



**Sustainable Growth in
Technical and Scientific
Communication
Principles, Personal, and Programmatic**

2007

**Conference Proceedings
34th Annual Meeting of the Council for Programs in
Technical and Scientific Communication
October 11, 2007
East Carolina University
Greenville, NC**



About CPTSC

The Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC) was founded in 1973 to promote programs in technical and scientific communication, promote research in technical and scientific communication, develop opportunities for the exchange of ideas and information concerning programs, research, and career opportunities, assist in the development and evaluation of new programs in technical and scientific communication, if requested, and promote exchange of information between this organization and interested parties.

Annual Conference

CPTSC holds an annual conference featuring roundtable discussions of position papers submitted by members. The proceedings include the position papers. Authors have the option of developing their papers after the meeting into more detailed versions.

Program Reviews

CPTSC offers program reviews. The reviews involve intensive self-study, as well as site visits by external reviewers. Information is available at the CPTSC website.

Website

CPTSC maintains a Web site at: <http://www.cptsc.org>. This site includes the constitution, information on conferences and membership, a forum for discussion of distance education, and other organizational and program information.

Listserv: CPTSC's listserv is CPTSC-L. To subscribe, send an email message to <https://lists.unomaha.edu/mailman/listinfo/cptsc>. Complete the online form as directed.

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About the 34th Annual Conference

The 34th Annual conference was held at East Carolina University, Greenville, North Carolina.

Acknowledgements

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Table of Contents

About CPTSC	2
Acknowledgements	3
Conference Schedule.....	10–11

Keynote Speaker

Growth and Community:

A Few Thoughts on the Organics of Professional Communication	12
---	-----------

Dale Sullivan, *North Dakota State University*

Plenary Panel

Tilling the Field for Healthy Growth.....	20–27
--	--------------

Plenary Session Introduction: Molly Johnson

Digging Around the Garden:

Change as Progression, Disruption, and Tool.....	20
---	-----------

Brent Faber, *North Carolina State University*

Nurturing Health Communication Programs	22
--	-----------

Barbara Heifferon, *Rochester Institute of Technology*

Community Plots:

Field-based Learning Through Internships and Outreach	22
--	-----------

Brent Henze, *East Carolina University*

Cultivating Cross-disciplinary Symbiosis.....	25
--	-----------

Tyanna Herrington, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Fruits of our Labor: CPTSC-Funded Research Reports.....	27–39
--	--------------

Moderator: Kathryn Northcut, *University of Missouri-Rolla*

Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Scientific and Technical Communication:

Designing International Curricula	27
--	-----------

Laurence José, *Michigan Technological University*

Ann Brady, *Michigan Technological University*

The Role of Historical Studies in Technical Communication Curricula:

A Report of Survey Results	30
---	-----------

Edward A. Malone, *Missouri University of Science and Technology*

Tara E. Bryan, *Missouri University of Science and Technology*

Towards a Lexicon for Diversity in Technical and Scientific Communication Programs:

Strengthening the Message in Academic Programs and Professional Organizations	37
--	-----------

Elizabeth Avery Gomez, *New Jersey Institute of Technology*

Assessment I: Multi-Modal Program Review	39–40
<i>Moderator: Nancy Allen, Eastern Michigan University</i>	
Multimodal Program Review and Assessment	39
<i>Stan Dicks, North Carolina State University</i>	
<i>Susan Katz, North Carolina State University</i>	
<i>Jason Swarts, North Carolina State University</i>	
Seasons: Program Growth and Change	40–44
<i>Moderator: Michael S. Martin, University of Wisconsin-Stout</i>	
Successfully Growing a TC Program: Building Alliances and Negotiating Departmental Politics.....	40
<i>Rick Mott, Eastern Kentucky University</i>	
No New Funding Needed: Accountability Issues in Growing from an Option to a Major	41
<i>Teena A. M. Carnegie, Eastern Washington University</i>	
Adding New PhD Programs to a Growing Field.....	42
<i>Karen M. Kuralt, University of Arkansas at Little Rock</i>	
<i>George H. Jensen, University of Arkansas at Little Rock</i>	
Developing a Student-base for Certificate and Master’s TC Programs	43
<i>Michael S. Martin, University of Wisconsin-Stout</i>	
Pruning: Shaping Writers and Writing	44–49
<i>Moderator: Natalia Matveeva, University of Houston-Downtown</i>	
Preparing Students to Manage Technical Communication Projects in a Global Economy	43
<i>Stevens Amidon, Indiana University–Purdue University Fort Wayne</i>	
Technology in Technical Editing Courses	47
<i>Michael Albers, East Carolina University</i>	
Developing a Technical Writing Style Workshop for Undergraduate Students.....	48
<i>Dave Yeats, Auburn University</i>	
Administrators’ Issues and Narratives	50–54
<i>Moderator: Margaret Hundleby, University of Toronto</i>	
Program Sustainability and Faculty Sabbaticals: Challenges for Lone Ranger Program Administrators.....	50
<i>David Alan Sapp, Fairfield University</i>	

Personal Journey of an Untenured Technical Communication Program Administrator in a Tenure Track Position: Lessons Learned	51
<i>Wanda L. Worley, Purdue School of Engineering & Technology, IUPUI</i>	
Proposed CPTSC Publications	54–58
<i>Moderator: Karla Saari Kitalong, University of Central Florida</i>	
Beyond the Water Cooler: Proposing a Scholarly Journal that Emphasizes Programmatic Issues in Technical and Scientific Communication	54
<i>Tracy Bridgeford, University of Nebraska at Omaha</i>	
<i>Bill Williamson, Saginaw Valley State University</i>	
<i>Karla Saari Kitalong, University of Central Florida</i>	
Transmitting Administrative Knowledge for Sustainable Growth.....	58
<i>Alice P. Philbin, James Madison University</i>	
Assessment II: Measuring Yield	59–65
<i>Moderator: Elizabeth Pass, James Madison University</i>	
Assessing Progress in Technical and Scientific Communication Programs: Do We Need National Guidelines for Student-based Outcomes?	59
<i>Elizabeth Pass, James Madison University</i>	
Assessment Challenges for an Evolving Technical Communication Program.....	60
<i>Kay Harley, Saginaw Valley State University</i>	
Quantifying Quality and Core Competency Skills.....	62
<i>Don Cunningham, Radford University</i>	
Crossing Borders and Going Global.....	65–67
<i>Moderator: Alexis Poe Davis, East Carolina University</i>	
Resist Fallouts in International Technical Communication Development and Realize Sustainable Growth in the Global Economy	65
<i>Han Yu, Kansas State University</i>	
How Has Offshoring Affected Technical Communication Departments?.....	66
<i>Kevin LaGrandeur, New York Institute of Technology</i>	
Pollination: Ideas that Travel Well I.....	69–73
<i>Moderator: Steve Benninghoff, Eastern Michigan University</i>	
Building Programs Around Ideas.....	69
<i>Stewart Whittemore, Michigan State University</i>	
<i>Jeffrey T. Grabill, Michigan State University</i>	
Sustainable Development: With Great Power comes Great Responsibility?	71
<i>Steve Benninghoff, Eastern Michigan University</i>	

Bridging the Gap to Other Disciplines: How Will Technical Communicators Negotiate the Development of Responsible Programs for Writing in the Disciplines?.....	72
<i>Darla-Jean Weatherford, Texas A&M University</i>	
Language Awareness.....	73–77
<i>Moderator: David Alan Sapp, Fairfield University</i>	
Building Language Awareness in the Technical Communication Curriculum	73
<i>Bruce Maylath, North Dakota State University</i>	
Using Social Presence as a Curricular Strategy: Motivating Learners in the Technical Communication Curriculum.....	73
<i>Aimee Whiteside, University of Minnesota</i>	
Heightening Language Awareness: Controlled Language in Technical Communication Curricula	76
<i>Matthew Livesey, University of Wisconsin-Stout</i>	
Our Work/Our World: The Role of Technical Communication in Social Justice	77–86
<i>Moderator: Sherry Southard, East Carolina University</i>	
Our Work/Our World: The Role of Technical Communication in Social Justice	77
<i>Jen Osborne, St. Philip's College</i>	
<i>Ritu Raju, Houston Community College</i>	
<i>Emil Towner, Texas Tech University</i>	
Apologia: Exploring How Wrongs are Discussed and Reconciled	81
<i>Emil B. Towner, Texas Tech University</i>	
Workplace Ties	86–88
<i>Moderator: Pamela Brewer, Appalachian State University, Texas Tech University</i>	
Sustainable Growth in Practitioner Relations: A Discussion of Survey Results	86
<i>Thomas Barker, Texas Tech University</i>	
<i>Sally Henschel, Texas Tech University</i>	
Making a Program Work: Integrating Workforce Communication Instruction into Capstone Design	87
<i>Judith Shaul Norback, Georgia Institute of Technology</i>	
Nurturing Seedlings	88–90
<i>Moderator: Tracy Bridgeford, University of Nebraska at Omaha</i>	
Rhetoric of Science and the First-Year Composition Classroom.....	88
<i>Tim Giles, Georgia Southern University</i>	

Growing the Service Course: Anticipating Problems, Promise in the Technical Communication “Mini-Program”	89
<i>Michael Knieval, University of Wyoming</i>	
Passion, Identity and Skill-set: What Can Digital Rhetoric do for a Developmental Writing Program?.....	91
<i>Ben Xie, Paine College</i>	
<i>Ellen White-Khazrai, Paine College</i>	
Pollination: Ideas that Travel Well II	91–97
<i>Moderator: Karl Stolley, Illinois Institute of Technology</i>	
Sustainable Curriculum in Technical Communication	92
<i>Tiffany Craft Portewig, Auburn University</i>	
The University as a Knowledge Entrepreneur and the Role of Technical Communication.....	92
<i>Marian G. Stone, Arizona State University Polytechnic</i>	
Curricular Implementations of Sustainable Web Production.....	94
<i>Karl Stolley, Illinois Institute of Technology</i>	
Enhancing a Technical and Business Writing Program Through Distinct Courses.....	95
<i>Cynthia McPherson, University of Alabama/Huntsville Texas Tech University</i>	
Reshaping Careers for Teaching and Administration in Technical and Scientific Communication.....	97–96
<i>Moderator: Rebecca E. Burnett, Georgia Institute of Technology</i>	
Reshaping Careers for Teaching and Administration in Technical and Scientific Communication	97
<i>Rebecca E. Burnett, Georgia Institute of Technology</i>	
<i>Andrew Cooper, Georgia Institute of Technology</i>	
<i>Karen Head, Georgia Institute of Technology</i>	
Principles of Sustainability for Professional Writing Programs from an Ecological Perspective	98–105
<i>Moderator: Donna Kain, East Carolina University</i>	
An Ecological View of Professional Writing Programs.....	98
<i>Douglas Eyman, George Mason University</i>	
Posthumanism as a Sustainable Model: Ecology, Institutional, and Disciplinary Change	100
<i>Byron Hawk, George Mason University</i>	
Designing an MA/PhD Research Methods Course for Mutualism	103
<i>Susan Lawrence, George Mason University</i>	

Diversity and Representation	105–109
<i>Moderator: Gerald Savage, Illinois State University</i>	
“2+2”=Growth:	
Lessons Learned from an International Dual Degree Program.....	105
<i>Mark Nunes, Southern Polytechnic State University</i>	
Taking Action for Diversity in Technical Communication Programs	107
<i>Gerald Savage, Illinois State University</i>	
The Graduate Student on the Search Committee: Contributions and Cautions.....	108
<i>Christian F. Casper, North Carolina State University</i>	
Topiary Trees: Shaping Programs and People	109–112
<i>Moderator: Mark Hannah, Purdue University</i>	
Growing into our Collaboration with Engineering Design:	
Sharing Vocabularies, Values and Processes	109
<i>Alan C.W. Chong, University of Toronto</i>	
Semester @ SEA: Student Engagement and Activism	110
<i>Michael J. Salvo, Purdue University</i>	
<i>Jennifer Bay, Purdue University</i>	
Virtual Case Environments (VCEs):	
Implications for a Self-Sustaining, Project-Oriented Curriculum.....	113
<i>David Fisher, University of Arkansas at Little Rock</i>	
<i>Cindy Nahrwold, University of Arkansas at Little Rock</i>	
Poster Presentation	114–118
<i>Moderators: Molly Johnson, University of Houston–Downtown</i>	
<i>Joe Strange, University of Houston–Downtown</i>	
Breaking the Luddite: An EQ Strategy for Reducing Resistance to Change	114
<i>Mialisa Moline, University of Wisconsin–River Falls</i>	
Fluid Relations: Assessing Programs in Context.....	117
<i>Margaret N. Hundleby, University of Toronto</i>	
Infusing the Study of Ethics into Graduate Programs.....	117
<i>Joe Strange, University of Houston Downtown</i>	
<i>Molly Johnson, University of Houston Downtown</i>	
Officer List	
Member List	

Conference Schedule

Thursday, October 11

4:00 pm–7:00 pm	Check-in/Registration	Bate Building Lobby near 1031, ECU
5:30 pm–7:00 pm	Reception	Bate Building Lobby Alcove, ECU
7:00 pm–8:30 pm	Awards & Keynote Address Growth and Community: A Few Thoughts on the Organics of Professional Communication Dale Sullivan, North Dakota State University	Bate Building, 1031, ECU

Friday, October 12

7:30 am–10:00 am	Check-in/Registration	Bate Building Lobby near 1031, ECU
7:30 am–8:30 am	Light Breakfast/Coffee/Tea	Bate Lobby 1032
7:30 am–5:00 pm	Computer Lab/Hospitality Suite	Bate 2005
8:30 am–10:00 am	Plenary Panel Tilling the Field for Healthy Growth Plenary Session Introduction: Molly Johnson <i>Brent Faber</i> <i>North Carolina State University</i> <i>Jeff Grabill</i> <i>Michigan State University</i> <i>Barbara Heifferon</i> <i>Rochester Institute of Technology</i> <i>Brent Henze</i> <i>East Carolina University</i> <i>Tyanna Herrington,</i> <i>Georgia Institute of Technology</i>	Bate 1032
10:00 am–5:00 pm	Poster Displays	Bate 2019
10:00 am–5:00 pm	Vendor Exhibits	Bate Hallway, 2 nd floor, outside 2005
10:00 am–10:15 am	Break	Bate 2005
10:15 am–11:15 am	Concurrent Sessions I	Bate 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021
11:15 am–11:30 am	Break	Bate 2005

11:30 am–12:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions II	Bate 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021
12:30 pm–2:15 pm	Lunch	Downtown or Campus
2:30 pm–3:30 pm	Concurrent Sessions III	Bate 2016, 2017, 2018, 2020, 2021
3:30 pm–3:45 pm	Break	Bate 2005
3:45 pm–4:45 pm	Concurrent Session IV & Poster Presentations	Bate 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019
5:00 pm–6:00 pm	Administrators' Roundtable	Mendenhall Student Center Great Rooms 1 & 2, 2 nd floor
6:30 pm–7:30 pm	Cocktail Hour	City Hotel & Bistro, Ballroom
7:30 pm	Banquet Dinner	City Hotel & Bistro, Ballroom

Saturday, October 13

9:00 am	Business Meeting	City Hotel & Bistro
11:30 am	Afternoon Excursion	Departs City Hotel & Bistro

Keynote Address

Growth and Community:

A Few Thoughts on the Organics of Professional Communication

Dale Sullivan, *North Dakota State University*

Keywords: sociopolitical action, sustainability, rhetoric, program, pedagogy, professional

It is a treat to be in Greenville, North Carolina, to see the beauty of the region, to hear local accents, to taste local foods. I want to thank Molly and Kathryn for inviting me to share my thoughts on scientific and technical communication program administration. This is a great honor for me, coming as it does 24 years after I first attended CPTSC in Lincoln, Nebraska. At that time, I had been teaching technical communication at a two-year college in Salina, Kansas, for two years and had dreams of developing an associate degree in technical writing. That was my first encounter with the wonderfully supportive people in this organization. Down through the years, I have never found a more supporting and helpful professional organization despite my interests in a wide range of rhetorical studies represented by groups as diverse as AARST, RSA, SBL, CCCC, and NCA.

Let me say before I proceed that this paper is the result of many days' musings during my morning walks to school and an informal discussion at lunch one day a couple weeks ago, when Andrew Mara, Bruce Maylath, and I lingered in our department's seminar room after others had excused themselves to teach class or attend meetings. I shared an undeveloped early outline of this talk, and they added much to the shaping of this paper. As I continued to work on the paper, I often thought of Tom Huckin's keynote address in 2002, when CPTSC met in Logan, Utah. In that talk Tom drew our attention to rapidly expanding globalism and to our sociopolitical responsibilities. He focused on our "lack of attention to broader

sociopolitical issues." He said, and I quote, "Social philosophers such as Andrew Feenberg and Langdon Winner (1986) have long argued that technology is not an autonomous force but invariably has sociopolitical underpinnings and sociopolitical consequences. Technical communication should strive to take this fact into account." My talk this evening returns to Tom's call for sociopolitical action, but I focus on the local rather than on the global. I believe what I have to say this evening has programmatic, pedagogical, and professional implications.

The first word in the conference theme this year—sustainable—has emerged as my theme. As I thought about this word, two narratives came to mind: the narrative of rhetoric programs in 20th Century America and the narrative of the sustainable agriculture movement.

Consider rhetoric programs in the 20th Century. In the early 20th Century, shortly after speech teachers walked out of the MLA conference in 1914, several rhetoric scholars—Hoyt Hudson among them—joined the faculty at Cornell. As Edward P. J. Corbett has documented, the Cornell School of Rhetoric became the major center for rhetorical studies in the United States, drawing students from all over the country and sending them back out. The students were dispersed like seeds to many places. As that generation of scholars retired, a new center for rhetorical studies emerged at the University of Wisconsin in Madison, when people like Edwin Black joined the faculty. Students from Madison and other programs later formed a new leading program in rhetoric at Northwestern as the

program at Wisconsin withered; and now many leading rhetoricians (John Angus Campbell, Michael Leff) are being drawn to the rhetoric program at Memphis. Rhetoric, it seems, sustains itself by moving. It survives today as an annual sprung up from seeds spread by the wind.

Is Scientific and Technical Communication (STC) a parallel case or not? Is our field an annual or a perennial? Can we expect STC programs to survive longer than a single generation in a particular location?

The answer to these questions should influence our planning as program administrators. If scientific and technical communication programs are annuals destined to grow rapidly, disperse seeds, and die, then we should design our local programs so they can draw as much nourishment from their local and temporal situations as possible without being overly concerned about what the next generation at our institutions will look like. Our commitment is to the seeds, not to our rootedness in the soil that supports us temporarily. On the other hand, if our programs are perennials, then we should design programs with the health of the local soil in mind.

Wes Jackson (1996), founder of the Land Institute outside Salina, KS, has spent many years searching for ways to combine the robustness of an annual with the stability of a perennial. Annuals draw nutrients from the soil, investing their energy in seed production; perennials draw nutrients from the soil but invest their energy in building root structures that protect and enrich the soil. The last time I heard an update on his project, which admittedly was several years ago, he was optimistic about buffalo grass, a short, hearty, and matted grass, almost sage in color, that covered much of the high plains before the sodbusters came in. It was no small task to break the sod where buffalo grass had created dense and deep root

systems. This grass produces a seed head that rises only a few inches above the matted grass, but that seed head (or burr as it is called) is unusually full for a perennial. Somehow buffalo grass combines the characteristics of perennials and annuals, investing energy in its root system and in its seed production.

Although my talk this evening focuses on root systems of perennials, I believe scientific and technical communications are perennials, or at least have the potential to be perennials, that not only build strong root systems, but also, like buffalo grass, produce abundant seeds. So please, do not think I am against seed production or the strategies that have in the past been effective in producing abundant seed growth.

One way to assure that our genes are passed on is to adopt the annual model, concentrating on seed production, taking for granted that programs in scientific and technical communication will follow the pattern of rhetoric. If programs are destined to rise and fall in a generation or two then we should concentrate on building conditions that will allow faculty to publish profusely and concentrate on replicating themselves in graduate students who, by their growing numbers, will guarantee that our specialization will continue. It seems to me that, if STC programs are annuals, they would be well served to concentrate on building global connections, cultivating specializations in emerging technologies, and developing instrumental knowledge. The global is infinitely transferable, specialization guarantees a niche in the ecology of academic disciplines, and instrumental knowledge is adaptable to a myriad of work sites in the world of practitioners. All of these efforts are only marginally concerned with the local environment: they draw what they need from it but they concentrate on the transferable and specialized.

Under the perennial model, conversely, we should build conditions that encourage faculty to become involved locally. In contrast to the annual paradigm that emphasizes globalization, specialization, and instrumentalism, the perennial paradigm emphasizes the local, the diverse, and the political.

In the remainder of this paper, I will explore what tactical scientific and technical communication might look like if we were to concentrate on the local, the diverse, and the political. I will do this by drawing an analogy between our field and sustainable agriculture.

When I left Michigan Tech nearly six years ago to go to the University of Minnesota, I decided I needed to study something local, to turn my research toward topics relevant to my new position as head of the rhetoric department in the College of Agriculture, Food, and Environmental Studies. I was naïve. Little did I know agriculture and food policy has become one of the most hotly contested battlefields in national and international politics. In the last five years—I left the University of Minnesota and moved to North Dakota State University four years ago—my focus on food and agriculture issues as they are played out in the upper Midwest has led me to become much more deeply informed about the struggles of the sustainable agriculture movement as local, usually small, farmers struggle to keep their crops free from genetic and chemical contamination, as they seek ways to build local food networks, as they hand on ancient practices of seed saving and diversity on the farm. From this local community of activists, who fight to survive against seemingly insurmountable obstacles thrown up by multinational companies who have taken control of distribution networks and research in our land-grant universities, I have learned to appreciate the importance of the local, of the diverse, and of the political.

Let us consider what it means to focus on the local. I first became sensitized to a focus on the local while at Michigan Tech. There I watched Craig Waddell get involved in local issues associated with water quality in the Great Lakes. There I watched Elizabeth Flynn's late husband, John, engage in a pitched rhetorical battle with the public relations spokesman for James River Paper Corporation, a corporation that wanted to build a paper mill on the shores of Lake Superior. There I began to see books like Wes Jackson's *Becoming Native to This Place* (1996), assigned by Jennifer Slack, in the bookstore and in students' hands.

Watching these people become engaged in the local, and beginning to read some of the books they assigned, I gradually came to understand the importance of being committed to the local. Consider some of what critics of global industrialization have said. In *Becoming Native to This Place*, Wes Jackson claimed that the global village has turned out to be more of a playground than a village. He laments the decline of the oral tradition, the face-to-face engagement that comes from people being committed to one another in local settings. Because the global village/playground has displaced local engagement, we hardly notice that communities are being destroyed (p. 88). Stephen Doheny-Farina (1996) made a similar argument about virtual communities in *The Wired Neighborhood*. He ended the book with these words: "The net is a seductive electronic specter. Take part in it not to connect to the world but to connect to your city, your town, your neighborhood" (p. 188). And Gary Snyder (2004) said, "A place on earth is a mosaic within larger mosaics—the land is all small places" (p. 30).

These calls to return to the local have their roots in reaction against the industrial revolution. As Langdon Winner pointed out, Thomas Carlyle's "Signs of the Times" expressed alarm at the disruptions caused

by industrialization to traditional life as early as 1829 (p. 67). William Morris and others in the arts and craft movement continued the call for people to return to the local, to find alternative means of production outside the industrialized world. These calls for a return to the local, similar to the back-to-land movement of the early 1970s and reflected in the *Whole Earth Catalogue*, seem to become more abundant as spaces for alternative livelihoods are destroyed by the expanding global economy. Gustavo Terán (2005) said that single, universal solutions (here I read in “industrialized globalization”) foreclose “the possibility of finding alternative paths to the good life.” All such universal solutions, he said, cannot avoid becoming “colonizing events” (p. 71). As an alternative to education designed to prepare students to enter the global economy, Terán advocated “vernacular education,” which consists of passing on intergenerational knowledge through storytelling, permitting local communities to construct their grassroots narrative and to determine what knowledge and practice they want to assimilate into their culture.

