and pedagogical approaches for SYW and designed a workshop for the spring of 2013 that shared methods and rationale for incorporating multimodal composing into SYW courses.

Further, we are committed to an ongoing model of PD through a peer-to-peer (P2P) program. We piloted this program in spring 2013 as a way for TAs to observe and collaborate with one another. It was motivated by survey and focus group data collected in the fall of 2011, which indicated that TAs desired more collaboration with and observation of colleagues; our alumni survey data suggested this as well. The P2P program offered a slightly more formalized way of accomplishing this. Fifteen TAs participated in the spring 2013 pilot semester of the P2P classroom observation program. We placed the TAs with partners or groups, offered a loose structure of how to conduct classroom observations (pre-observation meeting, observation, conversation after the observation), and provided a short reading about best practices for non-evaluative observations. After this introduction, the P2P observation and dialogue were self-guided processes for the participating TAs. The feedback we collected from this pilot indicated that TAs found the P2P program filled a gap in their professional development as teachers. They asked us to make the P2P program more in depth and include more than classroom observations. In the spring of 2014, an expanded teaching buddies version of the P2P was available for TAs to have a peer partner for grading, designing assignments, observing classes, etc. It is our hope that this P2P program, in its ease and flexibility, can serve as another sustainable form of ongoing professional development.

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT AS DISTRIBUTED ACROSS DEPARTMENTAL AND INSTITUTIONAL LOCATIONS

The final piece of our approach advocates making PD for TAs a wider departmental and institutional commitment. Our data, as well as existing

scholarship (Boice; Meyers; Neal and Peed-Neal), show a powerful need to involve more people and offices in creating, offering, and sustaining professional development for TAs. Writing for a cross-disciplinary audience, Shirley Ronkowski identifies several components to sustaining TA development programs (56–58), but of particular interest for us is her emphasis on institutional memory, which she explains can be established through collaboration with university teaching centers. While Ronkowski is largely interested in teaching centers, we see ourselves forming similar partnerships within our own department. By suggesting that professional development in teaching be more distributed across the institution, we argue that work with TAs in English departments should not be solely a WPA endeavor. Instead, it can and should engage other English faculty to make use of their varied expertise to meet TA needs. The results of increased distribution are twofold: 1) increased range of who participates (and how they participate) in TA professional development can contribute to institutional memory in programs with high WPA turnover and; 2) distribution can lead to sustainability of PD programs.

Connecting Professional Development to Broader Teaching Interests

Through our initial needs assessment survey, we realized some concerns about teaching did not fall neatly under our domain as WPAs and specialists in rhetoric and composition. In fact, in their survey responses, TAs expressed interest in topics that went far beyond teaching SYW. For instance, 65% of participants marked selecting texts (textbooks, articles, films, etc.) as of high or moderate priority; 64% were interested in planning class lectures; and 82% articulated as a concern meeting the needs of students with various learning styles and levels of experience. In the write-in section about “Other concerns?” one participant stated, “Film studies tips would be great.” Another participant explained, “Need help picking texts, facilitating appropriate activities and assignments in order to meet course goals.” We increasingly wondered if we could handle the diverse needs and interests our TAs expressed. For instance, many of the concerns focused on selecting texts aligned specifically with the section of SYW that focused on literature, a section none of the authors has taught nor did we identify as having particular knowledge about the teaching of literature. Although we felt well prepared to help TAs accomplish tasks like planning short lectures, meeting the needs of diverse students, or planning activities to align with course outcomes, we also realized that these were pedagogical approaches TAs would utilize in nearly any course they would teach in their careers. In short, the data suggested that drawing on the expertise from other mem-

bers of our department and the university community would be a meaningful move, especially because it would amplify the value of teaching across the department and university, contribute to broader understanding of our commitments as WPAs, and potentially enhance the knowledge of our work and thus sustain it after we had left our positions. While we certainly recommend increased, ongoing PD in composition studies, we also argue it is necessary to understand how this PD can undergird and connect to the other teaching TAs undertake. Such connections can be better facilitated by pulling from various loci of expertise held in departments and universities.

Our focus group data corroborated this need, especially because many participants were interested in talking about diversity in the classroom, broadly defined. This interest was partially motivated by the SYW as fulfilling a “social diversity in the US Experience” general education requirement. The discussions that circulated around notions of diversity and how to integrate it into the SYW course brought in topics and questions that went beyond composition studies. One experienced TA noted that he felt the diversity and US experience aspect of the course really needed to show up on his syllabus to have it approved. (He was right.) Other experienced TAs raised critical, thought provoking questions about the social diversity requirement—admittedly part of the course that had not received much attention in past PD: “What’s up with the diversity requirement? How do we really meet that?” and “What are ways to get at the diversity requirement? How can SYW as a program articulate multiple ways to meet this requirement?” These comments and questions from the TAs pushed us to see the diversity requirement as more than just an add-on to a writing course. Instead, it was a central aspect of pedagogy that the TAs themselves (and the WPAs) needed more support to appropriately theorize and apply. We thus felt a need to bring scholars and teachers who could speak to designing a course that meaningfully utilized diverse content and met the needs of a diverse student population into the professional development conversation

Finally, our alumni survey offered very direct feedback from former TAs that called for enhanced PD in areas of teaching beyond the typical WPA purview. As we collected data, we frequently wondered: Is offering professional development in the teaching of writing really just about the teaching of writing? Concerns raised by TAs were far from strictly the domain of compositionists or WPAs, and the alumni survey helped us demonstrate this in a way that we hoped would be persuasive to departmental colleagues. Alumni expressed that they felt relatively well supported as graduate students teaching at our institution; twenty-one out of the twenty-two participants “agreed” or “somewhat agreed” that they had been well sup-

ported. They still indicated ways they could have been better prepared for their faculty positions, and most of the suggestions called for more people to take part in their professional development. For instance, 59% of the alumni said they would have appreciated the opportunity to observe the classes of others, and 55% of them desired more observations of their own classes by faculty members. In the discursive section of the survey, some alumni requested more observations by faculty members in their areas of specialization, others referenced the value of mentoring programs in their current jobs, and others simply noted that there was a lack of balance since there was formalized preparation to teach composition but not other kinds of English courses. One participant wrote this lengthy and illustrative comment:

I felt very well prepared to teach composition, but not as well prepared to teach other courses. More opportunities to observe the teaching of advanced literature courses, I think, might have been beneficial. More opportunities to discuss how teaching literature is different from teaching writing (even if literature-based) would also have been helpful (perhaps through brown-bags or mentoring opportunities). While I could talk about this in an unofficial way with my dissertation advisor and committee, it would have been nice perhaps to have a dedicated teaching mentor with whom such conversations would be expected.

MERGING KNOWLEDGE AND RESOURCES TO SUPPORT INSTITUTIONAL MEMORY

We have committed to early efforts toward creating a more distributed model of TA PD in our department. First, and most importantly in terms of enhancing sustainability and disseminating locations of institutional memory, we initiated a strong relationship with our university teaching center. Alongside teaching center consultants, we discovered that high quality TA and faculty development can be achieved by merging knowledge from the field of educational development (the domain of many teaching centers) with our own knowledge of writing program administration and composition studies. Our experience working with our teaching center has made available to us both educational development scholarship and practical resources. Specifically, the teaching center provided us with grant money for increased administrative support and program assessment, and center consultants have proven allies in both collecting data and administering workshops for which we needed additional expertise.

One workshop that is worth discussing more specifically as an example of this distribution of PD responsibility was held in fall of 2012 and focused on teaching diversity. Driven by the data about the social diversity requirement we collected through focus groups, we designed this workshop to meet the needs of TAs in ways that were theoretically sound, interactive, and immediately applicable in the TAs's current classes. The workshop was designed as three parts. The first part was a lecture from a guest speaker, the associate director of our teaching center, on how to conceptualize diversity as an integral part of course design. The second part of the workshop featured a panel of experienced teachers who shared their expertise in creating diverse learning environments. These experienced teachers were both faculty members and TAs from various specializations within English Studies, allowing us to draw on the wide array of expertise available across our department. The third part was a breakout session that allowed TAs time to talk with their peers about how they could incorporate diversity into their own SYW classes. The evaluations indicated that the twenty participants found each of the three sections either "important" or "very important." The more distributed approach modeled by this workshop demonstrates how the responsibility of PD in teaching can move beyond the WPAs, into the department, across the university, and thus show to TAs the broad commitment to teaching at the university. Beyond those immediate benefits, in the long-term, the program becomes more sustainable because the institutional memory is strengthened by the involvement of more people and places.

CONCLUSION: LOCALLY DEVELOPING PROFESSIONALS

We conclude by recalling the mandate issued by Reid et al.: "Go gather data—not just impressions—from your own TAs" (62). Like Reid and her co-authors, we recognize the need for more research on TA professional development programming across institutional types. We also realize that local contexts for teaching and learning—and TAs's own goals—should and will shape PD in these local contexts. At the same time, we emphasize that although our institution may be radically different from others, the model we describe involving collaboration with TAs, ongoing PD and rejection of the one and done model, and distribution across locations in the university is applicable across a variety of programs.

Our approach to ongoing professional development takes seriously that supporting experienced TAs means providing opportunities for them to develop as professionals. Our data showed that in their transition to greater teaching independence, TAs become more invested in their professional

development, not less. Related to this investment, we discovered that TAs, especially experienced ones, need to be more involved in their PD as teachers and approached as colleagues in the field rather than novices in need of training, inoculation, or the one and done approach. Given the frequency with which our program alumni from all areas within English studies teach composition, our ongoing PD program quite literally prepares them for their profession. Finally, we observe a powerful trend that demands more people/places get involved with the PD of TAs. We need more diverse expertise, more models of approaches to teaching, and increased mentoring to make TA professional development sustainable in terms of both labor and institutional memory. By systematically collaborating with our TAs, our campus teaching center, and other English department faculty, we embrace the process of creating a locally relevant ongoing professional development program.

NOTES

1. All survey and interview data collected have been approved by the University Institutional Review Board (Review board number 2014E0043).
2. We use the term *professional development* to emphasize the collaborative and distributed model we outline here, working intentionally away from describing these programs as *training*, a metaphor that places TAs as novices rather than colleagues collaborating. At our institution, for instance, the FYW workshop is often referred to as a training session to certify them. *Training* brings to mind Paulo Freire's notion of banking education where the TAs are empty containers waiting to be filled by experts with teaching knowledge and skills.
3. Needs assessments and the collection of ongoing feedback from TAs are crucial to understanding local needs as they change. While WPAs certainly value feedback collection, educational development scholarship emphasizes the practice even more and provides practical guides for how to collect feedback. See Samuel B. McClelland's 1994 article on survey questionnaires, for instance.
4. Reid et al. also find this framework helpful and rely heavily on it in their 2012 *WPA: Writing Program Administration* article.

APPENDIX A: SUMMER 2011 NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Email text:

Hello all,

Professor K and I are in the process of planning some new and improved professional development workshops for GTAs that teach (or will teach)

Second-Year Writing. To assist with our planning, we wanted to get input from the grad students in the department about what they want to know when it comes to planning and teaching this course.

So, since most of you have or will teach SYW, we ask that you fill out the following survey. We thank you in advance for your participation!

Best,

L

Online Survey

Experience:

- I have taught Second-Year Writing (SYW) before.
 I plan to teach SYW in the future.

If you have taught SYW before, what version(s) of it have you taught? (.01, .02, etc.)

Your Professional Development Interests/Concerns:

Ranking Your Interests

Please rank the topics that you would like to know more about through professional development workshops about teaching English SYW. You may rank as many or as few of the topics as you would like, but we ask that you rank according to the following system:

- The ranking scale is goes from 1 to 3.
- 1=high priority; 2=moderate priority; 3=low priority
- Please rank NO MORE THAN SIX for each number.
- We also encourage you to write in any concerns/ideas you have that are not already listed here.

- Research/using sources
 Responding to student work
 Grading student work
 Creating a syllabus
 Facilitating/encouraging/teaching revision
 Understanding the course objectives/goals for English 367
 Designing a curriculum that emphasizes “diversity”
 Creating writing assignments/prompts
 Selecting “texts” (broadly defined) to read/watch
 Creating daily lesson plans
 Teaching about the writing process
 Planning a writing course that is more “advanced” than English 110
 Facilitating class discussion
 Planning class lectures
 Planning in-class activities

- _____ Meeting the needs of students with various learning styles & levels of experience
- _____ Conducting writing workshops/peer review
- _____ Teaching students who do not speak English as a first language
- _____ Topic of your choice: _____

Discursive Section

If you would like to elaborate or say more about any of your interests/concerns, please do so here:

If you have taught SYW before, what was your greatest success in teaching the course?

If you have taught SYW before, what was your biggest challenge?

If you've never taught SYW, what is your biggest concern about teaching the course?

APPENDIX B: AUTUMN 2011 FOCUS GROUPS OF GRADUATE STUDENTS

Questions for Experienced TAs

Discuss your previous experience(s) teaching Second-Year Writing (SYW).

What do you perceive to be the goals/objectives of SYW?

How do you plan and teach to meet those goals?

What were your strengths/successes in teaching SYW?

What were the challenges?

If the department were to offer professional development for TAs planning to teach SYW, what sort of topics would you like to see covered?

Questions for TAs Who Have Not Yet Taught English SYW

What do you perceive to be the goals/objectives of English SYW? (We showed them a handout that articulated the Gen Ed requirements to help start this piece of the conversation.)

What do you look forward to about teaching SYW?

What concerns do you have about teaching SYW?

If the department were to offer professional development for TAs planning to teach SYW, what sort of topics would you like to see covered?

APPENDIX C: WINTER 2012 ALUMNI SURVEY

The Second-Year Writing Program is undertaking a self-study this academic year. As part of that assessment we are gathering data from recent graduates to determine the effectiveness of current teaching and professional development opportunities in the department. We hope that you'll be willing to take a few minutes to answer the ten questions below.

The data collected will assist us in creating more robust and productive programming for graduate teaching associates. The self-study report and external program evaluation will be available in late Spring 2013.

1) Where do you teach?

WRITE IN ANSWER

2) At what type of institution do you teach?

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

2-year college

4-year college that grants only bachelor's degrees

4-year college/university that grants master's degrees

4-year college/university that grants master's degrees and PhDs

Other:

3) What is your current appointment?

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

FT Tenure Track

FT Lecturer

Adjunct

Other:

4) What are you teaching at your current institution? Please write course titles or subjects rather than numbers.

WRITE IN ANSWER

5) What did you teach while at OSU?

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

FYW

SYW

Business Writing and Technical Writing

Literature surveys

Creative writing workshops

Other:

6) Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: (5 pt likert scale: Agree; somewhat agree; neither agree nor disagree; somewhat disagree; disagree; NA)

- In general, I felt well supported as a graduate student teaching at this institution.
- I felt well supported as a graduate student teaching FYW.
- I felt well supported as a graduate student teaching SYW.
- I felt well supported as a graduate student teaching Business Writing and Technical Writing.
- I felt well supported as a graduate student teaching literature surveys.
- I felt well supported as a graduate student teaching creative writing workshops.

7) What other kinds of professional development programming would have been helpful during your time at this institution?

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

- None; I was satisfied
- Workshops about teaching
- Observing others' classes
- More frequent observations of my own classes by faculty members
- Observations of my own classes by peers
- Panel discussions on teaching
- Brown bag sessions to discuss teaching concerns
- Additional rewards and recognition for teaching
- Teaching mentoring program
- Other:

8) What other kinds of teaching experiences (as instructor, as a TA, teaching internship with professor, etc.) would have been helpful during your time at this institution?

MULTIPLE CHOICE

- None; I was satisfied
- Opportunities to serve as a grader, assistant, or recitation leader in a faculty member's course
- Teaching a greater variety of courses
- Tutoring in the Writing Center
- More robust/satisfying teaching internship experience
- Other:

9) What other formal classroom instruction/courses about teaching would have been helpful during your time at this institution?

MULTIPLE CHOICE:

- None; I was satisfied
- Graduate workshops on pedagogy from visiting scholars
- Graduate seminars on literature pedagogy
- Graduate seminars on creative writing pedagogy
- Graduate seminars on writing pedagogy (beyond your FYW teacher training)
- Other:

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Community Engagement in Writing Program Design and Administration

Veronica House

ABSTRACT

The article theorizes ways in which writing program administrators can create and administer engaged writing programs, design innovative and sustainable writing curricula around community needs, train faculty in community-engaged pedagogies, and create substantive community partnerships. Employing engaged program design theory, the author offers the Writing Initiative for Service and Engagement at the University of Colorado Boulder as a model for how writing programs can support the work of local communities through sustainable, civically-engaged vertical writing curricula.

What does it mean to create, institutionalize, and administer a community-engaged writing program, and why is it a desirable model for WPAs? For several decades, service learning and other kinds of community-engaged pedagogies have offered an increasingly valued approach to teaching composition. The connection to critical pedagogy, experiential and active learning, and public rhetorics has provided theoretical underpinnings to this form of pedagogy that enhances students' academic learning through their educationally meaningful community-based experiences.

Scholarship on community-engaged curricular and program design hinges on four premises. The first premise is that these curricula and programs comprise an ethical vision for higher education, whose primary purpose, many scholars argue, is to teach students to be critical and active citizens. The second argues that writing is a situated form of social action. The third invokes enhanced learning outcomes associated with community-engaged pedagogies. The fourth argues that these pedagogies are fiscally smart investments for the university.

Guided by these arguments, and particularly by the evidence that community-engaged learning encourages deeper engagement with course material; better acquisition of rhetorical and writing strategies; a clearer conception of audience and exigency; and improved critical thinking skills, the Program for Writing and Rhetoric (PWR) at the University of Colorado Boulder decided to integrate community-engaged pedagogies throughout its lower- and upper-division writing curriculum. In 2008, the PWR launched the Writing Initiative for Service and Engagement (WISE) and became what Campus Compact calls an *engaged department* for our substantive programmatic commitment to community engagement. We have constructed a vertical community-engaged curriculum that touches several levels of writing classes (first-year composition, technical communication, science writing, business writing, and topics in writing courses such as travel writing, environmental writing, and grant writing) as well as several thematic areas of study (first-year experience, community literacies, digital and multimodal composition, ecopedagogy and sustainability, visual rhetorics, and public rhetorics). Currently, 30 percent of our writing faculty teach WISE courses each year to about 1,200 students, who spend over 15,000 hours on community-based writing and research projects. As I theorize what it means to undertake such widespread change for a writing program, I hope that WISE will prove a useful model to other WPAs considering such a curricular shift.

Like many universities around the country, the University of Colorado Boulder (CU) has added engaged learning to its mission. In 2008, CU's chancellor launched his Flagship 2030 Plan, which articulated his vision for what the university should strive for over the next twenty years. Civic engagement and experiential learning were at its heart. As Charlton and Charlton note, however, "the various mission statements we craft at every institutional level, regardless of how well they dovetail, are only representations, not enactments, of desire" (70). This has proven true with the chancellor's Flagship 2030 Plan. It is the responsibility of individual programs and departments to manifest community-engaged work, and many have been resistant for a variety of reasons, usually related to promotion and tenure requirements or misconceptions about its intellectual rigor. As several scholars studying institutional change have noted, the department is the "key unit for institutional transformation. The department [is] the unit that control[s] the curriculum and that set[s] the standards for defining the roles and rewards for its faculty" (Battistoni et al. 4). At the time Flagship 2030 was issued, five instructors in the Program for Writing and Rhetoric taught service-learning courses. A few more faculty had expressed interest, but there was no coherent programmatic discussion about what we were doing

and why. However, Flagship 2030 created an important *kairotic* moment for the PWR to make a powerful shift in our curriculum—to integrate community engagement throughout.

The Program for Writing and Rhetoric is a freestanding unit in the College of Arts and Sciences and is responsible for campus-wide instruction in academic and professional writing. We have upwards of eighty faculty and graduate students teaching our courses. Four are tenure-track faculty (whose tenure lines are housed in English or Communication and who function as our program director and associate directors); over forty are full-time instructors or senior instructors (who are on indefinitely renewable three-year contracts, some of whom are program coordinators or associate directors); and over thirty are adjuncts and graduate students. We offer roughly 450 sections of lower- and upper-division writing to more than 8,000 undergraduates each year. Because we currently teach almost every undergraduate student twice (as first years and again as juniors or seniors), we are in a unique position to impact undergraduate education on campus.

This article details three essential elements for creating, institutionalizing, and administering a sustainable, engaged writing program with a comprehensive community-engaged writing curriculum. These elements include faculty development, programmatic support, and community partnership building. In this article, as the WISE founder and associate faculty director for service learning and outreach in the PWR, I describe the pedagogical, professional, and economic implications of our programmatic decision in order to provide a model for WPAs interested in creating a community-engaged writing program. In all of this work, I remain mindful of Paula Mathieu's concerns from *Tactics of Hope*, in which she challenges the value of the institutionalization of service learning, and particularly a top-down institutionalization, which, she fears, often stems from "public relations concerns" (95). While Mathieu acknowledges some of the benefits to strategic institutionalization, she also warns that we must look critically at the full range of implications of that institutionalization. She suggests that

rather than advocating institutionalization of service-learning per se, we should ask, what values are we institutionalizing? What needs are we prioritizing? What risks do we incur when we seek to create broad, measurable, sustainable programs that claim institutional resources and space? (98).

I address these questions while also emphasizing the important nature of and the imperative need for this work.

In Paul Feigenbaum's challenge to the dialectical nature of Mathieu's tactics-versus-strategies argument, he writes,

we should strive not for the utopian avoidance of institutional constraints but for the incorporation of relationship-centered practice into the academic paradigm itself. Instead of merely protecting the community from the institution, engaged scholars should work to make the institution more welcoming of the ethical visions that inspire their work. (49)

But Feigenbaum himself acknowledges that “ethical visions” in and of themselves are not adequate reason for transformation. The implementation of community-engaged work involves both tactics and strategies, and strategy is essential. When a program institutionalizes community-based learning, it must validate it, explain it, and provide a theoretical and research-based framework for it, all of which help to ensure the project’s durability and long-term viability.

RATIONALE FOR COMMUNITY-ENGAGED WRITING

How the PWR institutionalized community-engaged learning is important, and I will discuss this later in the article, but of equal importance is why. What did we hope to gain by doing this? What evidence did we have to suggest benefits—and benefits to whom? What are the underlying theoretical assumptions? These questions, asked by our dean and our program’s faculty advisory committee, were valid and needed to be answered. Several research studies, theories, and scholars helped me explain the rationale for the PWR’s commitment to community-engaged praxis.

In their introduction to *Going Public: What Writing Programs Learn From Engagement*, Rose and Weiser state, “as engagement work emerges as an expectation for faculty work and institutional commitments, writing program faculty need to understand and be prepared to locate their writing programs in relationship to these efforts” (4). They call it “a seismic shift of the grounding assumptions of the writing program’s purpose” (7).¹ Often, the decision to promote and support service-learning efforts is framed as an ethical one. The belief that writing instruction must connect to real world issues adds support to the most common argument for community-engaged learning opportunities: that through service learning, students become engaged citizens, active in the public discourses of a participatory democracy (Ash and Clayton; Berlin; George; Herzberg; Wells; Haussamen; Barber and Battistoni; Parks and Goldblatt; Grabill and Gaillet). In their article, “Writing Beyond the Curriculum,” Parks and Goldblatt envision an educational shift in line with Ernest Boyer’s vision for the New American College in its “capacity to connect thought to action, theory to practice” (qtd. on 342). Steve Parks pushes the idea even further in *Gravyland*,

imagining the effect of “writing programs premised on progressive social values and committed to expanding literacy rights within local communities” (35). Evoking Mathieu, he argues “for the importance of composition and rhetoric programs that develop strategic spaces (as opposed to tactical interventions) to support community-based partnerships and progressive literacy programs” in a visionary effort to create a “new city” (192, 98). Parks’s vision inspires me, and I imagine that any WPA considering such a curricular shift will have a similar proclivity. I have seen all too often, however, how the ethical argument can turn off those we need to convince the most. Is the focus on critical citizenship or community literacy or radically revised institutions of higher education sufficient to drive substantial and lasting curricular change and widespread support for those efforts? What other arguments are needed?

Discussion about the connection between community engagement and writing program administration often hinges on a comprehensive view of writing that emphasizes its context-bound, social nature. Not surprisingly, then, community-engaged writing has proven to lead to enhanced learning. Tom Deans explains the multiple benefits: it challenges students “to *write* themselves into the world through producing rhetorical documents that intervene materially in contexts beyond the academy,” “to *read* the complex social forces that constitute one’s cultural context,” and “to *write* purpose-driven documents for audiences beyond the classroom” (“English Studies,” 102, 103; emphasis original). Indeed, fifteen years of assessment studies in higher education and composition studies document that well-executed service learning encourages, at a higher level than traditional courses, comprehension and application of knowledge (Eyler and Giles); development of critical thinking (Ash and Clayton); awareness of the complexity of rhetorical principles (Bacon; Feldman; Wurr); analysis of rhetorical appeals, of reasoning, of coherence, and of mechanics (Wurr); understanding of counterarguments, contextualization of arguments, effective use of sources, engagement with intellectual strategies, appropriate use of language (Feldman); and transferability of concepts (Bacon; Feldman). It encourages students to “analyze the social action that genres perform: how they are tools-in-use rather than fixed formats” (Deans, “Shifting Locations” 456). The contextualization of rhetorical principles and the higher scores of students participating in service learning offer a compelling argument for inclusion of high impact community-engaged learning experiences in a rhetoric and writing curriculum. When a dean at CU asked me whether there are assessment studies to document the PWR’s claim of enhanced learning, I cited the findings named above.

Upper-level administrators are also interested in the economic implications of an engaged curriculum. Bringle et al. published a large-scale study indicating that service-learning courses aid in retention of students, recruitment of students, higher alumni donations, higher graduation rates, and higher numbers of alumni remaining and working in the community once they graduate (“The Role” 47). These arguments are helpful when discussing funding to engaged writing programs with administrators or with offices such as Student Affairs.

Competing ideologies about the purposes for higher education necessarily influence these disciplinary and institutional conversations. Not all high-level administrators will prioritize that their faculty teach students about social justice issues or to be critical and engaged citizens, but they will always care about numbers. Even though some faculty members bristle at reducing community-engaged work to a conversation about numbers, recruitment and retention numbers matter. Eli Goldblatt argues in *Because We Live Here* that retention often connects to social justice issues—to underprepared students, to racism on campuses, to the great disparities in the kinds of educational instruction our students experience before coming to our institutions. WPAs can justify the curricular choice in budgetary conversations, not only as valuable to student learning outcomes but also to the financial health of the program, the institution, and the community.

FACULTY DEVELOPMENT

Once a WPA determines the benefits of encouraging community-engaged pedagogies, she must focus on faculty development, partnership building, and the programmatic shifts necessary to make the work sustainable for all involved. Making community engagement part of the curricular mission involves the intentional, collaborative, and systematic design of community-engaged pedagogy at and across individual courses and programmatic levels. Faculty professional development workshops and other training and support efforts help to ensure rigor and excellence in course offerings.