Although these calls to resist the dominant economic and industrial structure may seem idealistic, there is still opportunity to act. As the distributivist, G.K. Chesterton (1925/2001), once put it, “I have finally decided to approach the social solution in this fashion: to point out first that the monopolist momentum is not irresistible; that even here and now much could be done to modify it, much by anybody, almost everything by everybody.”

Just what that “much by anybody” or that “everything by everybody” might turn out to be depends on our localities. I can speak only of what I see going on in my community. Fargo-Moorhead is a community with a rapidly growing population of approximately 180,000 people. This region was originally settled largely by Scandinavians, especially

Norwegians. As we all know from Garrison Keilor’s *Prairie Home Companion*, these people are part of an agrarian culture, mostly Lutheran and Catholic. Fargo-Moorhead is home to the two largest Lutheran churches in the world and dozens of smaller ones. Contrary to stereotypes, these Lutherans are not entirely self-absorbed, hot-dish enthusiasts. Lutheran Social Services has a regional headquarters in the city and sponsor refugees regularly, so the metropolitan area has become home to people from around the world. Combined with NDSU’s growing international student population, these displaced people are in need of literacy education and social services as they make Fargo-Moorhead their home. Several literacy initiatives have sprung up in the area to help in the work, but these groups are not yet integrated into a coalition. Two faculty members in English, Amy Rupiper Taggart and Andrew Mara, are working with these literacy groups, hosting summits and initiating cooperative educational programs that connect NDSU students with local elementary schools and service agencies in an attempt to promote literacy and to build a coalition of literacy projects. These projects and the interaction that come about because of them are part of what it means to be local in Fargo, North Dakota, and Moorhead, Minnesota. These are among the indigenous plants in our local garden.

Next, let us consider what it means to be diverse? Diversity is, of course, one of the god terms in contemporary society, usually associated with issues of race, culture, and gender. I would like to think about the word in other contexts for a moment. Consider our lawn in south Fargo. Our front yard has somehow flourished as a monoculture. Although we have never applied chemicals to it, the grass holds sway—there is no room for an alien culture to invade. There are no dandelions, no crabgrass, no pigweed. The back yard, on

the other hand, is a riot of diversity. Once again we have resisted the temptation to use chemicals to eradicate difference. As a result, in this environment, dandelions rejoice in their display of color and profusion of seed heads, snow on the mountain invades unoccupied territory, clovers of various kinds show up in colonies of their own, and other unidentified plants shoulder their way in. The back yard's ragged appearance is a source of embarrassment to my wife and me as we sit in the Adirondack chairs sipping our evening refreshment until we remember to view it through the appropriate terministic screen. When we adopt the terms of monoculture and diversity, the contrast between the profusion and difference in the back yard and the monoculture in the front yard is no longer a problem.

The problem of monoculture versus diversity manifests itself on a much larger and more serious scale in the world of agriculture. In *Dinner at the New Gene Cafe*, Bill Lambrecht (1991) documented the disastrous effects of the popularly touted "green revolution" in India, where high-input farming techniques, typical of the United States, were introduced in the 1960s, markedly increasing production but also eradicating volunteer plants (we call them weeds) that were a source of vitamin A. These plants once flourished in and around the fields and were part of the daily diet. The new system, although it produced more food, encumbered farmers with unmanageable debt. The results of the green revolution are a mixed bag: an abundance of food, increased vitamin-A-deficiency-induced blindness, rapidly increasing suicide rates among farmers.

In the United States, where the effects of scientific agriculture have been less noticeable, there have been, nonetheless, dramatic changes in crops, food, and local agrarian culture. The wide adoption of Roundup Ready crops has led to the eradication of plant diversity. Between 70

and 85% of cropland supporting soybeans, corn, and cotton is sprayed with Roundup, an herbicide that kills plants not engineered to resist it, thus reducing genetic diversity and destroying habitat friendly to plants like milkweed, the mainstay of Monarch butterflies. The drive toward monoculture, toward highly specialized plant varieties, has led to large profits for companies like Monsanto and to large profitable corporate farms, but it also threatens to eradicate family and organic farms. These are only a few of the stories that demonstrate the dangers of monoculture. Time does not permit me to recount Michael Pollan's (2002) history of the apple as humans tamed its wildness at the cost of its genetic diversity, nor to remember the disaster of monoculture that produced the potato famine in Ireland, reducing its population by half in the mid 1800s.

What might it mean if we think of resisting the drive toward monoculture and of cultivating diversity in the context of program and professional development? First, I think it is necessary for us to recognize that our diversity is being weeded out as we attempt to market ourselves as specialists who can fit niches in the technological society. Our desire to guarantee that we and students will not be irrelevant, or worse yet, unemployable, has produced a preoccupation with our adopting strategies that add value to the corporate world's bottom line, and we increasingly do that by fashioning ourselves as specialists in emerging technology and user experience of emerging technology. Recognizing these developments as both useful and threatening, we can begin to put limits on just how far we go in that direction and cultivate other areas integral to scientific and technical communication as a discipline in the humanities. Corporate culture does not pay graduates because they know the history of technical and scientific discourses, or because they understand philosophical dimensions of

science and technology, or because they have a commitment to ethical and political action related to technical and scientific issues. This knowledge seldom contributes to the bottom line, but as Langdon Winner argues, we should not constrict our arguments to the *topoi* employed by the employers: there is more to science and technology than mere efficiency and profit.

A second factor that erodes diversity is our desire to reproduce ourselves both in the hires we make and in the students we teach. As a rhetorical critic, I find myself wanting to hire more rhetorical critics. We want to gather about us likeminded people instead of learning to appreciate methods and perspectives that differ from our own but enrich students. How many times have we quickly dismissed the work of others simply because we do not understand it? The temptation is to call their work shallow or uniformed. In matters of hiring and in educating graduate students, it would seem that diversity is achieved through cultivating generalists and by respecting colleague interests even when they seem strange or perhaps insubstantial to us.

A couple months ago, I found myself in a conversation with a winemaker. I asked whether or not the soil and climate of North Dakota permits the growing of quality grapes. She explained that they do as long as you start with a local plant for root stock. Local wild grapes are adapted to the soils and the climate, but do not produce the kinds of grapes we make wine from. Instead, she said, we graft in branches from the grapes that produce wine. It seems to me that there are lessons about hiring in the story.

Placing emphasis on the local and on diversity will lead us to political and ethical engagement. It is impossible to concentrate on the local, to make a difference in our home polis, unless we are willing to engage in political activism. Likewise, it is impossible to engage in ethical political activism if we retreat from oral culture and

from face-to-face involvement. Abandoning the oral and the face of others by retreating to written discourse and computer-mediated communication produces alienation, suspicion, desensitization. Indeed it is impossible to recognize the ethical path unless we engage in face-to-face encounters. Philosophers and theologians of ethics in the first half of the Twentieth Century—Martin Buber, Immanuel Levinas, Dietrich Bonhoeffer—taught us the need for this encounter. As Dietrich Bonhoeffer (1996) put it, the ethical agent referred to as “I” springs into being only in the presence of the face of the other (p. 51). Only by fully coming to recognize the humanity of others through face-to-face encounters are we able to respond to the situation ethically and take political action responsibly. Only in the face of the other is response-ability, the ability to respond, possible.

Science and technology are perhaps the two strongest influences on our culture in the present world. The family, the church, the school, even the government are engaged in little more than interpreting changes brought about by science and technology and learning to adapt to these changes. As Langdon Winner demonstrated, the changes in these fields shape our culture and yet we do not engage in political deliberation about them. Decisions about science and technology are seldom public or political decisions. Most often decisions that change our culture indirectly through technical and scientific advancement are made in sequestered and private places: the laboratory, the research and development lab, the boardroom. We pride ourselves in being the people who shape the programs that teach scientific and technical communication. I would like to challenge us to widen our vision, to broaden our scope.

Michele de Certeau (1984) discussed the difference between strategic action of those who occupy territory and tactics of

those subjected to that control. Through strategic action, the colonizers attempt to secure territory, protect boundaries, and establish order within the boundaries. Tactics are attempts used by those subjected to such authority to exploit opportunities diverting the system's authority to their own ends.

We may occupy positions legitimized by strategic planning; as teachers of technical communication we occupy legitimized niches in the technological world. An important question remains unanswered for me: Do we occupy a position from which we can leverage tactical action? de Certeau described the reaction of American indigenous people who accepted their subjection to Spanish colonization. Although they accepted colonization, these Indians, he said, "metamorphized the dominant order: they made it function in another register. They remained other within the system which they assimilated and which assimilated them externally. They diverted it without leaving it" (p. 32). These indigenous peoples represent tactical action of the colonized resisting strategic planning of the colonizers.

What might it mean for us to be tactical rather than strategic? In Fargo, we live atop 120 feet of the world's richest soil—the lakebed of prehistoric Lake Agassiz. Large scale agriculture is a dominant economic force in the region, literally dividing the territory into privatized land, gradually driving small farmers out of business and eradicating diversified, small farms. In their place large commodity farmers plant mile after mile of monoculture crops, modified genetically to kill their pests and to withstand applications of Roundup. There remains no commons, no commonly shared land, except for a few urban spaces set aside by the municipality for community garden projects and a few state parks set aside for recreational activities. There, in such rich agricultural land, it is extremely difficult to buy food not yet contracted,

processed, and transported through the commodities market. Some people informally share abundance of private gardens; a few months of the year a couple farmers' markets are open three days a week, a couple CSAs (community supported agriculture) exist, but most people do not know about them and never stumble onto invitations to join one. Simultaneously, a community garden program exists, again on the margins of mainline consumer culture, and a few specialized small grocers exist—a small green market, a Vietnamese market, and an African market. A few organic producers within thirty miles of the city market their food products through websites or a newly formed local food buying group named "My Sister's Farm." The local chapter of the Dakota Resource Council is participating in a local foods initiative, seeking ways to politicize food issues. As an interested observer and somewhat active participant in these efforts, I have come to recognize that the grass roots efforts have great promise, but they need to become more fully aware of each other. They need to join forces, forming a coalition, so that they can more readily take advantages of opportunities for tactical action within the colonized space of food production and distribution. What role might a technical communicator play if he or she were to define technical communication as political action? What opportunities are there for articulating tactical efforts of these diverse groups?

I hope you agree with me that what is called for is face-to-face engagement in local issues rather than retreat to theory. In our field, we have long lived by a governing metaphor: we bridge the gap between levels of knowledge by translating and simplifying technical language. Jennifer Slack (2004) and her co-authors revised that metaphor, suggesting that the technical communicator's task is not to translate but to articulate. To articulate is to seek new relationships among existing forces, to

participate in negotiating meaning rather than in transferring meaning. Articulation, in short, is a species of political action.

In a globalized economy, consisting of discrete territories controlled by monocultures, where diversity is rapidly being eradicated, we believe in the survival of the fittest. This twist on the Darwinian perspective seems to demand that we fill a niche in the global economy by becoming specialists who add value to products, specialists who suppress their natural inclination toward the political so they can be good citizens of corporate culture in the technological society. This appears to be an expedient course of action, especially when we consider that those who are in positions of authority, the *Guard(eners)*, consider wildness a threat. Weeds defined as anything not conforming to the monoculture need to be eradicated.

In my introduction, I said that I believed my comments today about the local, the diverse, and the political have programmatic, pedagogical, and professional implications. I hope you will be willing to play the believing game with me, exploring in your conversations what a tactical scientific and technical communication might mean as we integrate our programs with local cultures. Let me describe a heuristic, or perhaps an invitation, to explore these implications in your localities. Create a table consisting of four rows and four columns. Down the left column, list the words local, diverse, and political/ethical in the second, third, and fourth fields. Across the top row, list programs, pedagogy, and professional development in the second, third and fourth fields. You will then have nine blank fields, waiting for your input.

	Program Planning	Pedagogy	Professional Development
How might an emphasis on the local affect			
How might an emphasis on diversity affect			
How might an emphasis on the Political/Ethical affect			

The task of integrating our programs with local cultures and thereby growing strong root systems that will sustain our programs beyond a single generation is not a single-season project. I am not foolish enough to believe that this table can be filled out in one evening, one weekend, or even one or two years, but we can make a start.

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Plenary Panel

Tilling the Field for Healthy Growth

Plenary Session Introduction: Molly Johnson

Digging Around the Garden: Change as Progression, Disruption, and Tool

Brenton Faber, *North Carolina State University*

Keywords: change, information technology, nanotechnology

In the mid 1980s, science journalists began presenting a new science called nanotechnology in newspapers and science magazines. By 2003, \$679 million in federal funding is allocated for developing this new science.

Two technical communication professors write an article advocating single source methods for creating objects for Web pages. The authors argued that adopting single-source objects is necessary for technical communicators because "technical communicators...have assumed many tasks usually associated with information architects" (Ford & Mott, 2007, p. 333).

An Office of Information Technology proposes and installs a new IT software

platform (WORKWARE) for a university campus. The IT office emerges from the mediocre project as a powerful campus actor—prescribing policies for computer use, enforcing campus-wide technology access, and restricting campus platform and software choices. Three and half years later, without any campus consultation, the IT office discontinues WORKWARE and replaces it with a competing system.

Much of what we teach, research, and administrate involves managing—or at the very least—responding to change. For example, take a few of the topics we will be engaging with today:

A new spirit of entrepreneurship on university campuses; Increasing diversity initiatives within the discipline; responding

to new events and issues within external disciplines—law, engineering; offering a new perspective for teaching or writing— "communication design", semester experience in a community organization, virtual cases, new courses; moving from an option to a major, creating new PhD programs, challenges of globalism and the internationalization of our programs, creating a new journal in the field, dealing with new university initiatives or predatory institutional practices; responding to social justice issues in our communities, responding to ecological and environmental change, and new technologies.

These topics are all premised on dealing with, promoting, resisting, or just understanding what Jeff and Stuarts' abstract called "issues of permanence and change" in our community practices.

My suspicion is that change is a fairly central part of what we do and it is something we can probably understand a bit better:

In concluding *Discourse, technology and change*, I became interested in what I saw to be different concepts of change. These are varying meanings and understandings of change. In other words, they are ways change is understood in one discourse that may be quite different from how other disciplines, practices, or belief structures understand change.

Although there are probably more, as a start, I've been working with three concepts:

- A concept of change that evokes natural progression— nanotechnology is the "next big step in the progression of the natural sciences."
- A concept of change that instantiates a disruption and then continuation of narrative—the daily tasks of technical communicators disrupted by new technology which they must adopt to preserve their

historical roles as mediators of technical information.

- A concept of change that deploys change as a tool—a device people will use to achieve their personal or political goals—forcing a new IT platform on an organization to create technical dependencies and institutional power.

I am not talking here about a progression, chronology, or transition but different ways change is used in academic, organizational, and professional networks and what those uses tell us about these networks. Looking at our discourse for example, in their recent article, *Creating Single-source Objects for Contemporary Media*, Ford and Mott wrote:

As contemporary media continues to change the kinds of documents we work on, technical communicators will need to adapt to their enhanced roles in organizations and function as information architects. XML, single sourcing, and other advanced multimedia options require that professionals in our discipline transition from writing and designing documents to writing and designing objects (p. 340).

Here, change is a disruptive and restorative force initiated by a new technology. The disruption requires a resolution—technical communicators adopting alternative positions (information architects) and actions to continue the field's historical legacy. Earlier in their article, Ford and Mott wrote, "Coupled with the flexibility of contemporary communication technologies, however, is the demand for new tasks and skills required for content development" (p. 333); and, "technical communicators—who, we argue, have assumed many tasks usually associated with information architects—must be able to generate usable objects that appeal to users, in newly available structures that call for expanding the capabilities of text." (p.

333). First, I should emphasize that there is nothing *wrong* in the rhetoric of this claim. Instead, in this change—text we can see certain assumptions enacted—continuity, history, and preservation coupled with a certain amount of dynamism.

The repeated use of modality: need, must; and imperatives: demand, require, suggest that Ford and Mott are not writing about an historical progression but something that disrupts what technical communicators do. Similarly, the claim that these are imperatives "new technologies have brought to our profession" (p. 340) places technical communicators in the position of having to metaphorically "right the ship" after taking on a bit too much water. I'd like to suggest that these sorts of discourses of change reflect and constitute the practice of technical communication as predominantly narrative—as the practical fulfillment of an historical narrative. Even though we may be writing about code, objects, or methods for web design, we continue to come back to our historical legacies, obligations, and continuities. In this way, the field is aggregated not much differently from colleagues in similar humanities endeavors who are promoting the historical legacy of great authors, cultures, creative endeavors, or ideas.

Again, this is not so much a bad thing as an interesting thing, especially if the people and fields with whom we work use a different concept of change. In *Discourse*

Nurturing Health Communication Programs

Barbara Heifferon, *Rochester Institute of Technology*

Community plots: Field-Based Learning Through Internships and Outreach

Brent Henze, *East Carolina University*

Keywords: community outreach, internship, nontraditional student, service learning, situated learning

What does it mean for academic programs to "reach out" to communities? Who's reaching where, and why, and how does that relate to our programs and curricula? To begin to address this question, I'd like to

technology and change, I argued that the WORKWARE software implementation was pursued as a tool to achieve organizational power. Here,—change-as-a-tool—enacts a different sort of social construction and value. For example, implementing WORKWARE was not accomplished to fulfill an historical narrative or maintain a continuity. Nor was it much of a progressivist project—the next evolution of campus IT. Rather WORKWARE was a way to leverage expertise and opportunity for self interest and power.

I'm particularly interested in thinking about what we teach students about change; how practitioners experience and enact change within their organizations; how we use change to motivate each other to adopt new and different technologies, practices, methods, and theories; if there different models for understanding change and lastly; if there are different ways for studying and examining change?

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introduce a few of the outreach-related activities that we, at ECU, have been working on, including my particular area, the internship.

Throughout this necessarily cursory overview, the theme I'd like to pursue is the "outward orientation" of technical and professional communication. To pursue this theme, I'll describe three efforts that we're making here at ECU to adapt our program in response to an outward-oriented vision of technical communication. The extensive literature on community-based research, internships, professionalization, and civic engagement suggests that our program is not unique. Rather, technical and professional communication seems to be a natural fit for outward-oriented research and pedagogy. This orientation shapes our curricula, outreach activities, and community-based research.

Internships

The internship in professional communication is the area of outreach that I'm most closely involved with, and in some ways it's the most traditional example of the technical communication curriculum "reaching out" to nonacademic communities. At the same time, it's an unusual example because the "nonacademic community" in question is not what most people generally have in mind when they think of "outreach."

To be sure, internships in our program and others are sometimes located in nonprofit organizations, community groups, and other public or civic sites often associated with community outreach. In our program, for instance, we've had interns doing marketing communication for the United Way and creating public healthcare documents for migrant workers through a local Hispanic outreach group. These projects fit nicely within the paradigm of "service learning": students are learning about public communication in authentic situations, but also engaging in civic work in organizations with humanitarian objectives—they're *servicing* the community while gaining a professional experience.

But far more of our internships take place in professional work settings—companies, government offices, and the like—where interns are engaged in *situated learning* that isn't motivated by humanitarian objectives. It's harder to reconcile these experiences with the traditional goals of "community outreach." Yet I'd like to do so. I recognize that there are important differences between "community service" through nonprofit organizations and the situated learning that can be achieved through corporate internships. But to understand "community outreach" from the perspective of academic programs in technical communication, I believe that it's helpful to look at the full spectrum of communities in which we are engaged, and to entertain a broader concept of what it means to "reach out."

When we ask students to undertake an internship, we're engaging in "community outreach" in an important sense: we're identifying our programs and curricula with the needs and goals of a community that will be important to students. In fact, it's professional communities that may be the most salient for many students. Although some students may see themselves primarily as students, many others perceive their academic experience as but one facet of their professional lives.

At ECU, we offer traditional, experience-based internships for students with little professional work experience, but we've also begun to offer internships specifically geared toward the growing population of so-called "nontraditional" students who come to us with loads of experience in professional work settings. These students have become the bread and butter of our program, and they're an extremely interesting population to serve. In fact, they epitomize our program's outward-looking orientation, and they have shaped just about every curricular innovation that we've made. This group of students simply can't set aside their work

and community identifications to be students and our programs are stronger to the extent that we're willing to embrace rather than resist this condition of their academic experience.

For these professional students, we've developed a "research-based" internship model that asks students to identify workplace problems or needs, and then redefine them as research questions that can be mitigated by means of academic research or scholarship. This model does two things. First, it brings the "outside in" by asking students to turn the workplace into a site of academic study. Second, it takes the "inside out," by prompting students to apply academic research to workplace needs.

Rather than assuming that the only goal of the internship is to prepare novices to function in the communities beyond school, this internship model is based upon the premise that professional students are already prepared for the work environment. However, they might be less prepared to apply the insights of research or scholarship to that environment. This internship model does not produce full-fledged field-based researchers as a result of a single workplace-based research engagement, but it helps students to examine workplace problems in light of academic research, and identifies that research as salient to workplace problems, even if some work has to be done to bridge the "culture gap" between the academy and the workplace. With their feet in both of these cultures, professional students are well suited to bridge this gap, and they can help us to do the same.

Outreach

The second example I'd like to discuss is the ECU Outreach Network, an organization created in the aftermath of Hurricane Floyd to help area towns and organizations to obtain grant funding for recovery projects and other needs. The program is a joint

effort of ECU's Office of Economic Development, the Masters in Public Administration, and the Masters program in Technical and Professional Communication. Jan Tovey was one of the network's founders, and Michelle Eble is currently its outreach coordinator. Michelle oversees the work of several graduate students who not only help to write grants, but also do all the other work involved in proposal development, including identifying funding sources, assessing an organization's grant readiness, and working collaboratively with community members who may never even have seen a grant application or imagined writing one.

The Outreach Network is the perfect conjunction of university resources, regional needs, and our program's efforts to build curricula around student experiences outside the classroom. It's an opportunity for graduate students to build upon what they've learned in our grant-writing and other courses in authentic projects that benefit local communities. And it is also an opportunity for our program to contribute to the university's regional service mission.

Research

Just as the Outreach Network arose from a community need relating to coastal disasters, the recently launched Renaissance Computing Institute (or RENCi) at ECU is an effort to facilitate research and outreach on the physical, biological, and human dimensions of coastal disasters in the region. Our program has a hand in this work as well. Donna Kain is currently serving as Outreach Director for RENCi. Donna, and Catherine Smith, and some graduate students are engaged in research on hurricane risk and hazard communication in coastal communities.

Rather than describing the details of this initiative's work, I'd like to focus on this work as a species of community involvement that effectively integrates faculty research, student imperatives, and

community needs. During the past decade, our MA program has attracted a few students who have enrolled in our program while working as public information officers or managers for various North Carolina municipalities. One such student was Roberta Thuman, the public information officer for the town of Nags Head on the Outer Banks. As you can imagine, Roberta's job involves a great deal of preparation for hurricane threats.

Donna and Catherine had both become interested in emergency and risk communication independently of Roberta's interest, but it was Roberta who brought into focus the set of practical needs and research questions that became the basis of their research. The project is a great example of how our scholarship and curricula can dovetail with "community needs" naturally by way of students. We don't have to look far to find rich connections with "community." They're sitting right there on our class rosters. After all, when students enter our programs, they're not leaving the community and its obligations and motivations behind.

Working together, Donna, Catherine, and Roberta have organized meetings of coastal emergency managers and initiated efforts to share information and resources among the region's communities. They've also obtained funding through the NOAA "Sea Grant" program to assess hurricane risk communication effectiveness in coastal communities. The project is as much a case of the community "reaching in" as of the

Cultivating Cross-Disciplinary Symbiosis (or "Cultivating Cross-Disciplinary, Cross-Cultural, and Cross-Conceptual Symbiosis")

TyAnna Herrington, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Keywords: diversity, international programs, symbiosis

The advantages and difficulties associated with international programs, inherent in their diversity, are located within the symbiosis that embodies the relationship of its partners. What's true of international

university "reaching out." But maybe thinking in those terms is naïve. It seems more meaningful just to say that the university really can be an authentic part of the community; conversely, the public stakeholders themselves are an important part of the university ecosystem. The so-called "outside" is already "in."