The first step in the deliberate institutionalization of community-engaged pedagogies in the PWR was to encourage faculty buy-in and enthusiasm for the work by creating an inclusive and collaborative faculty cohort. To launch the conversation, the Colorado Campus Compact director and I held a full-day engaged department retreat at a mountain lodge down the street from campus for twenty-one faculty who expressed interest. Colorado Campus Compact ran the event free of charge as part of their service to us as a member institution. An essential feature for engaged program building is to draw on faculty strengths, interests, and expertise

in ways that benefit the programmatic mission. To that end, each faculty member and I met individually before the retreat to discuss how they hoped to participate and what they wanted to contribute. This helped develop the anticipation that their individual work would enhance the collective programmatic initiative.

At the retreat, we first brainstormed as a group to create working definitions for what service learning and community engagement mean in our program and what service-learning courses should contain. We discussed how service learning differs from volunteerism and charity work and then drew on several definitions from national organizations and scholars to create our own: “service-learning is a pedagogy that integrates academic instruction and structured critical reflection with educationally meaningful community work that is appropriate to course learning goals in order to enhance the learning experience and meet community-defined needs” (WISE). We began to develop service-learning course criteria, which we wrote on whiteboards and refined as discussion continued:

- service learning should be integral to the course, not extra credit or an add-on;
- academic coursework should be fully integrated with the community work as evidenced in the syllabus, assignments, and critical-reflection prompts;
- service-learning activities and assignments should be designed in collaboration with community partners, and communication should occur throughout the semester; and
- students should understand within the first few days of class how their community-based work relates to the course’s objectives and assignments, how it will enhance their understanding of course material, how it will be evaluated, and how it relates to the course grade.

I offered additional learning objectives that we could add to our syllabi. These include that students will:

- recognize and analyze correlations between theoretical concepts and lived, local experience;
- produce writing that effectively addresses a community need;
- distinguish individual manifestations of a problem from the systemic, root causes;
- assess rhetorical circumstances in the public sphere and intervene appropriately through writing and civic action; and
- create purpose-driven documents for audiences beyond the classroom.

Drawing from Campus Compact's engaged department scholarship, we discussed personal, pedagogical, programmatic, and community barriers to becoming an engaged faculty member and an engaged program. During a brainstorming session, faculty raised various concerns: "Do I have the time to do this?" "Where in my course will I make room for this?" "Will I lose time to teach actual writing issues?" "How does this fit into a writing curriculum?" "What is a service-learning writing course supposed to do?" "How do I assess service-learning projects?" "What civic skills should we teach?" "I'm concerned about burdening community partners." "I don't know how to approach community partners." "Are we meeting real community needs, and how will we assess that?" "How do we market this project and educate others about what we do?" After faculty called out these questions, we discussed current scholarship and did some creative brainstorming around the issues that surfaced to determine how we could address them. Battistoni et al. suggest that

change is more likely to occur when barriers are removed or weakened than when supports are strengthened. This is because increasing support for organizational change will often just invite more resistance. Attacking the barriers, on the other hand, will make the positive forces stronger. (27)

We realized that we needed to think carefully and creatively about how to frame the work as integral to writing instruction. We agreed that significant training needed to occur.

A grant from CU's Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement funded two course releases so that I could further develop WISE. That semester and every semester for the next two years, we offered two to three faculty development workshops that ranged from basic service-learning course development to advanced workshops on critical reflection, partnership-building, and digital narratives. As faculty became more invested, some led workshops on their area of expertise and its relation to community-based instruction. Our service-learning office funded six colleagues to create and teach a service-learning first-year writing course. Focus groups with these instructors and other newly engaged faculty helped me understand what was and was not working and where they needed more support. We established a community-engagement library of books and DVDs for faculty use, and our program subscribed to *Reflections: A Journal of Public Rhetoric, Civic Writing, and Service Learning*. Once a year for four years, we brought in nationally-renowned speakers such as Patti Clayton, Robert Bringle, Tom Deans, and Steve Parks, all of whom held multi-day faculty development workshops for interested faculty.

I created the WISE website as a public instructional resource for service-learning practitioners and WPAs across the country who are interested in curricular change (House). The site includes pedagogical materials on critical reflection, course design, and partnerships. An unexpected benefit to creating a database is that I no longer need to hold workshops to cover basic material. I continue to meet individually with faculty or graduate students who want to engage with service learning for the first time or with seasoned faculty who want to update their courses, but in general, the initiative sustains itself. Our service-learning numbers have increased substantially from the original five instructors to thirty-two instructors teaching across our vertical WISE curriculum. The PWR has more instructors teaching with service learning and teaches more service-learning courses than any other academic unit in the University of Colorado system. In conversations with administrators, community partners, or potential donors, these numbers make a compelling argument about the program's commitment to the community and about our need for support and resources.

While these numbers indicate an impressive and real programmatic commitment to external audiences, perhaps more exciting to us within the program are the effects of the pedagogical shift on the faculty. I think of Mary Hocks' suggestion that WPAs should encourage "practices that *actually transform our experiences as teachers*" (38; emphasis added). The faculty who consistently do this work have become highly professionalized and committed to their individual partners, with whom they have sometimes developed long-standing relationships. The work occasionally goes beyond teaching to scholarship, which is not required of instructors per their contract of 75 percent teaching/25 percent service. Our faculty present their work at campus and regional workshops and at national conferences such as CCCC. Colleagues share relevant articles, CFPs, and assignments with one another. In other words, WISE is not a recruitment device or a mandate. Rather, it functions along the lines of Grabill's theory of infrastructures: "infrastructures enact standards, they are activity systems, and they are also people themselves" (*Writing* 40). WISE is a network of actors—workshops, the website, readings, faculty, community partners, projects, and activities, which manifest in a vertical engaged curriculum. We have been recognized as a model program by University of Colorado's Institute for Ethical and Civic Engagement, and our faculty have won numerous university, community, and national awards, particularly for our work with sustainability, diversity, and engaged scholarship.

PROGRAMMATIC EVOLUTION

Pedagogical support is critical, but the biggest challenge that we face connects to creating incentives and rewards for faculty. As anyone who has taught a well-designed community-engaged course knows, it requires a tremendous amount of work and time beyond the traditional work of creating and teaching a classroom-centered writing course. In fact, studies of the impact of service-learning pedagogy on faculty find that time and logistical challenges are the primary reason for faculty's dissatisfaction with the pedagogy, even while the faculty emphasize numerous benefits, which include purpose and professional satisfaction associated with service learning (Pribbenow 34). This has been the case for our faculty as well. Drawing on Mathieu's discussion of the ethics of tactical projects for community partners, I would like to suggest a related/flipped concept: the ethics of strategic institutionalization for faculty. Because community-based learning has become part of our curricular mission, providing a faculty support and reward structure is essential. Indeed, as higher education institutions promote community-based research and teaching, faculty must know that their engaged work will be recognized and supported as a legitimate form of scholarship and as a high-impact form of teaching.

The PWR's personnel committee has restructured our program's reappointment, promotion, and merit evaluation systems so that faculty receive merit points for community-engaged teaching, and it is a significant factor in reappointment and promotion discussions. This offers a way to indicate the value of the work to the program and college and helps ward against burnout. I continue to work towards improving the rewards system and would also like our program to offer faculty who consistently teach service-learning courses a course release after a certain number of semesters so that they can revisit their partnerships and service-learning scholarship. Future improvements would include the program capping community-based courses at fifteen students instead of nineteen. Budgetary restrictions currently do not allow for these changes, although I continue to advocate for them.

As the writing program's work in community-based pedagogy evolves, we continue to consider the ways in which to promote our work to campus and community audiences. We tag our service-learning courses as (sl) so that students can choose the pedagogical method they prefer. We hold an annual Student Service-Learning Showcase where students present their community-based projects to the University of Colorado and Boulder communities. In October 2015, we hosted the inaugural Conference on Com-

munity Writing, a highly successful international conference attracting academics and community partners.

To create a sustainable culture of community-engaged pedagogy, it has been critical to have a faculty member who acts as a point person for faculty development and other programmatic efforts. My current position as associate director for service learning and outreach did not exist before 2010. After two years of my work on WISE with a one-course buyout each semester, our then-director successfully argued for the value of creating the associate director position to protect my time (the course release is written into my contract) and to formally establish my administrative work as an essential and valued part of the PWR's mission. Sustainability is a popular concept these days in rhetoric and composition scholarship about community engagement, particularly due to Restaino and Cella's important edited collection *Unsustainable* (2013). My work is to help create an engaged infrastructure, a support system, resources, networks of people and projects, and a vision for future programmatic development that can be sustained *despite* the predictable and unpredictable shifting tides.

ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

At the International Association for Research on Service Learning and Community Engagement conference in 2008, I attended a workshop with Robert Bringle and Patti Clayton. Bringle opened the workshop with a punch line: “University faculty are from Mars. Community partners are from Venus.” The audience laughed. He applied relationship psychology, or exchange theory, to community-campus partnership theory, emphasizing that issues of trust, communication, commitment, and respect come into play, as they do in other kinds of relationships. As in friendship and love, frequency of interaction, diversity of interaction, and interdependency (influence on other’s behavior) are measurable factors of the impact of the partnership (“Beyond Reciprocity”). Everyone at the workshop knew what he was getting at. We didn’t want to be *that guy*—the one you think you’ve had a great date with, but then he never calls you again. We wanted to be dependable and communicative and totally invested. Well, hold on a minute, Patti Clayton said. You don’t want to smother them.

Clayton presented a useful model for conceiving of the kind of partnership most suitable for a course. On the partnership scale, which ranges from *exploitative* to *transactional* to *transformational*, she delineated the characteristics associated with each kind of relationship as they range from placement to partnership. As she has elaborated in her written scholarship, *transactional*, she explained, implies work designed to complete a task, and

while each party has something the other finds useful, there is no enduring purpose to the projects or the relationship. *Transformational*, on the other hand, implies a deeper, more sustained commitment, and individuals question and reflect together with an expectation for future growth around the issues the individual projects address (Clayton et al. "Differentiating"). During planning stages of a course, an understanding of the components of various levels of interaction and commitment can help both the faculty member and the community partner to develop a stronger and more equitable connection. While there is nothing wrong with choosing placement over partnership if it is intentional and negotiated, the delineation of the partnership scale often helps faculty move towards transformational work if all partners want that development. The moral of the workshop: relationships are complicated.

Throughout our program-building work, we as a faculty considered how our discipline and the teaching of community-engaged courses contribute to the public good and how we meet community-identified needs. Already-existing relationships can beget projects. (Eli Goldblatt tells us not to underestimate the generative potential of lunch [145–92].) But when the relationships do not yet exist, how does a writing program reach out to the community that houses it?

In WISE's second semester, the PWR held a Community Partner Symposium, welcoming thirty-five non-profit representatives to a luncheon with our faculty. In our invitation, we briefly described WISE and what service learning is, offered examples of potential projects, and presented our commitment to finding the level of partnership and collaboration that worked best for them. The purpose of this event was to honor the participation of organizations that had worked with our service-learning students previously and to learn more about the needs of other organizations with whom we might develop service-learning projects.

The topics of discussion at the luncheon mirrored those at the preliminary consultations I now do each time a potential partner contacts me. I spoke about service learning's distinction from volunteerism and our learning goals at each course level. We discussed the opportunity for shared teaching and mentoring and how their expertise and knowledge would be valued and utilized. We discussed the concepts of reciprocity and a shared mission. Some partners wanted to be more actively engaged with the classes, others less so. We considered how the kinds of work we could do with them can vary accordingly, what good and bad partnerships look like, and what the characteristics of each might be. Two of the community partners who had previously been students in our program's grant writing course gave their perspectives from both sides of the relationship.

Other partners who had worked with University of Colorado students in the past shared their experiences, suggested measurable outcomes for successful partnerships, and offered advice to others. Some examples included the need for clear and open communication, room for feedback among all the stakeholders, and clear definitions of responsibilities from the outset.

We came up with several factors that faculty and community partners agreed would help a course run smoothly. The most important factor was to determine whether the site is doing work that lends itself to a connection with the course content and whether students' work for the organization lends itself to reflection on the connection with course work. The non-profit's volunteer coordinator or another staff member should agree to direct, frequent contact with students. Partners stressed how limited their time and resources often are but were adamant that if they could plan for that time in advance, they would want to make it work. We discussed the chronic conundrum in service learning—that community organizations do not run on an academic calendar. I have encouraged two options to help mitigate this problem. The first, that a faculty member create an ongoing project that classes will work on semester after semester; the second option, that I find a faculty member to take over a project from another instructor.

Community partners were interested in the idea of co-teaching and described the work as a form of educational outreach. Some of them expressed interest in helping the instructor determine readings, assignments, and days that they might visit the class to share their expertise through guest lectures or discussions. It is critical during course design to take into account the wealth of knowledge housed in the community and to offer ways for the partner to share expertise.

From WISE's inception, our goal has been to determine what the community needs are and how we can adapt our curriculum to meet those needs. Sometimes faculty seek out organizations whose mission they think might align well with course objectives. On many occasions, especially as WISE has become better known in the community, organizations will initiate discussion of potential writing or research projects. When I meet with an organizational representative either on site or over coffee to determine whether our needs align, I discuss types of projects with the partner, referencing Tom Deans' distinction between writing about, writing with, and writing for the community (as well as Terese Guinsatao Monberg's addition of "writing as the community"). These frameworks have been tremendously useful for potential partners—and for faculty as they design their courses and consider possible partners—as *writing about* and *writing as* projects may have quite different criteria, goals, and responsibilities for the

non-profit than *writing for* or *writing with* projects (*Writing Partnerships*; “Writing Home”).

Some of our first-year course instructors allow students to choose their own organization with which to work. They might do a *writing about* assignment, such as a research paper investigating causes or effects of the social issue their organization addresses. Maybe they will determine an organizational need as part of a low-stakes *writing for* assignment and craft a proposal letter to a local business or campus office asking for a donation of a particular item or service that their non-profit needs. For example, one student completing his service-learning work at a day shelter for homeless individuals noticed the clients’ need for dental care. He wrote to twenty-four local dentists and, using the rhetorical strategies he had studied, requested that they provide one free day of dental care a year to the shelter’s clients. Thirteen agreed to the request. Another group of students partnered with the shelter’s art group to create a mural with the homeless clients. Over several weeks, they collaboratively produced a giant tree with the symptoms of homelessness written out in the leaves and the systemic, root causes written in the roots. The mural hangs in the shelter’s main room, visited by several hundred homeless people every day.

Depending upon the topic of the course, upper-level students may, for example, write a grant, create an interactive website, develop a business plan, or do a digital storytelling project for an organization. One class did a comprehensive community discourse analysis for an environmental organization that wanted to understand how people use and understand the word *sustainability*. The students wrote a report and presented their findings to the organization’s board of directors. Another class, which focused on poverty and hunger, created newsletters on nutrition and food access for semi-literate parents of children in an after-school program. These are a small sampling of the writing projects students complete.

When I meet with a potential community partner, I share relevant project examples as I hear from them the scope of the work they are proposing. During this meeting and based on my knowledge of faculty interests and expertise, I determine which faculty member might design a course around the project need or work with the partner as one of the options from which their students can choose. If a faculty member expresses interest, I connect the two, and they are then free to create their plan. During planning meetings, the instructor shares the semester timeline, course goals, and the students’ ability level, as she and the partner craft an appropriate, educationally meaningful student project. An understanding of mutual accountability is established at this time. Partnerships are in flux and sometimes unstable, based on changes in personnel, clients, and resources at the orga-

nization and different project needs and expectations. As with any relationship, creating a strong partnership is an ongoing process. Sandmann et al. argue that program planning theories are critical in the development of strong service learning work, as they involve not only “course-based cognitive outcomes but . . . social, political, and ethical considerations that inform the development of service-learning partnerships” (17). Responsible administration of an engaged writing program involves continual negotiation among faculty, students, institution, and community partners.

INSTITUTIONAL (RE)VISION

The WPA who provides faculty and community partners with guidance on how to negotiate different needs, goals, interests, and schedules in order to foster reciprocally beneficial outcomes moves their writing program toward Campus Compact’s definition of an engaged department. While Paula Mathieu voices concern that in strategic programs (versus tactical projects) the emphasis is on “securing stable continuity over time, and in many ways resists local rhetorical responsiveness,” a savvy administrator of an engaged program searches out community needs (which are time-sensitive) and supports the faculty’s development of courses around those needs (99). Therefore, while courses shift as community needs change and as the faculty’s experiences with community writing evolve, the programmatic structure is secure enough that faculty are trained and rewarded as they develop themselves as engaged faculty, and community partners can be relatively secure in the continuity of projects over time.

Writing program administrators often manage a large group of writing instructors and have responsibility for establishing learning outcomes and curricula for writing courses that, at many institutions, reach the entire student body. The discussions WPAs have across campus can help to shape larger conversations about our institution’s mission and about what constitutes a professional teaching faculty. Ernest Boyer posits that “for American higher education to remain vital we urgently need a more creative view of the work of the professoriate” (xii). A writing program can function as a vibrant part of a university that helps to define what a vital institution’s purposes are and can be. We can champion our faculty, students, and community partners as we ensure that the relationships and projects are both ethical and intellectually rigorous.

We can help lead the revision of our individual institutions, and of higher education in general, by getting engaged; by challenging an entrenched and powerful mindset that, despite mission statements, continues to narrowly define research, teaching, and service; by supporting

graduate students and junior faculty in these endeavors as they shape their professional identities and seek employment, reappointment, or tenure; and by adapting our curricula to the needs of our communities so that the writing program is an evolving, dynamic part of a specific locale, of its unique community ecosystem.

NOTES

1. This article, which offers a model program that has made that shift, complements the rich scholarship coming out of departments and programs that have created an infrastructure for doing engaged work: I'm referring to work by Eli Goldblatt at Temple University, Linda Flower at Carnegie Mellon, Steve Parks at Syracuse, and Jeff Grabill at Michigan State, among many others.

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Defining and Developing Expertise in a Writing and Rhetoric Department

Elizabeth Wardle and J. Blake Scott

ABSTRACT

Along with other exigencies, the growing number of upper-division writing and rhetoric programs has created new challenges and opportunities for involving non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF) in all aspects of program delivery including teaching, curriculum planning, advising, and coordination. Such activities depend on various types of expertise, and therefore writing programs must consider how to responsibly, strategically, and ethically define, recognize, develop, and evaluate needed expertise. Because many of our NTTF do not have academic credentials in the field, our programs could benefit from providing them with opportunities to develop what Collins and Evans call “interactional expertise,” which involves domain knowledge but also engagement with other disciplinary specialists (30–31). We discuss what we have learned from two such professional development efforts, one of which focused on a first-year writing program and the other of which focused on upper-division programs.

The most recent MLA Issue Brief on the academic workforce reports that in 2011, 50 percent of faculty in US colleges and universities were non-tenure-track faculty (NTTF), with nearly 20 percent of these in full-time, non-tenure track positions. As the brief points out, this latter group is not contingent, with many “teaching in their current positions longer than six years” (1). Reliance on part-time faculty is especially prevalent in the humanities and social sciences; according to a National Education Association report, the percentage of part-time faculty in the humanities grew 13.2 percent to 46.2 percent between 1987 and 2003 (NEA in Council 5). The growth of both full- and part-time NTTF seems likely to continue, as

a rising percentage of new hires fall into these categories due to enrollment, budgetary, and other institutional pressures (Council 4; Kezar and Gehrke).

Although most NTTF in writing programs teach first-year composition, the growing number of undergraduate Writing and Rhetoric majors and tracks—from forty-five to seventy-two programs between 2006 and 2009—has increased reliance on such faculty for teaching upper-division courses as well (McLeod 287). In a 2012 survey of academic deans across the nation, most respondents noted that NTTF were best suited to teach introductory courses but also “professionally oriented, and highly specialized courses that match their expertise” (Kezar and Gehrke).

In order for writing programs—and freestanding writing and rhetoric departments—to flourish, faculty must do more than teach. The 2014 *MLA Issue Brief: The Academic Workforce* rightly argues that both full- and part-time NTTF should be included in “curriculum planning, student advising, and other aspects of college life fundamental to sustaining good learning environments and positive departmental cultures” (1) so that “learning flourishes and student retention and completion rates increase” (2). Yet many NTTF, and especially part-time faculty, do not have such opportunities for involvement. As the Council for Higher Education Accreditation argues, the working conditions of NTTF often include “exclusion from curriculum design and decision-making” and a “lack of access to orientation, mentoring, and professional development opportunities, including on-campus programming and funding to attend conferences and seminars off-campus” (6). The Coalition on the Academic Workforce’s 2010 survey of part-time faculty members similarly found that “professional support for part-time faculty members’ work outside the classroom and inclusion in academic decision making was minimal” (2).

One potential constraint to further involving NTTF in departmental planning and curricular decision-making is that many of these faculty do not have graduate training or advanced degrees in Rhetoric and Composition. Most fields would see graduate training in the field as a necessary qualification for teaching the field’s scholarship in upper-division and first-year writing courses; Rhetoric and Composition is unlike most other fields, however. As Ann Penrose points out, “[t]he CCCC’s 2008 survey of programs indicates that roughly two-thirds of writing instructors hold degrees other than the PhD (Gere), and these degrees are typically in fields other than rhetoric and composition” (109). Even while many NTTF in writing and rhetoric departments have made what Penrose calls “long-term commitments to the teaching of writing,” their colleagues and others may not view them as members of the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition (109), at least as disciplinary membership is traditionally understood.

Although we believe integrating both full-time and part-time NTTF into the life of writing programs and departments is valuable and ethical, our discussion in this article will focus on the role of full-time NTTF. How can writing programs and departments with strong contingents of long-time, full-time NTTF further involve these faculty, teaching and otherwise, in the programs they make possible? How can such faculty be understood to have professional, contributory, disciplinary identities when, as Penrose succinctly puts it, they have, for the most part, “neither the signifying position nor the signifying credential of the profession?” (110). These are questions whose answers have serious material consequences for both teachers and students. In a five-year study, Langer found that the highest levels of student achievement were found in schools where teachers “belonged to strong and varied professional networks that supported their professional knowledge and interests, provided feedback from varied perspectives, and instilled a sense of community” (Penrose 110). Conversely, when teachers were not involved in professional communities and did not share ideas and compare their own practices to others’, the students performed poorly.

Professionals, according to Penrose, have “a specialized and dynamic knowledge base or body of expertise . . . a distinctive array of rights and privileges accorded to members, and . . . an internal social structure based on shared goals and values” (112). In other words, the professional faculty who participate in curriculum design, program creation, advising, and so on, should have shared expertise as well as shared goals and values. While NTTF faculty who teach first-year composition are certainly committed to that teaching and may have expertise in other areas (creative writing or literature, for example), they often do not have traditionally demonstrable qualifications as scholars of Rhetoric and Composition.

Steve Lamos has recently argued that one solution is to “develop a national apparatus for ‘credentialing’ college writing teachers” (46). In making this argument, he focuses on defining “a national set of knowledge and skills essential to professional college writing instruction” credentials that could “improve material and professional conditions for college writing teachers” (46). Of course, as Penrose states, “It is not simply accumulation of knowledge or even production of scholarship that marks one as a professional but participation in the community’s knowledge building and self-definition” (118). So, as Lamos notes, any sort of “credentialing” or professional development must be ongoing and participatory, not simply a one-shot attempt to gain acontextual skills or knowledge—a difficult challenge for many humanities faculty with already demanding teaching loads (51, 55, 60). Both Penrose and Lamos are thinking primarily of first-year composition teachers in their arguments for gaining expertise and professional

status. However, the situation becomes more complicated when we factor in specialized upper-level undergraduate courses; advising, assessment, and other essential activities; and the administration of undergraduate degree programs and other writing-related programs.

In this article we take up the question of expertise for full-time NTTF in a freestanding department of writing and rhetoric, where faculty at all levels are involved not only in first-year composition but also in several undergraduate degree programs, the writing center, and the writing across the curriculum program. The examples from our departmental experience that we will describe and analyze here ask us to consider how, as a field, we can recognize, value, develop, and evaluate expertise in writing and rhetoric programs and departments.

OUR CONTEXT AND CHALLENGES

Both of us teach and administer programs in a department of writing and rhetoric that was created in July 2010 at a public university that enrolls over 60,000 students. The story of why and how our department was created is too long to tell here (and only tangentially related to the topic of this article), but one of us has provided a version of it elsewhere (Wardle). In the first four years after its formation, our department has enhanced or created all the programs or structures it was tasked with: first-year composition; upper-level writing courses that serve the larger university; an undergraduate writing major, minor, and certificate; an MA and graduate certificate; a university writing center; and a writing across the curriculum program.

The department currently relies on twenty-nine full-time, non-tenure track instructors; thirteen tenure-line faculty members; fourteen graduate teaching assistants; and six adjuncts to staff its courses and programs. This significant proportion of full-time NTTF—which makes us an exception to some of the national trends—represents a major shift from our previous labor status when we were part of English. At that time, we relied on thirty-three adjuncts to staff composition. But when we became a department, we were given funding to replace most of those positions with permanent ones. Of the many instructors we have hired since 2009, three have earned or are close to earning doctorates in the field, three have degrees from our own Rhetoric and Composition MA program, and a few others have some graduate training in Rhetoric and Composition. The majority have degrees in literature and creative writing.

The teaching assignments and other roles of our full-time NTTF are varied and have shifted in response to changing departmental needs. Most of our instructors teach primarily first-year composition, and they have

been central to the program's transition to writing studies—writing about writing—content. The new department's first six full-time non-tenure-track instructor hires were explicitly enlisted to work as a team to innovate the new curriculum and participate in the assessment of it. Corresponding with a slight enrollment decrease in our still large first-year composition courses (from higher rates of test, dual enrollment, and transfer credit) and a growing demand for our upper-division courses and programs, several new instructor lines were designated as split between first-year writing and upper-division. At the same time, some NTTF hired to teach first-year composition expressed interest in teaching other courses as well. As we expanded the upper-division curriculum, some instructors have taken leadership roles in developing and implementing our writing and rhetoric minor and major. For example, several instructors were key participants on the new department's Curriculum Committee, charged with designing new upper-division courses (including student learning outcomes, syllabi, and assignments) and programs, with developing course development resources (e.g., Dropbox folders, faculty working groups), and with marketing the programs.

The non-tenure-track instructors hired to teach our upper-division courses brought related teaching experience and some type of related and demonstrable expertise, academic and otherwise. For example, one Rhetoric and Composition ABD with a specialty in the rhetorics of science and medicine co-developed and taught our program's Writing about Health and Medicine course. Another, with an MA in literature and extensive experience working for and with non-profit organizations, designed and taught Writing for Social Change. One of our instructors has drawn on his creative writing MFA, active publication record, and longstanding ties to the university and local arts community to redesign and teach our Writing for Publication course.

As our upper-division and other writing programs grew, non-tenure-track instructors also began to take on other new service, governance, and administrative roles for the department. They served on and more actively participated in faculty searches, became the majority of members on the department Council, and assumed program coordinator and advisor roles for the writing center, WAC, and upper-division degree programs. Indeed, some of these coordinators began redefining their roles to not only draw on but also engage in research.

As we have worked to create a community of tenure and non-tenure track faculty that values shared leadership, ongoing learning, and the cross-pollination of ideas, questions about professional expertise have repeatedly presented themselves. Most specifically, as Penrose asks, what “specialized

and dynamic knowledge base or body of expertise” should our non-tenure-track instructors possess to teach in and lead our courses and programs, including the new major? (108). What types of relevant expertise do they already have, and how can this be leveraged? How can we create mechanisms for helping NTTF gain training and credentials for teaching new upper-division courses, participate in new curriculum development efforts, and take on coordinating and other new roles? The answers to those questions hinge on notions of expertise: What is it and how does one develop it? How can we responsibly, strategically, and ethically value, develop, evaluate, and make personnel decisions based on expertise? Who should constitute the *we* making such determinations? In the next section, we turn to a multi-layered theory of expertise to help us think through these questions before discussing them in the contexts of our programs, department, and the field.

THEORIZING EXPERTISE AND ITS DEVELOPMENT

Types of Specialist Expertise

In *Rethinking Expertise*, Harry Collins and Robert Evans offer a comprehensive discussion of expertise as varied and multilayered. In exploring the question of how people “know what they are talking about” (112), they explain expertise as developed through a process that involves immersion in a knowledge domain and its language, largely though interaction with others, some of whom already have expertise in the domain.

Collins and Evans outline four levels of what they term *specialist expertise*: 1) popular understanding, 2) primary source knowledge, 3) interactional expertise, and 4) contributory expertise. These are levels rather than linear stages, as one does not necessarily lead to the next. For example, gaining a working understanding of primary source knowledge is best learned through engaging and interacting with others in the field, a function of interactional expertise.

Collins and Evans distinguish first between popular understanding and primary source knowledge, the former not requiring any specialized training. Most people have some popular understanding of writing since nearly everyone writes. But such popular understandings are often based in personal experience and/or fail to recognize detail or nuance; they can, therefore, be faulty, as with the belief that good writers are those for whom writing is easy. Popular conceptions can get in the way of a deeper understanding of a given phenomenon, as Myer and Land point out in their discussion of a field’s threshold concepts. For example, if a person holds the popular understanding that good writers are those for whom writing is easy,

they may be unwilling to invest time in learning how to improve as a writer. Or, if a person holds the popular conception that writing is only an activity and not also a subject of study, she may be unwilling or even unable to see writing as something one can learn more about.

In our own department, popular and practice-informed understandings of writing and argument gave way to primary source knowledge, or knowledge gleaned from reading the primary literature of a domain, as first-year composition instructors not trained in Rhetoric and Composition learned and discussed research and theory that informed the writing-about-writing curriculum in the professional development training program discussed later, and in some cases additional writing and rhetorical research as well.² Involvement in department workshops, conferences, and other events led by scholars in the field augmented this development, moving participants closer to what Collins and Evans identify as field-based specialist expertise.

Although encountering primary source knowledge is an important starting point for developing specialist expertise, Collins and Evans explain that such knowledge is not, in and of itself, sufficient. Individuals who read the literature without social contact with disciplinary experts may not know “what to read and what not to read” (22). They still cannot make judgments about or otherwise apply knowledge in the domain of expertise—largely because they aren’t engaging in the social life of the discipline. When someone reads the literature but is not socially engaged with the community of researchers who produce the literature, she can gain “false impressions” about both the content under discussion and the level of certainty researchers have about this topic (22). Collins and Evans equate this level of understanding with that of a chess novice who knows what a bishop can do without having a nuanced understanding of how to use that knowledge to play a game of chess (23).

In order to develop expertise that goes beyond knowing about some subject matter, Collins and Evans argue for the necessity of social connection to and interaction with groups conversing about the knowledge domain, including some people who actively contribute to that domain. In fact, they argue that “the location of expertise is the social group” (78). Only through social interaction can someone move from what they term *ubiquitous tacit knowledge*—including popular understanding and primary source knowledge—to one of two forms of specialist tacit knowledge: interactional expertise and contributive expertise. This idea has also been embraced by scholars in writing studies. In her study of academic literacy, Cheryl Geisler argues that expertise is acquired not just through encounters with “textual artifacts” but also “in the daily practices by which people like ourselves read, write, and know” (94). In her study of how students learn to

write in a discipline, Anne Beaufort reaches a similar conclusion, arguing that developing disciplinary writing expertise requires “becoming engaged in a particular community of writers [or, in our case, writing teachers and scholars] who dialogue across texts, argue, and build on each other’s work” (139). Penrose similarly notes, “Understanding professionalism as collaborative provides useful perspective on the question of expertise, for it shifts attention from knowledge as static to knowledge as responsive and evolving” (120).

Drawing from Geisler, Beaufort, and Penrose, we might understand Collins and Evans’s distinction between primary source knowledge and specialist expertise in terms of rhetorical competence. Although rhetorical competence is not necessarily part of what Collins and Evans define as primary source knowledge, it is required to develop their notion of specialist expertise. Both Geisler and Beaufort discuss disciplinary expertise, a type of specialist expertise, as involving subject matter knowledge but also the rhetorical ability to select, assess, use, and adapt this knowledge across the contexts of the domain. Geisler critiques the way expertise has been imagined primarily in terms of credentials around subject matter knowledge, positing that training and experience in adapting specialized knowledge to specific contexts is a crucial latter step. Beaufort goes further, concluding that people learn to be disciplinary experts by developing subject matter knowledge and strategic, rhetorical knowledge simultaneously (172). Involving the critical thinking and rhetorical skills to deploy subject matter knowledge, she explains, strategic knowledge is the “‘how’ of problem-solving in the domain” (138). In her book *The Rhetoric of Expertise*, E. Johanna Hartelius makes a similar connection in arguing that expertise is relational in that it is rhetorically established between an expert and audience.

In an observation that supports Collins and Evans’s assertion that their levels of expertise are not stages, Beaufort concludes that subject matter knowledge and strategic knowledge can develop simultaneously (172). Our own graduate training provides an illustration of how this might work. Although we took courses in which we read the literature and learned about the subject matter of the field, we also experimented with applying this knowledge to our teaching, conducting small research projects in which we applied what we were learning and engaging with others in the field via workshops, listservs, conferences, and other disciplinary forums.

Returning to Collins and Evans’s four levels of specialist expertise mentioned earlier, *contributory expertise*, or the ability to perform a specialized activity with competence, has traditionally been conceived as the highest form of expertise (14). The expert who embodies this form of expertise has the ability to perform fluidly the specialized practices of a domain, to “con-

tribute to the domain to which the expertise pertains” (24). Because Rhetoric and Composition is an academic discipline that values the sharing of knowledge, contributory expertise in our domain would entail building on the field’s knowledge through publications, conference presentations, and other forms of research.

Collins and Evans argue for an additional form of expertise, *interactional expertise*, which holds particular interest for our department’s situation. A person who possesses this form of expertise has mastered the language and gained an informed understanding of the specialty without necessarily having contributed to its body of knowledge through research. Gaining this kind of expertise seems to require some form of “enculturation into a linguistic community” but does not require the “full-blown immersion in a form of life” required for contributory expertise (30). In the case of a disciplinary domain, a person can become an interactional expert without having to become an active, publishing researcher in the domain. Instead, they can gain this form of expertise as Collins and Evans put it, “in the space between the skilled group and the books” (30): “The transition to interactional expertise is accomplished, crucially, by engaging in conversation with the experts. Interactional expertise is slowly gained with more and more discussion of the [domain knowledge].” How do we know that a person is gaining interactional expertise? “[W]here interactional expertise is being acquired,” Collins and Evans expand, “there will be a progression from ‘interview’ to ‘discussion’ to ‘conversation’. . . . There is no sudden ‘aha moment’ that marks the switch to mastery of interactional expertise, but its steady acquisition can nevertheless be recognized” (32–33).

In further discussing the process of developing interactional expertise, Collins and Evans argue that in some cases, this expertise can’t be achieved due to a person’s abilities or circumstances (32). (We, for example, are highly unlikely to have the necessary background and ability to gain interactional expertise with organic chemistry.) In addition, some people might not have the desire or curiosity to gain interactional expertise in a particular domain (we also lack the curiosity about organic chemistry to do what is necessary to read about it or engage in discussions about it with experts).

We want to pause here to complicate the distinction made by Collins and Evans between contributory and interactional expertise. For them, interactional expertise is grounded in learning the language of a field (or discourse community), so as to be able to “talk the talk” of a specialist. In some places, they distinguish this type of learning from learning to “walk the walk” or contribute to the doing or making of the field. As language specialists, we know that language use is embodied social action that contributes to knowledge making, and so we might question the move from

competent language use to other types of skilled, competent action as being the primary distinction between the two types of expertise.

Despite our critiques of the distinctions between several of Collins and Evans's levels of expertise, we believe that their primary claim still holds: Although learning "facts or fact-like relationships" through reading and observation is an important component of expertise, developing the more specialized expertise needed by teachers of a given subject requires "immersion" in the language and other social practices of domain and its communities (14). This is not a quick or easy process, and it often involves a good amount of time and struggle in learning about and attempting to participate in the forums, conversations, and practices of the field. Any training must allow for—and even encourage—the opportunity to engage in this socialization and the time to engage in struggles with ideas and debates.

Expertise across Communities and Levels of Practice

Thus far we have been describing expertise as if it is developed and relevant only within one particular domain of knowledge or, to use Wenger's term, *a community of practice*. However, we know that expertise also works across domains of knowledge and across levels of a particular community of practice. This movement of expertise between and among domains and levels is, we think, particularly relevant for departments offering both horizontal and vertical training in writing, since writing (unlike organic chemistry) is relevant across all domains of knowledge and types of communicative practice, whether specialized or popular.

Collins and Evans address the matter of expertise across domains using the phrase *referred expertise*, or "expertise taken from one field and indirectly applied in another" (64). For example, in our department, an instructor with a graduate degree in library science and a consulting business with law libraries has been able to use her knowledge about libraries and legal research to inform her teaching of writing. She has used this knowledge to train colleagues in teaching argument and conducting research through library databases. Such referred expertise is particularly important given the varied nature of the work faculty do in our department.

Some jobs within our department require more than the transfer of expertise from one domain into another domain but entail simultaneous or at least recent expertise and participation in multiple domains. Some of our upper-division courses—such as Writing about Health and Medicine—draw on both writing studies research and practice-based knowledge from other disciplines and professions, so instructors of such courses would need at least interactive expertise from working and writing in those other

domains. Students in our Writing for Publication course, for example, benefit from the instructor having some degree of expertise in the trade practices of the publishing industry. Because they typically involve service-learning assignments or other types of writing partnerships, courses such as Professional Writing and Writing for Social Change require the instructor to supplement field-specific expertise with connections to and experience collaborating with local business or community stakeholders.

Different types of administrative jobs also entail more than expertise in a given academic specialty. The two composition coordinators are both non-tenure track instructors who assist the tenured composition director in organizing schedules and workshops, managing personnel issues, and training and mentoring other teachers. Much of this work requires not only organizational abilities but also knowledge of institutional policies and processes and more local knowledge of instructor and student attributes and concerns. These qualifications do not involve disciplinary expertise but rather expertise in varied professional communities of practice as well as enactment of particular dispositions and skills. The above examples of expertise in multiple domains bring to mind Wenger's notion of boundary brokers: individuals with membership in multiple communities of practice who "introduce elements of one practice into another" (105).

Other jobs within our department require multiple domains of expertise that are less qualitatively different but different in terms of level, scale, and/or scope. Although Collins and Evans mostly discuss academic domains on the larger, or what we'll call the macro level of scholarly disciplines, we should not overlook the meso level, which can encompass universities, departments, and programs within departments, as well as the micro level of even more localized practice within classrooms. In some cases, specialized expertise on the lower two levels is most effectively accomplished by individuals with local connections, experience, and knowledge rather than by individuals focused on macro-level, disciplinary knowledge (although the two types of knowledge are not, of course, mutually exclusive)—thus the familiar adage that the best researchers are not always the best teachers.

If we think of the scholarly discipline of Rhetoric and Composition as the macro level, shaped by national/international organizations, journals, conferences, and other forums, then (according to Collins and Evans) the contributory experts in our department are mostly tenured or tenure-earning faculty who have research assignments and publish regularly, garnering national recognition in the field as experts in one or more of its research areas. But some of our instructors are also publishing journal articles and book chapters, presenting at conferences, and making other contributions in the field's scholarly forums, a fact that leaves us with questions about this

level of expertise. Are instructors contributory experts when they present at national or regional conferences, write an instructor's guide for a textbook, review a recently published book, or contribute to a scholarly conversation on a national listerv? Is there a distinction, as Collins and Evans suggest, between "making a contribution" to a scholarly field and "being a contributory expert" of that field (70)? Or are there, perhaps, different levels of contribution, a distinction that Lave and Wenger's notion of "legitimate peripheral participation" might help us make? For us, these remain open questions.

To make matters even more complicated, we might also conceive of our disciplinary domain as simultaneously enacted on the meso level, defined in part by university and department structures, policies, and activities. Thus, faculty members might be contributory agents on the meso level, whether they are contributing on the macro level or not. Here we follow James Porter and colleagues who call us to attend to institutions as "nodal points in the rhetorical relationships between general social (if not sociological) processes and local practices" (621). Examples of this work could include evaluating portfolios for program assessment and co-developing course resource sites with other faculty. Instructors in leadership positions in our department make important contributions to our university and program practices. For example, one of our current composition coordinators, although not active in national-level scholarly forums, nonetheless reads, applies, and conducts writing research in his program assessment efforts. Our previous writing center coordinator conducted research about and then designed a directed self-assessment mechanism for incoming freshman, an effort that helped change how some at our university think about writing assessment. Our WAC coordinators present at conferences, occasionally publish in the field, and co-write grant proposals for the design and assessment of discipline-specific writing and consulting. Such activities draw on relationship building, knowledge of other institutional programs and units, and other forms of expertise outside of the scholarly domain as understood in its most traditional sense. It seems fairly clear that instructors who make contributions on this level are acting as interactional and contributory experts, though in perhaps different, overlapping, or smaller sub-domains of the macro-level Rhetoric and Composition disciplinary domain.

The micro-level domain of classroom practice is perhaps one that needs less discussion here, since there is a long tradition in our field of valuing disciplinary work enacted on the micro level of the classroom and other specific sites. In addition to developing new courses, teaching, advising, and consulting with other teachers, examples of micro-level disciplinary work can include formative classroom assessment and teacher action research.

Thus, we argue that some of this micro work also entails contributory expertise (as Collins and Evans would define it), when it is shared with others. Like meso-level work, effective micro-level work requires more than disciplinary expertise but also other types of competencies and knowledge, including interpersonal communication skills and in-depth knowledge of local student attributes and concerns.

FOSTERING EXPERTISE IN ONGOING AND NEW FORUMS

Helping faculty at all levels achieve ongoing interactional and ideally contributory expertise has become a primary goal and focus of attention for us. Here we briefly outline two different efforts to cultivate expertise in our departmental programs and consider their implications and challenges not only for us but also for the field at large.

Example 1: Writing Studies Training Groups in FYC

Beginning in spring 2009, the composition program began officially piloting a writing-about-writing curriculum for its courses. This meant that the existing focus on teaching particular forms (memoir, commentary, etc.) and types of argument were to be replaced with a curriculum with content more squarely grounded in the field's scholarship. The piloted curriculum was built on the assumption that writing studies is a field with research- and theory-based knowledge about writing and that some of this knowledge should form the basis for the first-year writing course.

As a result of a presidential initiative to lower class size and improve undergraduate instruction, we were provided with funding to hire six new instructors in the 2009–2010 and 2010–2011 years. In our hiring, we valued enthusiasm and willingness to learn and try new things, since there was not a substantial pool of applicants with demonstrated expertise in the field of Rhetoric and Composition. In order to help these instructors become acquainted with some of the knowledge of the field that they could then teach in the first-year courses, we designed a series of training courses; these were subsequently revised as the participants provided feedback on their experiences. Using a reading list provided by the composition director, the first six instructors hired read and acquired primary source knowledge. The next year, after teaching the new curriculum, the group assisted the composition director in leading semester-long training workshops for other faculty (who participated voluntarily, but received small stipends for doing so). Small groups of faculty met with one of the experienced instructors to read research from the field and to begin planning their own writing-about-writing syllabi. The following year, having received funding from a national

grant funded by EDUCAUSE, the composition director and coordinator designed an online training course that was available to both our own first-year writing instructors and those at other institutions, and the non-tenure-track instructors who had not yet taught the new curriculum participated in that eight-week training along with faculty from a number of schools across the country.

Along with the initial training sessions and online materials made possible by the national grant, we focused on creating a culture in the composition program that was oriented toward ongoing learning and professional development. Within three to four years, the shift to the new curriculum and to a staff roster almost entirely comprised of full-time non-tenure-track positions was complete. During those years of programmatic change, expertise was created and recreated in a variety of ways. The program sponsored six to eight workshops or reading groups each semester, increasingly led by non-tenure-track instructors and graduate students, rather than the composition director and coordinator. Portfolio assessment had become an expected bi-annual activity and attracted ten to twelve volunteers at a time, many of whom said they saw portfolio assessment as a way to get good ideas from other teachers, rather than as an onerous rating task (although all participants also received small stipends for their work). A growing number of instructors attended and actively participated in the department's new reading groups, which focused on readings about subject areas (e.g., sociocultural approaches to writing and writing research) recommended by non-tenure-track instructors and tenure-line faculty alike. More instructors began to attend and present at national conferences. One instructor founded the in-house, peer-reviewed journal of first-year writing, *Stylus* (<http://writingandrhetoric.cah.ucf.edu/stylus/>).

The faculty who were hired to infuse composition courses with writing-related content have been doing so, increasing their disciplinary knowledge expertise and professional standing in the process. They now read research, pilot new approaches, and propose workshops and reading groups about such areas as peer review, portfolio assessment, learning transfer, ethnographic research methods, and writing process theory. This learning has borne fruit in their teaching. Some instructors have innovated beyond what we imagined when we first proposed the writing-about-writing course. They have designed curricula around discourse communities in order to teach genre theory, social writing process theory, and rhetorical theory. They have taken up theories of multimodality and genre in order to push the program to expand its historical focus on traditional academic, alphabetic texts. Some instructors have adapted knowledge they brought from other scholarly domains to the teaching of first-year writing. For example,

one instructor who learned theories of intertextuality from his graduate education in literary studies adapted and helped others adapt these theories for first-year writing courses.

While generally successful, the first-year writing efforts we've been describing have also included tensions and occasional failures. Some long-time, part-time composition teachers resisted the claim that what they had been teaching might be in conflict with disciplinary knowledge about writing and teaching writing or were not amenable to the expectation that they would read and think about research in collaboration with others (an understandable discomfort given the limited material resources available for those who engaged in this work). Some of these part-time faculty members found teaching positions elsewhere, cycling out as we replaced our thirty-three part-time teachers with full-time non-tenure-track faculty. Other NTTF members have actively engaged but sometimes have struggled—for example, to understand how theories and principles taught in the first composition course (ENC 1101) can inform and infuse the research and inquiry taught in the second course (ENC 1102). Some teachers have seen the ideas of the two courses as disconnected or believe that goals for ENC 1102—which include helping students understand how research is grounded in communities and conversations and in specific rhetorical situations—require an explicit re-teaching of rather than building on the ideas in ENC 1101.

In examining the patterns of faculty responses to the new curriculum and training around it, we observe that degreed expertise alone does not account for teachers' ability to acquire, apply, and adapt primary domain knowledge. While some non-tenure-track instructors with degrees from other fields have sometimes struggled to connect and apply concepts and observations from Rhetoric and Composition research, a number of others have not, and this has left us with questions about why. Exploring answers to these questions seems central to considering viable paths toward fostering expertise within Writing and Rhetoric programs.

Example 2: Pathways to Expertise in Upper-Division Programs

Over the last few years, the department's Curriculum Committee, led by the director of degree programs, launched a set of efforts aimed at better defining, creating resource sites for, and preparing faculty—tenure track and non-tenure track alike—to teach upper-division courses, advise students, and otherwise participate in curriculum development. These efforts have included small faculty working groups around clusters of related courses; some of these groups participated in faculty development confer-

ences and, more recently, have begun to sponsor small salon meetings for discussing and exchanging ideas around teaching strategies for an upper-level course. Curriculum and professional development efforts have also included the creation of online course and program resource sites. Because some NTTF expressed an interest in learning about and training to teach in new areas of the field, we also launched an ongoing experiment with a new instructor development program we call Pathways to Expertise.

With the participation of three deeply engaged instructors (with backgrounds in literary studies, creative writing, and Rhetoric and Composition), we completed the first beta testing of this more thorough and structured training. The first pathway centered on a core course for the major, minor, and certificate—Rhetoric and Civic Engagement—while also providing training in the scholarly area of rhetorical studies more broadly. The program involved an extended regimen of reading, interacting around, and applying relevant scholarship. Guided by our working knowledge of how expertise can be developed, this first pass included the following components:

- Leadership from a faculty coordinator and contributory expert (one of us) who actively publishes and teaches in the domain. With the help of other faculty with relevant expertise, this coordinator selected reading materials, created or gathered pedagogical resources files, facilitated discussions with the three participants and other faculty, and provided participants with feedback about their work.
- Reading key scholarship. In the fall term, guided by the coordinator, participants read and engaged in a number of face-to-face and online, wiki-based discussions about key scholarship from the area, which were slightly adjusted based on participant interest. At times, discussions of readings also included other faculty members with related expertise.
- Auditing sessions of a relevant graduate course. Also in the fall term, participants read and discussed materials from, and sat in on select sessions of, the core MA course, Rhetorical Traditions, taught by another tenure-line faculty member who is recognized by the field as a scholar of rhetoric.
- Teaching observations and discussions of pedagogical materials. In the spring term, participants observed select sections of the undergraduate Rhetoric and Civic Engagement course, analyzed the syllabi and teaching materials from other faculty members (including faculty at other institutions), and discussed materials with and received feedback from five more experienced faculty members who served as

informal teaching mentors. Two of these experienced faculty members were non-tenure-track faculty.

- Extensive feedback. Also in the spring term, participants created and received feedback on their own teaching plans and materials for the Rhetoric and Civic Engagement course they were preparing to teach.
- Professional development support. Participants joined and began to follow rhetoric listservs and blogs and learned more about some of the field's scholarly organizations, journals, and conferences that specialize in rhetoric (especially Rhetoric Society of America). In addition, all three participants and two of their informal non-tenure track teaching mentors were offered funding to attend the 2014 RSA conference in May without having to present; two of these instructors attended the conference, with another electing to attend a scholarly conference about civic engagement instead.

In addition to the opportunity to attend a scholarly conference with full funding, the participants were given additional credit in their annual evaluation for their work, and we have pledged to assist them in leveraging this training in applications for future awards, including the new NTT instructor promotion process and our university's Teaching Incentive Program Award, which comes with a \$5,000 raise to base salary. Further, two of the three participants (one has since left the institution to pursue a law degree) have been scheduled to teach Rhetoric and Civic Engagement or related courses within two years of completing the pathway.

When we asked the Pathway participants for evaluative feedback about their experience, all three noted how much they had learned and how the field of rhetorical studies had "opened up" for them, concluding that they were glad to have been part of the program's beta group. As sponsors and co-participants, we, too, benefited from participating in the program; indeed, one of us has implemented a new assignment idea generated from the participants' creative course development work. However, participants also emphasized the difficulty of engaging the substantial set of readings, attending the graduate course, and completing other activities given their existing assignments and workloads. These participants also noted the inadequacy or inaccessibility of incentives; two were not able to attend RSA due to other obligations, and all three expressed disappointment in not being scheduled to teach the rhetoric course sooner.

This first Pathway beta experience raised a number of pressing issues. First, it alerted us to the difficulty of balancing the added activities needed to develop expertise—interaction, reflection, struggle, and experimentation over time—with the heavy 4/4 workloads of our instructors, who do

not have time, for example, to audit a graduate course or observe another instructor over an entire term. In future Pathways, we plan to hold open reading groups about the topic the year leading up to the Pathway (which could be a way to create and gauge faculty interest) and possibly assign some Pathway-specific reading and discussion in the summer term. We will also decrease the number of initial readings to create more room to explore expertise in other, related domains (e.g., professional workplaces for writers) and to adapt ideas to our more specific institutional and teaching environments.

Second, our initial experiment made us better aware of the range of interest and commitment across faculty participants; even in the small group of three, one wanted to learn enough to teach the course and stay abreast of the scholarly area in a general way while the other two plan to seek a deeper engagement with rhetorical studies that includes regular interaction with other rhetoricians (at conferences, for example) and possibly teaching additional rhetoric courses (e.g., *The Rhetoric of Comics*). This range of interest has prompted us to explore a wider range of ways to promote interactional expertise in future Pathways.

Third, our experience further alerted us to ongoing challenges around incentives and rewards, challenges that also apply not only to the NTTF enrolled in the pathway, but also to faculty who assist as coordinators, facilitators, and teaching mentors in such efforts. The tenure-track faculty member whose graduate course the participants sometimes attended was frustrated by the disruption of her course and the additional time spent engaging the participants. Other tenure-line faculty have been wary of taking on roles as Pathway facilitators, not only because of the time commitment but also because of the complications of what they perceive as training and evaluating their colleagues. Others have implied that they worry that training non-tenure track instructors in this way could result in tenure-line faculty being edged out of teaching the specialized courses they were trained for in their PhD programs. In retrospect, it seems clear that participants need more tangible and immediate incentives and rewards; upon the advice of the beta group, we are exploring the possibilities of stipends and a more official certification, perhaps through our university's Continuing Education program. We will also ensure the completion of Pathways leads fairly quickly to teaching the related course.

Because we view the Pathways training as more of an in-depth orientation rather than a final destination, we must also develop mechanisms for continued professional development and scholarly training. If, for example, instructors who visit a conference become interested in presenting there, how can we provide the mentorship, resources, and other support to

make this possible? For the past two years, we have scheduled department research colloquia that feature tenure-line faculty paired with graduate students and instructors presenting their research projects; we hope that this more local exposure to the field, too, will spur continued self-directed learning. Recently, an instructor started a research and writing group for NTT faculty and made arrangements to count participation in this group as a service credit in the annual evaluation.

CONTINUING CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES

The ongoing emergence of our field, including the growth of stand-alone departments and new undergraduate programs, has led to a number of unique challenges. First-year composition courses existed before the discipline of Rhetoric and Composition was formed, and the institutional structures created around them have continued to shape our practices, including those around staffing, training, and credentialing. Over most of our field's history, first-year composition and graduate programs have been the primary sites of knowledge making, with an array of somewhat hybrid undergraduate programs filling out the middle. Many writing programs and departments have a number of faculty members teaching in them without the academic credentials typically required of faculty members in other fields. This scenario presents a challenge, one that has prompted us to consider and act on the issues raised in this article. This challenge can also entail opportunities, however. Tenure-track and non-tenure-track faculty from varied backgrounds bring with them a variety of expertise and experience that can enrich all of our work. Although Rhetoric and Composition is a discipline, rhetorical studies and other areas of the field have also functioned as interdisciplines; in addition, effective rhetorical practice is not only something that specialists know about and perform but also something that others do every day. Part of our challenge as Writing and Rhetoric programs and departments is to consider all of the ways that people can enact expertise both as writers/rhetors and in their knowledge about the discipline. Moreover, we must consider where various types of expertise—including expertise gained through professional or civic experience—are relevant and necessary in the variety of undergraduate courses departments such as ours are offering.