People in our field seem to love "hybrids." We're attracted to interdisciplinary research problems, town-gown border crossings, pedagogies rooted in sites of civic and professional work, theories that spring from and speak to practice, and students whose identifications extend beyond the university. Whether through internships, client-based projects, formal outreach collaborations, or community-based research, our work in technical and professional communication is fundamentally outward-oriented.

That's really what excites me about this line of work. Our discipline is pretty successful at seeing past the university's walls. And when we look beyond the university, what we see are communities facing problems that we can share; we see people with knowledge to offer us in the academy, just as we hope they're interested in what we have to say to them. More than many other disciplines, we in TPC really have the potential to serve and be served by our communities, following the lead of those students whose presence in our programs everyday challenges the notion that the university is a world apart.

cross-disciplinary programs can also hold true for local programs, even when those include participants within a common department who simply have differing research agendae or interests.

The primary definition of symbiosis is an instructive description of an international program's character:

symbiosis

a close association of animals or plants of different species often, but not always, of mutual benefit. [emphasis mine]

In enthusiasm to create program relationships among participants from varied disciplines and cultures it's possible to forget that the diversity that provides advantages also has to be carefully accounted for to avoid a program's self destruction, where a program's greatest strengths can also be the greatest weaknesses as a result of its diversity of fields, interests, and ideas.

Differing interests, knowledge bases, pedagogical structures and research methodologies are beneficial for providing insight, extended knowledge and information, and new viewpoints—and can also even provide catalysts for beneficial conflict that can lead to new knowledge development; but these differences can also be detrimental where those in different disciplines or different cultures—sometimes the same thing—don't always speak the same language, literally and figuratively.

One of the great benefits of developing programs that bring together diverse disciplines and cultures is the ability to create a strong and broad distributed knowledge base.

The strength of a distributed system, in this case intellectual, is in providing broader information sources, using more brainpower and human energy to treat the needs of complex problem-solving activities, in providing diversity in concepts and course offerings, and extending the ability to connect with more sources than what exist inside of any one institutional system.

But it's hard to ensure that all members of a diverse collaborative effort are able to

support their distinctive needs and goals, and this holds true for institutions as much as it does for individuals. Where a focus on a program or project's field specialization or research area can satisfy those members whose field is represented, it may exclude those who work with different disciplines or concepts.

Even pedagogical, administrative, or institutional structures may find more support in one collaborative group than another, leaving participants in the unsupported structure outside the realm of sustained subject-focused activity. And where those who work outside the boundaries of a favored field may adapt their work to subject-specific interests, they may find it difficult to reach their potential and may actually hamper the progress of others whose work is more directly focused in a privileged subject area.

Worst-case scenarios include those in which program or project participants vie for position in attempts to ensure that their subject areas become central to program or project work. Then effort and energy go to the struggle for position rather than forwarding the work itself.

In cross-disciplinary international programs like ours in our Global Classroom Project, it can be extremely difficult to find areas where interests in different disciplines and field studies could overlap. Russian, American, Swedish, French, and Kyrgyz participants' backgrounds have included art history, pedagogy, ethnography, biology, sociology, economics, political science, engineering, computer science, and cultural studies, among others. Our programs have included pedagogy based in traditional models as well as the newest approaches in distributed learning, although our institutions vary greatly in their administrative goals and structures.

Our best ally for dealing with these differences has been a concentration on a rhetorical approach that emphasizes engaged activity rather than subject-area

study. Where we can't pursue projects in given subject areas and still support the work of all participants, we can work toward a common goal of learning about a particular problem issue, drawing from all participants' knowledge, skills, and expertise, asking them to bring their values, methods, and educational approaches to an issue often outside their subject area interests, but treated by all of our discipline-specific understanding.

This approach has allowed for a symbiosis that moves a little further from its primary definition of collaboration, "not always of mutual benefit," to the secondary definition we all hope for:

- a cooperative, mutually beneficial relationship between two people or groups

Last night, I reconsidered these points in light of Dale's keynote and I'd like to offer another approach regarding global and local problems. We've learned through our international project's necessity to de-center attention from subject area treatment to action-oriented problem or issue analysis, that we have more common concerns than we do culturally-specific problems to scrutinize. For instance, the current class of Global Classroom Project students from Russia and America are analyzing ways that environmental issues are treated in each of our countries. (They're examining the kinds of attitudes

reflected in our countries' communications regarding recycling, global warming, water conservation, and so on.) Based on a shared concern about the impact of environmental negligence, they're working together to use what they learn as a means to create globally effective responses to environmental problems. This shared problem-solving responds to both local and global needs.

Another example is our newly developed collaboration among biologists, linguists, educational technologists and technical communicators from France, Russia, and America, who will analyze cultural perceptions and treatments of genetically modified organisms (GMOs) in all our countries. Whether our local responses to GMOs reflect common or conflicting concerns, our globally-based work together, employing diverse backgrounds, training and potentially diverse attitudes should render broader understanding of the surrounding issues that affect us all both locally and globally.

We hope that as we continue to work toward shared project goals, we'll learn how to sustain a constant state of mutual benefit. For now, as we adapt and experiment with global cross-disciplinary collaboration, we continue to move forward, bolstered by hope that we're growing in the right directions.

Abstracts

Fruits of our Labor: CPTSC-Funded Research Reports

Moderator: Kathryn Northcut, University of Missouri-Rolla

Linguistic and Cultural Diversity in Scientific and Technical Communication: Designing International Curricula

Laurence José, *Michigan Technological University*
Ann Brady, *Michigan Technological University*

Keywords: curriculum, diversity, globalization, international communication, pedagogy, undergraduate

Introduction

The present paper reports on curricular research generously sponsored by a 2007 CPTSC research grant. It was conducted by Laurence José, an international PhD candidate from France, and Ann Brady, a faculty member who serves as the director of the undergraduate program of Scientific and Technical Communication at Michigan Technological University. In this study, we seek to develop—and gauge the effectiveness of—methods in the teaching of international technical communication. Using quantitative and qualitative methods, we assess an assignment sequence in an introductory technical communication course. The data we collect will be useful for administrators interested in implementing new curricula in international technical communication.

Context of Research

The globalization of the workplace increasingly requires that students be prepared to work in linguistically and culturally diverse contexts; pedagogical and administrative interest in international technical communication has exploded in recent years. As Carl Lovitt (1999) noted, this “represents one of the most dramatic developments in the fields of business and technical communication over the past decade” (p. 1).

Curricula in technical communication, however, often do not meet these new demands. In their 2005 study, Sandi Harner and Anne Rich found that only 1% of undergraduate technical communication programs require a course explicitly in the topic of global or international communication, and only 5% of programs offer such a course as an elective. Of the 80 programs they examined, 7 included a modern language component as a part of the curriculum, a requirement that typically stands as the only distinction between the BS and BA degrees (Harner & Rich pp. 215–216).

Michigan Technological University’s Scientific and Technical Communication (STC) degree program is typical of these findings. Like many programs, our program does not offer classes concentrating solely on issues of linguistic and cultural diversity. Although our program requires students earning BA degrees to take a modern language, these classes are not fully integrated with other coursework in the program curriculum or with students’ overall programs of study. The result is that, although students may graduate with the ability to communicate in other languages, they are not necessarily aware of the cultural dimensions of the languages they speak. Because our curriculum largely reinforces “the myth of linguistic homogeneity” (Matsuda, 2006), its students remain under-prepared to work in diverse contexts.

Methodology

The site for our research is an introductory technical communication class (HU 3120) required of all STC students and is a popular elective for students in Business, Engineering, and Technology. To reinforce students’ sensitivity to the cultural dimension of communication (from a linguistic but also visual perspective), we have developed an assignment for which students compose instruction manuals, in English, for an audience of international students at MTU. To assess how the assignment impacts students’ understanding of international and intercultural communication practices, the assignment sequence is bookended by a baseline survey and a final survey. (See appendix for the assignment description.)

Preliminary Results and Analyses

After piloting the assignment in six sections of HU 3120 over the last year (one section in spring 2007, two sections in summer 2007, one section in fall 2007, and two

sections in spring 2008), we can make the following preliminary observations:

- Students have difficulties defining international communication as a concept.

The analysis of the surveys underscores how problematic it is for students to define international communication; many students have great difficulty articulating a basic definition of this concept, particularly when they are asked to contrast it with intercultural communication. The struggle to define international communication clearly suggests that we, as instructors, should develop a more critical attitude toward terms that we take for granted. The notions of international communication and globalization permeate our field, yet as we know, they remain difficult concepts even for the initiated. Before we ask students to enact international technical communication, we should maybe first ask them to engage in discussion about the semantic proprieties of the term itself. If we don't do this, we put students in situations where they in effect have to define their practice in the absence of underlying theory.

- The composition process helps students to gain awareness of the cultural dimension of their code.

As students worked in teams to compose a document targeting an audience for whom English isn't their mother tongue—but who nonetheless possess a standardized level of proficiency as determined by the TOEFL—they were led to confront and to question their communication practices. The cultural dimension of language that often remains invisible became more visible and more significant for students. They were able to assess more directly the importance of linguistic choices and their impact within international situations. The rhetorical aspect of communication became therefore more tangible for students, as witnessed in the following excerpts from our final surveys:

“The biggest challenge is to not offend the international audience. You really have to get a feel of what you can assume and what you can't assume.”

“It was almost a paradigm shift into how much you have to think about word usage, analogies, and our assumptions of what they know.”

- The documents students created enacted institutional border crossing.

This aspect is something that we did not really foresee when we first started using the assignment. The composition and design of a document targeting international students at MTU inscribes the communication practices within a concrete socio-cultural context, a context that invites the document's application beyond the classroom. Since summer 2007, we have been collaborating closely with Sylvia Matthews of the MTU writing center, who everyday works to develop the communication practices of new international graduate instructors. Her role as a resource for students' user analysis process allowed for their documents to transcend mere classroom exercise: many students, after listening to and dialoguing with Sylvia Matthews, got a better sense of the specific needs of international students on campus, and most consented having their final documents be used as actual resources in the writing center. Since fall 2007, we observed that writing coaches actively use the documents during their meetings with international students.

Looking Toward the Future

In the near future we look forward to publishing examples and detailed analyses of student documents and surveys. We also intend to further the assessment and development of the assignment by creating pilot classes focusing more thoroughly on issues of international technical communication. In such a class, for

instance, a follow-up to the previously described assignment could consist of having students write a recommendation report on how to create effective documents for international contexts.

Appendix: The Assignment Description

For this assignment the class will function as a communication consulting firm. Each team (3 students) will function autonomously of each other, reporting directly to your instructor who will fulfill the role of you “boss.” Here are the directives:

- Michigan Technological University—in its endeavor to sustain the enrollment of foreign students and to make its campus welcoming to international students—has contacted our firm to design a series of documents that would ease the cultural transition of international students. The documents the university is seeking must be informative, welcoming, and easy to use for an international student just arriving on campus. Naturally, these documents have to be user-friendly and clear.
- Our goal will be to provide clients with a series of short instruction booklets to help new international students adapt to their new environment. Each of these documents has to contain

instructions on one specific topic, such as: “Driving in the US,” “Health Insurance in the US,” “Banking in the US,” “Eating and cooking in the US,” “Being a Student in a US University,” etc. After deliberating with your boss and your co-workers, each team will be given the responsibility to design one of these booklets.

- Each team will also be required to make a case for their document in a 5-minute persuasive pitch. The final version of your document will have to be 3–4 page long in a 6" by 9" format (your pages can be double-sided). Your document must also be reproducible in black and white print.

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The Role of Historical Studies in Technical Communication Curricula: A Report of Survey Results

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Keywords: curriculum, graduate curriculum, study of history, undergraduate history of technical communication

In 2007, the CPTSC provided funding for us to survey technical communication programs in the United States about the role of historical studies in their curricula.

We surveyed 33 programs offering certificates or degrees in technical communication and/or closely related fields and discovered that most of these programs

provide students with at least some exposure to technical communication history, usually within courses devoted to broader topics. In addition, most respondents indicated that they believe historical studies are useful to practitioners and that the study of history is important to the training of future technical communication teachers. They were divided on the issue of whether programs should offer courses devoted entirely to technical communication history on a regular basis.

Background and Methods

We set out to do a nonscientific survey of the administrators of technical communication programs in US colleges and universities. After evaluating several Web survey services, we selected Survey Methods (surveymethods.com) to host our project. We launched the survey on Sept. 16 by e-mailing invitations to 72 people who had been identified in either the STC Academic Database or the CPTSC Programs List as program administrators or points of contact for their programs. We had to eliminate several programs listed by STC and/or CPTSC because they did not provide valid contact information. We also eliminated our program at Missouri S&T.

Each e-mail invitation contained a unique link that took the recipient directly to our Web survey. Although the names of the recipients and programs are confidential, they were not anonymous. We were able to associate each e-mail address with a completed survey. Thus, we were able to eliminate multiple surveys originating from the same e-mail link. However, we were not able to ensure that the person who completed the survey was actually the person who was listed in the STC database or CPTSC list as the program director or point of contact. At least one recipient of our e-mail message forwarded it to a colleague, who in turn completed the survey.

Before beginning the survey, each respondent was told that we were trying to determine the role (if any) of historical studies in technical communication curricula at colleges and universities in the United States. They were also directed to interpret the term *history of technical communication* to mean not only the history of the practice of technical communication but also the history of the technical communication profession and the history of the teaching of technical communication.

From our mailing of 72 invitations on Sept. 16, we received 33 fully completed surveys and 1 partially completed survey—a return rate of 47%. The partially completed survey is not reflected in the data or analysis that follows.

Survey Results

The 33 people who responded to the Sept. 16 invitation indicated that their programs offer the following degrees in technical communication or a closely related field: BA (21 programs), BS (9), MA (19), MS (14), PhD (16), and other (13). The "other" category included undergraduate minors and graduate certificates. Examples of closely related fields were professional writing, science/scientific writing, English with a technical communication emphasis, rhetoric (or rhetoric and composition), and technical journalism.

Eighteen of the 33 respondents (55%) described themselves as the "official" directors of their programs, while four (12%) described themselves as the "unofficial" directors of their program. We assume that the remaining 11 respondents (33%) are neither the official nor unofficial directors of their programs.

According to the responses we received, most programs are providing their students with at least some exposure to the history of technical communication. Twenty-four of the 33 respondents (73%) said that their students receive "some"

curriculum-based exposure to technical communication history; four said that their students receive "no exposure"; and five said "much exposure."

Almost all of the programs that answered "some" or "much" (29 of 33 or 88%) said that they provide this exposure either "In a unit within a course devoted to a broader topic" (24 of 29 or 83%) or throughout their curricula (3 of 29 or 10%). Only 2 respondents (7%) selected "In an elective course devoted entirely to the history of technical communication," and no respondents selected "In a required course devoted entirely to the history of technical communication."

In fact, 23 of the 29 respondents (79%) said their programs "have never offered a course devoted entirely to the history of technical communication," while 4 said their programs have offered such a course at least once and 2 said their programs offer such a course on a regular basis.

Those who said their programs provide some or much exposure to technical communication history were asked why this exposure is provided. Twenty-six people answered this question, and the following are some of the responses:

...historical study helps to complicate the ideas that students sometimes hold that (a) things have always been this way, (b) the development of the profession has been a positive progress narrative and the way we do things now is necessarily better than past practices, or (c) there's only one right solution to any given situation.

...it is often in models long past that we can best analyze and see what makes things tick when texts too close to home in time and space make that impossible.

Our whole program takes a strongly situational approach with emphasis on the adaptation of documents to their specific time and situation. Historical study is a good

way to provide students with a sense of perspective on this.

By providing at least some historical grounding, [future practitioners] are likely to be better prepared to understand where obstructive values, beliefs, and practices come from and to work more effectively to change them.

An understanding of the depth and richness of the field, as well as a sense that it has strong theoretical underpinnings, adds to [students'] sense of technical communication as a PROFESSION, and places them in a position (in the workplace) to advocate for the importance and legitimacy of the field.

There's a more applied aspect of this emphasis on the history of technical communication, as well: it enables students to make decisions about documentation based on precedents.

Technical communication is a young discipline and a slightly older profession, but an ancient practice. We know embarrassingly little about our antecedents. Other professions have a much stronger sense of their history: doctors have their Galen, engineers their Agricola, teachers their Aristotle. This lack of a historical sense in technical communication is one reason the discipline/profession is often so short-sighted, focused on the newest technique or trend. It's also why we can't seem to convince anyone (even sometimes ourselves) that technical communication is a profession that requires specialized training to do well. Otherwise we wouldn't have a profession so filled with people with little or no training.

In a related question, all 33 respondents were asked what benefits (if any) a technical communication student derives from studying the history of technical communication. Eight people skipped this question, but 25 answered it. The following are some of the responses:

Security in the history and longevity of their interests as well as a sense of future possibilities tracing parallel developments in other professions as well as the development of this one.

I'll repeat myself: To cope with the present and to plan for the future, students need to understand the past.

Just as all students benefit from the study of history—of their nation, of the world, so do students benefit from the study of the history of our field/discipline. We are a young field—in terms of occupying our niche within the field of English studies. However, many of us believe our field has a rich past, extending back to classical rhetoric. For students, understanding the roles that language and language teachers have played and the impact they have had is critical to understanding the roles they may play and the many ways they may impact the future.

1. historical perspective
2. knowledge of the complex factors—social, economic, political, etc.—and interactions that influence action at any time
3. examples to draw from, both positively and negatively
4. knowledge of the interaction of communication and technology
5. more perspective on current practice
6. ways to think about what factors might influence future practice
7. deliverance from the all-too-common presentism.
8. Other than historical perspective, I'm not sure.

The four people (4 of 33 or 12%) who responded that their students do not receive any curriculum-based exposure to technical communication history explained

that their programs have applied curricula with no time or space for the study of history. These two comments are illustrative:

The certificate program is only five courses, which must address the skills and knowledge for creating technical documents.

The program was originally developed to provide Literature majors with a viable career option. As a result, the program had to share 50% of its courses with the literature program. This left only 35 credits for technical communication (including internships). So few courses meant that we could cover only core genre areas. We are presently changing this relationship and will expand the coverage for technical communication. But the state and the university are interested primarily in how we meet regional economic needs, so we will still focus on skills needed for the profession.

Most respondents (97%) believed that historical studies are useful to practitioners, but they were divided about how useful these studies are. Eighteen of the 33 respondents (55%) said that historical studies are *very* useful to practitioners, while 14 respondents (42%) said they are *somewhat* useful. Only 1 respondent felt that historical studies are not useful to practitioners. Fourteen respondents offered explanatory comments, including the following:

[very useful]: 1. Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. 2. We need a toolbag full of techniques and strategies and who best to learn them from than those who came before us. After all, we do stand on the shoulders of giants. 3. Having a history gives us an identity and a sense of self-worth. 4. What other fields are blind to their past? 5. It's fun.

[very useful]: I like the idea of teaching an entire course on the historical aspects of technical communication. In my graduate-level communication ethics course, I spend a couple of weeks on the relationship among the Nuremberg Code, the Declaration of Helsinki, and the Belmont Report in a discussion about informed consent and clinical trials protocols in medical ethics. I can envision developing this historical approach in a series of case studies pertaining to all sorts of technical communication topics—risk and benefits communication, environmental impact communication, etc.

[very useful]: No practitioner with knowledge of the development of the field of engineering or science will ever feel subject to the power of these recently constructed fields, and students prepared with history of the development of technical communication (esp. HCI and usability) see their futures are bright.

[not useful]: I'll admit I dislike how applied our program is. But when we add more academically, theoretically oriented courses, they are sometimes difficult to run—students who want the MS for a raise or to prepare to consult complain about a theoretical class taking up space for applied courses. I'm unsure how to deal with this besides taking students with a higher G.P., which seems to work (the high GPA students seem more likely to be interested for the sake of interest).

Most respondents (31 of 33 or 94%) believed that the study of technical communication history was important in the training of technical communication teachers. Twenty-two respondents (71%) said it was *very important*, while 9 respondents (29%) said it was *somewhat important*. Only 2 respondents (2 of 33 or 6%) felt that it was *unimportant*. Seven

respondents offered explanatory comments, including the following:

[very important] I'm sorry to say that I still see too many teachers who see practice as isolated from both history and theory, as something that can be easily learned and practiced by studying guidelines, etc. I'm very strongly in favor of the perspective of Donald Schön [author of *The Reflective Practitioner: How Professionals Think in Action*] and Atul Gawande [*Complications: A Surgeon's Notes on an Imperfect Science*] that professional practice is much more complex than some would give it credit for. And I think having some historical perspective is an important element of truly understanding a profession and becoming proficient as a practitioner.

[very important] If teachers don't have adequate awareness of the history of tech comm, we can't very well expect practitioners to develop a sense of tech comm as a historically-situated profession and practice. Too often our doctoral dissertations (both at my school and more broadly) are narrow, trendy 'research' that, when we look closely, actually means a tiny survey or usability test or pico-ethnography wrapped up in a bunch of pointless citations—enough to justify a medium-sized article if published, but hardly a book or a research agenda strong enough to survive the march to tenure. I think this superficiality is in part a result of the lack of historical and cultural depth in most doctoral programs.

The respondents were divided about whether a technical communication program should create a course devoted entirely to the history of technical communication. Nineteen of the 33 respondents (58%) said that a technical communication program should *not* offer such a course on a regular basis, while 14 respondents (42%) answered that a

technical communication program should offer such a course on a regular basis. Eighteen respondents offered explanatory comments, including the following:

[no]: Ideally, this would be great, but constraints of curriculum and faculty time make this nearly impossible—especially at the undergraduate level.

[no]: There are simply too many other areas to cover in any undergrad or grad program to justify having an entire course devoted to history of the field. Perhaps a large program with many faculty could justify this decision; our program is small and we're stretched thin.

[no] There are many workable models of programmatic design. History does not have to be a distinct course-level area of study to be present in a well-conceived and executed program. It may in fact be better addressed as a component of most (or even all) courses in a curriculum, or in other words, contextualized to the work of many courses.

[no] I think it's more useful to infuse the history throughout the curriculum so that its usefulness, relevance, relationship to practice are more obvious.

[yes]: If it's an independent program, not part of a larger program in English, it should do this. If it isn't, for reasons previously mentioned, it probably just can't do it.

[yes]: This would make a valuable and probably a popular elective for programs entirely focused on technical communication. My program is only a track; we don't have enough students or enough electives to offer a course focused entirely on the history of technical communication.

[yes] In PhD-granting programs, yes, I feel that a regular course in the history of technical communication would be appropriate.

Implications for Further Research

Some of the respondents seemed to have a limited view of history and its uses. We suspect, for example, that not everyone would regard the study of a company's communication practices over the last 10 years as an historical study. Should case studies of recent events, such as the communication failures during the Asian tsunami or Hurricane Katrina, be regarded as historical studies? (Some critics do regard them as such; for example, see Rivers, 1994, pp. 41–44; Kynell & Moran, 1999, pp. 8–9; Malone, 2007, p. 336.) Should a specific methodology distinguish historical studies from other types of studies? (Several critics have proposed methodologies for historical research in technical communication: see Tebeaux & Killingsworth, 1992, p. 27; Connor, 1991; "Medical", 1993, p. 212; Dillon, 1997, p. 72; Battalio, 2002.) The study of the history of rhetoric often begins with Aristotle. Where should the study of technical communication history begin: with the creation of the profession during/after World War II or earlier than that? Should faculty in U. S. technical communication programs "focus on American texts, authors, and practices" when teaching the history of technical communication? (Several critics believe so; see Todd, 2003, p. 66, for example.) The answers to these questions are important because the way history is conceived and defined affects the way it is valued and studied.

Most respondents agreed that historical studies are useful to practitioners, but do practitioners also believe that the study of technical communication history is useful? How do practitioners actually use technical communication history? A survey of current practitioners might help us to answer these

questions. A common response among the academics we surveyed was that a knowledge of history can help students (i.e., future practitioners) understand the present and predict the future. As several respondents noted, however, history can also be used as a source of models for emulation, evidence to support arguments, and even vicarious experiences. (For discussions of the uses of history in technical communication, see Connor, 1991, p. 5; Brockmann, 1998, pp. 385–392; & Malone, 2007, pp. 342–344, among others.) An understanding of the actual and potential uses of history in the technical communication workplace might help us make better decisions about the role of historical studies in technical communication curricula.