At the same time, there are consequences to claiming to be a discipline. If courses in our departments are intended (at least partly) to teach our disciplinary knowledge, then faculty members teaching those courses must become interactional experts around that knowledge. Facilitating these efforts requires diligence, responsiveness, generosity, and creativity. Tell-

ing NTTF to get a PhD in Rhetoric and Composition cannot be the only, all-or-nothing option, and it is hardly a viable one given staffing needs and hiring patterns. The development of interactional expertise should be based not only on valuing the kinds of expertise NTTF have already developed but also on recognizing that engaging our field's dynamic and multi-faceted body of knowledge should inform much of the work we do.

From Collins and Evans as well as other socio-culturally focused researchers, we know that inviting people to the disciplinary table will require providing opportunities for social interaction and some guided expeditions through much of what our field has to offer; in other words, it will involve pointing people in useful directions after learning and perhaps piquing their interests and goals. Instructors must be given the opportunity to interact with contributive experts in the field locally and beyond (e.g., via listservs and blogs). We will continue to collaboratively transform our Pathways and other efforts. We know that other programs and departments like those at George Mason University, York College of Pennsylvania, and Loyola University Maryland have developed inventive ways to train faculty, and we look forward to learning more about these. We are working with faculty from other institutions to develop new field-level opportunities for faculty to gain additional expertise. A related possibility for enabling the ongoing development of interactional expertise is forming partnerships with other universities for scholarly discussions, symposia, certification programs, online courses, and other exchanges, as Lamos has suggested. On the macro level, NTTF need more opportunities to attend relevant conferences and institutes. Conference travel funds, in many universities historically and certainly at our own, have been reserved for tenure-line faculty with research expectations; these funds should be shared with or expanded to include instructors who don't have research assignments but who are ready to engage with and draw upon current research—and who might develop research projects if given the opportunity. Our field's professional organizations might take leading roles here in designating travel grants not just for NTTF who are presenting but also for those who are just beginning to work toward interactional expertise. Whatever opportunities for connection we can imagine and provide, they must be supported and sustained across time. People don't enculturate or remain enculturated without ongoing participation and communication.

We recognized that our field's unique history and *ethos* mean that we need alternative means for developing, recognizing, and even regulating expertise. A top-down model designed and led only by contributory scholars in the field is not tenable for our department and, we imagine, for a number of departments like ours. Leadership and decision-making are best

done in teams that represent expertise from a variety of domains relevant to our mission. We hope that creating such collaborative structures and processes will foster dispositions that encourage people to pursue new types of expertise and give them the ability to continue working toward the expertise, even when the domain knowledge is challenging.

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Opening Plenary Address

What Remains and What Sustains: Companions in Mission, Colleagues in Action, WPAs for Life

Elizabeth Boquet

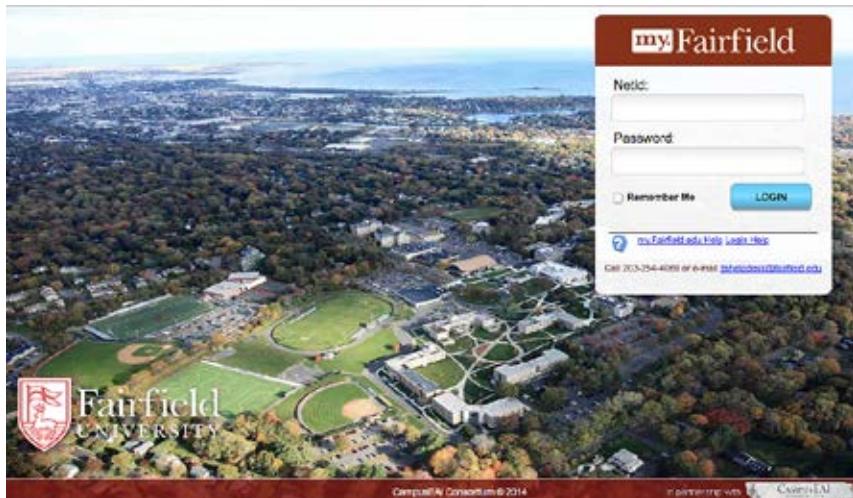
In a small conference room on the Keene State University campus in the winter of 2000, I sat with the other Northeast Writing Centers Association executive committee members planning our spring conference. Decisions needed to be made about the keynote address. Our speaker was set, but the time was up for grabs. Traditionally, the keynote had been given first thing in the morning, as people gathered their muffins and spooned out their fruit salad and filled their coffee cups, but attendance in the early morning the previous few years had been sparse. We considered moving the keynote address to lunch, to ensure a full house. But Bob Connors was adamant: “The keynote strikes the key note. That’s why it’s called a keynote.”

For those who didn’t know Bob or who don’t know his work, his was a formidable presence: a big burly guy with a full beard and a booming voice, a scholar astride a Harley who loved to construct things: sentences, histories, mantels for his southern New Hampshire home. He was forty-eight—my age now—when a motorcycle accident took his life only a few months later, on an early summer day. Of all of Bob’s work, and there is a lot of it, this is what I most remember: “The keynote strikes the key note.” So much so that, when I sit down to write an address like this one, I think first and again of Bob.

In this article, I take up the call, issued most recently by Steve Parks in the *College Composition and Communication* review essay “Sponsors and Activists: Deborah Brandt, Sponsorship, and the Work to Come,” for those of us who teach about and research literacy sponsorship in its many and varied forms to tell our own sponsorship stories. To do so, I offer a snapshot of my own institutional literacy autobiography to reflect on how literacy sponsorship, a concept that has animated a large segment of rhetoric

and composition over the past several decades, operates in our own professional lives.

Literacy sponsors, as Brandt defined them in *Literacy in American Lives*, “are any agents, local or distant, concrete or abstract, who enable, support, teach, and model, as well as recruit, regulate, suppress, or withhold, literacy—and gain advantage by it in some way” (19). I have appreciated the opportunity, afforded by the theme for the CWPA conference, to think about who and what sustains us across time in doing the work our institutions call on us to do (and sometimes the work they’d rather we not do, which is also part of it) and also, as my title suggests, to think about what remains of us—any of us, all of us—when we are gone, whether on a temporary or a permanent leave-taking. I regard my subtitle now, ten months after I first drafted it—“WPAs for Life”—and I wonder, in that tree-falls-in-a-forest kind-of-way, if a writing program administrator has no writing program to run, is she still a WPA?



My institutional literacy autobiography begins at, and centers on, Fairfield University, where I was hired as an assistant professor of English and director of the writing center in the fall of 1993. Fairfield is a comprehensive Jesuit Catholic university with approximately 3200 undergraduate and 1500 graduate students enrolled in its five schools. It is located in Fairfield, CT, right along Long Island Sound, between New York City and Bridgeport.

The photos accompanying this text were shot on Fairfield’s campus, in a project inspired by contemporary photographer Sally Mann. Mann’s work revolves, in one way or another, around questions of mortality. Her series *What Remains*, for example, followed from the murder of a fugitive

who was tracked onto her family's farm and killed. In this same series, she documents the decomposing body of her family's beloved greyhound, and she travels to a body farm at the University of Tennessee where researchers study human decomposition. Her series of landscapes of Civil War battlefields near her Virginia homestead highlights the return to nature of places that were once dramatically populated by bodies in contact and conflict.¹ Following Mann, I snapped these photos of unoccupied spaces precisely to call up the traces of those who have occupied them. While I refer to these spaces as unoccupied (in the sense that no one appears in the photos even though in many cases someone is currently assigned to the space), I see in my mind's eye an institutional landscape filled with people. I want to explore what it means to dwell deeply, as I have at Fairfield for these past twenty-two years, in one place, in many different roles, yet somehow always already a writing program administrator—because, while we might consider it a truism that “a person is not a program,” we would probably all like to imagine that our presence matters, has mattered, in the places where we devote so much of our lives.

“Who am I? Whose am I? Who am I called to be?” These three questions frame the Ignatian Residential College on Fairfield’s campus. Students and their mentors work from these questions to examine their lives. I suppose I am asking a version of these questions now when I wonder, “What does it mean to have mattered? According to whom? In relation to what?”

My knowledge of the Jesuit tradition when I began at Fairfield was limited to the connections between critical pedagogies and liberation theology, with their shared commitments to what would be called “the preferential option for the poor.” The Jesuits sought—still seek—to empower communities through education by meeting people where they are and accompanying them as they agitate for change. I am fairly fluent in Ignatian-speak now, but when I arrived at Fairfield, I was largely unprepared for the institutional literacy learning curves that lay ahead those first few years. They were everywhere—from figuring out how to read (and write) minutes, how to follow (and make) motions, how to prepare applications and reports, how to read and respond to candidate materials, how to participate in faculty governance, how to make a successful tenure case by framing some of my administrative work as teaching, some as scholarship, very little as service. (It worked.) The list goes on and on. There was a lot to learn.



"Administrators come and go. But faculty remain." That's the counsel I received as I adjusted to my first new dean; and, in certain ways, it is true. Many administrators came, and they have gone, four or five times over. New administrators have come where once there were none. I remain.

Fairfield's central administrators² are themselves concerned about the sustainability of our current model of operations, so much so that the subtitle of our developing strategic plan is, in fact, "Building a More Sustainable Future." Faculty too are invested in the viability of the current model and support the goal of a more inclusive, more affordable college education, but few list the first sustainable principle for a university as "To build and implement a new business model that broadens our revenue streams and makes our costs more responsive to our articulated priorities" ("Fairfield 2020"). I encounter this language from our Fairfield 2020 strategic planning documents many times as I log into the system through which faculty performance is reviewed, and I realize: We cannot talk about sustainability without talking about faculty. We cannot talk about sustainability without talking *with* faculty. *Sustained merit* is, in fact, the original term for the default category in our faculty salary distribution system. The faculty sustain. I sit on the university's merit review committee, with its official charge and its secure database and its appeals processes. I log in to the interface and marvel at colleagues who distill a year's worth of teaching accomplishments into a 250-word text box. And then tab to the next text

box for research. And tab again for service. Sustained, sustained, sustained. All faculty are sustaining.



I served on and chaired the Faculty Salary Committee (FSC) when senior administrators, backed by the board of trustees, brought forward a merit pay proposal, which has since been implemented. That committee service stands as the steepest of the steep institutional literacy learning curves I have encountered during my time at Fairfield.

The five faculty on the FSC—during my term, one each from chemistry, political science, finance, math, and English—met at least weekly (and sometimes more often than that) to sift through the data the university's administrative team would provide, identify gaps, figure out our questions, set the weekly meeting agenda, and review the various documents under consideration. We met to plan to meet with the administration's representatives. We considered what to do with the information we had, what information we didn't have but should, what information we were unlikely to get but needed to request anyway. As FSC chair, I prepared and gave the reports to the General Faculty, translating administrative positions for faculty and faculty positions for administrators. It was a familiar role.

When I recall my time on the FSC, I am reminded of Brandt's account of the case of Dwayne Lowery, the line worker who becomes a union leader. Lowery's early success in organizing and advocacy was sponsored

on the ground at his own workplace as well as through professional development opportunities. Eventually, however, the value of the literacy skills Lowery had been acquiring diminish in the face of increasing legalization and bureaucratization. I feel for him. Many days, I think he and I are the same. Brandt writes, “[I]nstitutions undergo change, affecting the kinds of literacy they promulgate and the status that such literacy has in the larger society” (56).

At Fairfield, we wound up with a three-tiered merit system: Additional Merit, a category that is almost never funded; No Merit, a category (which would be a 0% increase) that can rarely be justified; and the category into which nearly everyone would fall: Sustained Merit.

Still, not all faculty labor in sustainable positions at Fairfield as elsewhere; on my campus, we are working to ensure that conditions across labor categories converge. To the extent that this is happening, it is less because conditions are improving for part-time faculty and more because they are deteriorating for full-time faculty. Meanwhile, our documents dis-incentivize collective action. Though many express sympathy, dismay, anger, and shame at the working conditions for part-time faculty, part-time faculty on our campus, as on many campuses, remain woefully under-represented in critical discussions—discussions ranging from departmental business to curricular decisions to compensation negotiations—and our documents, along with the historical interpretations of those documents, compose their ongoing exclusion. Administrators view the governance process as slow, unwieldy, confusing. Faculty object to administrative invocation of extra-institutional bodies—benefits consultants, attorneys, “the state”—to justify ignoring, obstructing, or bypassing agreements codified in institutional documents to which faculty view all parties as bound.³ We bear witness to the decomposition of the texts on which the university was built.

Perhaps this shift is inevitable in an era in which documents are increasingly ephemeral, circulating on a network, landing in an inbox from the disembodied “universityannounce@” or “facultyannounce@” or from simply “Fairfield University” itself, disappearing with the click of a key. In an article entitled “To: You, From: Michael Blitz and C. Mark Hurlbert, Re: Literacy Demands and Institutional Autobiography,” Blitz and Hurlbert begin, “Just a reminder that the agenda for today’s meeting will be to find out what literacy demands are and to determine the extent to which they contribute to or constitute institutional autobiography” (7). They gather all the mail that arrives in their department mailboxes for a year and conclude: “The documents that ‘arrive’ . . . supply us with little histories in the form of decisions that we have had some/no part in making” (8).



Blitz and Hurlbert wrote this article in 1989. Since then, we have experienced a revolution in the means available to our institutions to compose us and our work. Our faces look out from various landing pages, log-in screens, and “sizzle sheets,” for all the world to see. These representations are rarely within our power to revise, adapt, or delete. Blitz and Hurlbert write of a “visible, audible, and hermetically Institutional Literacy . . . which speaks as a shifty subjectivity—shifty because it is both transient and tricky . . . Every literacy demand is, in other words, a minute and momentous pedagogy” (12).

Claude Mark Hurlbert was my dissertation director. This May marked twenty-one years since the sun-soaked day when he hooded me. Claude retired this year, and it is hard for me to believe that a whole career has passed in between then and now.

What I’m leaving out is this:

I spent seven years as a central administrator, working to advance Fairfield’s previous strategic plan, the one positioned now as in desperate need of a refresh. That plan was collaborative and student-centered. It privileged teaching and learning. It capitalized on what I would still argue are Fairfield’s “value propositions.” Though this work might now be viewed as stale, well past its due date, it feels achingly fresh to me.

As this new strategic plan comes into focus, I train my lens, Sally Mann-style, on the deterioration of various types of literacies that have been spon-

sored in, through, and by the institution. As Mann walked the perimeter of the body farm, so I travel the footpaths of my own campus, contemplating the composition of the soil. I walk down Bellarmine Road, up the hill on O’Neill Way, and around the corner of Fitzgerald, and I am called back to my first moments as a graduate student in a PhD program, as someone who, upon arrival, had one single disastrous year of college teaching as a master’s student under her belt.



That year in my master’s program began with three hours of professional development—a morning workshop for inexperienced teachers during which time a senior faculty member assured us “The good ones, you can’t hurt; the bad ones, you can’t help.” I remember feeling deflated by that statement, even as I tried to draw on its limited wisdom. I had no transferrable framework when faced with the literacy demands of teaching: constructing a syllabus, planning a unit, designing assignments, grading a set of papers, even maintaining a grade book. Every task seemed somehow free-floating in its own universe, and every need was pressing, not the least of which were the needs of students that appeared to be disconnected from the papers they were supposed to be writing but that somehow kept insinuating themselves into the work of our class: the student who threw a chair at one of his group members; the student who came to class repeatedly visibly beaten but certain she had “asked for it”; the student who went home

for Thanksgiving break, loaded his shotgun, put it in his mouth, and never came back.

I had taken home a lot of student writing over that Thanksgiving break, so I had nearly a complete writer's notebook of that student's experiences, right up until the week he killed himself. Soon, what had been an unremarkable, undifferentiated section of first-year writing was a topic of significant interest among various administrators. They wanted all of his writing. They wanted the syllabus, the assignments. They wanted to talk to me. Suddenly, everyone wanted to know what had been going on in my class.

What to say about the sponsors of my institutional literacies at that particular moment in my career, other than that I can't recall anyone expressing concern about how I was being constructed in this scenario, how my own entrance to the profession I had seemingly chosen was being configured by not only the terrible loss and the subsequent questions I had about what I might have legitimately noticed but also by the institutional gaze that was trained on me. I don't think faculty and administrators were wholly indifferent; I think that they too were wildly underprepared: "The good ones, you can't hurt; the bad ones, you can't help." Certainly I learned how powerful institutional documents could be, how they could stand (in) for (and against) individual institutional actors.

When I entered the doctoral program at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, just shy of two years after that initial teaching experience, I knew shockingly little about the place. It felt more like I was entering an academic witness protection program. I leapt at the chance to flee all sorts of personal and professional complications and to tuck myself away in the Alleghenies until things cooled down, Harrison Ford-style. I arrived for a five-week summer session, and I stayed straight through for three years. I had no idea that a Politics of Composition seminar I took that first semester with Claude would afford me the space to think with others about the relationship of literacy to violence in its many, many forms. I was not ready then to talk about my initial teaching experiences, but I was more than ready to encounter the work of Elspeth Stuckey, of Mary Rose O'Reilley, of Richard Miller, of Claude himself and his then-frequent co-author Michael Blitz, whose work on violence in and around the writing classroom shocks and saddens me now still with its contemporary relevance.

I could not see myself then developing a bullet-proof syllabus, so to speak, and I cannot see myself now developing a bullet-proof writing program. Violence, and the call to respond to it with compassion, continues to compose much of my professional and personal life. I have spoken and written elsewhere on its most recent turns (see Boquet 2015) but I have not, until now, connected my current work to my first semester teaching, to the

sorrowful experience of that first troubled class. The questions of what matters are the questions of what sustains are the questions of what remains. From Mississippi to Western PA, from New Orleans to Bridgeport and back again. This summer, as I write, to Lafayette, LA, where my mom and dad used to go to the movies as a young married couple to escape the summer heat. To Charleston, SC, where my poetry project colleague and collaborator taught before moving with her husband and young sons to Newtown, Connecticut, six months before the shootings at Sandy Hook. To my own grown-up hometown of Milford, CT, where last year my husband, a local police officer, responded to a fatal stabbing in our neighborhood high school and where, more recently, one of his fellow officers killed himself on Father's Day. I set aside the drafting of this piece to attend the wake and the funeral, to accompany my husband who accompanied the casket from the funeral home to the church to the gravesite to inter the remains.



Fairfield University is, essentially, a gated community. No one passes through it on their way to anywhere else. A guard station marks the main entrance, and warning signs mark the others. The campus is, overall, impeccably manicured, with benches where you can sit beneath the willows that dip into the pond (as long as you don't feed the wildlife), stretch out on green grassy knolls (as long as you don't bring your dog), and explore the trails leading to the Zen garden (as long as you smile for the cameras and park only in designated areas). It seems that all institutional literacies should be similarly composed. We go *to* Bridgeport or Nicaragua or New Orleans or Tanzania, but we're not really supposed to carry those places back with us. When I return from a quiet afternoon of writing on campus,

my husband pulls up the *Fairfield Citizen*, a small local circular, and pushes it toward me. The headline reads “Cops: Man hangs self in woods near Fairfield U” and the final paragraph confirms: “Officers began to search the immediate area, including the woods on the university property. It was there they discovered the man’s body, hanging from a tree.”

People are in pain, in Newtown, yes, and in New Orleans, true, and in Nicaragua, certainly, but also on our own campuses. Right here in front of us. That pain presents a problem, as it insinuates itself into the perceived real work of the institution. Can we not acknowledge that our experiences with pain anywhere should render us more, not less, capable of responding to it everywhere? Compassion, it seems to me, is an infinitely renewable resource.

It is difficult to draw the connections, as I would like to, between violence in our communities, violence on the edges of our campuses, violence that makes its way into our classrooms, and the violence implicit in our institutions’ unwillingness to render visible the power they mask through the increasing disembodiment of our educational enterprise. We are experiencing the deterioration of the value of expertise and shifts in the value of academic literacies writ large and as they have been historically practiced. The central consolidation of power, the control of information along with the simultaneous denial that such practices are operative: These are contemporary literacy tests; we should make no mistake about that. I bristle at the mission creep of the term *sustainability*, as I have outlined it here.⁴ I have no language for bridging the distance between the ways that the term is deployed in my own institution’s documents, my understanding of my university’s core mission, and my felt sense of this term’s mattering in the world.

* * *

An email message with the subject line “To the General Faculty from the President” arrives. In it, the President informs the faculty that the FSC and the administration have reached agreement on compensation for the coming year. This is good news and, even though significant changes to health care coverage loom large, contract terms are relatively favorable. All faculty are sustaining.



The President's email message also announces that the Senior Leadership Team will be recommending changes to the process for determining salary and benefits. At the same time, the message undercuts the successful conclusion of this year's reasonably equitable compensation agreement by positioning salaries and benefits as an institutional problem to be solved. The President notes that salaries and benefits are the university's largest operating expense—65% of the annual budget—as though it were self-evident how concerning this figure should be. I learn, in the days that follow, that I am not the only person to read this figure and think, well, of course. What else would the university's largest operating expense be? What else *should* it be? What is the target percentage, and why? We are told that the current levels are unsustainable, but many of us wonder “What else is a university made of? What else matters?”

The President didn't anticipate any of these questions in the end-of-the-year remarks he gave to the General Faculty only a few weeks before circulating this email. Instead, he called on faculty to be civil in the face of potentially radical transformations of our work/lives, as the values on which we have bet our own and our students' futures are rendered obsolete. Perhaps he too is reeling, as many of us are. I questioned the potential chilling effect of such calls for civility. The President responded briefly from the floor of the meeting and more fully in a personal email message to me two

days later. It was unclear whether his message invited a response from me or foreclosed one. I responded anyway. He did not reply.

The President is now reconsidering whether he will continue to give this traditional end-of-the-year address. All the while, Organizational Announcements pop into our inboxes—new vice president positions; the promotion of a vice president to provost; the promotion of a dean to associate vice president and of a director to dean; searches fail and are cancelled; faculty salaries are re-purposed—for what, no one can quite say. Recommendations from faculty who run programs, including those of us who run writing programs, are met with a thin Fairfield line about “the institution’s best interests” and a corrective that we are somehow not the ones from whom such recommendations should or will come.

As a university leader during a time of rapid organizational change, I played and will continue to play my own role in complex decisions. I do not exempt myself as an actor in these institutional scripts, neither as someone who experienced nor as someone who inflicted pain. Even now, I am interim co-director of a core writing program that took more than a decade to build and may well be significantly re-organized during my term while the permanent director is on leave. None of us is in an enviable position. As our institutions shape and shift, we all struggle to make sense of these changes. Perhaps pain is an inevitable part of that picture. If so, we can at least acknowledge that it is simultaneously regrettable. We can gesture toward healing. We can speak to each other’s humanity.

I joke that it took me a year’s worth of General Faculty meetings to realize that, when we call the question, we actually stop talking about the issue. The calling of the question seemed to me to be just the beginning. I know now that in many ways it is just the beginning, that many questions still follow the calling.

As I put the finishing touches on this plenary address, I participated in a workshop for the Connecticut Writing Project. Our CWP director tweeted out a photo of our group, and it was re-tweeted by “Fairfield University.” That night in my inbox was a message from a long-ago-graduated student, Gary. I supervised his Honors project, which explored, among other things, the concept of the trace and the question of remains. Through that project, we first encountered Sally Mann’s work when we took a field trip to the Housk Gallery in New York City for an exhibition. It was prescient work to be doing when Gary’s father passed away later that year, only a few weeks shy of Gary’s graduation from Fairfield. The message that arrived in my inbox reads, “i’m sitting down, kids asleep, light up my computer to do a few last things, and run across a tweet featuring you. for a brief moment

i flash back to this very special time where questions were as valuable as answers. what a rare thing.”⁵



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NOTES

1. Mann’s style is haunting and indistinct. My own snapshots lack clarity, especially in print reproduction, because I am unskilled, but I present them here for what they echo of her work. Information about Sally Mann can be found on her website: sallymann.com.

2. *Central administrators* is admittedly a slippery category. I use it here to designate administrators who have significant decision-making authority and whose responsibilities do not involve routine contact with students.

3. See, for example, the Fairfield University Institutional Progress Report submitted to the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) in

2009 that responds to the NEASC Evaluation Team's assessment that governance is "a concern for the university" (4).

4. Here I acknowledge Cheryl Ball who used the phrase *mission creep* during her plenary address at the 2015 CWPA conference to describe this phenomenon.

5. Original formatting preserved.

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Friday Plenary Address

Towards an Ecology of Sustainable Labor in Writing Programs (and Other Places)

Seth Kahn

Almost every time I write anything about labor issues that takes more than a few days to draft, I struggle to figure out how not to sound like I sound on Facebook. Just when I think I've got the voice under control, I cross paths with something like this story, and it all blows up. . . .

About two weeks ago in early July 2015, an adjunct activist comrade posted an article from a small newspaper in Ottawa, Illinois, which seems maybe rural or maybe exurban Chicago. The article, called "Pay is modest, but rewards large for IVCC faculty," highlights an Illinois Valley Community College Electrical Systems instructor named Karl Kusek, who fits a profile I'm often rejoined to remember in public discussions of contingency—somebody with a full-time job, who teaches for the love of teaching, and who doesn't really much care about the fact that the compensation is poor. In fact, Kusek says, "'When IVCC asked me to teach I was really excited. . . . I think I even told them I would do it before I knew I would be getting paid.'" We also know that Mr. Kusek's sum total prior teaching experience was "one semester as a last-minute replacement vocational instructor" at a local high school (Stanley).

I don't blame Mr. Kusek for taking the job or for enjoying it. If he likes it and does it well, good for him. His willingness to publicly trumpet that he doesn't care how much (little) he gets paid is troublesome for us labor activists and for people who do care how much they get paid, but I imagine it simply didn't occur to him that saying so out loud might undercut other people's efforts to win better.

A more troublesome character than Mr. Kusek in this story is the college president Jerry Corcoran. I'll just show you what President Corcoran

says about his adjunct faculty in the article, and we'll see if it gets as deep under your skin as it does mine:

'Nobody ever got rich doing it, but from my standpoint they have so much that they know, so much to share and such a willingness to share that it just speaks volumes about their character.'

'But more than that, I think they contribute mightily to the reputation for quality at this institution, and I just have nothing but the highest regard for them.'

'I think part of their motivation is probably that feeling they get when they realize they have enhanced somebody else's life,' he said. 'It's those "ah ha!" moments when you watch your student's eyes light up, because they've just learned something as a result of your sharing your knowledge with them.'

Corcoran described joining the adjunct faculty as 'an incredible opportunity for people who want to work with others and benefit society as a whole.'

'You very well could be a strong candidate to represent our college proudly to the entire community and make a difference in our students' lives.' (Stanley)

Can anybody see what's so frustrating here? Or is it just me who finds it that way? It's not that he claims to respect his faculty so much as that he equates their willingness to work for low pay with their moral character—a move we see constantly applied to teachers at all levels, ranks, and statuses. It's a more accusatory version of the emotional wages argument that Eileen Schell and many others have made, which says that teachers are expected to find the internal payoff of teaching so high that the financial payoff isn't relevant. Nowadays, the argument seems to be that anybody who doesn't find the emotional payoff sufficient is morally bankrupt.