Almost 60% of the people we surveyed do not believe that technical communication programs should offer an entire course about technical communication history on a regular basis. How do we make decisions about which subjects should be given entire courses in our curricula? We have heard colleagues argue that research methods should be taught throughout a technical communication curriculum rather than as a separate course, but many programs offer a separate course in research methods. Should subjects such as international technical communication, Web authoring, and even technical editing be taught across the technical communication curriculum rather than as separate courses? Ironically, these types of curricular decisions are often based on historical precedents and contemporary examples rather than other forms of research and analysis.

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Towards a Lexicon for Diversity in Technical and Scientific Communication Programs: Strengthening the Message in Academic Programs and Professional Organizations

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Keywords: diversity, recruitment, retention

The National Institute of Health (2006) and National Science Foundations (2006) both have numerous academically funded programs designed to increase diversity in higher education programs and the workforce needs of the twenty-first century. These funded programs range from pre-K-12, to summer programs, and to each level of higher education. Many federal workforce agencies are also implementing diversity initiatives (NIH, 2006). The technical and scientific communication field needs to leverage these initiatives to promote messages that attract a more diverse audience into technical and scientific communication academic programs and the profession as a whole.

We propose a review and content analysis of the terms used for diversity messages in published materials and Web sites promoting technical and scientific communication programs, comparing the analysis to feeder programs from the NIH and NSF, such as Bridges and McNair, and targeted summer programs (NSF 2006; BEST 2004). The findings will be presented to the CPTSC Program Review group for discussion on ways to develop diversity initiatives, develop evaluation criteria for CPTSC program reviews, and to bridge to feeder programs. Examples of discussion topics based on the content analysis include:

- Do current technical and scientific communication programs use language similar to funding agencies?
- Is there a consistent message between technical and scientific communication programs and funding programs, such as the NIH

and NSF or does the message breakdown?

- How can we strengthen the message that promotes diversity within the technical and scientific communication profession?

Higher education faculty and the student body alike must be representative of our country's population (Smith, 1994). In 1995, technical communication administrators Cheirett and Gibbs identified concerns about recruitment, retention, and the management of a diverse workforce in the twenty-first century. The Project Kaleidoscope 2006 report titled *Transforming America's Scientific and Technological Infrastructure: Recommendations for Urgent Action* discusses today's workforce and the need to be better skilled, better educated and lifelong learners (Narum, 2006). Moreover, *Building a Nation of Learners: The Need for Changes in Teaching and Learning to Meet Global Challenges (2003)* noted the perspective as 60% of future jobs requiring training that only 20% of today's workers possess (Narum, 2006; BHEF, 2003). The National Science Foundation, for example, "is committed to leading the way to an enterprise that fully captures the strength of America's diversity." (NSF GPRA Strategic Plan 2001-2006).

Project Significance

The differing terms from the published materials and Web sites will provide the basis for content analysis and discussion with the CPTSC Program Review group as a step towards a lexicon for diversity initiatives within the discipline. For example, common terminology shared with the CPTSC Program Review group can help

develop diversity initiative programs, become inclusion criteria for the CPTSC program reviews, as well as to promote communication with other groups through publication. This effort could complement initiatives, such as the NSF GPRA Strategic Plan (2000), that suggested the “use of all aspects of NSF activity to enhance diversity in the science and engineering workforce, with particular attention to the development of people who are beginning careers in science and engineering [and] invigorate research-informed, standards-based SMET education at all levels through partnerships that draw deeply from the research and education community, Federal, state, and local education agencies, civic groups, business and industry, and parents.”

Methodology and Research Tasks

The methodology for this research would begin as a qualitative discourse analysis that results in quantitative coded results. This research plans to leverage existing published materials and Web sites in the technical and scientific communications programs, comparing it to funded agency programs. The data collection and content analysis can also be used as a comparison to programs outside of the discipline, placing emphasis on those programs successful at increasing diversity. The expectation is a content analysis to identify common terminology for diversity as a result set.

Budget Statement

This research solicits the use of the \$500 grant for monthly Internet site fees to:

- Have a Web site dedicated to this research topic in a virtual space. Through the Web site, discussion groups, idea generation, and information gathering can take place. The ability to review our findings across the discipline and discuss next steps toward diversity initiatives that benefit the program

as a whole can be included within the Web site.

- Be able to obtain research materials outside of the NJIT digital library.

This research also seeks to leverage open source discussion boards, and associated online technologies for collaboration in a virtual space.

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Assessment I: Multi-Modal Program Review

Moderator: Nancy Allen, Eastern Michigan University

Multimodal Program Review and Assessment

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Keywords: multimodal assessment, program review, objectives, outcomes

In the last year the degree programs in the English Department at NCSU were required to perform eight-year assessments and to undergo external review for assessment and improvement purposes. This included the MS degree in Technical Communication. We decided that assessment of the program should involve all of the constituent groups influenced by the program: prospective students, current students, faculty, alumni, and industry and government employers. Obviously, using a single feedback mechanism for such disparate groups would simply not work, so it became obvious that we would need to use multiple methods for eliciting, receiving, and analyzing data about the effectiveness of our program as perceived by the different audience groups.

As part of the self-assessment process, we developed a set of core program objectives and outcomes against which we would measure the results. Our assessment plan included three broad objectives: to guide students in their development as professionals in their chosen fields in technical communication, to prepare students to be effective theoreticians and practitioners in technical communication, and to continue to be perceived as a highly successful graduate program that achieves local, national, and international visibility.

Under each of these objectives we listed several desired outcomes and the method and frequency of data collection we would use to determine how well we were achieving the desired outcome. It is those methods that comprise our multimodal approach to self assessment.

To assess prospective student perception of the program, we used the graduate school's application and admission statistics for the previous ten years, studying the rise and fall of applications and trying to see correlations with economic conditions (there were none apparent). We also studied how well we did recruiting and retaining a diverse group of students and were pleasantly surprised to see that we easily exceeded departmental and university averages. For current student assessment we used two vehicles: (1) an exit survey in which we specifically asked students how well they thought the program had helped them to achieve each of our desired outcomes, and (2) assessment by faculty advisors as to how well students' capstone projects reflected success in meeting the desired outcomes. Our primary means for assessing faculty were to study the numbers of publications in books and in peer-reviewed articles to ensure that it remained at a high level. We studied alumni by conducting an extensive

survey (described by Susan Katz at last year's CPTSC meeting).

Finally, to study how well we were doing with industry, government, and nonprofit employers, we studied the ongoing rise in job openings we received from them for students to work in internships, part-time, and full-time positions.

The results of all of this data collection and analysis were or will be used for two main purposes: to meet the university requirements for assessment and to allow us to make improvements to our courses and our curriculum. We issued an extensive

assessment report used internally by the department and issued to the external assessment team, which gave the MS program high marks. MS faculty will use the assessment results and report to study our individual courses and our overall curriculum to determine what changes and improvements we can make.

We propose to present a panel in three parts: (1) an overview of the results, (2) suggestions for doing multimodal self assessments, and (3) applying self assessment results to curricular and program modifications.

Seasons: Program Growth and Change

Moderator: Michael S. Martin, University of Wisconsin–Stout

Successfully Growing a TC Program: Building Alliances and Negotiating Departmental Politics

Rick Mott, Eastern Kentucky University

Keywords: academic landscapes, alliances, departmental politics

Due to the corporatization of the university, academic programs face mounting pressure to increase their numbers of students to justify their cost. Fortunately for those of us working in technical and scientific communication programs, we teach a subject that is waxing rather than waning in terms of its importance, significance, and position within research and industry. Consequently, many technical communication programs have increased their numbers of students by following a set of successful recruitment strategies and procedures that may vary from institution to institution.

Yet, at what cost do we increase our numbers? As most academicians know all too well, frequently we must attempt to grow our programs by drawing on a limited—and often shrinking—set of resources. As a result, if we succeed in raising our numbers, must we necessarily divert resources from other, less successful programs into our own to sustain the

effort? From where do those resources come? And at whose expense?

Of course, the location of our program—whether housed in a department of English, humanities, communication, or engineering—may affect potential available resources; but, to sustain our program's viability, and to maintain our collegiality, we must often ameliorate, or at least try to avoid, the problem that if we are growing in numbers and taking a bigger piece of the resource pie—a resource pie that may include teaching loads, course offerings, and tenure lines—some other program's piece may be getting smaller. Because, unfortunately, once we force someone else to accept a smaller piece of some real or imagined resource pie, we are actively recruiting unwanted opponents and unconsciously fomenting disruptive and unproductive dissent.

How, then, do we position our technical and scientific writing programs to work as an ally—rather than as a competitor—with other programs within our department,

within our college, or across the university? Rather than being viewed by colleagues as an unfair consumer of resources, how do we demonstrate the value—to us, to them, and to the university community—of a vigorous and growing communication program? And how do we demonstrate to colleagues that one program’s success does not have to come at the expense of another program’s well-being.

For my five-minute presentation, I intend to briefly summarize the pitfalls of growing a technical and scientific writing program, and then offer suggestions of how we can best build alliances with other programs—both within and without the department—and how we can negotiate the inevitable departmental politics that accompany the changing academic landscape.

No New Funding Needed: Accountability Issues in Growing from an Option to a Major

Teena A. M. Carnegie, *Eastern Washington University*

Keywords: accountability, information, program resources

This position paper raises questions regarding issues of accountability when growing technical communication programs. Where and how do we get information regarding resources needed to support programs? Can we legitimately justify expanding programs with arguments of efficiency while marking the “no new funding” checkbox on state program approval applications? What are the best practices for establishing and managing program resources?

These questions arise from my recent experience expanding the technical communication program at Eastern Washington University. Like many small programs, the EWU program is contained within an English curriculum. The technical communication program, for example, is one of three options in English (the other two being creative writing and literature). In Washington State, the Higher Education Coordinating Board (HECB) requires that

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options share 50% of their courses as a common core, and in English departments such as mine, the core courses are inevitably deemed to be literature courses. Given the need for electives and internships, it is possible (although rare) that a student could complete a major in English with a technical communication option having taken only two courses in technical communication. Clearly, more substantial coverage in technical communication subjects is needed to adequately prepare students for the job market.

To alter the number of mandatory technical communication courses within the program, however, requires expanding the program from an option to a major. Creating a new major puts technical communication courses at the core of the program, but it also requires state approval which means the completion of a HECB proposal.

Through the approval process for new programs, the Washington State HECB seeks to enact its strategic plan and bring accountability to the foreground. The HECB strategic plan, for example, emphasizes two primary goals: increasing opportunities for students to earn degrees and ensuring the higher education system remains responsive to the state economic needs. The strategic plan views the alignment to educational resources with the needs of the economy as a critical action, arguing that the state “must respond to student and employer demands in the field where current or projected job creation outpaces the capacity of the higher education system to produce trained graduates.”

Completing a new program proposal highlights issues of accountability faced by growing programs. Generally, it is not difficult to demonstrate that technical communication increases opportunities for students. Statistics show a 23% increase in jobs for technical writers nationally with an

average of 2,620 openings annually. In Washington, technical writing is listed as one of the ten fastest growing occupations with the number of jobs in technical writing expected to increase by 33.3% over the next seven years.

Showing the alignment of educational resources, however, can prove to be a major stumbling block for small programs growing into majors. Often the information needed regarding graduation rates, administrative support (FTEs for administrative and clerical staff), and other costs of a program can be hidden in department and college accounting and difficult to separate out. Administrators are often reticent to discuss resources and finances for programs, sending an implicit message that new programs must be justified based on efficiency and requests for increased resources avoided. But the question remains: is this feasible or healthy for growing programs?

Adding New PhD Programs to a Growing Field

Karen M. Kurlalt, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*

George H. Jensen, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*

Keywords: doctoral programs, graduate program design, multimedia, program development

As the *MLA Job List* teems with technical writing positions—a number of which go unfilled or are filled by only marginally qualified candidates—our field appears to be growing at a pace rapid enough to support several more doctoral programs. At the same time, program administrators should consider two concerns. First is the issue of whether the enthusiasm generated by the field’s current growth might eventually spawn too many programs. We can support them now, but when the growth spurt fades, will we be overproducing graduates? Second is the question of sustainability: if a department cobbles together a PhD program now, can it obtain the faculty, the resources, and

sufficient numbers of students to create a high-quality, lasting program?

Our department has recently faced these questions. We are developing a doctorate emphasizing rhetoric, professional communication, and new media. Our drive to create this new program is partly generated by economic and academic conditions in our state: we are getting strong signals from the state university system and our graduate school that if we ever want to have a PhD program, now is the time to launch. At the same time, we recognize our responsibilities to the discipline not to overcrowd the market with too many graduates with similar credentials and to provide a high-quality education.

One way that we hope to distinguish our program is through its extensive focus on new media. The working title of our program is “PhD in Rhetoric, Professional Writing, and Digital Media.” We intend “rhetoric” to acknowledge our roots, “professional writing” to cover technical writing as well as other areas (such as creative nonfiction, publishing, and possibly even entertainment), and “digital media” to indicate that the focus of the program will be on technology.

One problem we have encountered in developing our degree proposal is that new media is—new. Similar programs are rare and have emerged only recently, most in the past five or six years. Existing programs in technical writing, professional writing, and composition studies have not neglected technology; even the most traditional programs have begun to offer some coursework related to new media.

Developing a Student-base for Certificate and Master’s TC Programs

Michael S. Martin, *University of Wisconsin-Stout*

Keywords: certificate, continuing education

Developing or re-establishing a program in an era where funding and numbers are a central concern to administrations creates little time to make a program viable, especially in the eyes of administrators. Co-op and internship programs provide Technical Communication programs a fertile ground for recruiting potential students into either a certificate or newly developed Master’s program. It is often common that many people working in technical writing position gravitated to that position because of previous writing experience rather than a degree.

Through co-op site visitation and presentations, it is possible to meet many career professionals working with current students and provide them with essential information about the technical communication program including curriculum and opportunities for continuing

education, particularly when that opportunity can be done through distance learning.

However, we hope to implement a program that trains writers and teachers to become leaders in multimedia authoring and publishing. Although the need to address technology and new media is widely acknowledged, programs that currently focus on new media do not agree on much else, including titles of degrees, nature of the curriculum, and the mix of faculty.

We are currently disseminating an Advance Notice (an abbreviated proposal) through channels on campus. As we develop the full proposal, we are interested in feedback on everything from the title of the degree, the curriculum, and the faculty we need to hire. Based on our research, we believe this is the right time in the growth of the field for this program and others like it, and we are willing to share our decision process with other programs who are considering similar moves.

Although programs often turn to high school career fairs and college recruiting, connecting with older nontraditional students who are already acquainted with the technical communication field provides some outstanding possibilities for both previously mentioned programs. This possibility and avenue is being developed out of such an experience. Although visiting a co-op site and meeting with both the technical writing team and the team leaders, and doing such a presentation about the program, including a look at the faculty, the updated curriculum, and the facilities available, it was discovered that only about 25% of the people on the team had an actual degree in technical communication. However, the response to

the curriculum was extremely positive, and a typical comment was, “I wish I could take that class. Is it possible to take it online?”

Such a response created a conversation among the Technical Communication faculty and led to a updating of both a certificate/specialization program as well as consideration of how to recruit for our developing Masters’ in technical communication program. Developing the

Pruning: Shaping Writers and Writing

Moderator: Natalia Matveeva, University of Houston-Downtown

Preparing Students to Manage Technical Communication Projects in a Global Economy

Stevens Amidon, Indiana University Purdue University Fort Wayne

Keywords: international communication, multiculturalism, world English

During a recent series of interviews partially funded by a 2005 CPTSC research grant, Stuart Blythe and I talked to managers of communication organizations. During these interviews we noted significant concerns expressed by these managers about the challenges they faced working in the global economy. One of the managers we interviewed described working with “virtual companies with minimal physical presence and extensive networks maintained via digital and electronic communication” (Amidon & Blythe, 2008, p. 14). He also described a project where he was managing the work of technical writers from Poland and software engineers from India, for a US client. He expressed frustration dealing with language and cultural differences, particularly when working with individuals from nonwestern cultures.

1. My session will focus on the preparation of students for this type of complex management work. Although I don’t have any easy answers, I would like to raise a series of questions for discussion among CPTSC members about this important curricular task—preparing students to manage communication projects in the

student-base will include meeting with teams from companies that have previous experience with co-op students and meeting with those seeking a certification or an advanced degree in Technical Communication. Currently, the Admissions Department and the College have supported this possibility. The next step is to implement and fund such an initiative.

global economy. Some of these questions include: Is there an international English style we should be teaching to help students to better work with writers from other countries? If so, how do we best teach such a style?

2. Is there an ethical problem when companies ask managers who speak only English to conduct sensitive communications with individuals who do not speak English well?
3. Are style guides such as the Security and Exchange Commission’s *A Plain English Handbook* suitable for international audiences?
4. How do we teach students to be sensitive to the developmental challenge facing workers in third world countries—how to preserve local values and identities while working for global audiences often (falsely?) characterized as homogenized, pro-Western, and eager for increased interaction with both multinational corporations and mid-sized American businesses?

All of these questions raise complex issues. Take the first question for example: many books and textbooks in business and technical communication give us advice such as this for communicating across cultures effectively—"Use plain English. Use short, precise words to say exactly what you mean" (Bovee & Thill, 2007, p. 11). But even such simple and wise advice can be problematic. It's entirely possible the electrical engineer you are working with in Bangalore understands the technical jargon; he understands the term "U353, Wide Bandwidth Dual JFET Input Operational Amplifier." However, when he goes to translate a phrase like the following, he may run into problems: "Installing the JFET is hard due to a tight fit with the power transformer. Aligning the device is even harder, because..."

As Edmond H. Weiss (2005) pointed out, we might find terms like "hard," "harder," and "tight fit" simple and easy to understand. (p. 8) However, the engineer may not have learned the metaphorical use of "hard" to mean "difficult." When he thinks "hard," he thinks of the property of a material, the opposite of "soft." Furthermore, when he sees the word "tight" he may think of a fastener fixed firmly in place rather than understanding the idiomatic "tight fit" that uses the word to indicate a measure of spatial closeness. And the final sentence is even more difficult due to the fact that it uses ellipsis—it deliberately omits a word that is implied. An idiomatic speaker of English understands that "harder" means "harder than installing." The engineer may not.

For translation purposes we might be better served if we wrote, "Installing the JFET is difficult because there is little space between the JFET and the power transformer. Aligning the device is also difficult because..."

This phrase is not as concise, not as elegant, yet it may be much easier for the engineer in Bangalore to translate.

International English: What's a Writer to Do?

The example of the Bangalore engineer suggests we have pedagogical work to do. Yet even the language we use to discuss stylistic issues related to international technical communication is vexed! We've all probably heard a few of the following terms describing varieties of English, but few, if any, of us are familiar with them all.

EWSE: Emerging World Standard Spoken English (Crystal 1999)

This term refers to an English emerged from postcolonial remnants of the British Empire and economic globalization. David Crystal, writing to both academic as well as business audiences contended that the emergence of a global language is not necessarily incompatible with the preservation of local cultures and languages.

WSPE: World Standard Printed English (Crystal 1999)

Crystal's term which acknowledges that print and electronic publishing media results in a global language somewhat different from the spoken version of the language. Both these terms view such varieties of English, descriptively, as local social constructions.

ELF: English as Lingua Franca (McArthur 2003)

A term from linguistics to identify English in much the way Crystal does, but also investigates the ways governmental decisions (designation of official languages, training of the diplomatic corps) help move a language from *vernacular* (local) use to *vehicular* (cross-border) use.

EFL: English as a Foreign Language (Lesnyák 2004)

A term to describe the disciplinary study and teaching of English as an academic or practical subject. Term such as TESOL

(Teachers of English to Speakers of Other Languages) or TENL (Teaching English as a New Language) refer to certification study for such teachers, though many countries require no such certification for teachers.

ENL: English as a New Language (Lesnyák 2004)

This term has been used to describe the teaching of English to nonnative speakers for the purpose of navigating written and spoken English in universities where English is the primary language in use.

EIL: English as an International Language (Lesnyák 2004)

An approach to teaching English to nonnative speakers that departs from the paradigm that native speakers of English represent the norm to which students should aspire.

ESL: English as a Second Language (Alred, Brusaw, & Oliu 2003)

An older term describing the teaching and study of English by nonnative speakers. Still in use, particularly in demographic studies to describe people who speak English as well as a native language, but because it encompasses both people who learn a second language in an academic setting as well as those who learn it *ad hoc*, it seems to be falling out of use.

ESP: English for Specific Purposes (Fuentes 2001)

An area of teaching English as a Foreign Language when the form of English taught is determined by the needs of the learner, for example the Bangalore Engineer who needs to interpret technical material written in English.

EIST: English for Information Science and Technology (Fuentes 2001)

A special area of ESP.

E1: (Weiss 2005)

A linguistic term referring to native speakers of English.

E2: (Weiss 2005)

A linguistic term referring to people who frequently speak English as a second language (ESL) due to their location, their job or profession.

E3: (Weiss 2005)

A linguistic term referring to people who rarely speak English as a second language.

Corpora of E1: (Leech & Smith 2005)

Varieties of native English: British English, American English, Indian English, Australian English, New Zealand English.

All of these terms certainly give us a complex view of world Englishes! Despite the terrific job textbooks do teaching concision and clarity, and despite the usefulness of texts like the SEC's *A Plain English Handbook*, there are just too many kinds of Englishes for a single approach to work. Even a synthesizing text like McArthur's (2003) *Oxford Guide to World English* gave us a variety of Englishes organized by continent, but doesn't help us identify the specific needs of that engineer in Bangalore.

I'm not suggesting that we need to turn professional writing students into linguists. I am suggesting that we need to develop better ways to prepare students for the communication challenges they may face. Research seems to indicate that a hands-on approach that puts students in cross-cultural teams is essential and that "multicultural interaction increases student sensitivity to the need for a nonethnocentric approach to international communication" (Goby, 2007, p. 425). Given the state of today's economy, international communication may not be simply one aspect of professional

communication—it may be the essence of professional communication!

Those of us in CPTSC will have a great opportunity in 2009 when the CPTSC annual conference will be held at the University of Aarhus in Denmark concurrent with a meeting of English for Specific Purposes (ESP) scholars.

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Technology in Technical Editing Courses

Michael Albers, *East Carolina University*

Keywords: editing, technology, Web

As currently taught, most technical editing courses, at both the undergraduate and graduate level contain minimal technology. The primary technology currently taught is the use of track changes in Microsoft WORD. However, surveys of professional technical editors reveal that many are now working on distributed teams and on web-based projects that require online editing and a solid understanding of the relationship between technology and editing.

At the University of Memphis, as at other universities, professional writing students have strongly expressed a desire for more technology in their courses. Although they tend to equate technology with learning tools, an editing class has the potential to expose them to multiple technologies and relate those technologies

to both editing and rhetorical skills. More importantly, because the class requires spending more time editing/critiquing texts than producing it, this exposure to technology can be beneficial in helping them see technology's position within the bigger picture of document production.

Within a technical editing course, technology-based learning objectives must be integrated with the current (conventional) technical editing course objectives. Technology issues covered may include:

- Editing assignments using Microsoft WORD's track changes and comments.
- Editing and commenting within PDF files.

- Editing for adherence to styles using WORD and PAGEMAKER style sheets.
- Learning comprehensive editing of web documents that includes checking links, verifying effective link wording, and verifying page structure.

By using different software programs with different implementations, the students will be able to gain a clearer understanding of the underlying technology, rather than just how to use one software package.

Understanding how features are implemented differently will contribute to the student having a better grasp of the fundamentals and be better able to apply those concepts to other programs they will encounter in the future.

On the other hand, this strong focus on using technology for editing does come at the expense of time to focus on foundational skills such as grammar and basic copyediting techniques, not to

mention the rhetorical needs of comprehensive editing. Although it is not an either/or situation, balancing these does require the instructor to make serious decisions about what constitutes “good enough” with respect to both the student’s fundamental writing knowledge and technology knowledge. Too often bipolar positions tend to be taken with the student expected to either have a strong grasp of English grammar or to have strong technology skills to satisfy the job market.

Missing from both of these arguments are the contextual issues of relating technology use, the document, and the audience. Confounding the arguments is the fact that students often do not take an English grammar course and most undergraduate students only take one editing class. The result is a single course tasked with doing everything within a time span where many instructors are pressed just to teach fundamental (traditional) editing skills.

Developing a Technical Writing Style Workshop for Undergraduate Students

Dave Yeats, *Auburn University*

Keywords: English studies, pedagogy, style, workshop

When dealing with the issue of technical writing style, many programs take one of two approaches: either style is treated as a secondary issue in the context of courses designed around specific genres (reports, proposals, writing for the Web) or, as is sometimes the case in MA or PhD programs, excellent writing skills and an understanding of style is assumed rather than treated as a specific topic of instruction. As some programs increase an emphasis on areas of technical communication like project management, single sourcing, content management, and globalization issues, the issue of technical writing style is especially important because above all else, employers looking for technical writers who have excellent writing skills. Even though job advertisements

specify experience with and expertise in specific software packages, the one thing that does not change as software tools come and go is the ability to understand rhetorical situations and resolve communication issues with an effective command of the language.

Some schools do teach style as a subject of its own. The University of North Texas, for example, lists a course called Style and Technical Writing in its catalog of graduate courses. Though I don’t have any information about how the course is designed and delivered, the description on the UNT page mentions that the course requires students to study the “principles of technical style with intensive practice in writing and analyzing technical prose.”

The goal of many technical communication programs at both the graduate and undergraduate level is to equip students with the theoretical and practical skills that will enable them to be flexible and productive technical communicators in the workplace. Toward that end, students are introduced to a number of specialized topics that introduce them to a number of rhetorical situations and samples of good writing. However, to be flexible, students should be instructed on how to produce solid writing outside of the genres of reports, computer documentation, or writing for the Web. Undoubtedly, students will encounter writing situations that instructors may never have anticipated. Instruction in writing style will give students the ability to both self-critique and accept the critiques of others with a focus and precision that is sometimes not possible in a course focused on a specific topic or genre.

In the spirit of foregrounding the instruction of style, I plan on introducing a technical writing style workshop course at the undergraduate level at Auburn University modeled after creative writing workshops. Specifically, the course would be largely a careful look at student work by both the instructor and peers in the course. Students would take turns submitting their work to the entire class for evaluation, and would silently observe a discussion of their work that highlights both the successful and unsuccessful aspects of their prose. Teaching a course on technical writing style as a roundtable workshop will hopefully result in a few benefits for the students:

- Students will gain insight into their writing by receiving many independent analyses of their work rather than only the instructor comments.
- Students will get exposed to a wider variety of potential style issues because of their careful reading of

their peers' work and by hearing the instructor's recommendations to their peers.

- Students will become more comfortable listening to and responding to critiques of their work—hopefully developing an ability to recognize and effectively use constructive criticism.
- Students will be able to direct more attention to word choice, sentence structure, and other stylistic issues for specialized purposes such as persuasion, instruction, and writing for content reuse.

I would argue that the ideal placement of this course in a sequence of courses would be early in a student's career (perhaps by the junior year for undergraduates), I believe instruction in style may be beneficial at any point. I anticipate that my class will largely be made up of upperclassmen.

Another potential benefit of such a course would be the goodwill of the English department as a whole. At this point in the field of technical communication, many departments find themselves either making permanent separations from departments of English or making some official or unofficial agreement to operate independently while remaining under the English umbrella. Even in departments without such formal separations, various disciplines within English studies tend to operate in discrete, independent ways rather than exploring potential collaborations with colleagues. Teaching a course in technical writing that so freely borrows from traditional creative writing pedagogy may offer a new way to strengthen bonds within a department and provide an opportunity to work with creative writing faculty in developing guidelines, course policies, and procedures.

At the conference, I hope to discuss the merits of adopting such a course structure

and gather advice about choosing assignments and delivering course content.

Administrators' Issues and Narratives

Moderator: Margaret Hundleby, University of Toronto

Program Sustainability and Faculty Sabbaticals: Challenges for Lone Ranger Program Administrators

David Alan Sapp, *Fairfield University*

Keywords: faculty, Lone Ranger, program administration, program sustainability, sabbatical faculty

The challenges facing “Lone Ranger” faculty who direct technical communication programs have been discussed in CPTSC proceedings (Carnegie, 2003; Hea, 2003; Nardone, 2003) as well as other published venues (Latterell, 2003; Sapp, 2006). These discussions have addressed issues regarding untenured junior faculty in our discipline who are hired to run small programs in which they are the sole full-time faculty. However, not yet addressed by this literature is what happens after lone rangers earn tenure and begin planning their first sabbatical leave. When they accept a half- or full-year research leave, what is the impact of their absence on their program’s students, part-time faculty, curriculum, and assessment efforts? At this important juncture of their young careers, lone rangers must face a threat to their program’s sustainability.

Of course, we all believe that the world will fall apart without us to hold it together. When we change institutions, for example, it’s natural for us to worry about how our absence will impact the students and colleagues we mentored, or the campus committees on which we served. But, in almost all cases, the world continues to exist—our classes get taught, students and colleagues find other mentors, and campus committees grind on (and on). However, what happens when *we are* our programs? In other words, what happens when lone ranger faculty-administrators leave programs—permanently, or even temporarily—without any oversight? This is

a dilemma faced by many of our discipline’s lone rangers.

A cursory glance at our conference attendees suggests that some of the extensive growth in our discipline is in one-person programs, and further study is needed to determine to what extent these types of programs can prove sustainable. Although one of the attractive features of the lone ranger career is the relative autonomy that our circumstances afford us, it is clear that stronger support systems must be developed for lone rangers, not only to sustain those individual programs, but as a long-term disciplinary sustainability tactic.

During this presentation, I facilitated a discussion of concrete strategies for lone rangers and suggested additional ways that professional organizations such as CPTSC can play a role in making these small programs sustainable. The options, with their relative advantages and disadvantages, included the following:

- Hiring a colleague
- Pursuing an endowed professorship
- Securing a visiting professorship
- Developing industry partnerships & using adjunct faculty more strategically
- Convincing interdisciplinary colleagues to share full-time hires

The participants agreed that it is important for stronger support systems to be developed for lone rangers, not only to

sustain those individual programs, but as a long-term disciplinary sustainability tactic. The outcomes of this discussion proved important not only for lone rangers building careers at small universities and colleges but also to our discipline's large doctoral programs where effective career planning should be provided for doctoral students, some of whom will end up directing these one-person programs.

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Personal Journey of a Untenured Technical Communication Program Administrator in a Tenure Track Position: Lessons Learned

Wanda L. Worley, *Purdue School of Engineering & Technology, IUPUI*

Keywords: personal narrative, program administration, technical communication faculty, untenured writing program director

Each of us has a story to tell; I would like to share part of mine. My hope is that veteran and nonveteran writing program administrators, and anyone thinking of entering the program administrator ranks as an untenured faculty member in a tenure track position, can learn from my story. Five years ago, I was hired as an assistant professor (tenure track) to direct the Technical Communication program. After sharing a snapshot of my experience prior to accepting the program director position, I will share briefly some of the highlights of my journey. I will then share several challenges I have faced and lessons I have learned. Finally, I will offer a few survival strategies for others who are or may be in my position.

Life Before Becoming Program Director

I began my career as a technical communicator, although the title had not yet been invented. Fresh out of college with

a bachelor's in English from Indiana University-Bloomington, I was hired as a Forms & Procedures Analyst by a medium-sized utility gas company in Indianapolis, IN. Soon after being hired, I began my master's program at Indiana University-Bloomington and started teaching writing as an adjunct in the Department of English at Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis. I continued as an adjunct for several years while working full time in positions outside academia. After leaving the university, I moved to Wisconsin. More than ten years later, with PhD (University of Wisconsin-Madison) in hand, I found myself once again an adjunct at IUPUI teaching writing classes in the Department of English. When a full-time, nontenure track lecturer's position opened up in the department, I applied for and got the job.

At the time, the Technical Communication (TCM) Program was a joint program in the School of Liberal Arts

(Department of English) and the School of Engineering and Technology. Although the School of Liberal Arts administered the tenure and promotion process of the TCM faculty, the program was physically located in the School of Engineering and Technology. At the invitation of the then director, I began teaching a TCM course each semester. When the director of the program retired in 2003, I applied for the position and was hired.

Life after Becoming Program Director

When I accepted the position as program director, the School of Engineering and Technology took full responsibility for the program. As an assistant professor in a tenure track position, I found myself directing a program with one full-time faculty member (recently tenured), eleven TCM adjuncts, and a part-time administrative assistant. A lecturer and an assistant professor from the Department of English also taught a course in our program the first few semesters, and the lecturer continues to teach a course each semester.

As a service program for all the programs in the School of Engineering and Technology, we were a stand-alone program (i.e., not part of a department). So for four years, I reported directly to the Dean of the School. In my new role as program director, I naturally found myself consumed with the responsibilities of running the program: for example, recruiting, hiring, training, and managing adjunct faculty; coordinating curricular matters; coordinating course offerings; ordering textbooks; assigning teaching schedules; managing the budget; handling all the student test-outs; handling all conflicts among students and faculty; running the TCM Writing Center (hiring, training, and managing tutors); overseeing the TCM Certificate Program; attending campus events to represent the TCM program; guest lecturing on effective technical report writing and technical oral

presentations. In my first year as program director, I led the search and screen committee to hire a lecturer for TCM.

I also taught classes and served on committees. As I prepared my three-year review dossier, I realized that other than accumulating service points, I had done little to further my tenure track journey. The review committee recommended reappointment, but stressed that I needed to “publish or perish.”

Four years into my journey as program director, in August 2007, the School of Technology was reorganized; Technical Communication, Architectural Technology, Interior Design Technology, and Computer Graphics Technology were merged into the Department of Design and Communication Technology. I was offered the Associate Chair’s position. I accepted.

Challenges

David Alan Sapp (2006) pointed out, “A review of recent issues of the MLA Job Information List reveals that a majority of advertised positions for technical writing program administrators are for assistant untenured faculty members, not for associate or full tenured professors” (p. 201). So I am not unique, but knowing that has not made my journey any less challenging. I had been a program director several times outside academia, so felt competent from the beginning in my role as program director; what I sorely underestimated was how much time and attention I should have been spending on my tenure and promotion activities.

Being a program director of a stand-alone service program and reporting directly to the Dean of the School, without question, my biggest challenge was balancing my role as administrator and my role as a tenure track assistant professor. As I stated earlier, I started out focusing primarily on my role as program director and as teacher. In these roles, I had more than enough opportunities to fulfill service

requirements. The areas I spent the least amount of time on during those first three years were ones valued most highly by tenure and promotion committees in my university—research and publishing. How could I possibly find time to conduct research, to write and publish articles, to present at conferences? I had a program to run (teachers to hire, textbooks to order, teaching schedules to prepare, committee meetings to attend, etc.) and classes to teach (reports to evaluate, class activities to prepare, etc.).

A few of the other challenges I faced included ensuring program integrity, including the TCM Certificate and the TCM Writing Center, and my integrity as a teacher. I was challenged also to keep abreast of technology changes that affected our course offerings. Our university course management system (CMS) changed dramatically during this time, and I faced the challenge of modifying the online courses to fit the CMS and making sure my adjunct faculty had every opportunity to learn how to use the new system.

Lessons Learned

Where do I start? I have learned that I needed to clone myself because the days were just not long enough for me to get everything accomplished. Then I figured out that even if I had several clones, my clones and I still wouldn't be able to get everything accomplished. I have learned that an untenured writing program director in a tenure track position needs to balance her role as director and as untenured assistant professor: she needs to balance meeting the needs of the program and meeting her tenure and promotion needs. I have learned that this balancing act needs to start day one, not four years into a five-year process. And perhaps most importantly I have learned that untenured program directors need "a few good mentors."

I have also learned that program directors need excellent leadership skills,

coaching skills, written and oral communication skills, conflict management skills, and interpersonal communication skills; they need to be able to see the forest and the trees at the same time; they need to know how and when to delegate (but must have someone to delegate to); they need to know how to prioritize; they need to be able to articulate clear, measurable goals; they need to know how to network and how to build networks; they need to know how to manage a budget; and on and on. (This list is not in any particular order.)

Survival Strategies

How, though, does one naïve to the tenure process accomplish the balancing act from day one? I suppose some faculty give themselves extra time by changing universities before they are faced with going up for tenure. Many circumstances, however, may preclude one from moving to another university. I draw on Sapp again who offers excellent survival strategies (pp. 213–217). Here I will briefly discuss the two most relevant to my situation:

- negotiating the job description and
- networking and seeking mentoring.

Negotiating the Job Description

Negotiating the job description is an excellent strategy if one knows what to negotiate and if the administration is willing to negotiate the job description. In my situation, being naïve to the institution of tenure, I did not know what to ask for. So a survival strategy I suggest is to do what I preach to my students: RESEARCH! I should have known more about tenure than I did. As I write this, I am a bit puzzled that I did not do more research, but after all, I was applying for a position at the university where I already taught. I had spent years teaching there—part-time and full-time—so I knew the university. But I had never been in a tenure track position and I knew few people in the engineering and technology

school, which brings me to the second strategy.

Networking and Seeking Mentoring

If accomplished, this strategy—networking and seeking mentoring—is key to surviving and thriving! I needed a mentor from day one, someone to help keep me on the “tenure track,” someone to help me see when the pendulum was unbalanced. I reported directly to the Dean and certainly did not expect him to mentor me. Could/should I have sought one myself? Of course, but building relationships with faculty you do not know takes time. Outside the TCM faculty, I did not know my colleagues in engineering and technology, not really. I did, however, know my colleagues in the Department of English, but many thought I had moved to the *dark side* when I took the position in technical communication. I have wonderful allies in my school now, but that did not happen overnight. I had to earn their respect.

Why, though, should the junior faculty member be totally responsible for finding a mentor? In defense of faculty who do not voluntarily take on the mentoring role, as Poor, Gray, and Koseff (2008) pointed out, “most faculty are not trained to mentor.” Mentoring takes a great deal of time, something many tenured faculty have little of. And mentoring is not always rewarded. Because mentoring is so important at all levels, if they do not already, universities, schools, and departments should promote and reward mentoring. I know my chances

Proposed CPTSC Publications

Moderator: Karla Saari Kitalong, University of Central Florida

Beyond the Water Cooler: Proposing a Scholarly Journal that Emphasizes Programmatic Issues in Technical and Scientific Communication

Tracy Bridgeford, *University of Nebraska at Omaha*

Bill Williamson, *Saginaw Valley State University*

Karla Saari Kitalong, *University of Central Florida*

Keywords: official CPTSC journal, programmatic issues, proposed journal, scholarship

of successfully making it through the tenure and promotion process would have improved immensely if I had had a mentor in place starting August 1, 2003.

Final Comments

My tenure dossier must be ready for outside reviewers in a few months. My story, although not new or unique, needs to be told over and over. If I had read it five years ago, my journey would have been altered. New technical writing program administrators who are untenured assistant professors find themselves on a tenuous balance beam for five years. Individually each role takes tremendous time and effort. Add to that, the time and effort one gives trying to balance the roles. Obviously, the challenge is one that needs help and support. If that help is not offered freely by deans, department chairs, and colleagues, untenured program directors must find the time to make it happen if they want to survive.

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One of the hallmarks of sustainable growth in a discipline is the establishment of a journal. Although technical communication hosts a number of journals (*Technical Communication Quarterly*, *Technical Communication*, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *Journal of Technical Writing and Communication*), no journal exists for the purpose of disseminating theory and practice concerning the administration of academic technical communication programs. And we believe the time has come to devote a journal to programmatic issues in Technical Communication (and all of its name variants).

In this presentation, we will outline a proposal for a new academic journal, tentatively titled *Programmatic Perspectives*, to be sponsored by the Council of Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication (CPTSC). This online journal will provide a venue for the discussion and exploration of issues relevant to creating, administering, and sustaining academic programs.

We invite discussion about the need for and desirability of the proposed journal, stories about publication successes (and failures) related to the scholarly discussion of programmatic issues, and feedback on the proposed journal's content and publication logistics.

Why Now?

Perspectives from the last three or four decades reveals an evolution in conversations from a strict focus on practical issues such as writing in professional contexts or teaching genre characteristics to more theoretical discussions. The last two decades brought more theoretical discussions into perspective, focusing on humanist, narrative, activity, social, and critical theories into our conversations in ways that made technical communication an academic force in English departments.

From our perspective, program administration is the new, emerging practice that demands practical and theoretical attention. A journal devoted to such issues could further enrich the field by expanding on the theoretical models we use to explore its various dimensions. Systematic thinking requires that we look beyond the context of individual classrooms or courses to see the complete vision of how programs help shape current and future professionals.

By creating this journal, we see its scholarship following the example the CPTSC community has already set for such discussions: looking for the broadest and most diverse range of intersecting discussions. How far ranging are the topics, issues, challenges, theories and practices that inform our work as program administrators? Bringing our work back to a programmatic focus—from both a practical and theoretical perspective—is really just another way of examining the core of the profession itself. It is through program administration that we craft environments within which we foster the growth and change of the profession and the support and encouragement of new and experienced program directors. Journal publications are the spaces where academics have the greatest influence, can make the most difference. And because the journal will be housed online, publication (and conversations) will be faster, more cost effective, and more immediate—much like the elation one feels during those intense discussions at the annual CPTSC meeting.

A Conspicuous Gap

With technical communication program directors facing challenges as diverse as shrinking budgets, enrollment fluctuations, legislative mandates to demonstrate accountability, and the effects of a changing global marketplace on student job placement rates, the current supply of

insightful articles is insufficient. Juxtaposing this dearth of sustained publication in technical communication program administration against the growth of CPTSC and the importance of the annual conference to the development and sustainability of the community, we believe it's time to launch a peer-reviewed journal to help build and sustain this vibrant community and facilitate the sharing of research, ideas, and information.

Although several scholarly venues offer spaces where programmatic issues relevant to TSC might be explored, the available literature seems woefully inadequate to support the many technical communication teacher/scholars who take on program administration roles at some point in their academic careers. The comparatively few relevant articles that have been published are scattered among several journals (primarily *Technical Communication Quarterly*, *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, *College Composition and Communication*, and *College English*), the mission statements that lack specific reference to programmatic issues in *Technical and Scientific Communication*. *Technical Communication Quarterly* is typical of these journals; its mission statement states that it "publishes research focused on technical communication in academic, scientific, technical, business, governmental, and related organizational or social contexts," and that acceptable topics include communication design, pedagogical approaches, the role of digital technologies, ethics, the rhetoric of workplaces or professions, the practices of publication management, dialogue between academics and practitioners, research methods, and connections between social practices and organizational discourse.

Other journals similarly exclude program administration as a relevant topic. One might expect to rely upon edited collections and electronic for a such as the *Writing Across the Curriculum*

Clearinghouse to carry the heaviest load in disseminating program-related scholarship for the technical and scientific communication community, but in fact the bulk of program-related discussions appear to be ephemeral, taking place on listservs and around department water coolers. Anecdotal evidence suggests that some technical communication program administrators have had difficulty placing articles about their scholarship of administration, despite the fact that in other sectors of our field, program administration scholarship is flourishing (consider, for example, the *WPA Journal* and the *WAC Journal*, both available electronically). Topics of interest to program administrators in general include curriculum and program design, student job placement, the establishment of corporate and community alliances, professional certification, and the writing across the curriculum movement, not to mention historical accounts that situate the current state of the field within a sustained context. However, these topics are seldom addressed in journals or other publications directed at technical communication faculty. Only in the important area of assessment has the volume of articles aimed at technical communication program administrators seemed more adequate and timely, with many publications of general interest to faculty across rhetoric's sub-disciplines.

The annual meeting of the CPTSC emerges like a beacon of hope in this dark world of technical communication program administration scholarship. Its proceedings, which are underutilized and undervalued as scholarship, nonetheless serve as an important archive of relevant issues and workable solutions. *Programmatic Perspectives* would strengthen that beacon's signal, and thereby illuminate more dark corners for more technical communication program directors.

Publication Logistics

In the tradition of scholarly publishing, *Programmatic Perspectives* will follow standard editing practices employed by print journals. But by publishing on the Web we see a variety of opportunities for additional and evolutionary conversational spaces that can potentially revolutionize communication practices (and thus scholarly practices).

Academic values demand that any sanctioned scholarly venue meet certain long-standing criteria.

Peer review

The journal content will be peer reviewed to meet academic standards for promotion and tenure, among other things.

Academic rigor

The journal content will meet standards for academic rigor, as they are defined and refined by the scholarly community.

Timely content

The journal content must be timely, meeting the needs of the community to build its academic discourse. Electronic publishing on the Web enables features not available in print publications. Although the Web welcomes hypertextual writing and publication, we propose that articles be published in PDF format—at least in the beginning. Editing hypertextual articles requires a more rigorous technical knowledge, energy, and time not feasible at this time. Publishing the journal in PDF format establishes a scholarly identity quickly and efficiently.

Programmatic Perspectives Journal

Each issue of *Programmatic Perspectives* may include several content features:

Scholarly Articles (pp. 3–5)

Articles will focus on programmatic issues from both theoretic and practical

perspectives. During the first year, we plan to solicit articles about specific topics that will identify gaps in scholarship.

Developing Scholars' Forum

The developing scholars' forum will highlight one graduate student's research in each issue. This column provides space for graduate students to describe their research.

Special Columns

Special columns will provide new a forum for discussions or continue discussions begun at the annual meeting, including a directors' column, a professional development column, and an editorial board column.

Topical Wikis

Topical wikis will offer the community opportunities to contribute directly to the building of community knowledge.

Community Response Forum

Academic discourse includes both discussion threads that play out in series of articles, perhaps over several years, and response to work that is more immediate. *Programmatic Perspectives* will foster both.

Program Showcases

Program showcases will highlight one program per issue. This feature provides space for program directors to describe their programs in a public forum. These descriptions can potentially help directors of both established and new programs conceptualize their offerings.

Book Reviews

Book reviews will focus on work of particular interest to administrators of writing and design programs.

Transmitting Administrative Knowledge for Sustainable Growth

Alice P. Philbin, *James Madison University*

Keywords: administrative and sustainable growth

The annual CPTSC conference, the papers resulting from it, and the newsletter of CPTSC help all who direct or coordinate technical and scientific communication programs with new research in the field, discussion of administrative and curricular issues, and an assortment of issues and concerns. I challenge the organization to do more: we need to develop a guide to growing, managing, and leading TSC (technical and scientific communication) programs. The guide I imagine would contain discussions of theory, practice, and advice for leaders of programs.

To my knowledge, no such text exists for directors of technical communication programs, particularly for those who direct independent departments of technical communication. I have studied the literature of the Council of Writing Program Administrators (2008), explored various Webs, and follow the archives of the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing. (2008) I also study the Society for Technical Communication journals and Webs. Although some literature exists through the College English Association (2008), I suggest that a guidebook or handbook would be a real service to members of the profession, and I think CPTSC is the appropriate venue through which to explore this topic that unites both experienced and new program administrators.

I propose this project for three reasons: Transitions of Leaders

The professoriate is graying. Within technical communication, retirements and deaths have occurred in recent years, and these events cause me some concern about

the transmission of knowledge about not just the field in general, but about *praxis*—the strategies and actions that govern day-to-day matters, everything from administrative meetings to counting FTEs.

Transitions of programs

Leaders of TSC programs encounter various mandates for change, and I have observed that the pressure of change has increased in recent years. A specialization within an English department may become an online program, add a master's or doctoral program, or may be reconfigured so that a TSC program becomes independent (as has happened at my university).