Nationally, and certainly in fields far beyond Writing Studies, any conversation about labor equity probably has to contend with propaganda like this story. Such stories pop up in newspapers all over the country more often than you'd think, and they're almost always full of the same basic ideas: "*We're so grateful to our adjuncts for performing such a vital service to our campuses and communities that we hope our expressions of gratitude override the fact that we're not paying them beans for their work as professionals!*" In this particular case, as one Facebook friend pointed out, the fact that the article profiles not one but two adjunct faculty with little teaching experience reinforces the notion that college level teaching doesn't require

training—a claim that's sadly trickling up from the public discourse on K-12 education.

This may not be the healthiest response to the president of IVCC, but it sure is fun:¹



So what does any of this have to do with a talk about sustainability? At IVCC, hiring adjuncts in this way is business as usual: according to Vice President for Academic Affairs Deborah Anderson,

Our needs are always changing. . . . We never know from semester to semester what we're going to have to sell. . . . For our applicant pool we always need people in English and we always need people in math, those are pretty much the two standbys. (Stanley)

Upper management at IVCC doesn't see hiring faculty contingently via Job Fairs, filling needs that are constant with employees who aren't, and paying poorly for it, as problematic; in fact, as we've seen, the president believes his adjunct faculty are heroic. He and the vice president don't invoke the rhetoric of sustainability, but a look at their website shows that, like most college campuses these days, the word is all over it. At the very least they don't reject or even resist sustainability, even though they seem to treat their faculty pretty disposably.

Maybe I'm turning this otherwise all too common campus into a strawman, but I can't help making this one other observation. While I was looking around their website, I found a PowerPoint presentation that included the slide below, but I have to tell you two things about it first: 1) it's a pitch from a corporation you'll recognize and likely be surprised that they're talking about sustainability at all; and 2) it's on slide 17 of 24 that we see the word *sustainability* or anything I could even construe as a reference to it for the first time.

Car Sharing Benefits

Car Sharing Technology has 3 key benefits to offer your account

1. **Individual or Student, Employee and Staff Benefits** – Personal use options create a multitude of solutions for individuals
2. **Business Use** – Car Sharing Technology is a cost effective, on site transaction system, that brings efficiency and transparency to travel 24 hours a day
3. **Sustainability** – Car Sharing Technology, complimented by Hybrid, Plug in Hybrid conversions and fuel efficient vehicles can vastly reduce carbon footprints



I wish this kind of slide show were rare, but it's not. That's one of the reasons I'm often skeptical of the sustainability trope, which at its worst sets

itself in opposition to changes that are necessary to redress serious problems. There are two common versions of this critique that register most clearly for me.

First, it sets the status quo as a limiting value, so it's inherently defensive if not regressive. Austin Williams, in "The Enemies of Progress," lays out this argument in terms more provocative, maybe even strident, than even I would. In short, he argues that the entire paradigm of sustainability is an exercise in neoliberal hegemony, which allows its proponents to claim environmentalism without doing anything to subvert genuine threats to the environment. If you're familiar with Marxist critiques of labor unions, the logic is much the same: palliating crises, instead of letting them reach Hegelian dialectical synthesis, short-circuits the revolution. Or more concisely, any activism that actually improves conditions is regressive.

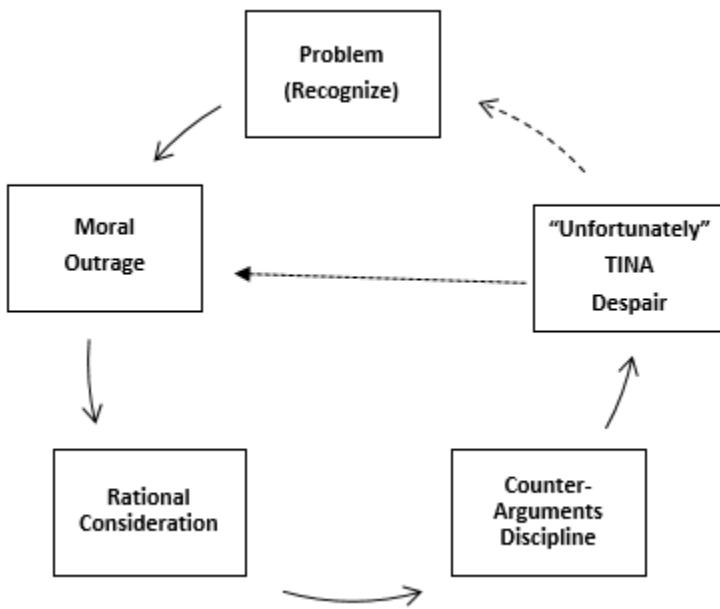
Second, sustainability is highly amenable to greenwashing (Munshi and Kurian). The Enterprise pitch I just showed you is an obvious example. What's relevant about that argument for us is that sustainability sounds so reasonable that it's difficult to contest, and, as a result, is easy for the powerful to deploy for their own not-always-good reasons.

And a third, for that matter, based on my longtime experience as an environmental activist. From my perspective, the sustainability movement appears to have been impelled, at least in part, as a corrective to the tree-hugger/granola/hippy and tree-spiker/enviro-radical images that had come to signify environmentalism in the public eye by the late 1980s. I spent the summer of 1989 canvassing door-to-door for Greenpeace and often heard one or the other of those accusations from people annoyed that I'd interrupted their dinner: you're all a bunch of starry-eyed dreamers, but I've got reality to think about, or, you're the people that tried to torpedo a French battleship! All of this is to say that the same instrumentalism from which critics conclude that sustainability is a greenwashing ploy may actually have been a perfectly reasonable ingredient in an environmentalism that didn't sound too Romantic or too dangerous for most people to accept. Sustainability sounds more reasonable, more technocratic, than environmentalism and is, therefore, both more palatable and more vulnerable to cooptation.

If I'm right, or we can at least posit for now, that the sustainability trope has corrected for the environmental movement's tendencies towards tree-hugger romanticism and tree-spiking radicalism, then I would also assert that there's a place in our thinking about workers and labor in writing programs based on the same kind of respect for all a program's inhabitants and resources that the sustainability movement calls for. But—and this is one of my key points—because we're academics, we have a collective tendency to contextualize ourselves to death. I hate the phrase *paralysis by analysis*, but

we're very good at expanding and complicating the contexts in which we see ourselves until we find a layer that makes positive change hard. That's one of the risks we take by importing the sustainability trope, with all its attendant ecological intricacy, into our thinking. It's a risk worth taking but a risk that requires noting.

Let me elaborate. Co-authors Anicca Cox, Tim Dougherty, Michelle LaFrance, Amy Lynch-Biniek and I contend in an essay we're hoping will be in the *CCC* special issue on political economies that all too often progress on labor equity gets derailed by what Rachel Riedner and Kevin Mahoney call the *cycle of despair*, which they show thus:



Something happens that draws a reaction of moral outrage. In the wake of that moral outrage are calls to be “reasonable” or “rational.” Those calls invite “counter-arguments” or assertions that we don’t know enough and need to do more research and end up not only defusing the moral outrage but also convincing us that nothing can really change. In the end, we get to feel okay about ourselves because we were and still are morally outraged, and that mitigates the frustration we feel at not changing anything while at the same time reinforcing our sense that we can’t change anything.

Let's stop to think about this. Think about moments when you've felt outrage that you couldn't act on because you had to “be reasonable.” Consider the possibility that you got rational-ized out of acting, got talked out

of doing something good. As I pose this for you, understand that in no way am I blaming anybody for not doing something heroic. All I really want is at least a momentary recognition that sometimes “Hey, slow down! Let’s be reasonable here” is not the right answer. Or maybe even more precisely, that being reasonable and being overly cautious are easy to conflate.

Or put even another way: There are better and worse ways to account for context. Contextualizing labor activism in ways that make it harder is worse.

A concept of sustainability that focuses on life-sustaining inter-relations among all the members of an ecosystem is better. A concept of sustainability that isn’t framed as defending the status quo from imminent destruction, or heaven forbid as resource management, is better. Ecology in our field is often another metaphor for *system*, one that evokes nature and dynamism and adaptability, but I want to push that one step further. Not only are the people who work with us in our programs and on our campuses part of complex systems (and understand I mean that very inclusively: students, administrators, staff, all of us), but they’re people (and so are we) whose lives and livelihoods often depend on the health of the environment. And it’s really easy to lose sight of how connected we are within that environment.

Let’s turn back to the story I began with. If we think about Illinois Valley Community College as an ecosystem, do we react to their practices and discourses surrounding them any differently? I do! Here’s what we know about the local environment, about the ecosystem (as it were). We know adjuncts teach about one-third of the courses (President Corcoran says this in the article). We know two of their adjuncts love teaching so much that they’re thrilled to be doing it and willing to talk to the press about it. We know they’re continuously hiring in English and math, among others, which suggests to me that maybe adjuncts in those departments aren’t so thrilled. I don’t know Illinois geography well, but the town is about 60 miles west of Chicago, maybe about the same north of Normal, maybe 30–40 miles of backroads from DeKalb, about half an hour from Peoria. So I doubt they have a huge pool to draw from among the local population of about 18,000; conducting Job Fairs to find people seems inconsistent with the message of the article. It seems an awful lot like most community colleges in small towns. Working conditions for adjuncts are poor, but many of them have their reasons for taking and keeping the jobs anyway, and others cycle out when they decide it’s not worth it. It’s not the kind of place that’s ripe for a unionizing effort or other large-scale labor activism. From outside, it seems infuriatingly toxic because structurally it’s just like lots of places that are, in fact, toxic.

Granted, I have no evidence from which to make concrete claims about conditions there. I say that to make the point that an ecological conception of context can also help avoid expanding the scope too widely. For example—earlier, I made the point that the story from IVCC is similar to other stories that glorify what my New Faculty Majority comrade Char Mollison calls the Happy Adjunct. I’m already locating the story in a wide context without trying to distinguish it from what may or may not be similar examples. Likewise, I first saw this article among a small group of adjunct activist friends, and the person who posted it framed it as “See! Here they go again! Just like all the other bad managers!” Both of those contexts may be relevant, but neither is especially obvious, and I’d like to think that thinking ecologically and sustainably can help us decide at moments like this what layers of context are how important and to whom.

A carefully developed ecological frame can help show us what we miss when we think too big. We already know that everything is interconnected. We already know about the Butterfly Effect. We already know that systems are complex. When our scope is too wide, we lose the details that comprise complexity. I really wanted to write a letter to President Corcoran at IVCC, castigating him for equating crappy labor conditions and moral superiority. I still do. In this case, there’s simply no evidence that anybody associated with the college feels like the environment is bad. If nobody is suffering, which it’s not clear anybody is, then assuming the environment is toxic is just an assumption. Am I wrong, as an activist and advocate, to be angry at an upper administrator who says something that I believe is not just tone-deaf but potentially harmful to adjunct faculty everywhere? I don’t think so, but an angry intervention into that local environment certainly isn’t likely to accomplish anything.

There have obviously been ecosystems that were toxified without any of their inhabitants knowing, and doing nothing doesn’t help anyone. Thus, adopting this kind of ecological frame can help in a second way by reminding us that lots of people suffer in genuinely toxic environments, even the people that it is easy to construe as beneficiaries of labor inequity. Or maybe even a better way of putting it—we certainly see individuals who benefit individually from toxic environments: presidents who collect high six—sometimes even seven—digit salaries while casualizing and shrinking the faculty and staff cohorts; individual faculty members whose success comes on the backs of other faculty; and so on. Even though I cautioned earlier about being too reliant on Butterfly Effect logic, it’s important to remember that what often seem to be quintessentially local problems aren’t—or aren’t just. Maybe everybody at Illinois Valley Community College is happy, and as an outsider activist, I wouldn’t know that. And as a result of not know-

ing, it's wise for me not to try to intervene in their local conditions (efficacy aside). But in order to minimize the risk that a dangerous idea seeps from IVCC into our metaphorical water table, it's entirely appropriate to notice it publicly, to analyze it for warning signals and ripple effects, and to talk about it.

My last two points I'm going to make and discuss together. The ecological frame also helps to make concrete the interconnections that we otherwise often simply assume or assert. In other words, declaring that everything is interrelated is one thing; articulating *how* and *why that matters* is another entirely. And, finally, the frame I'm imagining here makes room for an activist impulse that more technocratic versions of sustainability tend to discourage, as I contended earlier. I'm going to end with an example that should crystallize both of these points and, ideally, segue into what I hope is a healthy discussion of the handout you all got at your tables (see Appendix A).

The Indianapolis Resolution is the product of about sixteen months of collaboration among a group representing a broad range of job statuses and institution types. The Resolution will recall the provisions of the Wyoming Resolution for those of you who remember them, but updates to them will account for changes in both the field of Composition/Rhetoric and the profession writ larger. Addressing three different domains of action, we propose a mechanism by which professional organizations can both reward and demand institutional compliance with disciplinary standards, and do so without violating bylaws or causing themselves legal problems; we call on graduate programs and disciplinary organizations to be both proactive and candid with graduate students and new members to the field about labor issues, job prospects, and extant professional documents they can use to support their efforts; and we call for professional organizations and institutions and departments to support labor research more explicitly and materially.

The text doesn't invoke any kind of ecological or environmental metaphors (except *the field*, which is sort of natural-sounding but not much more than that), but I hope it's evident that what we're trying to do is to support healthy labor practices and conditions—which sometimes involves aggressively expunging toxic elements, sometimes (we hope much more regularly) nurturing and growing carefully. A sustainable ecology can't survive without addressing threats to its health and can sustain itself positively and healthily with care, trust, and good faith. More directly—unethical labor practices are threats. Refusing to be honest with new members of the field about the current conditions of the academy and the field is a threat. Discouraging research that exposes and helps to address labor exploitation?

Not good. Conversely—and I hope the single most tautological thing you ever hear me say—doing the right things is healthy, and we should encourage ourselves and everybody else to do more of them in every way we can. I'd much rather spread optimism and humaneness than despair, frustration, and toxic sludge.

Or, in the simplest possible terms: As long as we sound a little more articulate than this, we're doing just fine.



NOTES

1. Image courtesy of David Wilder.

APPENDIX A: THE INDIANAPOLIS RESOLUTION

To sign and share the resolution electronically, visit <http://www.compositionist.net/indianapolis-resolution.html>

Indianapolis Resolution

(Updated May 30, 2015)

WHEREAS, most post-secondary teachers with primary responsibility for teaching writing are contingent, as are increasing numbers of Writing Program Administrators and Writing Center directors;

WHEREAS, a caste system has emerged in the discipline in which the salaries and working conditions of most post-secondary teachers with primary responsibility for teaching writing remain (and have remained so since the Wyoming Resolution in 1987) fundamentally unfair as judged by any reasonable professional standards (e.g., unfair in excessive teaching loads; unreasonably large class sizes; salary inequities; lack of benefits and professional status; barriers to professional status; and barriers to professional advancement);

WHEREAS, the November 2013 revision of the Statement of Principles and Standards for the Post-Secondary Teaching of Writing failed to address labor substantively, removing all specific recommendations for class size and workload, and locating ambiguous references to working conditions at the end of the statement; and while we acknowledge that the March 2015 revision includes specific workload recommendations but does not change working conditions' location on the Statement's priority list;

WHEREAS the disciplinary status of composition/rhetoric/writing studies has solidified since 1987, resulting in the proliferation of independent writing programs, graduate programs, departments, and all the accoutrements of disciplinarity including journals, conferences, and CIP Codes;

WHEREAS a long history of position statements and exhortations from CCCC, WPA, MLA, ADE, NCTE have not provided mechanisms that compel specific, concrete, demonstrable changes in working conditions;

WHEREAS, we contend that inquiry into the effects of insecure labor provides important data about teaching and learning;

WHEREAS, labor-focused research has the potential to improve both working conditions and teaching practices;

WHEREAS, currently, there exists a dearth of support for creation, publication, and dissemination of research into labor and its effects on teaching;

WHEREAS, in the spirit of both fulfilling the vision first announced in the 1987 Wyoming Resolution and preparing future writing studies professionals to be labor-responsible colleagues, advocates, and administrators, we call for reform and sustained action at the levels of institutional compliance, disciplinary pedagogy, and scholarly research.

THEREFORE, be it resolved that:

A. At the level of institutional compliance,

-
1. We call upon disciplinary and professional organizations such as NCTE/CCCC, ADE, MLA, RSA, and CWPA to consolidate and publicize the numerous extant professional standards documents on one user-friendly, accessible website; and where appropriate to revise or update those standards.
 2. We call upon these professional organizations to contribute at least one board-level member to an inter-organizational labor board.
 3. We call upon this board to develop a seal of approval that would be issued to departments/programs that fulfill current disciplinary standards for reasonable and equitable working conditions.
 4. We call upon this board to hear grievances from faculty who believe their departments/programs have violated the current standards as clearly outlined through the action of provision A.1.
 5. We call upon this inter-organizational labor board to establish and publicize clear protocols for investigating those grievances.
 6. We call upon this board to establish a process for announcing the results to the grievants and to the accused in such a way that would first allow non-compliant departments/programs to work internally to remedy the situation before results are made public.
 7. We further call upon this board to establish a process for making public a program/department's failure to remedy a violation of professional standards (A.1) for working conditions[1]
- B. At the level of pedagogy, we call upon our disciplinary and professional organizations to:
1. Draw explicit attention to the reality that material conditions are teaching and learning conditions—that current labor conditions undervalue the intellectual demand of teaching, restrict resources such as technology and space to contract faculty, withhold conditions for shared and fair governance, and perpetuate unethical hiring practices—as the central pedagogical and labor issue of our times.
 2. Recognize issues related to labor as central components of all pedagogy/training courses, professional development initiatives across the curriculum, and pedagogically-focused conversations at national conferences, asserting that these topics must be a part of graduate and undergraduate teacher training, as well as professional development for current faculty.

3. Create a clearinghouse of information about how disciplinary professional statements such as CCCCCs “Principles for the Postsecondary Teaching of Writing,” NCTE’s “Position Statement on the Status and Working Conditions of Contingent Faculty” and CWPA’s “Portland Resolution” have amply codified best practices for reasonable and equitable working conditions, and where appropriate are in need of updating; how innovative teachers and administrators have made compelling, forceful, and successful arguments to help their institutions improve working conditions for all faculty.

C. At the level of research, we call on our disciplinary and professional organizations to support efforts to:

1. Offer more material and professional support and opportunity for the creation, publication, and dissemination of quantitative and qualitative research into the impacts of the labor system on the teaching and learning of writing.
2. Consider research into labor and its effects on teaching and learning with the same intellectual weight and scholarly respect as other subjects in our field.

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Saturday Plenary Address

Sustainable Infrastructures and the Future of Writing Studies

Cheryl E. Ball

I begin this talk with an acknowledgement that my remarks today are made, in some cases, as lengthy adaptations from two other pieces I have co-authored with Douglas Eyman. The first is a chapter in the recently published *Rhetoric and Digital Humanities* collection, in which Doug and I outlined three types of infrastructure needed for electronic publishing. The second is a chapter in the forthcoming *Microhistories of Rhetoric and Composition* collection, in which, looking back at the history of a single issue on electronic publishing that was mostly lost to the field for over a decade, we outline best practices for sustainable electronic publishing. Without Doug's collaboration, co-authorship, and co-editorial support, the framework for this talk would be missing.¹

SETTING THE SCENE

In January 2016—just six months from now—*Kairos: A Journal of Rhetoric, Technology, and Pedagogy* will celebrate its twentieth anniversary. Readers familiar with *Kairos* know that it is a peer-reviewed, independent, open-access journal that has been publishing screen-based, hypertextual, and media-rich scholarship since 1996. (See <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net> to access the journal.) Since *Kairos*'s first issue, its mission has been to publish scholarship that examines digital, networked, and multimodal composing practices—that's twenty years of scholarship about digital writing practices. There are people in this room who had just learned to walk when *Kairos*, too, took its first steps . . . when the notion took hold in our field that digital writing needed its own form of scholarship.

The future of writing studies, my friends, arrived decades ago and has already settled in—but I suspect you know that. So today I'd like to talk

about what the field didn't know twenty years ago about digital writing, and I will warn you that some of that history may be uncomfortably close to home, and for that, I apologize in advance, and hope that you'll take these brief microhistories as forewarned examples. I will also talk about what we need to know going forward—let's say twenty years forward—and what we need to do to plan for that now.

I begin by taking us back to the year 2002, in which the following three scenes occurred.²

Scene One

A reader finds the perfect, multi-journal special issue on electronic publishing (see fig. 1) to use as a framework for one of her dissertation chapters on digital scholarship. She cites the work, but when reworking the chapter for publication two years later, she finds that not only are a majority of the dozen webtexts missing, but also three of the five journals are no longer available, and one of those three journals has been completely scrubbed from the Web. It has “been disappeared,” as we say.



A Special Multi-journal Issue of *Kairos*, *Enculturation*, *Academic.Writing*, *CCC Online*, and *The Writing Instructor* on Electronic Publication



Introduction:

- ▶ David Blakesley, Doug Eyman, Byron Hawk, Mike Palmquist, Todd Taylor

Features



Kairos: Archiving/History

- ▶ A brief history and technical overview of the current state of JAC Online, with a few

Fig. 1. The multi-journal special issue on electronic publishing, featuring webtexts from five online journals in rhetoric and composition studies. This screenshot is from the *Kairos* version of the table of contents. <http://kairos.technorhetoric.net/7.x>.

Scene Two

A tenure-track scholar's webtext is peer-reviewed and published in a new, online spin-off of a highly respected, long-running, and institutionalized print journal (see fig. 2). The online version is part of a multi-journal special issue on electronic publishing. Less than two years later, and without warning to the author, the online version of this journal disappears from the institution's website and is seemingly wiped from institutional memory. There is no record the webtext was ever published within the journal.

The screenshot shows a page from the *College Composition and Communication Online* journal, specifically the 54.1 September 2002 Joint Ejournal Special Issue. The author is Steven D. Krause. The title of the article is "Where Do I List This on My CV? Considering the Values of Self-Published Web Sites". Below the title, it says "version 1.00". The text of the article begins with a paragraph about the high value of scholarship in refereed journals or books and the question of whether self-published Web sites should be counted in promotion, merit, tenure, review, and recognition.

This essay explores the question: "Given the high value that most institutions put on scholarship that appears in refereed journals or in books produced by well-respected presses, how are innovative, intellectually valuable, well-researched, self-published Web sites to be counted in the processes of promotion, merit, tenure, review, and recognition?"

In his essay "The Electronic Word: Literary Study and the Digital Revolution," Richard Lanham imagines a future where academics working in English departments benefit both as readers and as writers of electronically published scholarship. Lanham writes that all of the "fuss" of scholarly publishing "could be avoided if scholarly journals were 'published' as on-line databanks upon which individual scholars could draw at will." Delays could be avoided and the costs of printing, distributing, and storing academic publications could be dramatically reduced. "And new informational opportunities would arise. We could update our own articles as we wanted to, and those revisions would be immediately available to the scholarly community. We could choose to include, as part of our work, subsequent comments upon it--either champagne or, for stout hearts, hemlock, or both" (21).

Fig. 2. Steven Krause's peer-reviewed webtext, "Where Do I List This on My CV? Considering The Value of Self-Publishing Websites" originally appeared in the first iteration of *CCC Online*, in 2002. The only way to access it now is through the Internet Archive, where this screenshot is from.

Scene Three

The editor who suggested that this special issue cross journal borders to showcase five publications that promote web-based scholarship is, five years later, the only editor standing—or, rather, editor of the only journal still consistently publishing.

Now, if any of you have run off on your iPhones to check these links yourself, rest assured that *Kairos* Senior Editor Douglas Eyman has recently restored all of the links he could find to the other journals. In almost every case, this required searching for the author or title of the piece on those journals' new index pages and finding them linked deep within their interfaces and "redesigned" architecture in Drupal, with the most unfriendly

URLs possible. However, for most of the last thirteen years, these pieces were not linked or accessible in the way they were originally intended. This instability and erasure has plagued online publishing in rhetoric and composition and is nothing short of shameful. I am embarrassed by it, even as I count myself among one of the lucky ones who works for the only journal that stood. I tell this story from a position of privilege, but also from a position of having worked my ass off to keep *Kairos* running for much of the last fifteen years in various capacities, with a large and incredibly capable staff and the support of amazing senior editors like Doug.

However, I want to tell this story today—this history of a broken thing—because even though these scenes are from over a decade ago, our field continues, *continues*, to make the same mistakes over and over again. We are scholars of rhetoric, and teachers of digital writing (whether we like it or not), and so we need to resurrect this erased past so that we can learn from our mistakes and teach our students—whether they are students in our undergraduate writing classrooms or our graduate students who will be the next keepers and continuers of our scholarly record—to pay better attention to our infrastructures.

THE INFRASTRUCTURES OF DIGITAL PUBLISHING

So what, really, do I mean by infrastructures?³ Based on our combined decades of experience editing *Kairos*, Doug Eyman and I talk about infrastructures in digital publishing in three terms: *the scholarly*, *the social*, and *the technical*. I'm going to briefly outline the scholarly and the social aspects in this talk, because I want to focus on one that is perhaps less well-known for this audience, the technical, and how to think rhetorically about technical infrastructures for our scholarly endeavors.

Scholarly Infrastructures

Scholarly infrastructure for the Computers and Writing field is slightly different than it is for Rhetoric and Composition and CWPA's more broadly. Each in-discipline has its own scholarly publishing values. The scholarly infrastructure for the larger field of writing studies values co-authorship and collaboration, mixed-methods, narrative writing styles, peer-review and social aspects of writing, process and revision, as well as social justice and critically oriented pedagogies, student-centered and open-door teaching.

These are things that the field not only researches but also (supposedly) adheres to in its scholarship. That is, the scholarly infrastructure is that which supports the field's existent scholarly values. These values change over time, such as when writing studies started to accept more data-driven

research in the 1980s. Or when we agreed that multimodality and hypertextuality were acceptable to our scholarly publishing values in the mid-90s. It is true, however, that not all in-disciplines of writing studies accept multimodal scholarship as valid—but they'd be wrong. ;)

Social Infrastructures

Social infrastructures are those that support the engagement of the field's scholarship. Since I am specifically talking about digital publishing today, let me give you an example from *Kairos*: Peer review at the journal takes place collaboratively across three stages. First, the section editors evaluate whether a submission is ready for the editorial board; then, if a piece makes it past the first stage, the external reviewers provide feedback usually in a group of five to six; and if a piece makes it past that stage with an R&R, we will assign a staff member to work one-on-one with an author to complete those revisions prior to re-review.

A related example to invoke here is the number of staff members we have on board: There are currently thirty-three staff members at thirty universities across the US! For the August 2015 issue, we have a near-record nineteen webtexts that all thirty-three of these editors, section editors, and assistant editors have been copy-and design-editing, keeping track across our eight-stage production process through a staff wiki and email (see fig. 3).⁴ This social infrastructure runs the machine that is *Kairos*. I'm just the wizard. Well, actually, Doug is the wizard because none of this would run without him. I guess that makes me the Good Witch in this metaphor.

The staffing is important to point out here because one of the reasons *Kairos* has been able to sustain itself all these years is due to the large, well-qualified, trained, and dedicated staff who volunteer their time to be part of this social and scholarly endeavor. Many of them are graduate students or early-career tenure-track scholars teaching 4/4 loads who spend as many as ten to fifteen hours a week during production cycles, which can last upwards of three months, two to three times a year. For the first ten years of *Kairos's* life, that wasn't the case—we didn't really have assistant editors, and section editors all worked independently. But it just wasn't sustainable, and a change meant more time hiring and training people. We've done that work now, and everything is in place to bring in new staff members whenever we need them, which is about every two years.