Impacts of Politics Upon Programs

I have observed the trend that universities now must respond to federal—not just state—mandates. The Spellings Report (1996) offers a somewhat problematic instance of this trend. For example, in some institutions with well-established assessment programs, administrators have embraced the concept of outcomes assessment that employs instruments developed not by educators, but by quasi-governmental agencies such as the Rand Corporation. (2008) Leaders of programs are often placed in a reactive mode when these decisions occur. Coping strategies exist for such contingencies, but I find no written record of them for administrators of TSC programs.

I invite this group to discuss several questions about my proposed project:

1. Would you find a guide or handbook useful?
1. If so, what form should it take?
2. What issues should the text address?

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Assessment II: Measuring Yield

Moderator: Elizabeth Pass, James Madison University

Assessing Progress in Technical and Scientific Communication Programs: Do We Need National Guidelines for Student-based Outcomes?

Elizabeth Pass, James Madison University

Keywords: accreditation, assessment, certification, outcomes assessment, outcomes-based assessment, student-based body of knowledge

How do we, collectively or individually, define healthy growth or progress in technical and scientific programs?

That programs assess is a given. We assess to evaluate students, faculty, and our program. According to the *University of Central Florida Academic Program Assessment Handbook* (February 2004), effective program assessment starts with setting the mission (or purpose), goals, and objectives (outcomes): "One of the primary purposes of student learning outcomes assessment is to provide feedback to determine how the program can be improved to enhance student learning" (p. 28). But if technical and scientific communication programs are conducting outcome-based assessment, on what are they basing the outcomes? Are there some over-arching guidelines or standards?

I looked at the Association of Teachers of Technical Writing, CPTSC, and Society for Technical Communication Web sites, and

they had the range of no mission but goals, no purpose but mission, mission and goals, etc. However, none has objectives or outcomes for their organization. Is it appropriate for them to have objectives or outcomes?

While writing this proposal, I have discovered that STC has formed a Body of Knowledge committee, headed by Hillary Hart, with representatives from the various technical communication organizations. They had been discussing it in their meetings since (from what I can tell) April 2006, but have formalized the committee and begun work. Also, CPTSC is doing something similar.

I think this is a great first step. Establishing a body of knowledge is the path to establishing a mission and goals for such an organization. However, I'm interested in how that then gets implemented. One of the ways a body of

knowledge can be implemented is through student-based outcomes assessment.

What I mean by student-based outcomes assessment is that we do not assess the learning and teaching process, but the value added to the product (the student) under our guidance, training, teaching, etc. We measure the end product—what we graduate.

Other measures assess how many faculty there are, money spent per student hour, % of facilities used compared to university facilities, how many a department graduates, and so on. Student-based outcomes assessment doesn't do that: it looks at students after they graduate, in their job, the value added, what we added to the student.

For a national outcomes-based assessment, we would need longitudinal assessment: what entry level jobs students have achieved, what students are doing after five years, and what they are doing after ten years. Also, we would need to do employer surveys.

Once we've established a body of knowledge for the discipline, let's say we implement this by doing outcome-based assessment and find skills and knowledge necessary to engage successfully in the variety of technical communication careers.

Assessment Challenges for an Evolving Technical Communication Program

Kay Harley, Saginaw Valley State University

Keywords: assessment, curriculum, undergraduate

Sustainable growth in scientific and technical communication demands responsible assessment of current programs. However, assessing an evolving program presents several challenges. Saginaw Valley State University's pilot assessment of its relatively new undergraduate program in professional and technical writing (PTW) has revealed many of these.

What good are these guidelines and goals? Can these be established for programs granting technical communication degrees without certification or accreditation and it mean anything?

I used to be on the fence about this issue, leaning against certification and accreditation because it took away from a program's individuality. But I'm for it now. I believe programs granting technical communication degrees are accountable to the public. The Spellings Report calls for federal oversight. It calls for assessment to assure the public, and calls for comparisons between institutions, as well as performance-related data. We need to control our data now. For example, the University of Texas system assesses and posts their results. Their test was developed by the Rand Corp—a business. Administrators are making these decisions, and using standards established by business.

We have a responsibility to the public and to our profession; we are guaranteeing that students have a certain skills and knowledge set when they walk out the door. But what exactly are these skills and knowledge? And how do we measure them? Is it time to start accrediting?

Developing and Refining the Assessment Instrument

Because our program is housed in an English department with emphases in several areas, assessment of the PTW major needs to reflect both the broad English department goals and those specifically developed for the PTW program. We initially developed a rubric that scores

twelve qualities and characteristics across six categories of student learning objectives (audience, purpose, genre, context; language and conventions; document design; collaboration; project management; tools and technology). In our pilot, we were unable to adequately assess collaboration and project management; we need to refine our instructions or explore alternate assessment methods for these objectives.

Accommodating Changes in Requirements, Course Content, and Faculty

During the last two years, we have added four new courses, revised 3 courses, and added stronger prerequisites and a clear sequence of core requirements. We have also added faculty with new areas of expertise and lost faculty instrumental in initially creating the program. The student portfolios we are currently assessing reflect these changes and will continue to do so for several years as many students are part time, have entered the program under different requirements, and may choose to graduate under old or new catalogs. Although our assessment rubric should be valid for all majors, it most strongly targets current requirements and course content, which may put some students at a disadvantage or skew comparative results. We also have to decide whether to connect the portfolio to a particular course and/or make it a graduation requirement. The pilot was linked to a particular course, which we viewed as a capstone to be completed in students' final semester; however, we found students might be taking the capstone as much as two semesters (spring/summer and fall) prior to graduation, so portfolios varied significantly depending on how many courses and program requirements students had met.

Valuing Diversity

Students choose the PTW major for divergent reasons, and their work after

graduation represents a wide range of interpretations of "professional and technical writing." We have encouraged students to tailor their portfolio to their graduate school or professional interests. However, the diversity in what they have included has posed problems for assessment. We need to develop clearer guidelines, but want to maintain student ownership and responsibility for selecting what they feel best represents their work.

Technology Issues

Joe Strange and Molly K. Johnson's e-Portfolio land poster at last year's CPTSC highlighted the technology and institutional issues that complicate electronic portfolios: options (Web folios, open source or custom software or personal portfolio tools for course-management software); storage (including security, access and proprietary content); and viewing/using multiple software modes for graphics, text, and multimedia content. Our initial attempts using Sakai revealed students had many problems in how to submit material, as did faculty in accessing it. We need to solve the technology issues and provide more refined and detailed instructions on how to submit materials—at the same time, valuing the variety of materials students may opt to include. The challenge is significant.

Making Faculty Time for Assessment

A recent Higher Learning Commission re-accreditation visit highlighted program assessment, so such efforts have become an institutional priority. However, neither in our department nor in our PTW program has time or resources been allocated directly to this effort. With a 4/4 course load and multiple preparations, we need to develop reasonably time-efficient assessments that don't put an undue burden on the faculty. Our pilot effort involving six faculty and six portfolios has been fairly time intensive; we have a long way to go to find pragmatic, efficient, and

professionally responsible ways to manage ongoing assessment.

Using information gained from assessment for multiple audiences and stakeholders, Ann Brady and Patty Sotirin summarized three intersecting goals for portfolios—"first, to give students a way to collect, display, and reflect on their work; second, to 'monitor growth of the students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes' (Vavra); third, to evaluate curricular design and the development of programs themselves" (CPTSC 06). In addition, electronic student portfolios, the assessment rubric, and assessment results are potentially powerful ways to showcase the work of students and the PTW program to the rest of the English department, the university, the community, and potential employers. However, we

Quantifying Quality and Core Competency Skills

Don Cunningham, *Radford University*

Keywords: assessment, competency, quality, skills

As scientific and technical communication increases as a career specialization, a logical prerequisite is effective and well-designed curricula capable of effectively establishing a significant knowledge base. Yet there is disagreement regarding the essential characteristics of post-secondary educational programs designed to develop scientific and technical communication professionals. Determining the appropriate pedagogical emphases first requires identifying and quantifying effective and consistent workplace qualitative measurements for information products as well as essential core competency skills for practitioners.

During the past decade, many researchers have attempted to identify and measure professional technical communicators' value-added contributions to design processes as well as to the finished products (Cunningham, 2005; Fisher, 1999; Fisher & Sless, 1990; Henry, 1998). However, many value-added aspects

need to think carefully about whether the same assessment can meet these different purposes, looking particularly at issues of student permission and access by groups (possibly alumni or an advisory board) other than program faculty.

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remain unnoticed or are overlooked. Survey results indicate technical communicators perform various tasks that are generally not recognized. Design and development teams are therefore often unaware of how to effectively utilize technical communicators in cross-disciplinary team efforts (Fisher, 1998).

Many, in both industry and academia, advocate revising the perception of professional technical communicators as providing a service or support role and reevaluating the discipline to increase recognition, status, and legitimacy by shifting the focus from documenting products to managing information (Cunningham, 2005; Davis, 2001; Faber & Johnson-Eilola, 2002; Hackos, 1994; Harney, 2000; Hughes, 2004; Hughes, 2002; Johnson-Eilola, 1996; Mirel & Spilka, 2002; Redish, 2002.). Demonstrating the full economic value of the contributions offered by professional technical communicators as information managers in an organizational

environment first requires establishing meaningful business quality measurements. Despite many efforts, though, there has been little real success in recognizing and measuring information product quality (Carliner, 1997). A major hurdle is a lack of consensus about definable elements that represent quality and those that offer the greatest potential to add value.

Quality metrics should obviously reflect the effectiveness of information transfer. The metrics should also consider other value-added aspects—collaboration skills, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, effective use of resources—that are not as easily quantifiable. For outcomes assessment, meaningful measurements should first capture the degree to which certain aspects are represented in the curriculum and subsequently evidenced in student attitudes and behaviors. After such aspects are taught, measurements of student abilities to apply or demonstrate lessons could be quantified using artificial scales for the various degrees in which students articulate and demonstrate the respective quality aspects in a capstone experience.

While striving to prepare new graduates for industry, educators are also challenged to adapt curriculum to changes in technology, organizational expectations, and the economy. Competence for scientific and technical communicators is not static. It is constantly evolving along with the society in which it is practiced. To survive in today's highly competitive market, businesses demand graduates capable of functioning optimally and assuming greater roles across a broad continuum of responsibilities. Professional communicators must be able to change, use critical thinking and problem-solving skills, as well as collaborate effectively with multidisciplinary team members.

Without licensing or certification to measure program effectiveness, identifying aspects of the educational process that

need bolstering to meet the expanded competency needs of new graduates can be difficult. An effective workforce requires persistent reassessment of essential work competencies and incorporation of applicable content into program curricula. Yet effective quantitative measurements for program assessment are often limited and inconsistently applied.

The body of empirical data about which competencies are important and how useful these competencies are in various work settings is increasing. In addition to limited multidisciplinary knowledge, research suggests technical communication graduates are not adequately grounded in basic business operations, business planning, project management, and problem-solving skills (Cunningham, 2005 ; Hart-Davidson, 2001; Rainey, Turner, & Dayton, 2005; Turner & Rainey, 2005; Turner, 2004; Whiteside, 2002; Whiteside, 2003).

In this brief presentation, I examine the challenges of identifying and quantifying information product quality and measuring professional communicators' value-added contributions. I also discuss attempts to identify and assess core competency skills for practitioners and the implications this has on determining pedagogical emphases in programs at the post-secondary levels. I hope a discussion will focus on these important questions:

- Can we establish appropriate quality metrics for the degrees to which students articulate and demonstrate value-added aspects such as collaboration skills, decision-making skills, problem-solving skills, and effective use of resources?
- Can we enhance existing curricula and pedagogical emphases to address the growing body of empirical evidence that graduates lack core competency skills in

business operations, business planning, project management, and problem-solving?

- Can we identify and assess program effectiveness in preparing graduates for transition to business and industry with effective business operations, business planning, project management, and problem-solving skills?

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Crossing Borders and Going Global

Moderator: Alexis Poe Davis, East Carolina University

Resist Fallouts in International Technical Communication Development and Realize Sustainable Growth in the Global Economy

Han Yu, Kansas State University

Keywords: China, intercultural communication, international communication

With the increasingly globalized economy and communication network, to realize sustainable technical communication growth, we need to develop and envision international technical communication (ITC) as an integral part of our program. But as we seize on the opportunities presented by this emerging subfield (in research, teaching, and education partnership), we should also actively resist the fallouts from its rapid development—notably, the stereotyping of culture and subtle Orientalism. And a case in point, the development of technical communication in China.

Our earliest studies on this topic date back to the 1980s. Since then, North American delegations have traveled to China, Chinese educators traveled here, education partnerships emerged, and over twenty studies focused on the topic, including field reports from China, comparative studies of Chinese vs. American discourses/practices, and China's technical communication education initiatives. These efforts are making "TC in China" a distinctive and promising topic,

and helping researchers, teachers, and students to become sensitive to Chinese cultures. But with rapid development also came our (un-intentioned or even well-intentioned) stereotyping of what we call Chinese culture and subtle Orientalist arguments.

Because we are urged to be culturally sensitive, we have been tempted to discover "cultural differences" where there are none or where they are not so significant. Or we make superficial correlations between phenomena and "tip-of-the-iceberg" cultural factors, factors we easily see (and thus stereotype) as being Chinese: face saving, guanxi, Mao's political influences, etc. Or we rely on second-hand materials or translations several steps away from the original (and several steps closer to our assumptions). Although none of us intends to generalize, when we do not make efforts to examine China's subcultures or individual Chinese people's cultural uptakes, we continue to generalize (a short step away from stereotyping). These limited understandings of the Chinese context, coupled with our desire to

develop technical communication in China, lead to subtle Orientalism. For example, although we quickly spot and dismiss downright Orientalist arguments, we will, for instance, equate China's technical writing (or the lack thereof) and ESL education to a "deficiency model" and sincerely discuss how we may "help," "assist," and "influence" the Chinese based on the default US model.

These fallout, if ignored, can hinder our research and teaching of technical communication in China (or technical communication in other cultures, regions, and countries), the development of ITC as a sub-field, and the long-term development of technical communication in the global economy. It is essential that we, as individuals and as a program, be aware of

and actively resist these fallout. As teachers and researchers (as opposed to, say, well-intentioned tourists), we should be culturally sensitive in a much deeper sense: be willing to modify our methodologies for the international context, widen research perspectives, refine (or reject) cultural assumptions, and bring these sensitivities to our ITC classrooms. As a program, we should invest to build more in-depth and long-term international/intercultural teacher training or exchange programs, build more multidimensioned ITC curricula (even if it means introducing students to contradictions and unsolved questions), and encourage more culturally diversified presences in students, teachers, and administrators.

How Has Offshoring Affected Technical Communication Departments?

Kevin LaGrandeur, *New York Institute of Technology*

Keywords: distance education, globalization, India, industry-academe relationships

In a relatively recent (2003) article in *The Times of India*, technical communication experts from that country noted that, although "the demand for technical writers in India is rapidly rising...universities in the country do not offer any certificate courses in technical writing." One expert, Makarand Pandit, the organizer of the India chapter of the Society for Technical Communication, said, "A graduation and flair for writing suffice for qualifying to be a technical writer" in India. Additionally, Ritu Raju (2007), in her paper presented at the present conference of the CPTSC, noted the "extant practice of utilizing programmers to write technical documentation" as evidence that "existing avenues for technical communication education in India" are few (p. 46). This situation has only recently begun to change, and new educational options are still sparse. According to Wang and Baake (2006):

aside from an introductory technical communication course for nonmajors

(known in US universities as the 'service course'), there is little training in technical communication offered at Indian universities. According to the Society for Technical Communication (STC) India chapter's Web site, there is no formal education curriculum in the field of technical communication in India (p. 427).

It is clear that this lack of educational venues for Indian technical communicators threatens to degrade the quality of the documentation of American businesses that outsource to that country. As a result, it is also clear that India presents a ripe market for technical education programs, and that this bull market has existed for at least the last four years. How has this situation affected technical communication education providers across the globe and, especially, here in North America? This question really has a number of parts: first, has this lack of educational resources and training influenced enrollment in our

programs (especially online courses) by overseas students? Secondly, has the rise in offshore, professional writers in need of training had the opposite effect of causing a rise in offshore Technical Communications programs that will compete with ours? Third, have North American, online universities perceived this need, and if so, how do their programs compare with more traditional university programs?

To begin with the first of the previous questions, I can say that in my role as Director of Technical Writing Programs for New York Institute of Technology, we do not get many queries from India or other places, such as the Philippines, to which American corporations outsource. The total number of inquiries from these places in the last four to five years has amounted to about two per year. Additional evidence that Asian technical writers are not yet flocking to our university programs for training can be found in the preliminary nature of recent discussions and articles about this topic in our professional conferences and journals. For instance, one of the aims of Wang and Baake's article, written only a year ago, is to explore the possibility of marketing their American university's technical communications programs to aspiring Indian technical writers. An article written for a major journal by members of a major technical communications program such as Texas Tech University would not have such an aim if enrollment of students from India were already common. A possible clue to why enrollment in our programs has not increased is clear from their research results: for most Indians, our educational programs are just too expensive. Tuition for a year would cost the average Indian worker a year's salary (pp. 433–435).

Whether or not there has been increased interest on the part of Indian technical writers in American-based educational programs, some of those programs have already begun aggressively

marketing their programs to them. A quick survey of offerings, done via online search engines, finds that these programs are mainly being offered online by for-profit universities, such as DeVry. However, it is also clear that the bulk of these programs are not really for technical communications degrees or even certificates; instead, they are typically general business programs with just a little training in technical writing. Thus, what is being marketed to Indian students (and others) is simply repackaged goods. Another Google search using the terms "technical writing certificate programs" turns up a multitude of options for study. But these programs vary widely in the number and rigor of courses offered, and in the range of skills and knowledge taught. For instance, one program, offered by "Techwriter-Certification.com," offers a certificate in technical communication that consists of three courses, and the only types of documentation taught in these courses are instructions and proposals. There is no discussion at all of other important documentation types, such as reports, and no instruction in digital modalities, such as Web design. Moreover, the problem of affordability for Indian students is still an issue here, as none of these programs appears to offer price-breaks to students from poorer parts of the globe. A final problem with the marketability of online programs is that, according to Raju's comment in my paper session and to Wang and Baake (p. 434), prospective Indian technical writing students are still somewhat suspicious of online course delivery. This might be because they see some of the questionable qualities of online courses previously noted, and it points to the advantages of instituting some regulatory assurances of these kinds of courses.

As to the question of what offshore educational institutions offer in the way of technical communications programs, the situation in India is even more nascent and

wide open than here in America. According to the Indian Society for Technical Communication, there are at least two university-based programs available to Indian students and professionals, both new. One is an option in the Master of Communication and Journalism (MCJ) program at Calicut University, and the other is an abbreviated program offered by Stella Maris College, Chennai (stc-india.org). At least one other university program is mentioned by Indian technical writers in the forum at the Technical Writers of India (TWIN). Read more about the program at Anna University, in Chennai at their website, <http://twin-india.org/portal/node/2412>.

More common are educational programs offered by corporations such as software providers and other technical writing consultancies. These are for-profit, private sector businesses and are not accredited in any way that is apparent. They appear to simply hang out a virtual shingle on the Internet to attract students. Their programs are similar to the certificate programs being offered online in the United States. The marketing for these programs is fairly aggressive, and they pop up first in any online search. As a result, they are much easier to find on the Web than other types of programs for aspiring technical writers. Indeed, it is hard to avoid these firms' marketing. For instance, in the TWIN forum for India's technical writers, previously mentioned, the discussion string regarding educational options for Indian writers includes a post by a representative of a for-profit concern named Triumph India Learning Academy. This representative's posting starts as an apparent piece of innocently helpful information, but quickly becomes an aggressive marketing pitch:

Hi Asha,

I think Alex has answered most of your queries and to add further, try Triumph India, as we are the pioneer in Tech

Communication in India. We are based in Bangalore, with more than eight plus years of experience in Technical Writing. Triumph India Learning Academy offers in depth and practical training in Technical writing.

For more information about the courses that we offer and the career growth, please contact me on the contact number given below or please give me your contact number so that I can get in touch with you. See <http://twin-india.org/portal/node/2415>.

This pitch is from a private educational academy, but there are other sales pitches on the Internet for technical writing degrees by Indian corporations that have nothing to do with education, as such. For instance, one firm, K9 Technologies, in Chennai, India, is a four-year old software development firm that said on its Website that it has recently branched out into training. One of its training programs is for technical writers. There is no indication anywhere on its Website that this software development firm has any accreditation for teaching. They only claim that they have experienced technical writers teaching their classes and that they have a good job-placement record. See <http://www.k9technologies.com./individual.html>. This sort of "anything goes" procedure for participating in the technical communications education market does not seem helpful to the quality of the writing that ultimately comes out of India. But more importantly, for the present study, it indicates just how fast the market for technical writers is growing there: these procedures are essentially "boomtown" ones that pervade any hot market.

So it seems that, in sum, the market for technical writing programs in India—especially certificate programs—is ripe, so ripe that it has engendered a wild-west sort of atmosphere in the educational market, one with lots of demand, little regulation,

and a lot of potential. Traditional American educational institutions will probably not be able to compete well in this market until two important things happen: they will have to find a way to vie for students who have little money to spend on such education, and regulators and/or businesses will have to become more demanding about the rigor and accreditations that technical communications programs are run on. Without a demand for more stringent regulation of the Indian and online educational markets, or simply more selectiveness among employers about whether and where writers have gotten their education, the cheap, flexible online institutions will elbow out the more expensive and staid traditional schools.

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Pollination: Ideas that Travel Well I

Moderator: Steve Benninghoff, Eastern Michigan University

Building Programs Around Ideas

Stewart Whittemore, *Michigan State University*
 Jeffrey T. Grabill, *Michigan State University*

Keywords: assessment, globalization, industry-academe relationships, theory-practice relationship

We teach in a relatively new professional writing program. Prior to that we both taught in an English department in a large, dynamic city and watched enrollments in technical and professional writing explode as information industries grew rapidly. In these different settings, there were interesting market pressures on growth. In the late 1990s, there was a market demand to produce more students trained in narrowly construed skills. Today, we look at our different local economy and are

concerned about how many professional communicators the market can bear. Although we respect market logics as indices of value that shouldn't be ignored, we recognize that they do enforce short-term thinking. Had we attended carefully to the market in the 1990s, we might have produced an overabundance of students with the software skills "the market" told them they needed. Similarly, today we might make equally short-term choices in a context that we perceive as constricting.

Our point in this position paper is to reflect on issues of permanence and change in programs and curricula. What, precisely, matters in terms of how we educate professional communicators? What intellectual practices “travel” well? Some of the issues in the current political economy of technical and scientific communication programs that concern us are:

- The meaning and practice of globalization. What globalization means in general and for our programs remains unclear, although we are fortunate to have a number of scholars working on this and related international issues. Still, the impact of distributed work, its related language practices and politics (English and US-centric), and its often quite different cultural practices should mean something for the intellectual work we ask students to do. But what?
- The meaning and use of theory. When we refer to what “travels,” we are using a metaphor for theory. What makes our programs intellectually coherent? For some programs, this is clearly some version of rhetoric—but which ones? And what about those programs who orient differently? If we want to educate students to adapt to change, then they need to understand and be able to articulate their work as intellectual work. What in our programs enables these habits of mind?
- The meaning and use of theory, part 2. Or, how do we understand learning in our programs? In our program, we give lip service to helping students learn how to learn. We understand, we think, that our best efforts are likely focused on helping students leave us with the habits of mind that will enable

them to pose meaningful problems, ask good questions, and help their organizations find solutions. This habit of inquiry seems essential, but we are vague, at best, in our ability to point to curricular and programmatic strategies that facilitate learning.

Whenever we consider the question of which intellectual practices in technical and professional communication travel well, we immediately think of the characteristics of symbolic analytic work that Robert Reich (1992) identified in *The Work of Nations: Preparing Ourselves for 21st Century Capitalism*. Briefly, these qualities are collaboration, experimentation, abstraction, and system thinking. We don't think it's necessary to spend time rehashing these terms here or discussing the ways they map quite nicely to the goals of technical and professional communication programs because this has been argued successfully elsewhere (most notably by Bill Hart-Davidson in *Technical Communication 48.2* in 2002). In a nutshell, graduates should be: (1) effective researchers (experimentation); (2) know how to play nice with others (collaboration); (3) be able to theorize from patterns or trends in data of various types (abstraction); and (4) be always capable of seeing the big picture, of getting the global perspective (system thinking). We have and continue to accept these as worthwhile skills for graduates to possess regardless of the types of workplaces they go into.