Stage 1: Pre-production check	Ensures items are addressed prior to production changes.
Stage 2: Design editing	Ensures the webtext is technologically ready for production.
Stage 3a: Copyediting	Style, grammar edit
Stage 3b: Copyediting	References edit and fact-checking
Stage 4: Proofreading	Final proofing by AEs
Stage 5: Editor's Proof / Author queries	Editor's proof and author query write-up; Authors work on queries sent by Editor
Stage 6: Finalization	Senior Editor transfers final webtexts to publication location
Stage 7: Author Proofs	Editor emails authors to collect author proofs
Stage 8: Walkthrough	All staff proofread of entire issue; Senior Editor makes final corrections before release

Fig 3. *Kairos*'s 8-stage copy-editing process ensures that every webtext is processed using the best practices in scholarly, social, and technical infrastructures that the journal has built up over the last two decades.

This hiring and training cycle, and this staffing situation, is radically different from pretty much every other online journal in our field. So I know I'm asking a lot when I'm asking the field, and its editors and potential editors, to learn from our prior mistakes in digital publishing. But, we do have lessons learned and best practices to share. And since one of writing studies' core scholarly values is collaboration and sharing and working socially, I think it's reasonable to expect some collaboration and sharing and working socially on these matters across publications in our field. Which is why I get *so angry* whenever I think about the foolishness of NCTE and their complete lack of regard for scholars' peer-reviewed work in online venues that the institution itself has created. Which leads me back to my initial scenes of technological failure and our contemporary scene of technical infrastructures.

Technical Infrastructures

The technical infrastructure of digital publishing is all about sustainability and preservation, regardless of form, in the rapidly evolving technological ecosystems of the Internet. There's a reason why *Kairos* was the only journal left standing when link after link, journal after journal, in the multi-journal special issue of 2002 disappeared: The editors had built the technical infrastructure of the journal to withstand the whims of the Internet. The others? They each had their own stories about why things changed and moved. You can see how things changed with these journals in Jeremy Tirrell's map-pings from 2009 (see fig. 4).

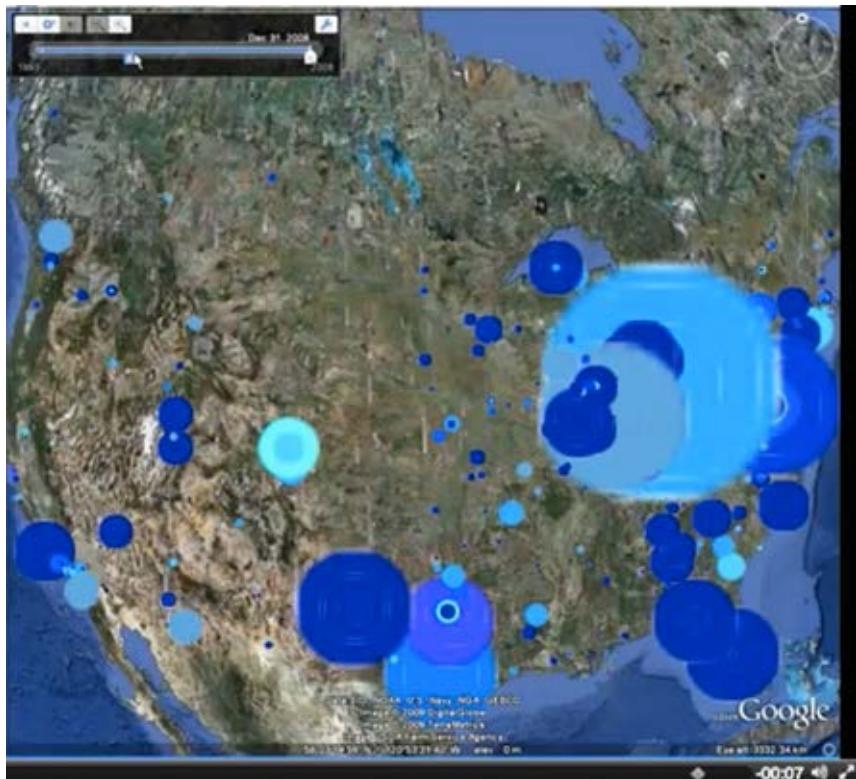


Fig. 4. Although this screenshot from Jeremy Tirrell's Google Earth mapping of online journals in rhetoric and composition can't show how staff members' affiliations moved through a journal's publication history, it is useful here to remind us why online and webtextual journals are necessary, how a one-minute video sometimes makes a better rhetorical argument than a 1000 words, and that technical infrastructures that allow for the publication of videos instead of static screenshots are no small feat.

They speak of microhistories yet to be told, but among the social circles of journal editors, we know why, for instance, *Enculturation* disappeared for a few years after it moved from Texas to Virginia: because its lead editor, one of a very small cohort, was trying to get tenure. That's a social infrastructural issue. We know, too, that *The Writing Instructor* and *Academic Writing* changed content-management systems and thus went on hiatus, some for several years. That is a technical infrastructural problem—and one that the field, as a whole, is still working on.

But I still don't see those gaps in providing archives of the field's scholarship as egregious an example as what NCTE has done with its digital publishing over the years. Not once, with the first iteration of *CCC Online* (which seems to have published one, or maybe two issues in 2002.⁵ See fig. 5); and not even twice, when it started the *CCC Online Archive* as a metadata resource for the print-journal's articles (see fig. 6); but *three* times, with the latest iteration that was published on a DropBox account instead of the organization's servers, ran for all of one issue before NCTE pulled the plug (see fig. 7), and as in the previous cases, wiped all traces of it from their website (see fig. 8).⁶



This essay explores the question: "Given the high value that most institutions put on scholarship that appears in refereed journals or in books produced by well-respected presses, how are innovative, intellectually valuable, well-researched, self-published Web sites to be counted in the processes of promotion, merit, tenure, review, and recognition?"

In his essay "The Electronic Word: Literary Study and the Digital Revolution," Richard Lanham imagines a future where academics working in English departments benefit both readers and as writers of electronically published scholarship. Lanham writes that all of the "fuss" of scholarly publishing "could be avoided if scholarly journals were 'published' as on-line databanks upon which individual scholars could draw at will." Delays could be avoided and the costs of printing, distributing, and storing academic publications could be dramatically reduced. "And new informational opportunities would arise. We could update our own articles as we wanted to, and those revisions would be immediately available to the scholarly community. We could choose to include, as part of our work, subsequent comments upon it—either champagne or, for stout hearts, hemlock, or both" (21).

Fig. 5. This screenshot shows one of the webtexts that was disappeared from the original version of *CCC Online* (circa 1998–2003).



Fig. 6. The *CCC Online Archives* (e.g., the second iteration of *CCCO*) was also hosted offsite of NCTE's servers, and when NCTE decided it was done with this service, it migrated the contents to its server, where they have since been rendered un-useable (e.g., if a user tries to click through the links, they are returned to the index page).



Fig. 7. The third iteration of *CCC Online* seemed intellectually promising, but was infrastructurelly doomed to failure.

The screenshot shows the NCTE User Login page. At the top, there's a blue header bar with the NCTE logo and the text "National Council of Teachers of English". Below the header, there's a navigation menu with links like "About", "Member Center", "Get Involved", "Resources", "Professional Learning", "Groups", "Join", "Renew", and "Shop". On the right side of the header, there are "Logout" and "SEARCH" buttons. The main content area has a title "NCTE User Login" and a sub-instruction "Please log in to view this page: College Composition and Communication Online.". There are two main login sections: "I'm a Returning Member or Previous Customer" and "I'm New to NCTE". The "Returning Member" section contains fields for "Username" and "Password", with a note about case sensitivity, a "Remember me next time" checkbox, and "Log In" and "Forgot Password" buttons. It also includes a link for "Staff Login". The "New to NCTE" section has a field for "Enter your email address" with a note "(You'll create a password later)" and a "Continue" button. To the right of the login forms, there's a "Secure" logo from Comodo and a "Beacon Services" link. At the bottom of the page, there's a copyright notice, social media links for Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, Pinterest, and YouTube, and a "Visit us on:" link.

Fig. 8. Although *CCC Online* is still listed on under the CCCC's publications menu options, a user will only find this Login page. There is no additional information regarding editorial contacts, advisory boards, or submission information—even if that info is no longer relevant—without a user having to be a member of CCCC and logging in. It's completely unclear to me why that information would be hidden behind a paywall, even if the journal is no longer active. Imagine if an author's tenure case rested on a publication in that one volume and the Drop-Box URL, and total lack of . . . ugh, I could go on and on about this.

None of these publication problems had to happen. When the third *CCC Online* journal was still forming, still a twinkle in NCTE's eye, they could have asked for advice. They had a ready cadre of members involved in the 7Cs committee that had expertise in these exact areas and who had made it known that earlier mistakes could have been avoided had NCTE gotten its constituency involved instead of springing potentially good ideas laden with bad infrastructures on its membership. Once *CCC Online* was announced, our advice was too late, for the system had steamrolled its way into being.⁷

Let me assure you that I am not here to blame the editor, who, as a tenure-track scholar at the time, could not have known all the problems he was about to face. That was NCTE's bad, for not informing him and for choosing a tenure-track scholar to start up a new journal. I blame them for

knowing it had technical resources in its social infrastructure—humans in its membership who knew well the technical obstacles they faced and could have helped—but NCTE decided not to ask, or worse, after repeating the same mistake multiple times, didn’t think to. When people ask me why I don’t go to CCCC anymore, I tell them this broken history of technical infrastructure.

KEEPING TRACK OF OUR OWN SCHOLARSHIP

How can writing studies have a future when our major organization repeatedly and unilaterally expunges, expurgates, and exiles our peer-reviewed scholarship? All for lack of technical infrastructure? I’m here to tell you that it’s not that hard to make a website persevere. *Kairos* has been doing it successfully for twenty years. We’ve had our stumbles—a month offline last summer that forced us to move servers unexpectedly; the four days offline in 2009 when a German company acquired our domain name after a billing error; the one or two complicated pieces that we had to host on other servers along the way and then forgot to move—these are not happy moments in my *Kairos* history. They embarrass me.

But we’ve learned quickly from all of these errors and made strides towards best practices that have and will continue to make the journal a viable place to publish over the next ten to twenty years (if the web lasts that long . . .). We are constantly reflecting on our practices and interrogating our workflows regarding technical infrastructure, scholarly expectations, and the social capital that serves as the economic engine for our particular journal.⁸

As the landscape of knowledge production becomes increasingly a digital, networked endeavor, it is incumbent upon us to make sure that all of our scholarship is consistently findable, usable, and sustainable. These best practices for sustainability in digital publishing focus on three key aspects of technical infrastructure: accessibility, usability, and archivability. (*Kairos* has been calling this last term *sustainability*, but I am attentive to that word’s mission creep as Seth Kahn outlined in his earlier CWPA plenary talk.)

Accessibility Needs to be Supported in order to Reach the Widest Possible Audience

While originally shaped by a focus on users who rely on adaptive technologies and the techniques that provide greater access, publishing with an eye towards accessibility benefits all users. For *Kairos*, accessibility means open-access (of the libre model); requiring rich author-created metadata such as alt attributes on images; alternate media formats; and transcripts for all audio and video-based media. Accessibility also means consideration of

the user's access to bandwidth and the constraints that come with limited access (our server logs show visitors from over 180 countries, many of whom have slow modems or are connecting through cellphones).

Usability Includes Navigational Schema and the Apparatus that Helps the Reader Use the Text

In some ways, usability intersects with scholarly infrastructure as we strive to make webtexts more easily used for research purposes by adding metadata; making sure the text is open to copying and re-mix; and providing ways to easily cite the works we publish. Usability also applies to the editorial and revision functions—creating texts that can be easily revised is an important part of digital publishing and the teaching of digital writing. For instance, *Kairos* asks authors to use non-proprietary softwares and languages to compose. (No Wix, Weebly, or iWeb. Even question Word and WordPress. Basically, anything that begins with a W.) This allows all of our editorial staff to access the ‘neath text, or code, with minimal effort as we copy- and design-edit the piece during production.

Archivability Requires Preserving Texts and Providing a Means for Users to Find Past Iterations in the Event that a Journal (or Artifact) Moves or Changes Its Primary URL

The discussion around the archiving and preservation of digital artifacts changes daily. This is not an issue to be solved once and for all but to monitor and adjust as new technologies, new media, and new genres emerge. As a participant in the “Access/ibility for Digital Publishing” seminar I held last week at West Virginia University said, “Don’t tell me that your WordStar 4.0 document won’t open. You just don’t have the right hardware and software to open it with.” It’s unreasonable, however, for us as scholars to maintain technical systems that would allow us to open every digital file on the planet far into the future. But if we prepare our texts with the idea that—in twenty years, or, even in five years—some human or alien or tenure reader might need to open the CWPA 2008 conference program (see fig. 9), then we need make that possible.

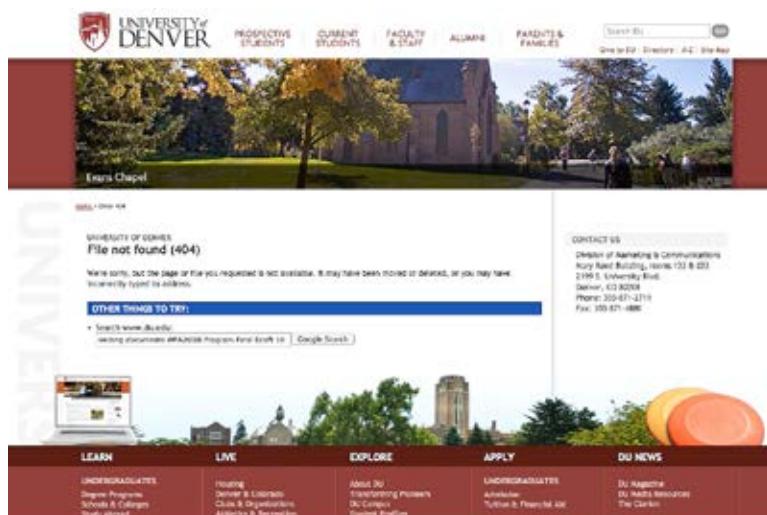


Fig. 9. This screenshot from the CWPA website shows a 404 error (File Not Found) when a user clicks on the link for the 2008 CWPA conference program.]

Here are three of *Kairos*'s sustainability guidelines for all authors (out of twenty-four total guidelines for design, which doesn't include coding recommendations):⁹

- We need to be able to archive everything we publish, so we cannot accept webtexts hosted on third-party sites (such as Wix and Weebly).
- We strongly encourage authors to use standard, non-proprietary formats (HTML 5, CSS, etc.) rather than Flash or other embedded proprietary media or template engines.
- Upon acceptance, we will need copies of all embedded media files, and all 3rd-party sites that host files must be shared with the journal in order to facilitate editing and archiving.

Technical infrastructure is in some ways simpler (because there are known best practices like the W3C guidelines) and more challenging for digital publishing (because fewer journal editors have the technical expertise to run servers and networks). In Writing Studies, where academics are more professionally mobile than in other fields, the social and technical infrastructures intersect as editors and publishers move from one institution to another, sometimes bringing their journals with them and sometimes leaving them behind.

As the economics of publishing further erodes the capacity to produce and mail out new print texts, there is a gradual shift to more online venues,

including those for long-form and data-driven scholarship: from the WAC Clearinghouse to Computers and Composition Digital Press, the University of Michigan's Sweetland series, and the Research Exchange. It has been our experience at *Kairos* that writing studies tends to overlook the technical as not a core element of writing practices, and we aim to correct that, at least in terms of digital scholarship and electronic publication.¹⁰

So this is how we fix broken things: Most authors and editors have a strong sense of the scholarly infrastructure (peer-review, placement in appropriate directories and bibliographies, the apparatus that authors need for tenure and promotion) as well as the social infrastructure specific to each journal's institutional and disciplinary context and mission. We—as authors, editors, publishers, teachers, and organization members—remind ourselves to carefully consider all three forms of infrastructure—scholarly, social, technical—when working with digital texts and to reach out to those of us who have histories and experiences that we are happy to share, particularly with the lesser-known technical infrastructures of composing and publishing. This attention to the infrastructures of digital publishing should begin to infuse general writing curricula as we prepare students for writing contexts that already begin with born-digital as a standard approach rather than an innovation that only techno-rhetoricians may engage.

NOTES

1. During the talk itself, I wasn't able to point to all the places of self-citation. Many of the passages were slightly rewritten in context of the talk, so I haven't used quotation marks to indicate these passages.
2. Although they appear in a different order, the three scenes come from Cheryl Ball and Douglas Eyman's "History of a Broken Thing: The Multi-Journal Special Issue on Electronic Publication" in *Microhistories of Composition*, edited by Bruce McComiskey. (Logan: Utah State UP, 2016). Reprinted with permission from the publisher.
3. Discussion of the infrastructures of digital publishing is taken up in our chapter "Digital Humanities Scholarship and Electronic Publication" in more detail and was originally published in a slightly different form in *Rhetoric and Digital Humanities*, ed. Jim Ridolfo and William Hart-Davidson (Chicago: U of Chicago P, 2015), 65-79. Reprinted by permission of the author and the publisher.
4. For more discussion on design-editing as a unique stage in *Kairos*'s copy-editing process, see Ball, 2013 and Ball and Eyman, 2015b.
5. After my talk at CWPA, I had the good fortune to sit down with Todd Taylor, who had been the editor of the original *CCC Online*, to ask him what had happened to it. While he couldn't answer the latter (because it was up to NCTE

to maintain), we had a great discussion about its process of becoming that I hope to elaborate on in the future.

6. For more discussion of the history of *CCCO*'s disappearance, see the *Microhistories* chapter. I admit that, for the sake of streamlined arguments, only parts of the *CCCO* technological narratives (across the three versions) have been included in these writings and only those I've had first-hand knowledge of through my editorial work or committee work in the mid-2000s on 7Cs.

7. In April 2010, a month after the start of the journal was announced at CCCC, I sent an email query to the editor asking for clarification on the journal's technical and social infrastructures, in part because I wanted to publish there myself and I knew about NCTE's poor history with its previous two *CCCO* versions. Although I no longer have the response email, I believe it said that NCTE was still working out the logistics, but given the journal's final DropBox resting place, it's obvious they never did. So that it may be of use to other scholars and future editors, here's the list of questions I asked:

- (a) will *CCC Online* be open access? specifically, will the webtexts be free and open access?
- (b) how will the journal address copyright and Fair Use in multimedia scholarship?
- (c) when do you expect the first multimedia issue to be published?
 - (c1) are you working on a traditional “issue-based” timeframe for the journal, or will you be pushing publications as they become ready?
- (d) how will the review process be done? I'm assuming you won't be doing blind review, but will the reviews be done traditionally as separate letters? And what criteria will the reviewers be using?
- (e) given *CCC Online*'s past history of moving things around, what infrastructure and sustainable staffing measures are in place to assure authors that once their work is published in the new *CCC Online*, it will remain at that URL in perpetuity?
- (f) what “system” are you using to host the journal? or a better question: when will submission and technical guidelines be available for authors?

8. For more context on the accessibility practices discussed below, see the *Microhistories* chapter.

9. To see the full list of design guidelines for *Kairos*, visit <http://kairos.tech-norhethoric.net/styleguide.html>

10. For more discussion on why coding literacies should become part of our writing pedagogy, see Eyman and Ball, 2014.

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WPAs in Action: Vignettes from the Field

Composition Condition

Nate Kreuter

Western Carolina University, a coeducational public university located in Cullowhee, North Carolina and a member of the UNC system, has a two-semester writing sequence in its liberal studies curriculum, ENGL 101: Rhetoric and Writing and ENGL 202: Writing and Critical Inquiry, which all undergraduate students are required to fulfill. Both are taught through the Writing, Rhetoric, and Critical Studies (WRCS) program which is housed in the department of English. WRCS also had responsibility for teaching ENGL 300: Foundation Composition, a remedial writing class.

Until recently, the WCU curriculum held students accountable through a policy known as Composition Condition (CC). The policy read simply:

Composition-Condition Marks: A student whose written work in any course fails to meet acceptable standards will be assigned a composition-condition (CC) mark by the instructor on the final grade report. All undergraduates who receive two CC grades prior to the semester in which they complete 110 hours at Western Carolina University are required to pass English 300 or English 401 before they will be eligible for graduation. This course must be taken within two semesters of receiving the second CC and must be passed with a grade of C (2.0) or better. (*Catalog*)

However, at no point in the history of the policy did a specific rubric or criteria exist for assigning CC marks. Unlike course grades, no mechanism existed for students to challenge or appeal CC marks.

In 2013, the CC policy and its curricular entailments suddenly came under the scrutiny of the provost's office when it was realized that—due to a misconfiguration of WCU's academic reporting software—students who had received two CC marks were not being referred into the English 300 course, were not having their advisors alerted, and were in fact fall-

ing through the cracks of the policy (flawed as it was). The CC mark, due to the reporting glitch, had been rendered meaningless for a time, as an untold number of students with two CC marks had graduated without having taken ENGL 300 since the reporting glitch had been encoded in the software program in 2008, and more were slated to graduate in the very near future.

Because no students were being flagged for the course, nor was the course requested by students with two CC marks or their advisors, the English Department had not scheduled a section of ENGL 300 for several years. As far as the English Department was aware, there was no demand for ENGL 300, and thus, no need to offer it. As far as the English faculty knew, students were either not receiving the CC mark or, equally likely, faculty in other disciplines were largely unaware that they had the mark at their disposal. With grave concerns about the pedagogical basis for the CC policy, its lack of established criteria, and without a clear sense of what curriculum should be offered in ENGL 300, the English Department was content to allow the CC mark and its associated course to languish. But in the fall of 2013, the discovery of the software glitch forced the university to confront the CC mark, both in terms of its actual effects and in terms of its pedagogical implications.

Meetings ensued. It was discovered that the CC policy had been originally established in 1948, likely in response to GI Bill policy mandates and at a time when the school only enrolled 550 students. The CC policy had gone unstewardied for long periods of WCU's history. When the CC policy came under scrutiny in the 2013–2014 academic year, I, the untenured WPA, advocated eliminating the CC policy altogether under the rationale that it was pedagogically unsound and had not been updated to reflect the standards and research of the discipline of Composition and Rhetoric. In the Faculty Senate hearing over the CC policy's fate, the provost's office argued for maintenance of the CC policy, expressing strong sentiment that to eliminate the CC mark would be to concede to graduating unprepared writers.

Ultimately, my arguments carried the senate, and by a vote of 18 to 6 the following resolution was passed:

Resolution to Abolish Composition Condition

Whereas the Composition Condition (CC) grade was established at WCU in 1959 [sic];

Whereas there are no clear standards for who receives CC grades and for what specific writing issues;

Whereas all faculty, regardless of discipline, share responsibility for our students' writing;

Whereas due to a glitch in Banner, WCU did not enforce the CC rule between 2008 and 2014 and therefore has graduated dozens, if not hundreds of students with two or more CC grades;

Therefore be it resolved that WCU abolishes the CC grade and encourages faculty to work with students in all classes to improve writing skills. (WCU Faculty Senate)

This episode reinforced the importance of having tenured faculty in the position of WPA, for reasons that should be obvious. More importantly though, the show-down over an outdated, pedagogically unsound, and un-appealable graduation requirement reinvigorated campus discussions about writing, writing in the disciplines and across the curriculum, and the rhetorical nature of writing. The episode gave me multiple opportunities to educate faculty in other disciplines on the liabilities of defining "good" writing strictly as writing that is mechanically correct. More importantly, as a result of the discussion, the university has undertaken a host of new initiatives to support student writers, initiatives that are far more instep with disciplinary best practices than the outdated CC policy. The confrontation over the CC policy, too long avoided, has been a boon to students, faculty, and the university's curriculum.

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Review

Theory Building for Writing Studies

Raúl Sánchez

Bazerman, Charles. *A Rhetoric of Literate Action: Literate Action, Volume 1*. Fort Collins: WAC Clearinghouse and Anderson: Parlor Press, 2013. Print. 165 pages.

Bazerman, Charles. *A Theory of Literate Action: Literate Action, Volume 2*. Fort Collins: WAC Clearinghouse and Anderson: Parlor Press, 2013. Print. 225 pages.

Writing programs exist to facilitate the teaching of writing in its various forms. Specific courses emphasize specific writing that is intended to reflect, closely or loosely, writing activity that takes place in other parts of the institution or in other parts of the world. This schooled writing, and the writing that it imitates, is carried out by individuals—students—who are imbricated in a very wide range of constantly shifting contexts: social, cultural, cognitive, affective, emotional, historical, institutional, familial, religious. As writing program administrators, we want writing instructors to know about this imbrication and to teach writing in light of it. We want them to share part of our field’s rich understanding of writing with their students on the assumption that the more students know about writing, the better they will be able to write.

As these students’ bodies come into contact with the materials, texts, and discourses that comprise and extend our writing programs—syllabi, teachers, classrooms, their own laptops and tablets—we experience their materiality in a particularly immanent way. Even though a writer’s materiality is certainly rendered discursive or symbolic when it interacts with a writing program—for example, in the form of grades and other assessments—there is also a sense in which that materiality resists description. The writing bodies that enter into relationships with writing programs are

never fully accounted for in the many and varied texts that emanate from those programs. Because of this, writing programs enjoy a distinct perspective on acts and functions of writing: on the curricular writing produced by a program's students and on the organizational writing produced and received by the program's employees. In turn, this perspective can inform enduring theoretical issues surrounding the study of writing.

For these reasons, the two volumes of Charles Bazerman's *Literate Action* are relevant to the work of writing program administration. In these books, Bazerman sets out to offer a broad view— informed by a selection of social science research—of what writing is, how people use it, and how best to use it. This is a bold undertaking, one manageable only by someone with Bazerman's experience and stature, someone with a long and distinguished career devoted to the study and teaching of writing. In fact, and in a sense, these books accumulate and distill the knowledge Bazerman has gathered and given to us in such major works as *Shaping Written Knowledge*, *Constructing Experience*, and *The Languages of Edison's Light*, as well as the various collections, the many articles and book chapters, and the textbooks that bear his name. Readers familiar with his work will find in these new books a familiar concern: the idea that because literate action (most often writing) is extraordinarily complex and interwoven with other complex activities, it requires a powerful set of concepts to guide its methodical study. These concepts include specific theories of cognition, intertextuality, activity, and, most important, genre. These are theories that others in the field have pursued and developed as well, and readers familiar with that work will no doubt compare Bazerman's perspectives to it, finding points and degrees of divergence and convergence.

Readers (myself included) who come from humanities-oriented traditions of theoretical inquiry in writing studies—for example, those derived from twentieth century rhetorical theory, poststructural theory, postcolonial theory, and the humanistic strands of British and US cultural studies, feminist theory, queer theory—may find themselves in unfamiliar territory or perhaps on terrain they have not surveyed since graduate school. These readers should approach *Literate Action* as a generous invitation to begin a dialogue between modes of inquiry that should complement each other more than they generally do, in order to do what Bazerman sets out to do: describe and theorize writing as fully as possible. Elsewhere, I have discussed the possibility of uniting these modes under a different notion of empiricism (“Outside”). It is in such a spirit that I will try to present *Literate Action*'s aims and arguments for the benefit of *WPA: Writing Program Administration*'s readers.