And yet it seems to us that by concentrating too closely on training students to focus on the big picture, we may forget to foster a concern with the local perspective—a concern with the specificity of times, locations, situations, and persons that the oldest and, we believe, best strands of rhetorical theory call attention to. As just one of example of a rhetorical theory that can add nuance to our notions of symbolic analytic work, consider the notion of *kairos*. In the fall

2007 edition of *College Composition and Communication*, Michael Harker (2007) reminded us of the continuing importance of *kairos* to writing instruction. Citing a tradition stretching from Aristotle to Kinneavy, Harker noted that *kairos* "is where thought and theory converge with action," that *kairos* "beckons us to identify moments as critical," and that *kairos* inevitably involves ethics because situational exigencies compel us to make the best decision about what is appropriate based on incomplete information (p. 82).

Some of the findings from a current research project bear out Harker's claims. For his dissertation, Stewart is studying a team of technical writers in a commercial software firm. One interesting thing about these writers is that their official job duties entail that they be "advocates for a user perspective" in the software development lifecycle. Another interesting thing is that the firm has adopted an "agile" software development methodology organization-wide. This methodology places the technical writers into cross-disciplinary teams with developers and quality assurance folks and compels these teams to work together on tight one-month development runs (termed "sprints"). One of the principle vehicles of team awareness in the agile methodology is the daily meeting (the "scrum") that team members verbally—and quickly—communicate to each other what they've worked on the previous day, what they will

Sustainable Development: With Great Power comes Great Responsibility?

Steve Benninghoff, *Eastern Michigan University*

Keywords: sustainable development, sustainable growth

The question of what "sustainable growth (SG)" would mean for scientific and technical communication programs is a tricky, if interesting, one. Actually the choice of terms, of SG versus "sustainable development," I think can be argued is a mistake, depending on how the terms are understood. The core definition of "grow" is

work on that day, and any impediments or problems they have encountered. The writers do much their advocating for user needs through their identification of problems in these meetings. In other words, these meetings are not afterthoughts; they are one of the primary places that the invention process occurs in this organization; they are scenes of *kairos* in the fullest sense – ethically, epistemologically, aesthetically, and rhetorically. Our questions for discussion in this roundtable, then, are:

- How do we prepare students to read and respond to situations like these?
- How do we make students agile?
- How do we teach *kairos*?

We suspect that these are not things that we can do in a single semester.

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to get larger, and I don't think technical and professional communication (TPC) faculty really believe that our programs should get larger indefinitely, like Bill Cosby's "chicken heart," consuming all in their path until all degrees are technical and professional communication. Of course what is meant by sustainability here is a "collar" of sorts, for

how fast or controlled TPC would grow. But what we're after here, it seems to me, is potential answers to the questions of how, and in what ways, TPC programs ought to "develop"—how to change themselves and others—than just an issue of increasing size.

It is more of a question about the situational constraints of particular programs, their schools, the local economies, and the nation or world they serve. Thus for me the question of our sustainability levers around an old opposition between the ever-growing toolbox of skills and new communication applications we seek to support as well as the critical and social values/goals we all find so important. The weight of employment and a growing diversity of skills is, to say the very least, substantial.

A considerable amount of our sustainability comes from the pressure of supplying skills older members of the workforce have not had time to invest in—new capabilities. But there is quite a burden we should be careful of there, as well. We all know that the latest whistles and bells do not necessarily, in and of themselves, improve the communication products or, prominently, the results of them. Time and experience provide us with case studies of communication disasters, or simply mistakes, that have had consequences both large and small, and we teach these studies of the social effects of technological and communication practices to students along with the new capabilities that will get them

jobs and help their employers. The interesting questions become in what new areas and approaches are various programs developing in tandem with such new areas of specialization and new "tools," as well as how and in what way are different programs contextualizing these practices in social spheres that do not necessarily assume their positive effects. We must always be careful that the cutting edge will always cut in at least two ways.

Far from trying to strike a luddite tone here, what I am trying to emphasize is that the real difficult questions we work at, appropriate to our field, have to do with the wide variety of applications, of relevances, of capabilities and consequences, for the communication powers that we teach. At my institution, we are working on re-arranging and spreading some of the core skills of the field around more courses and renaming courses appropriately—a sustainability activity I will share as a lead into a discussion that I hope will touch on:

- What skills areas are various programs adding or shifting around?
- What forces are driving these shifts—economic, certainly, but social or critical?
- What ways of incorporating social/critical views are programs developing?
- Where do programs find support for such contextualizing?

Bridging the Gap to Other Disciplines: How Will Technical Communicators Negotiate the Development of Responsible Programs for Writing in the Disciplines?

Darla-Jean Weatherford, *Texas A&M University*

Keywords: engineering communication, pedagogy, rhetoric of technology, undergraduate curriculum

As an increasing number of universities implement programs that require students to receive writing instruction within their major disciplines, technical communicators face the challenge of negotiating the opportunity to teach those courses and, if

they succeed, developing programs that satisfy the needs of both the subject matter experts and the technical writing specialists. This may not be as straightforward as it sounds; subject matter experts may distrust the technical communication community,

and technical communication specialists may have limited—if any—real understanding of the subject matter.

Although writing across the curriculum has existed since the 1970s, the early stages of these developing programs have frequently been problematic. A dichotomy remains between SMEs who have little training in the principles and practices of technical communication and the writing instructors who have little comprehension of the subject matter area. SMEs sometimes have insisted that student writing products maintain traditions within the discipline that are contrary to the best of technical communication expertise, and writing teachers have lowered their standards to meet the “traditional” standards of the discipline rather than try to refine the discipline’s writing.

Solutions to these problems will not be easy, and they may challenge the argumentative skills of the technical communication instructors. A primary challenge in many universities will be convincing administration to fund positions for technical communication experts across the curriculum; many will find supporting SMEs less complicated and potentially less expensive than adding technical communication specialists. Additionally, the Technical Communication instructors whose education has been in liberal arts may have little or no appreciation for the complexities of the disciplines where they may be hired to teach; degrees in the arts often have limited study of mathematics or sciences, and liberal artists may have inaccurate

models of the realistic tasks or challenges of disciplines that rely heavily on those subjects.

Where technical communication specialists are hired to work with the science and engineering programs, they may be housed in writing centers rather than within a specific discipline. Although they may become conversant with the writing style and approaches of the discipline or disciplines participating in these centers, the Technical Communication instructors may still be somewhat limited in their ability to evaluate the technical merit of the work, that limits their effectiveness in guiding students to better writing. To overcome that shortcoming, Technical Communication instructors may need to undertake sophisticated efforts to develop a working vocabulary in and understanding of the research in the disciplines.

In petroleum engineering at Texas A&M University, a combination of these approaches—working with administration to develop the program, working with SMEs to develop a robust definition of good writing, and becoming conversant in technical vocabulary—has led to a program that has become well-respected within the industry in its 14-year history while other programs have come and gone.

If technical communication specialists are to assume meaningful, active roles in developing, managing, and growing interdisciplinary writing programs, we must find ways of addressing issues such as these.

Language Awareness

Moderator: David Alan Sapp, Fairfield University

Building Language Awareness in the Technical Communication Curriculum

Bruce Maylath, North Dakota State University

Keywords: documentation, global, international, language awareness, linguistic, technical communication, translation

Addressing the Twin Cities Society for Technical Communication chapter at its June 2007 luncheon, the president of Prisma International began by pointing out that native English-speaking technical communicators managing documentation for international markets (by hand count, about half of that day's attendees) make big and costly mistakes by not being aware that their native English differs, often dramatically, from the languages targeted for their documents' translation projects (Thompson 2007). In so doing, she identified by inference a gaping chasm in the curricula of most technical communication programs in the US, yet one that does not exist in programs in Europe.

Language awareness is a term and movement with much more currency and visibility outside the US than within it (White, Maylath, Adams, & Couzijn 2000). Cummins defined it as "both...the sense of knowledge of how language works...but also...[of] the intersections between language and power." A bit more expansively, the Association for Language Awareness defined it as "explicit knowledge about language, and conscious perception and sensitivity in language learning, language teaching and language use." Considering how central language is to technical communication, the lack of language awareness among US professional communicators is astounding.

I've frequently found that American students—even those majoring in technical communication and English—are painfully unaware of the ways languages vary and differ. Compared to other nations' educational systems, educational units in the US seem xenophobic in raising awareness of the fullness of language and its varieties. In a recent article in *CCC*, titled "The Erasure of Language," Susan Peck MacDonald described how English departments in the US came to neglect and then abandon the study and teaching of language in nearly wholesale fashion.

The current situation raises a huge red flag for the technical and professional communication field, when one realizes that most companies appoint technical communicators as project managers for their translation projects. Are we preparing students for this increasingly critical role?

While I served as director of the technical communication program at the University of Wisconsin—Stout (2000–2007), the program's industry advisory board was persistent in pointing out that a technical communicator's chief tool is not software but language. Many board members employ Stout technical communication majors as interns. Many expressed initial delight with their interns' competence with documentation technology but surprise and concern that their interns arrived consistently lacking even basic language awareness. For this reason, in its 2004 curriculum update, the program added a new required course, *The Structure of English*. Long standing in the university catalogue as an introductory linguistic course, the instructor now tailored it for students majoring in technical communication. With a view to managing translation and localization projects in particular, course objectives and assignments were emphasized to acquaint students with the English language's variations and the nature of its relationships to other languages.

The course has now been offered in this new form for three years. Many students say that it became their favorite, not only among required courses in the technical communication curriculum but throughout their entire college careers. Interns and graduates report that they reflect on the course daily, none more so than a 2006 graduate who landed a job as a translation project manager for Lionbridge in Seattle, where she manages many translation projects for Microsoft's documentation. The course also has become a reference point in other technical communication courses and

will be joined by a course in international technical communication, slated to be launched in the 2008–09 school year, with an option to take an equivalent course at Ireland’s University of Limerick during summers.

The lesson for technical and professional communication programs generally is that language awareness is obligatory in a global market where translation is commonplace and that it can be developed in students rather quickly and easily through a well-tailored course in introductory linguistics, whose lessons come into play in subsequent courses.

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Using Social Presence as a Curricular Strategy: Motivating Learners in the Technical Communication Curriculum

Aimee Whiteside, *University of Minnesota*

Keywords: communities of practice, curriculum, language

It is fundamentally important for future technical communicators to have a keen awareness of language—grammar, structure, and nuances (White, Maylath, Adams, & Couzijn, 2000). An essential part of that awareness is social in nature. Integrating a concept called social presence into the technical communication curriculum can be a rewarding curricular and instructional strategy.

Social presence involves five integrated elements that together determine a learner’s motivation to take an active role in their and their peers’ construction of knowledge (Whiteside, 2007). The five elements are affective investment, cohesiveness, interaction level, knowledge and experience, and instructor involvement. When curricular stakeholders and instructors understand and nurture social presence, learners’ motivation in their and their peers’ construction of knowledge can increase (Whiteside, p. 2007).

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This presentation focuses on strategies to integrate social presence into the technical communication curriculum. One example involves creating communities of practice (CoPs), or “groups of people who share a concern or a passion for something they do and learn how to do it better as they interact regularly” (Wenger, 1999). When technical communication students form a CoP, they enter into what Lave and Wenger (1991) coined as legitimate peripheral participation. In the legitimate peripheral participation, novice learners may not actively participate at first, but they become integrated into the CoP as they absorb the knowledge and experience from the more “expert” senior technical communication students. Wikis, Drupal, Moodle, and Listservs could all be potential tools for helping to nurture social presence within a Technical Communication CoP.

A key component of nurturing social presence in a CoP involves integrating it into the technical communication curriculum through community building and other curricular activities. Community building may involve leadership activities throughout the technical communication program. Other activities may include a mentorship program where a new student entering the technical communication program is paired with a junior or senior in the program. Also, students may be assigned to discover, explore, and connect to important technical communication resources, such as the technical communication Server, professional organizations, and landmark works.

Because social presence can be an essential component in determining learning outcomes, this presentation will generate a fruitful discussion of ideas regarding how to nurture social presence throughout the technical communication curriculum.

Heightening Language Awareness: Controlled Language in Technical Communication Curricula

Matthew Livesey, *University of Wisconsin-Stout*

Keywords: controlled language, intercultural communication, writing for translation

The need for effective technical communication across cultures and languages—and the resulting need for academic technical communication programs to prepare students through their curricula—has resulted in efforts to simplify documents, particularly procedural manuals used by companies and consortia whose products and processes cross borders. Efforts to codify and deploy limited vocabulary and usage rules (controlled language, or CL) began in the 1930s and have reached their most widely adopted form in the Simplified English (SE) standard of the Association Europeene de Constructeurs de Material Aerospacial (AECMA). Spyridakis et al. found that the use of SE significantly eased translation of documents into Spanish, though it did little

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to help translation into Chinese. The authors of that study postulate that SE's emphasis on words that are clear cognates of the translation target language and grammatical forms similar in the base and target language are likely the contributing factors to this difference. Graduates of technical communication programs increasingly are expected by their employers to arrive with an awareness of languages and their distinctions. Technical communication programs need to respond through their curricula.

Little research has been published on the effectiveness of using SE on translation efficiency since Spyridakis. But as writing for translation is a larger and larger focus of technical communicators, even in industries that, unlike aerospace, have previously had

little reason to translate their materials, the need to provide translated documents quickly and efficiently exerts pressure on technical communicators to write simplified base language texts. Writers in these companies may not follow a systematized protocol such as SE, but may simply follow guidelines specifying a CL: limited vocabulary, maximum reading level index scores, or other such measures.

The Technical Communication Program at the University of Wisconsin-Stout campus has the distinct advantage of enjoying a relationship with six European universities with translation studies programs. In a variety of technical communication courses, Stout students exchange documents with their counterparts studying translation. In one such example, Stout students in the technical writing course write 500-word step-by-step procedure documents in English, then deliver them to students in a translation class at the University of Paris 7-Denis Diderot, who then provide translations in French. The value to the Stout students is not the gratification of seeing their prose rendered into proper scientific French; most do not have any ability to judge the final product. But they do have an opportunity to communicate about their texts with the students in Paris, both by discussion board postings and videoconference. As a result, the American students get the chance see their writing from the perspective of an intelligent reader from another culture, which deepens their understanding of what effective communication really means.

Our Work/Our World:

The Role of Technical Communication in Social Justice

Moderator: Sherry Southard, East Carolina University

Our Work/Our World: The Role of Technical Communication in Social Justice

Jen Osborne, *St. Philip's College*

Ritu Raju, *Houston Community College*

Emil Towner, *Texas Tech University*

Keywords: global economy, social justice, outsourcing

As Maylath has argued, students must have instruction in cultural and linguistic differences if they are to be effective in preparing documents for translation. However, simply telling students to avoid language that is colloquial or otherwise culturally specific (sports-related metaphors, for example) is not enough; students must be made aware of the efficiencies that may be realized by communicating clearly in a CL. Students who are given a brief explanation of CL and its rules are able to generate text, and edit existing texts, in ways that increase the efficiency of the translation process. Pedagogically, this mechanism of heightening language awareness is effective regardless of whether the students themselves have had experience with other cultures, and therefore has value to student populations who do not have access to such intercultural experience.

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Panel Description

Technical, scientific, and professional communication affects many aspects of daily life, and consequently, it has great potential for creating and sustaining fairness, equality, and dignity in the global economy—not only for those whom we serve directly, but for their stakeholders as well.

According to the Society for Technical Communication's (STC's) Ethical Principles for Technical Communication, "We seek to promote the public good in our activities." But, what is, "the public good" and how do we "promote" it? This panel explores these questions, particularly as they relate to social justice issues in technical communication. See <http://www.stc.org/about/ethical-principles-for-technical-communicators.asp>.

Technical communication's strong roots in social justice are evident in influential articles such as Steven Katz's "The Ethic of Expediency." However, as the international director of BorderLinks, Rick Ufford-Chase, stated that social justice is "often defined less by words and more...by the direct actions and work of those that strive for it." By answering the call to directly work toward social justice, programs in technical, scientific, and professional communication can achieve healthy, principled growth, as well as address our ethical obligation to promote "the public good."

Jen Osborne

Assessing Ethics in Technical Communication Graduates

Are technical communication programs graduating students who have adequately learned and practiced the Society for Technical Communication's Ethical Principles for Technical Communication? How do we know the degree to which technical communication graduates know ethical guidelines for this field? If ethics in technical communication are important,

then technical communication programs should include assessments of ethics as part of its student learning outcomes assessment plan.

Assessment specialists commonly say that if a particular skill, ability, or principle is not assessed, it's not important. However, the perception that ethics are not only important but crucial in the field of technical communication is evident in STC's guidelines, in the many textbooks that focus on ethics, in textbooks that include ethical considerations of particular skills, and in conference proceedings. What is not readily apparent, though, is student knowledge and practice of these important principles.

This presentation aims to generate discussion about ways technical communication programs can conduct meaningful and manageable assessments of students' ethical attitudes and behaviors regarding their practice of technical communication. In particular, I believe such assessments would be made easier by converting STC's Ethical Guidelines for Technical Communication into a rubric.

A common rubric—either holistic or analytical—promotes consistency across the field and reduces the burden of developing individual program rubrics or other tools for evaluating ethics. In *The Impact of Student Learning Outcomes Assessment on Technical and Professional Communication Programs*, Jo Allen (2004) reminded us that "With well-constructed assessments that measure student learning and abilities, the faculty have hard data, rather than anecdotal perceptions, of their programs' strengths and weaknesses." (pp. 93–108) The data generated by such assessments can then be used to further strengthen student understanding and practice of the ethical guidelines for technical communication. This type of assessment aligns with Margaret Spellings' Commission on the Future of Higher Education and regional accrediting agency mandates for colleges and universities to be

held accountable for the quality of learning of their graduates.

Assessment of ethics student learning outcomes should be conducted within a framework of curriculum mapping that shows an organized, cohesive plan for introducing, developing, and assessing ethics student learning outcomes. And the results should be used by programs to strengthen the quality of student learning that focuses on ethical standards for technical communication. The key to meaningful and manageable assessment, however, lies in the assessment tool and its use.

Robert Barr and John Tagg (1995) stated in their much quoted article *From Teaching to Learning: A New Paradigm for Undergraduate Education* that “Certainly some learning is difficult, even impossible to measure. But it does not follow that useful and meaningful assessment is impossible.” (pp. 691–711) A common rubric based on STC’s Ethical Principles for Technical Communication is an important instrument that could make this important assessment possible.

Ritu Raju

Beyond Outsourcing: The Need for Technical Communication Programs in India

The outsourcing of business processes to India has generated much discussion, apprehension, and even invective. India is one of the major recipients of the outsourcing pie, on account of its vast English-educated workforce, low operating costs, and the presence of a well-organized software industry. Offshoring and outsourcing have also brought to the forefront the intercultural aspects of technical communication.

Researchers have studied extant procedures for documentation and opportunities for technical education in India. Anthes and Vijayan (2001) mentioned that offshore developers are “meticulous

about preparing documentation, planning for alpha and beta releases, establishing user acceptance procedures, regression testing procedures and the collecting metrics during development.” King (2006) referred to the trend of major offshoring vendors such as Wipro and Infosys recruiting engineering students in their last year of school and providing them with job-related course material in an attempt to ensure a steady supply of knowledge workers. Fay Hansen (2005) cited a study by AT. Kearney that offers the following information: “India graduates 2 million proficient English speakers with strong technical and quantitative skills. India’s top engineering schools pump out high-quality knowledge workers who are no longer simply coding software but moving up the value chain to high-level analytics and consulting.”

However one aspect of offshoring that remains under-scrutinized is the actual documentation process that accompanies and consummates the completion of outsourced projects. Junhua Wang and Ken Baake (2006) examined the existing state of technical communication education in India and concluded that online technical writing programs could fill a vacuum in this area.

My proposal aims to examine, in greater detail, existing avenues for technical communication education in India and the programmatic gap presented by the extant practice of utilizing programmers to write technical documentation. Specifically, I will examine the role of ethics courses as a vital component of such programs, not only as a means to infuse the element of ethical practice into outsourcing, but also as a long-term strategy to augment the corpus of social capital in India.

Emil B. Towner

Apologia: Exploring How Wrongs are Discussed and Reconciled

Social justice is founded on the belief that all individuals and groups who make up a

society deserve fair and just treatment. This concept is so pervasive that it cannot be contained within political borders, geographic regions, or even academic disciplines. Consequently scholars from a wide variety of disciplines are currently focused on studying wrongful acts and reconciliation efforts that have occurred throughout history and across the globe. Technical communication, however, has yet to make explicit contributions to this growing field of social justice.

The 2006 book “Taking Wrongs Seriously: Apologies and Reconciliation” provided an interesting example. Edited by Elazar Barkan and Alexander Karn (2006), it strived to go “beyond disciplinary boundaries” and national borders to offer a window into the realm of ethics. True to its mission, it features 14 chapters focusing on the roles and impact of apologies in reconciliation efforts. Each chapter is written by a scholar from a different discipline including history, crisis management, French studies, law, philosophy, public policy, and psychiatry. The field of technical communication, however, is noticeably absent—despite the fact that many chapters focus on subjects that are considered important areas of study in technical communication (such as commission reports, ethics, cultural issues, and even visual rhetoric).

Based on the presence of these topics, it is clear that technical communication is not foundationally divorced from apologia or reconciliation. Just the opposite, apologetic rhetoric seems directly in line with the ethical, process-oriented, and documentation studies in technical communication. For example, as Nicholas Tavuchis stated in his groundbreaking book, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation*, apology is a “moral expedition.” Moreover Elazar Barkan and Alexander Karn noted that apologies “can create a new framework in which groups may rehearse their past(s) and reconsider

the present.” These moral expeditions and frameworks are eventually cited in influential reports and are even documented as policies or reconciliation processes. Based on this, I suggest that technical communication as a field is already implicitly involved with the study of apologia and reconciliation; however it has yet to realize its full potential. By directly engaging in the study of these important areas in the future, technical communication scholars and practitioners can more deeply uncover and discuss new ethical and technical considerations, as well as take a prominent role in topics that eventually manifest themselves as commission reports, public policies, and processes.

In this presentation, I offer a discussion of how and why apologia and reconciliation should be explored in technical communication. In doing so, I will discuss the history and current state of apologia scholarship in general, as well as in technical communication. From there, I will offer examples of work that technical communication scholars and practitioners can pursue in the future.

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Apologia: Exploring How Wrongs are Discussed and Reconciled

Emil B. Towner, *Texas Tech University*

Keywords: apologia, ethics, social justice, technical communication

Social justice is founded on the belief that all individuals and groups who make up a society deserve fair and just treatment. This concept is so pervasive that it cannot be contained within political borders, geographic regions, or even academic disciplines. Consequently, scholars from a wide variety of disciplines are currently focused on studying wrongful acts and reconciliation efforts that have occurred throughout history and across the globe. Technical communication, however, has yet to make explicit contributions to this growing field of apologetic and reconciliation studies.

The 2006 book *Taking Wrongs Seriously: Apologies and Reconciliation* provided an interesting example of the noticeable absence of technical communication in this growing area of social justice. Edited by Elazar Barkan and Alexander Karn, it strived to go “beyond disciplinary boundaries” and national borders to offer a window into the realm of ethics. True to its mission, it featured fourteen chapters focusing on the roles and impact of apologies in reconciliation efforts. Each chapter was written by a scholar from a different discipline including history, crisis management, French studies, law, philosophy, public policy, and psychiatry. The field of technical communication, however, was noticeably absent—despite the fact that many chapters focus on subjects that are considered important

areas of study in technical communication (such as commission reports, ethics, cultural issues, and even visual rhetoric).