Bazerman claims that each volume of *Literate Action* can be read on its own. This is true, as each one tackles a substantially different though obviously related task. The first, *A Rhetoric of Literate Action* (*RLA*) aims to present “advice . . . for the experienced writer with a substantial repertoire of skills” who “now would find it useful to think in more fundamental strategic terms” (4). It does much more than this, as we will see. The second, *A Theory of Literate Action* (*TLA*), points readers to the theoretical and intellectual sources behind this advice. Because Bazerman explicitly sets out to distinguish between practice (or “rhetoric”) and theory, one might be tempted simply to follow his lead, reading *RLA* as something of a how-to guide and *TLA* as its rationale. But this would be a mistake because both books deal with theory. As it happens, *RLA* is the book that actually articulates a theory of writing on the way to offering some advice about how to approach the task of writing. In turn, *TLA* traces the sources of that theory to key figures from a handful of other disciplines. *TLA*, then, is a primer on the texts and traditions of inquiry to which Bazerman and other empirically-oriented writing studies scholars turn as they conduct research on and develop theories of writing. As such, it is very valuable; Bazerman carefully and lucidly explicates some fairly knotty concepts, and in doing so, he invites compositionists unfamiliar with this work to see how it might coincide with, expand upon, or even challenge the theoretical resources to which those compositionists habitually turn for insight into the study of writing.

Published simultaneously by Parlor Press and the WAC Clearinghouse, the books can be purchased as paperbacks through the former, but they are also freely available as .pdf files through the latter (as are Bazerman’s *Shaping Written Knowledge* and other texts, most of which were originally published elsewhere). This makes them especially easy to adopt for graduate seminars, teaching practicums, and other teacher preparation and professionalization efforts. I would likely reserve *TLA* for a graduate seminar, perhaps on the way to sustained analyses of some of its primary texts or as a gateway to Bazerman’s earlier work. But *RLA* should be read widely, especially by those who teach writing as well as by those who study it.

VOLUME 1: *A RHETORIC OF LITERATE ACTION*

In *A Rhetoric of Literate Action*, Bazerman admits that it is nearly impossible to generate “general advice or analysis” about writing given its great contemporary variety (3). He notes that we know a great deal about specific kinds of writing for specific situations and that we are able to give and receive useful instruction on how to write well in those situations. But inso-

far as we understand writing to be more than a tool—insofar as it “forms the playing fields of our literate times,” and insofar as “each piece of writing we do claims a place, identity, meaning, and action on those fields of life”—we understand how and why it can be difficult activity to understand and perform (3). Bazerman states what most of us (and most of our students) have felt at various times: that “once we step out of highly directed, highly instructed writing situations we may quickly feel at sea, not knowing which direction to take and without signs to help us gain our bearings and make decisions” (4). He states as well something else we know and hasten to tell our students: that the more we practice a previously unfamiliar kind of writing and reading, the better we may get at it, and thus the less adrift we may feel. But even in these such circumstances, “underlying questions remain” about our writing goals and processes. This is because writing is not—or should not be practiced as—a rote activity: “we cannot reduce our writing just to type, but must create it anew from our interests, resources, thoughts, and perceptions” (4).

Despite the acknowledged difficulties involved in describing writing broadly, Bazerman sets out to “create a rhetoric of wide generality, relevant to all written texts in all their historical and contemporary variety” (16). Toward this end, *RLA* is divided into twelve chapters, which Bazerman’s introduction subdivides informally into three blocks. Chapters one through four offer “a framework for identifying and understanding the situations writing comes out of and is directed toward.” Chapters five through eight explain “how a text works to transform a situation and achieve the writer’s motives as the text begins to take form.” These four chapters, to me, form the heart of this volume—perhaps of both volumes—so I will devote the most space to them. Finally, chapters nine through twelve give “specific advice of the work to be accomplished in bringing the text to final form and how to manage the work and one’s own emotions and energies so as to accomplish the work most effectively” (4).

Early on in the first block, Bazerman explains that in order to understand and perform writing most effectively, “we need to understand it both within the human capacity for language and in the social-cultural-historical conditions which have developed dialectically with our writing practices” (8). We need to understand the issue of context in its fullest complexity. Unfortunately, the study of writing has tended to take an “abstracted” view that focuses on “code concerns,” which Bazerman identifies as “writing systems, spelling, grammar, generalized word meanings, organized patterns” (10). This view has combined with various “linguistic, educational, interpretive, and regulatory practices that have developed around writing” to create “the impression of a contextless code with universal meaning

carried within the text.” And yet, as Bazerman notes and as most in our field would agree, “written language can gain its meanings only as part of meaningful social interactions” (11). These include interactions over long times and great spaces, the kinds of distant interactions that writing itself makes possible. Therefore, attention to the question of distance is crucial to “a rhetoric of writing”—to an explanation of how writing works and how to make it work (13). It is in this context that the remainder of this block addresses familiar issues of genre (chapter two), *kairos* (chapter three), and intertextuality (chapter four).

In the second block, Bazerman addresses questions of exigency, motive, and strategy on the way to a discussion of how these components, as well as those discussed in the previous chapters, manifest in a written text’s form. He presents exigency as a particularly crucial feature of writing, echoing Lloyd Bitzer in noting that “it is only things we notice and interpret as consequential for us that prompt us to wonder whether they might be improved through our making of language” (65). This observation leads him to discuss speech acts and their ability to establish social facts among groups of interested people. According to Bazerman, “speech acts change the social world by creating new social facts, which change what we believe, how we interact socially, and how we act in the world” (68). Bazerman proceeds methodically through these chapters, introducing new ideas carefully and systematically, but also reincorporating ideas from the previous chapters, thereby creating an accretion that eventually represents what it means to write in contemporary contexts. For example, *kairos* and intertextuality resurface at the end of chapter five and elsewhere, and genre is a persistent presence in both volumes.

Chapter six deals with motives, and it is of particular interest for two reasons. First, it treats motives as emergent, as taking place when we “write without the immediate pressure of events unfolding around us at the moment.” In these situations, “our motives may only take shape as we start to contemplate and give mental definition to our situation and then begin to plan and carry out actions” (77). Moreover, “our motivations emerge and take shape in a complex world” (79). Therefore, for Bazerman, the internal and external complexity of writing situations can present particular difficulties unless we “understand a wider repertoire of possible directions and have a wider range of skills to form our emergent motivations into a greater range of potential objects” (80). The better we can understand the contours and details of writing situations, rather than simply react to what we perceive as their immediate demands, the more effective and meaningful our writing interventions are likely to be.

Second, this chapter considers the effects school writing can have on writerly motives, not only in school itself—in writing situations unique to the scenes of formal education—but in the realms beyond school, which of course comprise the much larger part of the actual world. Bazerman notes that for many people “the school experience of writing becomes a general characterization of all writing, and the values and practices of school writing get carried over to non-school situations in ways that are inappropriate” (81–82). Because most writing in school is “framed as assignments” and is “evaluated and corrected in relation to the curriculum,” the motives informing it are often very different than those informing writing activity that is more integrated into one’s personal, professional, social, or cultural life (82). Writing instructors know this phenomenon well and often lament it. But Bazerman suggests that its most serious consequences take place beyond schooling. To those writing situations, people bring the motives they learned from years of school writing, motives that amount to “pursuing correctness, being evaluated, and displaying knowledge and skills” (84). By analyzing school writing’s particularly negative influence on the much wider range of writing situations people encounter throughout their lives, Bazerman makes a larger claim about a writer’s need to understand the profound contingency that surrounds and characterizes any situation that contains, calls for, or is influenced by writing. Without a

reflective understanding of our motives, the unfolding nature of situations, and our changing participation in a dynamic situation, we are at risk of getting locked into a set of motives and stances that are less productive and may not achieve our ends. (86)

Even in the most apparently perfunctory scenes of writing, “it is worth asking ourselves periodically what we really want from a situation, what will meet our needs and carry forward a productive interaction with our audiences and interlocutors” (86).

Such considerations lead into the main topic of chapter seven. Here Bazerman explains that in situations characterized by writing and literacy, it makes more sense to think of rhetoric’s “key strategic action” not as persuasion, but as influence. As Bazerman explains, “when the goal is persuasion, the main vehicle is argument” (87). But the vast majority of writing situations are not overtly argumentative. At best, they are occasions to “change the symbolic landscape so as to change the field upon which others will act” (88). Bazerman notes that “it is easier to tell someone something new than to get them to change something they already believe” (89). At any rate, writing is a cooperative endeavor; it is “carried out within mutually agreed upon activities that do not depend on agonistic struggle.” In these situa-

tions, “the task is building new things and not opposing anything already on the discursive landscape” (90). Toward this end, for Bazerman the “fundamental strategic question is how you can best populate the intertextual landscape with new objects to gain the influence you hope for” (98).

Strategic deliberations manifest in a written text’s form, which is the topic of chapter eight. This chapter also serves as a transition to the final, more didactic chapters of *RLA*, as the advice that dominates that portion of the book begins to emerge here. But first, Bazerman returns to the issue of school writing in order to address the complex question of form in writing. He notes that a regular challenge for students is to learn “to expose and elaborate enough of their thought and experience so that their thought becomes intelligible to the reader” (103). For Bazerman, this question of what to include in a text underscores “paradoxes” that “riddle education as an enterprise,” namely, the fact that we “evaluate external behaviors and products to determine students’ internal development.” Moreover, Bazerman claims that while schooling may draw particular attention to these paradoxes, this “tension between external form and internal thought runs throughout writing.” It is convenient (perhaps necessary) for us to believe, for example, that we extract thoughts from texts, and that these thoughts come from “the mind of the writer.” Yet we know that a text is “an external object made of signs, which can be manipulated and evaluated as a formal construction.” Bazerman notes that while these signs may “index thoughts entertained and projected by the writer and thoughts evoked in readers,” there is no guarantee that these will match (103). As writers, then, the fact that form is the visible thing we can manipulate “tempts us to treat writing on the purely formal level” (104). Yet we use form to make meaning, which is not directly visible or even accessible without some kind of mediation—which is to say, a form.

Bazerman takes up the question of meaning in chapter nine, which he begins by reiterating the categorical, though paradoxical, distinction between meaning and form that he established in the previous chapter. He writes that “a form in itself is a gesture toward a social interaction, but it contains little meaning in itself beyond the gesture” (111). The question of meaning—or, more precisely, of information—brings Bazerman back to genres, each of which “has its appropriate contents of interest and concern to its appropriate audience” at the appropriate time (112). For a writer—for someone wishing to interact or enter into a communicative relationship with others—Bazerman claims that it is important to know not only that genres exist and that they are complex and dynamic, but also specifically that they embody the ontological and epistemological outlooks of those who participate in them. Because the information represented within a

genre “points to objects and events in the world beyond the text” of the genre, what is and what is not pointed to therefore becomes an indication of a given group’s existential relationship to the world (114). This would bear some relation to what Kenneth Burke famously identified as a given terminology’s simultaneous reflection, selection, and deflection of reality (*Language* 45). Furthermore, a group’s methods of gathering, interpreting, and valuing information are more than instrumental. Such methods indicate a fundamental sense of how the world and things in it can be known, as well as what will and will not count as knowledge. As Bazerman points out, training to join a disciplinary or professional group is immersion in that group’s “shared ontologies and epistemologies” (114). It is also, as we know, training in that group’s ways of writing. Because being, knowing, and writing are distinct yet tightly interwoven activities, for Bazerman, questions of ontology and epistemology “are not just philosophic abstractions; they are also practical matters of communication” (116).

On the one hand, we probably already understand the point Bazerman is making, thanks either to our training or our intuition. For that matter, we probably also know that his distinction between form and meaning—as well as the implied and related distinction between writing’s instrumentality and its creativity—is necessarily forced, that it would not stand up to a careful deconstruction. But the point here—for that matter, the point throughout *RLA* and the reason I believe it represents the actual theory of literate action in these two volumes—is that in the study of writing, in the teaching of writing, and in the administering of writing programs, we encounter the seemingly irreducible materiality of people who write. They make writing choices, overdetermined, imbricated, and otherwise bound up though these choices may be.

Part of a writing program administrator’s job is to be alive to the paradoxes of writing that Bazerman details, here and in his prior work. That writing is extraordinarily complex and that it is complex in both the minute and the epic ways Bazerman describes it (as well as in some other ways) stands in obvious contrast to the instrumental approaches to writing that our field has spent decades trying to discredit but that seem to be continuously reborn. How to build that complexity, or at least an appropriate respect for that complexity, into the day-to-day workings of a writing program is, of course, a difficult question. This is mainly due to the fact, as Bazerman has pointed out, that school writing already operates under an unusual set of constraints that set it apart from almost every other kind of writing. School writing formalizes everything, even the paradox between form and meaning. In that sense, perhaps the best a writing program can hope to do is provide the most successful appearance of respect for the

complexity of writing. On the other hand, if Bazerman is right that school writing underscores or aggravates tensions that exist in all writing, then perhaps we should not make too much of the differences between them. Teachers spend a fair amount of time lamenting the supposed artificiality of writing assignments in first year writing courses, technical writing courses, and elsewhere. But these are no more or less contextualized than any other kinds of writing, just differently so.

The book's final chapter contains a shift in focus from a discussion of *how writing works* to one of *how writers work*—or rather, how they don't work. The shift itself is not surprising; such a move makes sense, especially in the advice portion of *RLA*. But its presence is slightly jarring because the centrality of the new subject seems considerably at odds with the peripheral location in which it is placed. Specifically, Bazerman claims that, even though *RLA* to this point has imagined a “fully rational” writer at its conceptual core, in fact “humans aren’t built like that” (147). But if humans are not fully rational, why build a theory of writing around an imaginary writer who is? Bazerman does not address this issue. Instead, he offers “to give an overview of some of the many psychological issues that may play out at various moments” in the process of writing (148).

On the one hand, if we see this as a hinge chapter, a transition from the first to the second book, turning to other matters would be warranted. But as we will see below, the second volume does not necessarily or directly take up these ideas; rather, it returns to the *how writing works* emphasis. Of course, it contains extensive discussions of psychology, but these have to do with learning and development rather than with the often extraordinary internal difficulties that can confront people who must write and revise. Ultimately, there are connections to be made between the psychological issues Bazerman raises in this chapter and the socio-cognitive theory and analysis to which most of *Literate Action* is devoted. We as readers, however, must make them ourselves.

VOLUME 2: THE THEORY

In *A Theory of Literate Action: Literate Action*, Bazerman traces and summarizes the sources that inform *A Rhetoric of Literate Action*'s discussion of writing and writers. Bazerman claims that theories of rhetoric, writing, and literate action drawn from or inspired by the classical tradition—emphasizing the winning of arguments and oral, face-to-face communication—are ill-suited to the forms, modes, and purposes of communication that takes place in contexts created by written literacy. Yet Bazerman does not seek to part ways with rhetoric as such. Rather, he considers his theory to be “within

the rhetorical tradition, but providing a new direction for the way forward.” Furthermore, he notes that this volume is not a comprehensive examination of writing studies research but rather a selection that “aids the exposition of the theory” he is advancing. Finally, while he believes that each volume can stand alone—there is “no one-to-one correspondence of the chapters”—he does note that there are areas of *TLA* offering “fuller expositions” of issues introduced in *RLA* (5). These include issues such as spatial and temporal location, motivated social action, intertextuality, meaning, the temporal experience of texts, writing processes, and, of course, genre.

The first chapter of *TLA* lays groundwork for the chapters to come. Here Bazerman presents writing as a something of a problematic, a complex object of sorts that has a unique history within the history of human development and that presents unique challenges to those who would study and try to understand it. He begins by defining writing as “a skilled, invented, learned, historically emerged social activity,” one that is not “instinctual, not programmed directly into genes and stimuli-released hormones” (7). Writing is also “an invention we are still learning to exploit, learning to carry out new activities with.” For these reasons, “setting about the act of writing requires high focus, intention, and motivation.” We must go out of our way to write. Bazerman notes that in addition to the material challenges writing presents, which of course were far greater in the past than they are for most people today, “cognitive attention must be high to compose messages to those not physically present” (8). For Bazerman this issue of attention and intention is significant. It means that in studying writing, we must understand it as a form of action, or rather, as “a particular form of action” (9).

Ultimately, the goal is to describe writing in its fullest cognitive, social, cultural, historical, temporal, and relational complexity. But specifically, Bazerman wants to “present writing as a form of mediated, learned activity that carries out social activity at a distance.” Moreover, he means to show how writing “works through cognitive means that align writer and reader to common perceived locations of symbolic interchange and then carry out specific interactions within that space.” Bazerman notes that “writing—the making of texts—is a form of work aimed at transforming the thought and behavior of others, and thus coordinating relations in the material world.” Grounding his theory in Marx, he defines work as “all we do to make our lives together as social and material creatures in our social and material circumstances.” The fact that we work to change “the conditions of our life” is itself a product of consciousness, which in turn emerges from “our orientation to our material and social conditions” (9). According to Bazerman, “Marx sees the history of consciousness tied to our changing forms

of labor—that is, to the ways in which we transform nature to make it our own, and make it knowable to humans and part of human life” (10). Consequently, Bazerman sees “rhetoric and writing” as integral to this transforming process because “we form much of consciousness through our participation with others through language, and we learn to make meaning . . . through these culturally developed mediational tools” (10). But each text we create with such tools in turn “comes from a moment in cultural and social history—a history of interactions in pursuit of human life as it is then currently organized, as conceived through the forms of consciousness of writers and readers in their moments” (12). Thus Bazerman establishes that writing mediates between materiality and consciousness, that it is in turn shaped by materiality and consciousness, that it is also shaped by *prior* mediations between materiality and consciousness, and that this process carries into the future.

For Bazerman, genre is the overarching concept with which theorists and researchers can draw adequately complex pictures of the problematic described above. The ensuing chapters of *TLA* work toward rounding out that concept by exploring “the underlying conditions of human cognition, sociality, activity, and communication that pose the need for recognizable and familiar locations for literate interchange” (23). Because genre has been a thoroughly discussed topic and frequently used tool of inquiry in our field for decades, one might reasonably wonder why its story needs to be told one more time. The answer lies in Bazerman’s thoroughness and erudition. He does not present a summary of what genres are or how they work. He is not satisfied merely to bring readers up to speed on the basics of genre as it applies in our field—as some books and articles do—in preparation for an empirical investigation or a theoretical argument to follow. Rather, Bazerman carefully details the sources behind the very concept of genre, sources that combine to give the concept its explanatory force when directed toward writing.

Toward these ends, *TLA*’s second chapter situates the work of Lev Vygotsky at the book’s theoretical and attitudinal (to borrow an adjective from Kenneth Burke) source. Vygotsky serves as an exemplar for Bazerman, not only for his substantial theoretical insights but also for the breadth and depth of his approach to research. Even though Vygotsky directly influences only a handful of the other theorists in *TLA*, Bazerman nonetheless finds his “synthesis of social, psychological, linguistic, and historical concerns” to be a constant source of intellectual inspiration. Because Vygotsky’s thought moves “from the largest issue of society, culture, and history back into the complexity of human selves, thoughts, feeling, and development as we engage with the world,” it happens to mirror

and thereby provide insight into the paradoxes of writing—the complexes of interactions between interiority and exteriority, occurring in and across space and time, that constitute every act of writing. Furthermore, because Vygotsky's theory "respects students' motivated and autonomous selves," it clears crucial conceptual space for agency even as it "recognizes how deeply those selves are saturated with social interactions" (25). For Bazerman, from Vygotsky's earliest work onward, "[Vygotsky] finds a way to link consciousness with the material structures of language and the materiality of the cognizing being" without resorting to an idealist form of consciousness. He achieves this, in part, by refusing to see language as the mere representation of consciousness. Rather, for Vygotsky, language is a behavior that works in relation to consciousness, influencing its development. As Bazerman puts it, Vygotsky realizes that "the mind grows in relation to mediating tools and relations" (30). Thus consciousness is raised, or development occurs, and the agent or writer can be understood not as a fixed and isolated point in an otherwise dynamic scene of writing but rather as an integral part of that scene. In fact, in this model, the writer's agency is endowed precisely by its integration into such a scene, and it is carried out through the mediation of language and other "cognitive tools" (31).

In the third chapter, Bazerman examines "two direct lines of work" that flow from Vygotsky and that develop his concept of activity (43). First, turning to A. N. Leont'ev and then to Yrjo Engeström, Bazerman describes activity's "relation to larger systems of social organization" (43). Second, he traces A. R. Luria's attention to the role of spoken language "for the development of higher mental processes and functions" and Luria's perspective on functional systems, which are the cognitive mechanisms people develop, given "the capacity and tools available," to live their everyday lives (56). But of particular interest here—and in the fourth chapter, which deals with Alfred Schutz's concept of typification—is the extended discussion of genre. Bazerman connects acts of writing to activity systems, describing the former as "reflective participation" in the latter. Referring to Carolyn Miller's often-cited essay, "Genre as Social Action," Bazerman notes that when we learn to write "in the typified forms available" to us, we learn "the very motives and objects" of our time and place. These typified forms—genres—participate in "larger social activity structures" (52). More to the point, because these structures are "discursively constituted and maintained by the circulation of discourse," they are driven forward when individuals invoke the attendant genres. Thus, according to Bazerman, "genre-shaped utterances themselves become then vehicles of the production, reproduction, and evolution of the systems within which genres are meaningful" (53).

In the fourth chapter, Bazerman again discusses genre explicitly, this time in the context of Schutz's typification "and its role in constituting individual consciousness and social order" (66). In addition to his own contributions, Schutz's phenomenological approach to sociology made possible a number of subsequent studies in which "social structure can be seen as concretely enacted in micro-events created by individual agents, acting in typified circumstances" (83). From this work, Bazerman concludes that genre—a key component of which is typification—successfully bridges micro- and macro-sociology, the study of individual and collective social actions. In doing so, genre paves the way for structurationist theories such as those of Anthony Giddens, which "suggest that social structure is constantly remade in every interaction which reenacts ordered relations" (84). The idea of a mutually (if unevenly) transformative relationship between the interiority of the individual and the exteriority of the social is precisely the core of the complexity surrounding writing.

Subsequent chapters of *TLA* continue rounding out the concept of genre by exploring its sources in American pragmatism's impact on social science, in structural and structurationist sociology, in Erving Goffman's study of interactional order and that work's implications for written interaction, in notions of order and orderliness in language, in linguistic theories of utterance and the speech act, and in intertextuality. I do not have enough space to cover all eleven of the book's chapters, but I hope that my discussion up to this point—along with a glance at the book's table of contents—will give readers a sense of what remains. More important, I think, is for readers to get a clear sense of Bazerman's purpose and a representative view of how he goes about it. Once that has been achieved, for both volumes of *Literate Action*, then the next task is to situate the work in some recognizable contexts.

CONCLUSION

Earlier, I noted my own interest in bringing together our field's empirical and humanistic traditions of theoretical inquiry. Such work, I believe, might help us better describe the relations between interiority and exteriority that obtain in, on, and through the body of the writing-subject. But much research in writing studies (or composition studies) has explicitly or implicitly emphasized one or the other. *Literate Action* continues and extends Bazerman's project of arriving at the fullest possible understanding of writing by paying equal attention to interiority and exteriority. Yet important questions remain about the relationship between what Bazerman describes, in his discussion of Leont'ev, as "the inner contents of consciousness" and "the largest social orders of activity" (*TLA* 47). Bazerman

underscores rather than resolves these questions through his meticulous presentation of the extraordinary complexities involved in studying writing. I certainly do not think I can resolve them. But I can call attention to them, and in this instance I can do so in a way that will speak to the work of writing program administration.

In his extraordinary book, *Network*, Clay Spinuzzi places activity theory and actor-network theory (ANT) in “sustained contact” in order to develop the former “in a useful manner” (29). For Spinuzzi, activity theory does a very good job of analyzing change over time, particularly learning and development. But as he sees it, even activity theory’s more recent iterations—which take into account “questions of society and culture” and “issues of power and dominance” by theorizing activity networks—have not yet fully acknowledged the degree of relationality that obtains among human subjects and non-human objects in and across contexts and that, in turn, carries significant implications for our notions of writerly agency (43). For Spinuzzi, this emphasis on relationality, which actor-network theory provides in abundance, is essential to understanding how “knowledge work is strategically and tactically performed in a heavily networked organization” (16).

Spinuzzi’s testing of activity theory reiterates the question of interiority and exteriority that *Literate Action* calls to our attention, and that poses a challenge to any study of writing. On the one hand, we must attend to the irreducible singularity of the writer. On the other hand, we must comprehend the equally irreducible complexity of the contexts (and, therefore, relations) in which writers participate, out of which they emerge, through which they are transformed, and which they transform in turn. But this question poses itself differently if we shift the frame away from the telecommunications company Spinuzzi studies in *Network* or away from any of the non-school examples Bazerman offers in *Literate Action* and on to a writing program. This is because writing programs stand at an intersection of materiality and textuality that calls attention to the thoroughgoing discursiveness—we might even say the metaphorics—that characterizes reports of even the most hard-nosed empirical studies.

In its varied forms, the writing program is the main mechanism by which our field pays institutionally recognized attention to pedagogy, and thereby, to students’ bodies. At the moment, we do this mainly through courses—traditional, online, or blended—that students take in order to fulfill requirements. We do it through courses that comprise majors focusing on writing as such, and that aim to improve students’ knowledge of and skill at writing, broadly or narrowly defined. This attention is built into our disciplinary identity, for better or worse. Mostly for better.

It's better for the study of writing to have at its disposal an immanent notion of materiality, to complement any of its other useful notions of materiality, and writing programs provide this. The inexorable drive, built into language use itself, to render the writer's materiality as "materiality"—as metaphor—is consistently checked by the student body sitting in an instructor's office, sending her an email, submitting an assignment. The drive is checked by the everyday indexicality of a program's organizational writing, the texts that travel to and issue from it: grades, transcripts, placement exams, outcomes statements, program assessments, funding requests, and many others. One could argue that the writing program exists in the sum of relations and interactions that such texts capture, document, or represent. But such an argument, such a description of a writing program that textualized its bodies, would not have captured the program in its fullest complexity. Something would be missing in the description, something having to do with the learning and development with which Spinuzzi and Bazerman are so concerned.

Of course, something always is missing in the description. It is in the nature of descriptions to be incomplete, perspectival. We are reminded of this—or rather, confronted by this—through a writing program's multi-layered and immanent complexity. Despite the fact that a writing program must account for (i.e., describe) itself frequently and to a range of external entities, every WPA knows that no such description could ever tell the whole story. Yet we have the idea, or perhaps a vague notion, that such a whole story exists or is at least thinkable. In this sense, we rehearse the "tension between external form and internal thought" that Bazerman claims "runs throughout writing" itself (*RLA* 103).

It seems to me that a constitutive feature of writing is precisely the idea that a tension between interiority and exteriority runs through writing. The two volumes of *Literate Action* testify to Bazerman's career-long commitment to explore this idea and its implications, and as such, they make for stimulating, thought-provoking, profound, and often compelling reading. They teach us a great deal about a particularly rich perspective on this constitutive feature of writing. They do not tell us everything about this feature of writing, and of course they cannot tell us everything about writing itself. But we know, from our own administrative encounters with materiality and textuality, that those are unrealistic outcomes. Better to assess *Literate Action* at some point in the future, perhaps with a portfolio of the various conversations it will have provoked, conversations that—I hope—will have brought theorists together from across our field's methodological spectrum to work on the impossible but important task of theorizing writing.

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Review

Exploring the Intersection of Literacy and Migration: A Rich Ethnography

Todd Ruecker

Meyers, Susan V. *Del Otro Lado: Literacy and Migration across the US-Mexico Border*. Carbondale: Southern Illinois UP, 2014. Print. 208 pages.

Over the past few decades, as the US Latina/o population has grown, so have Mexican American student populations. Between 2001 and 2011, the Latina/o student population in US schools grew from 17 percent to 24 percent of the overall student population, with Mexican Americans constituting the largest group in this growing population (NCES “Projections”). By 2020, the Latina/o school enrollment is expected to grow 25 percent over 2008 numbers, compared to small decreases for White and African American students (NCES “Enrollment”). With these demographic shifts in mind, WPAs should be aware of the diverse backgrounds of their students as they seek ways to support the success of migrant students across institutions. Susan V. Meyers’s recently published multi-year ethnography, *Del Otro Lado: Literacy and Migration across the US-Mexico Border*, helps contribute to existing literature on the literacy practices of the ever-growing migrant Mexican student populations.

Meyers begins her book with one particular student, Jacqueline, and a story that illustrates the complexity of the transitions Meyers strives to document in her book. Jacqueline has lived on both sides of the border, spending a couple years in a Los Angeles elementary school before returning to her town, Villachuato, the focal Mexican town in the study. While Jacqueline appreciates the social circles in her Mexican hometown, she, like many in the rural community, which is culturally and geographically distant from the country’s central education offices, is becoming increasingly distant from school and the college ambitions she had developed while in

the US. Meyers uses this narrative to illustrate the point that “international migration facilitates formal education—at least for certain family members” (5). She notes that in rural Mexico community members are “deeply invested in choices related to their children’s future,” goals that often include advanced education (5). The complex way that Meyers treats her subjects is evident in the methodological approach she sets forth in this opening chapter. Meyers’s work involved qualitative and archival work in both Mexico and the US. She draws extensively from New Literacy Studies, which recognizes the socioculturally situated nature of literacy practices. She identifies her methodology as critical reflexive ethnography, which engages in some of the practices of traditional research but places informal community contact at the center.

Meyers situates her work in broader political contexts in chapter one. She explores the political connotations of dominant understandings of literacy, which tend to focus on a functional definition in service of larger economic development. She explains how her perspective recognizes how literacy is situated and enacted in specific contexts. This perspective helps Meyers explain how rural areas are often left out when textbooks and curriculum are developed and mandated from the central education agency in Mexico City and how urban students are prioritized in these particular policies. With this orientation in mind, she makes it clear that she is not going to portray the community she profiles as simply uninformed and marginalized, noting, “I argue that local actors often assume a more flexible, rhetorical stance toward literacy: one that reads the implicit lines of institutions’ rules and finds ways of complying, though tentatively and selectively” (37). In chapter two, Meyers explores the challenges facing both herself as a researcher as well as the town of her focus. For instance, she gives a detailed history of Villachuato, beginning with its colonial origin as a hacienda and progressing to the ways that NAFTA negatively impacted its agriculture-based economy. Of particular relevance, she notes, is the impact of extensive migration to the US, a practice which has halved the population of the town. During this discussion, she observes that a number of the migrants have gone to Iowa rather than places like California, where the agricultural labor market is saturated and housing prices continue to rise. This has implications for those working in writing programs around the country because it helps illustrate the fact that migrant populations are found in a wide variety of US contexts.

Chapter three shares a rich description of the Mexican education system that is largely focused on establishing the point that national policies do not always mesh with local ones. This mismatch comes into play when choices are being made, integral choices such as which textbooks to use and which

type of secondary school programs are offered in different communities. For instance, Meyers argues that it would be logical for Villachauto's secondary school to focus on agriculture career training; however, the school focuses on an office preparation program because it is less expensive to run than an agricultural program. Her ultimate argument in this chapter is that "rural communities have been increasingly alienated from the schools that serve them" (83) and that education requires some level of "permanent migration" (87) in the way it can distance rural students from their communities.

Chapter four examines the role literacy played (or did not play) in the lives of six women from the community. The first woman profiled, Esperanza, is the oldest person in the community at one hundred years old. She recalls early courtships conducted through formal letters, explaining how she used literacy to turn down one suitor who tried to pressure her into accepting. Others were not so lucky; one, Patricia, was raped as a teenager, forced into a marriage, and soon became pregnant. Determined to prevent her daughter, Lucia, from facing the same fate, Patricia sought to sponsor her daughter's literacy development despite objections from her husband. Meyers shares stories of women hurt by formal schooling experiences. For example, one woman, Myra, was told she should not write with her left hand and was later hit by a teacher at school for not knowing the complete multiplication tables. Meyers also profiles a woman who spent her life in LA, noting how the schools there "communicated to her that she was not destined for high achievement—and therefore, may as well not even try" (108). Drawing on these different stories, Meyers emphasizes the point that physical access to school is not enough because there are a variety of factors, such as "ideologically and psychologically based" oppression that hindered the pursuit of literacy by these women (101). She explains that the social networks and environment surrounding formal literacy opportunities played an important role in enabling women to successfully pursue language and literacy.

In chapter five, Meyers moves beyond individual profiles to return to a discussion of the Villachuato's orientation towards literacy. Literacy is very much an external force in Villachuato as the town itself does not have a library or bookstore, and its teachers tend to come from other parts of Mexico. Teachers view migration to the US as competing with Mexican education: Men in the town would become disenchanted and dismissive of school when they saw migrants returning from the US with material wealth in the form of things such as nice clothes and big trucks. Educational challenges were exacerbated because the liberal arts curriculum dominant in the schooling system was not directly applicable to the needs of the commu-

nity. To fulfill the associated literacy contract, which promised economic mobility with the greater literacy levels that came with education, students needed to move to an urban area.

In chapter six, Meyers takes us to the major Villachauto receiving community in the US: Marshalltown, Iowa. The major draw for migrants is work at a hog slaughtering plant which employs around 500 or so workers from Villachauto alone. Meyers notes that these migrant populations are sometimes received well by the larger, traditionally homogeneous community; however, there are also moments of tension. In an event celebrating the *El Día De Los Niños* tradition, the library hosted a storyteller reading in both English and Spanish. One Anglo mother complained that the event was not for “everybody” since there was some reading in Spanish and that they speak English in the US, a discourse the librarian countered. Mexican students face similar issues. Meyers explains how the US teachers easily slip into a deficit mindset when looking at Mexican students and the schools they come from, which communicates to Mexican students that their backgrounds are less valuable.

In the concluding chapter, Meyers complicates our understanding of the relationships between small towns, migration, and literacy. Harkening back to a point she made throughout, she situated the citizens of Villachauto as rhetorical in their approach to literacy: “Drawing on the available means at their disposal, they assess the contexts of their lives and make strategic choices about how to position themselves as literacy practitioners” (152). Meyers challenges the Mexican educators’ perception that migration is a threat to literacy, noting how literacy is consistently marginalized on both sides of the border: “Migration, then, is demonized, criminalized, and patently ignored, despite its huge influence on the lives and literacy outcomes of a vast number of young people who are or have been students in our classrooms” (157).

In an era where transnational migration continues to grow despite xenophobic attempts to seal border crossings and impede this process, Meyers’s book gives us a rich understanding of the practices of a particular community and how migration is intimately intertwined with literacy development. While she wisely does not try to be too ambitious in drawing broad implications from her work with one community, Meyers’s work helps WPAs better understand how to approach and explore the literacy practices of migrant students in their programs. Similarly, it is important for WPAs not to make broad assumptions about migrant students but rather to use the knowledge gained from Meyers’s work to think through ways to identify, learn about, and better serve diverse student populations in a writing program.

Meyers's work also builds the field's knowledge of an underexplored area: literacy instruction in rural communities. Drawing from Robert Brooke's work, Meyers makes important critiques about literacy instruction in rural contexts, such as how the literacy contract is complicated when students have to leave their home communities to realize the value of formal education and how textbooks typically fail to reflect the culture of rural communities. It is important for WPAs to recognize their rural student populations, increasing numbers of whom are migrants, and how their backgrounds are often ignored in textbooks, class discussions, and assignment development. In addition to training TAs to work more effectively with migrant writers, it may be necessary to train TAs from urban areas how to work closely and competently with rural students.

While reading *Del Otro Lado*, I appreciated the way Meyers personally engaged with the community and her research, providing a rich description of the focal community and the various contexts in which it was embedded. However, I would have liked to learn more about the participants she interacted with as well as her experiences in actual Villachuato classrooms. Much of the book, perhaps too much, was dedicated to contextualizing the Villachuato community in broader contexts. Because we did not learn enough about the teachers, students, and classrooms in Villachuato, the conclusion chapter similarly left me wanting more discussion regarding the implications for writing professionals working with students from migrant families in US schools and universities.

Meyers's book provides readers with a detailed glimpse into the complexity of migrant literacies and left me with questions for further exploration:

- How many of our students share some similarities to the individuals profiled in Meyers's book? What can WPAs and writing teachers do to learn about the complexity of their migrant students' literacies?
- What does it mean to administer writing programs and teach writing in a constantly changing world that will "continually challenge our assumptions" (161)?
- What role can/should writing professionals play in addressing systemic inequalities that continue across campuses and in larger society?

Meyers's book adds to a larger ongoing discussion of immigrant students in US schools and colleges. To this end, for learning more about immigrant student populations, I recommend the following edited collections: *Generation 1.5 Meets College Composition: Issues in the Teaching of Writing To US-Educated Learners of ESL*, *Generation 1.5 in College Composition: Teaching Academic Writing to US-Educated Learners of ESL*, and *Linguistic Minority*

Students Go to College: Preparation, Access, and Persistence. An important point alluded to in Meyers's work is that many of the students from towns like Villachuato won't make it into college classrooms. With this in mind, engaging in high school-college partnerships such as those described by Enrique Alemán, Jr., Judith C. Pérez-Torres, and Nereida Oliva or helping implement high school curricula like that described by Cruz Medina is important work for WPAs to consider.

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Review

Expanding Horizons: A Second Language Acquisition Approach to Writing Center Practice

Gita DasBender

Rafoth, Ben. *Multilingual Writers and Writing Centers*. Logan: Utah State UP, 2015. Print. 157 pages.

In a somewhat disheartened but clear-eyed response to the widespread perception of Writing Centers as sites of remediation, as “some sort of skills center, a fix-it shop” (435), Stephen North, in his groundbreaking 1984 *College English* article “The Idea of a Writing Center,” plugged into the very pulse of writing center activity and concluded that they are places “whose primary responsibility, whose only reason for being, is to talk to writers” (436). He followed up this bold claim with a reasoned call for “describing this talk: what characterizes it, what effects it has, how it can be enhanced” (434). Today, a rapid rise in the number of culturally and linguistically diverse students entering colleges and universities indicates a parallel increase in services designed to meet their academic needs (Huszar and Bailey 23). But these demographic shifts also tell us that given the vast variation in students’ histories, experiences, and educational needs, this notion of talk as the central function of the center can neither be simple nor uncontroversial. The unplanned, unrehearsed nature of writing center interactions raises obvious questions: How should talk with multilingual students proceed? Within what theoretical framework should this talk be grounded? What tools and strategies do tutors need to become expert talkers?

Ben Rafoth’s latest book, *Multilingual Students and Writing Centers*, attempts to answer these questions and more by taking a close look at the multilingual realities and constraints facing writing center tutors in the US and abroad. More significantly, it fills what appears to be a critical

gap in writing center practices with “theory and research from the field of second-language acquisition, particularly as it relates to one-on-one interaction, academic discourse, and providing corrective feedback” (3). The book represents a natural progression from Rafoth’s widely-read *ESL Writers: A Guide for Writing Center Tutors* (Bruce and Rafoth), an edited volume which dealt with the topic of second language writers in writing centers from a broader perspective and aimed to serve as an all-encompassing handbook for tutors working with students from diverse cultural, linguistic, and literacy backgrounds. One detects a justifiable transition from the expansive section on ESL tutoring sessions in *ESL Writers* to the singular focus on tutor training and preparation by means of the explicit use of second language acquisition concepts and terminology that is evident in *Multilingual Students*. Yet the exigency behind the book is perhaps best understood in the context of the larger, ongoing conversation on corrective feedback and Dana R. Ferris’s observation that “both SLA and L2 writing studies could collaborate to more effectively bridge the gap that currently exists between research and practice” (182). As distinguished university professor and director of the writing center at Indiana University of Pennsylvania, Rafoth takes this imperative seriously and demonstrates that writing center interactions which are informed by second language acquisition approaches culled from the domain of applied linguistics have the potential to transform tutor education and practice.

In chapter one, “The Changing Faces of Writing Centers,” Rafoth tries to accomplish several, related goals. In order to highlight the growing opportunities in education and literacy worldwide, the author presents an impressive array of writing centers that have sprung up in countries such as Turkey, New Zealand, Saudi Arabia, the United Kingdom, Ireland, and Germany. What these snapshots tell us is not only how writing center culture is rapidly spreading in international venues, but also how “these structures have arisen in response to the internationalization of English-language teaching, especially for academic and professional purposes” (23). To illustrate what internationalization—a critical element of writing center experience today—entails, Rafoth cites L2 writing sources that help establish the complex language and literacy background of multilingual writers in US settings and lays out the challenges facing monolingual tutors (33).

Preparing tutors, both multilingual and native English speakers, to be agents of successful exchanges is a daunting task, but it can be quite rewarding if this preparation is built upon a foundation informed by the kinds of approaches offered in chapter two, “Learning from Interactions.” Drawing upon concepts such as *idiomaticity*, *native-speaker privilege*, and *emicity*, Rafoth demonstrates how complex interactions can be handled

effectively if tutors are not just aware of how these concepts are tied to tutor and student expectations but flexible in adapting them. There is also a prolonged emphasis on specific ways that tutors can ensure that writing center conversations are effective by valuing “negotiated interaction,” careful listening, and a “full range of conversational pragmatics” (52) as building blocks for sessions with all types of second language learners. Two of the concepts, *miscommunication* and *incomplete understanding*, highlight the significance of what are generally understood to be negative experiences but can be useful in tackling, if not resolving, knotty language issues, as the example from Jennifer Ritter’s 2002 dissertation shows. At the heart of this chapter is a call for serious tutor training and preparation that provides novice tutors with the background knowledge required to work with beginner as well as advanced level L2 learners. Some of the ways tutor education can be achieved, Rafoth suggests, is by promoting a shared vocabulary, educating tutors on the differences between first and second language acquisition (53) and by developing centers where tutors undergo a “rigorous preparation course, [are] observed, and given regular feedback on their sessions” (57). Here as well as in other chapters, Rafoth reiterates the critical role of writing center directors in tutor development but with scant reference to accompanying strategies, even in brief form, for operationalizing tutor education.

Chapter three, “Academic Writing,” starts out by situating the work of tutors within the challenging context of instruction that occurs in various disciplines and in academia at large. Multilingual students and professionals engaging in academic discourse need guidance in understanding that writing is not only a discipline-based, genre-specific activity but also that it requires attention to and development of particular lexical elements. Further, given the vast range of expectations embedded in writing assignments across disciplines and the inevitable variations and inconsistencies in instruction that come with it, tutors need to develop a broad awareness of the conventions of academic discourse, if not disciplinary peculiarities. Since none of this can come easily for peer tutors, Rafoth suggests that tutors orient L2 writers to the “performance aspect of writing” (88) and help them develop strategies for observing and imitating conventions that would then ease their entry into the unfamiliar territory of academic writing.

In the sections that follow in chapter three, there is an extended emphasis on constructs and concepts that are designed to assist tutors approach the work of multilingual writers with a deeper awareness of the lexical, rhetorical, and strategic choices they can offer in the session. Of particular importance are the concepts of *reformulation* and *exemplification* which are “code glosses” or “metatext markers” (91). Rafoth rightly notes that as these

terms point to writing features directly related to disciplinary conventions, they enable tutors to “link abstract notions like *writing for the discipline, sense of audience, and explains clearly* to discoursal features” (92; emphasis original) in student writing that can be identified and negotiated interactively. Other language-based tutoring strategies that focus on “lexical density,” vocabulary, and use of translation are useful elements of this chapter, even though there are few examples that illustrate the challenges of putting these strategies into practice.

With the ongoing conversation of the efficacy of grammar instruction (Truscott; Ferris; Matsuda) hovering in the background, in chapter four, “Corrective Feedback,” Rafoth positions writing center pedagogy squarely at the center of the controversy by declaring that “ignoring or contravening writers’ requests for feedback on their errors has opened writing centers to criticism for failing to take seriously multilingual writers’ requests for help with language and grammar” (110). While the efficacy of grammar instruction and its linkage to improved writing is questionable, second language learners undoubtedly rely on instructors and tutors for guidance and feedback on language errors. So what kind of expertise should tutors bring to the demands of the intense language-based interactions with this population? Rafoth’s emphasis on “modified conversational strategies” (112) when dealing with multilingual students’ writing encapsulates an approach to error correction that directly addresses students’ concern with grammatical correctness. The chapter succeeds in naming tutoring strategies that replace intuitive responses to error with conscious moves such as noticing and recasting, providing tutors with specific vocabulary for dealing with language errors. The concept of *noticing* is presented as “a cognitive function that requires some type of activation” (114), and when used in conjunction with recasting—tutor articulation of the correct form of an error—these interactive approaches to language and error feedback can help second language students become active agents who have some control over their language learning experience. While these concrete strategies for addressing error correction are helpful additions to the tutoring toolkit, what resonates most in this chapter for writing center tutors and directors alike are the limitations of any of these approaches and the need for meta-discourse on the efficacy of corrective feedback—its benefits and drawbacks—given the likely gap in tutors’ knowledge of language acquisition and language use and the varied needs of multilingual learners.

The final chapter of the book reemphasizes the challenges posed by the increasingly diverse student populations attending writing centers and the critical need for directors and tutors to be adequately informed and trained as practitioners in the field of writing center pedagogy. Among several key

suggestions, and one worthy of consideration by administrators, is the call for the recruitment of more language-conscious tutors who are either themselves linguistically diverse or have experiences in language teaching and learning (123). Of further significance, and perhaps one that reflects a distinct departure from traditional tutoring norms for non-native as well as native speakers, is what Rafoth calls an “intentionally instructive” (126) approach to talk that is tied to “explicit or direct” (131) tutoring practices. Simply stated, Rafoth’s claim here is that, given the exigencies of working with multilingual students, direct, hands-on interaction can be far more effective if tutors are knowledgeable about and confident in engaging with the new concepts and resources that this book makes available to them.

Voices of tutors and vignettes of tutor-student interactions are bright spots in the book that provide glimpses of how sessions with multilingual students, while often messy and unpredictable, are nevertheless positive experiences. More importantly, though, they reveal just how difficult it is to determine the extent to which a session has been successful and the conditions that contribute to that success. As sample snapshots, these vignettes make useful discussion starters in tutor-training workshops or staff meetings. Throughout the book, Rafoth reiterates the role of directors as key agents responsible for guiding and educating tutors, and even though there is little substantial discussion of practical training methods, these reiterations highlight the critical role of writing center directors in tutor success. If tutors “must possess a base of knowledge” (131) specific to multilingual learners that they need to continuously build upon, directors must find ways to provide ongoing staff development opportunities that solidify this base. Finally, although the book’s pragmatic, language-based approaches to tutoring can be easily adapted to current practice, they are presented primarily as heuristics, not solutions, a vital point that directors would do well to keep in mind for tutor training events. In this sense, there is no denying that Rafoth’s book is targeted not just at writing center tutors but directors as well, and the latter will be quite heartened by the ongoing reference to their function as educators who are invited to devise innovative ways of engaging the book’s strategies for tutor development and training, an essential aspect of writing center activity.

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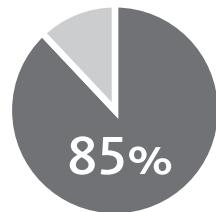
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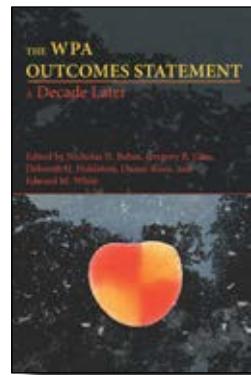


CONGRATULATIONS TO THESE AWARD WINNERS & WPA SCHOLARS!

The WPA Outcomes Statement—A Decade Later

Edited by Nicholas N. Behm, Gregory R. Glau, Deborah H. Holdstein, Duane Roen, and Edward M. White

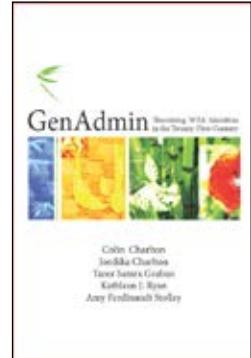
Winner of the Best Book Award, Council of Writing Program Administrators (July, 2015)



GenAdmin: Theorizing WPA Identities in the Twenty-First Century

Colin Charlton, Jonikka Charlton, Tarez Samra Graban, Kathleen J. Ryan, & Amy Ferdinandt Stolley

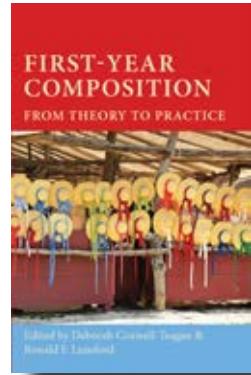
Winner of the Best Book Award, Council of Writing Program Administrators (July, 2014)



Mics, Cameras, Symbolic Action: Audio-Visual Rhetoric for Writing Teachers

Bump Halbritter

Winner of the Distinguished Book Award from Computers and Composition (May, 2014)

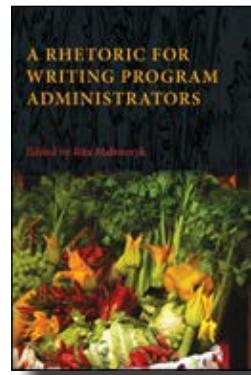


NEW RELEASES

First-Year Composition: From Theory to Practice

Edited by Deborah Coxwell-Teague & Ronald F. Lunsford. 420 pages.

Twelve of the leading theorists in composition studies answer, in their own voices, the key question about what they hope to accomplish in a first-year composition course. Each chapter includes sample syllabi.



A Rhetoric for Writing Program Administrators

Edited by Rita Malenczyk. 471 pages.

Thirty-two contributors delineate the major issues and questions in the field of writing program administration and provide readers new to the field with theoretical lenses through which to view major issues and questions.



Master's-Level Study in Rhetoric and Composition at NC State

NC State's Master of Arts in English offers a concentration in Rhetoric and Composition that provides focused study of writing and literacies, the teaching of writing, and the role of persuasive language in academic disciplines, professional and civic life, and culture at large. The concentration offers a flexible curriculum, a nationally recognized faculty, and an award-winning GTA program.

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Announcing the Eleventh Biennial Thomas Watson Conference on Rhetoric and Composition
University of Louisville, 20-22 October 2016

Mobility Work in Composition: Translation, Migration, Transformation

This conference will explore the relevance of diverse notions of mobilities for the work of rhetoric and composition (as a discipline, form of labor, and profession). We ask how mobility is and might be worked—theorized, activated, researched, experienced, imagined—in our teaching, scholarship, and program administration, with what effects, for whom and on whom. Participants might pursue such questions as:

- What models of mobility might we advance for what kind of work, and why?
- How might we usefully distinguish among the kinds of mobility experienced and exercised by differently positioned actors in our field?
- In what ways might mobility get taken up in practices and rhetorics of activism in engagements across divides of institution, discipline, program, location, and language?
- How might theories of mobility in knowledge, meaning, and identity contribute to or revise our approaches to translation, transfer, and genre and such matters as form, medium, text, and stance?
- How might we better conceive of and engage the movement of knowledge across boundaries of disciplines, programs, institutions, and routes of production, circulation, reception, execution?
- How might the problematics of knowledge mobilization contribute to or help us better grasp composition's perduring history of poor working conditions and low disciplinary status?
- How does mobility challenge dominant conceptions of and commitments to identities of ethnicity, gender, sexuality, race, class, language, ability, nationality, profession, and place? In what ways might we conceive of and pursue, or resist and challenge, mobilizations of identity in and through our composing, teaching, administration, and research practices?
- How do or might digital and other technologies shape and afford forms of mobility in composition, of what kind, for whom, and to what effect?

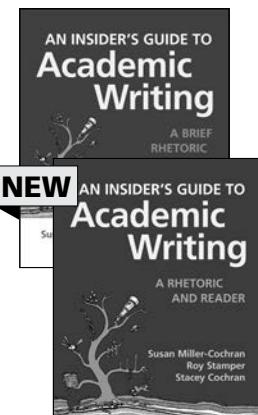
The conference will feature Anis Bawarshi, Christiane Donahue, Eli Goldblatt, Carmen Kynard, Rebecca Lorimer Leonard, John Sceters-Zapico, Jody Shipka, and Scott Wible.

Deadline for submitting proposals is March 1, 2016, with responses sent by May 1, 2016. More information is available at the conference website (<http://www.watsonconference.com>). If you have any questions, please contact Bruce Horner at watson@louisville.edu.



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A revolutionary approach to writing in the disciplines



An Insider's Guide to Academic Writing

Susan Miller-Cochran, University of Arizona
Roy Stampfer, North Carolina State University
Stacey Cochran, University of Arizona

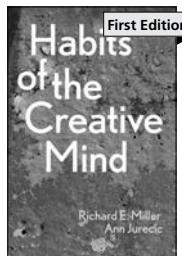
Available as a **Rhetoric** or **Rhetoric and Reader**

An Insider's Guide to Academic Writing prepares students to use a rhetorical lens to adapt to the academic writing tasks of the full range disciplinary discourse communities they will enter. Its proven pedagogy is based on the best practices of a first-year composition program honed over years of teacher training and student success. The text also features unique Insider's video interviews with scholars and peers that can be found in Launchpad Solo for *An Insider's Guide to Academic Writing*.

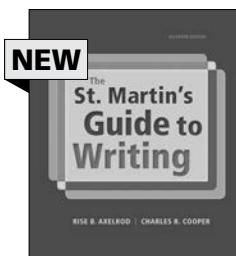
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trust to build a
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A photograph of a black computer monitor sitting on a white desk. The screen displays the homepage of the "Bedford Bits" blog, which features several small profile pictures of people and a section titled "Talk about teaching composition".

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Diana Hacker, late of Prince George's Community College

Stephen A. Bernhardt, University of Delaware

Nancy Sommers, Harvard University

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Extending an invitation to join the Council of Writing Program Administrators

The Council of Writing Program Administrators offers a national network of scholarship and support for leaders of college and university writing programs.

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- A subscription to *WPA: Writing Program Administration*, a semi-annual refereed journal
- Invitations to the annual WPA Summer Workshops and Conferences
- Invitations to submit papers for sessions that WPA sponsors at MLA and CCCC
- Participation in the WPA Research Grant Program, which distributes several awards, ranging from \$1000 to \$2000
- Invitations to the annual WPA breakfast at CCCC and the annual WPA party at MLA
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