Based on the presence of these topics, it is clear that technical communication is not foundationally divorced from apologia or reconciliation. Just the opposite, apologetic rhetoric seems directly in line with the ethical, process-oriented, and documentation studies in technical communication. For example, as Nicholas Tavuchis (1991) stated in his groundbreaking book, *Mea Culpa: A Sociology of Apology and Reconciliation*, apology is a “moral expedition.” Moreover, Barkan and Karn (2006) noted that apologies “can create a new framework in which groups may rehearse their past(s) and reconsider the present” (p. 7). These moral expeditions and frameworks are eventually cited in influential reports and even documented as policies or reconciliation processes.

Therefore I suggest that technical communication is already implicitly involved with the study of apologia and reconciliation; however, our field has yet to realize its full potential. By directly engaging in the study of these important areas, technical communication scholars and practitioners can more deeply uncover and discuss new ethical and technical considerations, as well as take a prominent role in topics that eventually manifest

themselves as commission reports, public policies, and processes.

In this position paper, I explore this pervasive and important genre of communication and social justice. I begin with a brief history of apologetic rhetoric, dating back to ancient rhetoric and the Greek term *apologia*. From there, I explore our modern understanding of apologetic rhetoric, including the types of strategies used by offenders defending their actions, as well as the elements of community-focused *apologia* that are used to heal past wounds and reconcile the offended and the offender. In addition, I discuss three important works that set the stage for *apologia* studies in technical communication, and I offer examples of subjects that warrant analysis from a technical communication lens.

From Ancient Greece to Image Restoration

The term *apologia* has been traced back to the Greek root *apologos*, meaning “a story” (Partridge, 1977, p. 347). It first appears in the *Oxford English Dictionary* as *apology*—*apo*, meaning “away,” and *loyia*, meaning “speaking”—and is defined as a speech in defense or as a vindication of a person (Oxford, qtd in Tavuchis, 2004, p. 15). In ancient Greece, such a defense was described as a genre of rhetoric. Plato, Isocrates, and Aristotle all described *apologia* as a specific genre in which an orator defends himself or his actions against an accusation (Ryan, 1982, p. 254). Over time, however, the Greek term *apologia* evolved into the term apology. Despite this linguistic lineage, the two terms are today considered distinct—apology being an expression of remorse and *apologia* a defense or excuse.

In modern studies, the study of *apologia* has focused on the rhetorical strategies available to people who are faced with justifying their actions. In one of the earliest and most notable examinations of

those strategies, Erving Goffman explored the “remedial” options available to the offender in his 1971 book *Relations in Public*. By focusing on “remedial work,” Goffman stated that the goal is to transform or re-position an act that at first seems offensive into a socially acceptable one (p. 109). To achieve such a remediation, the accused must offer either an account of the act; an apology; or a request that notes that the victim granted a request prior to the act and, therefore, attempts to shift part, if not all, of the responsibility for a wrongful act on the victim.

In 1973, B.L. Ware and Wil Linkugel extended the options when they described four factors that apologists use when caught in a wrong: denial, bolstering, differentiation, and transcendence. The rhetorical force of a denial is that it allows the accused to respond to charges in a way that does not conflict with the values and beliefs of the audience. By denying the charges, the accused can still identify with the values that he or she is accused of breaking. Bolstering, on the other hand, takes place when the accused shifts the focus away from the act and instead “attempts to identify himself with something viewed favorably by the audience” (Ware and Linkugel, 1973, p. 277). Differentiation takes place when the accused focuses on the specific details and describes how his or her actions are less egregious than other similar acts. In contrast, transcendence shifts the focus away from the particulars of a situation to larger, abstract ideals that the audience views favorably.

More than twenty years after Ware and Linkugel, William Benoit (1995) introduced perhaps the most comprehensive theory of apologetic strategies—predicated on the belief that “restoring or protecting one’s reputation” is one of the primary goals of people who are accused of committing an offensive act (p. 71). His theory brought together many theories that came before

him into a single, more all-encompassing theory. This theory consists of five major image restoration strategies—each with a number of sub-categories—that are often used by people when they are accused of wrongdoing: denial, evading responsibility, reducing offensiveness, corrective action, and mortification.

Apologia as Reconciliation

Recently, a number of scholars have shifted the study of apologia away from image restoration theories, in favor of an apology process that leads toward the reconciliation of a relationship. In doing so, they draw a distinction between focusing on the needs of the victims and focusing on the face-saving desire of the rhetor. For example, Jane Yamazaki (2004) implied that classical apologia theory cannot account for the work of “rebuilding fractured relationships and effecting reconciliation between nations” (p. 169). Joy Koesten and Robert Rowland (2004) also argued that the rhetoric of atonement should be considered a subgenre of apologia—one that seeks “both forgiveness for a sinful act and restoration of the relationship once the sin has been expiated” (p. 69). Finally, Jason Edwards (year) identified what he called community-focused apologia, that begins the healing process between communities.

A critical element in this reconciliatory view of apologia is the act of acknowledging wrongdoing and apologizing for those acts. This idea is in stark contrast to the position held by image restoration theorists, who view apologetic exchanges as ineffective in repairing relationships and who contend that the primary virtue of an apology is that it completes the three-part drama of wrongdoing, guilt, and restoration (Hearit, 2006, p. 17). The reconciliatory perspective, however, is based on the belief that the goal of the apologetic exchange is forgiveness and restoration of social harmony.

One important similarity between the image restoration and the reconciliation perspectives of apologia is that apologies consist of varying components or aspects. For example, Aaron Lazare (2004) stated that the apology process includes acknowledging the offense, offering an explanation, communicating remorse, and offering reparations. Similarly, Edwards (2005) argued that community-focused apologies should consist of remembrance (a reckoning or explanation of the wrongs), reconciliation (identifying the victims and pledging to make amends), mortification (expressing remorse and asking for forgiveness), and atonement or some form of corrective action. Finally, Hatch (year) stated that reconciliation rhetoric consists of the offender confessing the truth and apologizing, the victims forgiving the offenders, and both the offender and victims engaging in discussions of reparations and restorative justice.

Apologia in Technical Communication

In the previous discussion, it's clear that apologia is well rooted in classical rhetoric and current studies of social justice. However, the question often remains how apologia can be considered relevant to technical communications studies. Three important works help us understand the direct uses of apologia theory in technical communication studies.

First, Dale Sullivan and Michael Martin (2001) described how apologia theory can help technical communicators make ethical decisions. According to their “retrospective narrative justification for ethical action” technical communicators, when faced with an ethical dilemma, can ask themselves what accusations could result from their decisions (p. 263) and “what story will I tell about it when called to give an account” (p. 269). Therefore apologia theory can help us better understand the broader implications and justifications for our actions.

A second article, by Michael Moran (2003), used apologia theory to analyze a commercial report written in 1586. The report was written by Ralph Lane in response to criticisms upon his return to England after leading a failed colony. Basing his analysis largely on Ware and Linkugel's theories, Moran examines Lane's attempt to answer those criticisms and make recommendations for future colonies. The work by Moran in this article establishes the value of apologia theory as a lens for analyzing important technical and business communications—such as progress and annual reports.

Finally, an article by Carol Siri Johnson (2006) described how studying apologia can help us gain insight into technical processes. In her examination of the iron industry in early America, Johnson analyzed how Peter Hasenclever described the iron industry in a letter he wrote to justify his expenditures in 1773. As Johnson stated, Hasenclever's apologia "described the building of the ironworks and shed some light on the state of the early American iron industry" (p. 175). Thus, Hasenclever's apologia provides insight into the technical process of building ironworks. Moreover, Johnson noted that Hasenclever's apologia sheds light on "the discourse environment of the ironworkers" and "the way knowledge traveled" (p. 175).

In addition to these examples, I suggest that technical communicators have only begun to realize the potential insights we can gain from studying apologetic rhetoric. For example, one important subject worth pursuing from a technical communication lens involves the use of new media rhetoric for product recall notices. Although the official recall notices issued by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission are not distributed as justifications of wrongdoing, the press releases, web text, and online videos released by corporations are often ripe with apologia strategies. For example, when Mattel issued a voluntary recall of several toy lines due to small

digestible magnets and indications of lead-based paint, it also posted a video of CEO Robert Eckert on its website to discuss the issue. In the video, Eckert offers an apology, but focuses more on corrective action. In particular, he emphasized a "3-stage safety check" that will be used to ensure safety going forward. Not only does this three-stage check feature technical information regarding the company processes for safety inspection, but it also functions as an apologia strategy of focusing on "corrective action"—one of five major apologia strategies, in which apologists offer to repair damages caused by their actions, as well as take steps to prevent the event from happening again (Benoit p. 79).

The Mattel example constitutes a form of technical communication in the corrective action discussion of safety inspection processes, as well as an area of study interesting to technical communicators: new media rhetoric. However, there are also topics relevant to the social justice movement of technical communication. Here, I offer my current study of apologetic and reconciliation rhetoric in Rwanda as an example. In 1994, the brutal genocide of Tutsis at the hands of Hutus resulted in the deaths of approximately one million Tutsis and Tutsi-sympathizers, as well as the subsequent displacement of two million Hutus (who fled fearing Tutsi retribution). Today, the current Rwandan government is attempting to overcome the deep-rooted distrust and hatred between the two groups that dates back to early colonial times. Central to that effort is not only the search for justice, but also a call for national reconciliation.

A critical element of that reconciliation effort is the offering of an apology. One of the most prominent examples of this is the *gacaca* court system, established to handle the overwhelming number of genocide-related trials. According to this system, some criminals involved in the violence and destruction of property (but not the

planning of the genocide) can receive the alternative punishment of community service rather than an extended prison sentence if they offer a truthful confession of their criminal actions, followed by repentance and an apology (“Sentences Applicable to GACACA Courts”). The underlying importance of such a system seems to be the public acknowledgement of wrongdoing and the honest admittance of sorrow. These elements are so important to the process of reconciliation in Rwanda that a survey conducted in 2003 found that 80 % of Rwandans would be willing to forgive perpetrators if they, first, confess their crime(s) and, second, ask for forgiveness (Republic of Rwanda, 2003, p. 23). From a rhetorical standpoint, the insight gained by study the reconciliation work in Rwanda will help shed light on how communities and especially non-Western cultures discuss wrongs and work through reconciliation. By being on the front-lines of this research, technical communication scholars and practitioners can play an important role in how the process and results of the *gacaca* courts in Rwanda manifest themselves in commission reports and public policies.

Conclusion

Based on these examples, it is clear that technical communication is not foundationally divorced from apologia. Just the opposite, apologetic rhetoric seems directly in line with the ethical, process-oriented, and documentation studies in technical communication. Therefore, I argue that technical communication as a field is already implicitly involved with the study of apologia; however, it has yet to realize its full potential. By directly engaging in the study of these important areas in the future, technical communication scholars and practitioners can more deeply uncover new technical communication considerations in apologia, as well as study the impact of areas of research such as ethics, new media rhetoric, intercultural

communication, public policies, and social justice.

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Workplace Ties

Moderator: Pamela Brewer, Appalachian State University, Texas Tech University

Sustainable Growth in Practitioner Relations: A Discussion of Survey Results

Thomas Barker, *Texas Tech University*

Sally Henschel, *Texas Tech University*

Keywords: survey, sustainable growth, experience

In a recent survey of 109 academic practitioners, 97% of respondents agreed with the following statement: “The experience of practitioners of technical communication is of value to technical communication students.” Clearly the experience of practitioners is seen as an asset to any technical communication program; not so clear is the nature of that involvement. Our research, which includes a survey conducted in May of 2007, is an attempt to bring this experience into focus.

Many professional fields—in business, industry, government, or education—can yield experience to use in teaching; however, the current survey attempted to capture a picture of how the experience of technical communication practitioners in particular is reflected in classroom teaching and the curriculum. For example, many teachers use workplace documents, but how many use workplace codes of ethics, workplace standards, or invited workplace speakers? Respondents were asked to identify elements of the technical communication workplace that they

routinely use in their teaching. They were asked to report only those teaching practices they believe contribute to their effectiveness as a technical communication teacher and that they use regularly—once a week, in conjunction with specific assignments, or once a semester as appropriate.

This survey contained one main question and a demographics section. Analysis of the question may indicate a correlation between a profile of industry involvement and the degree of the respondents’ practitioner experience.

The survey results raise a number of interesting questions for discussion:

- In what areas can programs grow connections with practitioners?
- What are the most common models of practitioner relations among current teachers?
- What characteristics of teachers lead or don’t lead to more involvement of practitioners?

Making a Program Work: Integrating Workforce Communication Instruction into Capstone Design

Judith Shaul Norback, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Keywords: capstone design, engineering communication, program administration, workforce communication

In recent years, technical communication instructors and program coordinators have continued to face the problem of providing relevant, just-in-time teaching of technical communication skills and strategies for engineering students. The model program and TA training at the Georgia Tech Stewart School of Industrial and Systems Engineering (ISyE) are one way to address the problem.

Since 2004, the Stewart School of ISyE has incorporated instruction about workforce presentations with the senior capstone design course. A Workforce Communication Lab is used to give instruction to small groups of students in parallel with the course. The instructional materials have been developed based on interviews with industrial engineers, managers, and CEOs about the most important communication skills and strategies needed by industrial and systems engineers entering the job market. The goal of the instruction is not only to increase academic success but also to enhance the job competitiveness of graduates and quicken their ascent up the career ladder. The instruction is motivational—because it is relevant to the students and enhances their transfer of the communication skills and strategies learned in the Lab and in class to their jobs.

The program has been supported by funds from the National Science Foundation, Georgia Tech alumni, the Stewart School of ISyE, and the Georgia Tech College of Engineering. The Lab has had over 7,500 student visits since the opening in 2003; student improvement in presentation skills has been documented.

The following will include a snapshot of (1) the model used to integrate workforce

presentation instruction into the engineering capstone design course and (2) the TA training involved.

Model

The model includes six components: (1) TA training, (2) a tutorial about 15 selected workforce presentation skills, (3) practice in the Lab before the presentation to the faculty committee, (4) the presentation to the faculty committee, (5) practice in the Lab and review of video after the presentation, and then, finally, (6) presentation to the workplace client. The sequence of: Lab visit before/faculty committee presentation/Lab visit after/client presentation cycle occurs a total of three times—for the students' proposal presentation, interim presentation, and final presentation. This sequence is shown in Figure 1, attached.

TA Training

The TA training, as it connects to the steps in the model, includes

- Reviewing all instructional materials used in the Lab (see www.isye.gatech.edu/workforcecom.)
- Viewing numerous edited proposal presentations, interim presentations, and final presentations until feedback is consistent with Norback.
- Learning to use PowerPoint Producer to videotape and edit so the result includes the slides and the speaker in appropriate lighting.

This training prepares TAs for the following tasks:

- Giving feedback in each lab visit before the three faculty committee presentations
- Videotaping the three faculty committee presentations
- Editing the presentation video and slides for these presentations
- Giving feedback with video review in each lab visit after each presentation.

We hope the discussion stimulated by the presentation encourages technical communication instructors and program coordinators to consider this and as well as other innovative approaches to incorporating critical workforce communication instruction into capstone design engineering courses.

Nurturing Seedlings

Moderator: Tracy Bridgeford, University of Nebraska at Omaha

Rhetoric of Science and the First-Year Composition Classroom

Tim Giles, *Georgia Southern University*

Keywords: curriculum, ethics, rhetoric

What role can the rhetoric of science play in the first-year writing classroom? This question is one that I seek an answer to as I prepare to teach for Fall Semester 2007.

In 2007, my institution was awarded a \$5.5 million National Science Foundation grant to nurture the teaching of science. First-year students who are interested in science majors will be channeled into core curriculum classes with students with similar interests. I, for example, will be teaching the first semester of the composition sequence to chemistry majors. I have been told students tend to be either prospective public school chemistry teachers or pre-med majors. Few are thinking about entering industry as chemists because my institution does not offer a chemical engineering degree. Although the opportunity to teach such a class intrigues me in a number of ways, especially with my background in science studies, I am most interested in discussing writing assignments for such a class.

I typically teach the first semester of the composition sequence with an essay collection and leave the rhetorical and grammatical readings to the Internet. For a reader, I have picked Richard Grinnell's

Science and Society, which, like chemistry, touches upon a variety of science topics.

Writing about ethics, for example, could easily be an assignment, and there are relevant essays in a section titled "Bodies and Genes." An issue with a core curriculum class, though, is that it should provide service to the university to some degree by focusing on academic writing; I think students should have some practice with writing arguments and with documentation, for example, and there are other rhetorical modes such as comparison and contrast that students would do well to learn to make them more competitive players in the academic arena. However, so long as we have science students being taught by a professor whose research interest is in science studies, we should do some science writing from a perspective useful to the students. One way of accomplishing this goal would be to give students some practice with writing about processes.

Though my liaison in the chemistry department has assured me that first-year students will not be writing lab reports, process writing is certainly something they will do quite a bit as science students. A good way to introduce students to writing

about process is to have them write instructions. However, a lab report is a process description, not a set of instructions. A process description is more difficult. With a set of instructions, for example, active voice is naturally created through the imperative mood; on the other hand, with a process description, the passive voice becomes a problem. Revising

a set of instructions into a process description can be an answer to this problem.

My presentation will focus on nuances of these writing issues. In addition, I will consider how I will evaluate this class according to the portfolio approach, and I will be interested in hearing input from the audience.

Growing the Service Course: Anticipating Problems, Promise in the Technical Communication “Mini-Program”

Michael Knieval, *University of Wyoming*

Keywords: administration, curriculum, program, service course, staffing

How do we, collectively or individually, define healthy growth or progress in technical and scientific communication programs? What fallout can we observe or anticipate from the rapid growth of our discipline? I wish to argue that these two questions are intimately related and that they take on a unique character when we are talking about sufficiently staffing the smallest of our technical communication programs—those that essentially have no *program*, per se, save for the service course. During a period of growth, it seems that our graduate programs in technical communication are under the most scrutiny. As sites where the research and faculty that drive the field are effectively born and grown, the service course remains a crucial curricular site, significant to the long-term health, credibility, and viability of the field. This is, of course, because the service course touches so many students—it is *the* exposure to technical communication for most, the sole site of learning and of impression. Hence, the service course is important for the field to keep an eye on; in some ways, it functions as a distillation and encapsulation of the field’s values.

I recently conducted a survey about service course placement that also collected other information about faculty, programs, content, and other issues. Some simple

descriptive statistics that I found noteworthy include the following:

- 92% of respondents report the existence of a service course on their campuses
- 37% of respondents reported no curricular presence in technical communication beyond the service course
- 47% of respondents report that they have no tenured or tenure-track faculty whose teaching and administrative responsibilities are limited to technical communication

Each one of these statistics, when considered alone, is at least somewhat interesting, telling us that, respectively, almost all institutions support a service course in technical communication, over a third offer nothing in technical communication beyond the service course (making it the extent of their “program”), and nearly half have no devoted faculty in technical communication.

In combination, these results offer hope and caution. First, in a time of technological and disciplinary growth and change, the hope: for small programs—especially those with nothing beyond the service course—there is something to be said for agility and mutability. Given the relatively light weight of the “program,” changes might be

implemented quickly and with minimal red tape. However these figures are cause for concern as we contemplate growth of the discipline. These “programs” or lack thereof, are, I would argue, vulnerable and most likely to experience adversely the fallout expected during a period of rapid disciplinary growth because of challenges with staffing the course that constitutes the sum total of the program.

In particular, two related problems seem obvious: (1) lack of tenure-track faculty and (2) lack of program heft. A lack of faculty means fewer people available to direct and reinvent curriculum to keep pace with changing notions of pedagogy, disciplinarity, and technology. Lack of program means lack of “culture,” relatively speaking—fewer faculty, no specialized students, fewer conversations, fewer courses, and fewer resources.

In light of these challenges for service-course-only programs, there seem to be two likely directions, both problematic, to take to keep that service course growing and lively when it comes to staffing. First, these programs can grow by themselves. For institutions and departments interested in and capable of growing and that have the institutional support to do so, committing to this direction can be a productive move to enrich the local culture and add voices to program leadership that can contribute to the program vitality. However, committing to growth typically means hiring tenured or tenure-track faculty, a task that presents a Catch-22 of sorts: institutions need faculty to build programs, but programs in and of themselves are key attractors of good faculty. I’ve heard numerous folks at this conference in recent years tell variations of the same story—it’s hard to hire faculty, period. We see good candidates get absorbed into already-strong graduate and

undergraduate programs. Hence, recruiting faculty to small programs can be difficult, even if ambitions for growth are real and grounded in material support.

Other programs have no such support or institutional mandate for growth, so the program variable disappears, and the question becomes how to continue to offer and staff a responsive service course that presents students with a rich, beneficial experience using only local, minimal resources. I suspect that many that offer only such a course borrow faculty from allied fields like composition and rhetoric or lean heavily on nontenure track faculty to staff courses. This can work to an extent but doesn’t respond to the issue of disciplinary leadership. A service course in this context may ossify in its content, vision, and execution without disciplinary leadership charged with overseeing the curriculum and teachers, who are often teaching heavy course loads with no incentive to grow and change with evolving disciplinary conditions. The problem can be further magnified at institutions situated in contexts that feature less robust business and technology sectors, meaning that it is more difficult in the first place to hire teachers with the professional background necessary to qualify them for such work.

In sum, I believe that because of staffing issues, some of these service-course-only programs may be coming to a crossroads in terms of their ability to grow that service course, whether that means growing it into a larger program or sustaining it as a dynamic curricular space on its own. In an era of “plenty” for the field, these programs must continue to do more with less, and given the significance of the service course in the field’s larger growth, the challenge belongs not only to these programs but to the discipline itself.

Passion, Identity and Skill-set: What Can Digital Rhetoric do for a Developmental Writing Program?

Ben Xie, *Paine College*

Ellen White, *Khazrai, Paine College*

Keywords: digital rhetoric, developmental writing, learning process

Studies on the college developmental writing programs have concluded that these programs are overall effective: The studies by Stein (p. 1982) at Minnesota Community College, by Ragland (1997) at Central Missouri State University, and by Weissman et al. (1997) at the College of Lake County, concluded that students who completed developmental writing courses were more likely to succeed in college-level writing classes than were students who did not complete remedial work. However, Jenkins and Boswell's research revealed that more than a quarter of developmental students nationwide failed to complete their college preparatory coursework (Jenkins & Boswell, 2002). Developmental writing programs, therefore, remain challenges to college instructors and administrators, especially in the digital age.

In the present position paper, we will explore how digital rhetorical strategies facilitate the learning process in a developmental writing program, evaluate some functional rhetorical devices over the others, and discuss the roles of an instructor in integrating the digital rhetoric in pedagogy so as to focus on the three basic components—passion, identity, and skill-set in a writing class.

Passion

digital rhetoric enhances analytical and critical thinking, thus arousing passion for a writing course, and writing skills with the assistance of tools like MS Word, MS Publisher (greeting card, sales notice, etc.),

blogs, library online search, Wikipedia, Blackboard, YouTube.

Identity

digital rhetoric often serves as “dialogical rhetoric in printed and digital media” (Zappen, 2005, p.141), facilitates both monologue and dialogue, and encourages representation of “underrepresented voices” of communities such as a HBCU institution like ours through blogs, MySpace, review/comment tools of Web 2.0 (e.g., Amazon.com, eBay).

Skill-set

digital rhetoric helps develop the comprehensive and sometimes survival skill-sets for developmental students, such as online self-study of basic grammar, computer-assisted instruction, discussion topics, individual journal log in cyberspace, peer-editing and evaluation, reading assignment in virtual library, virtual tools, application like MS Publisher, MS Drawer, MS PowerPoint, Photoshop, Excel sheets for statistical assessment, and even db management (e.g., error-log or essay topic classification in Access db).

We are particularly interested in the strategies and practice of others at CPTSC regarding digital rhetorical devices for a developmental writing program: how have they coped with the challenges of time allocation, the integration of traditional classroom teaching and virtual tools application, and moreover, programmatic administration in a writing technologies intensive environment?

Pollination: Ideas that Travel Well II

Moderator: Karl Stolley, Illinois Institute of Technology

Sustainable Curriculum in Technical Communication

Tiffany Craft Portewig, Auburn University

Keywords: curriculum, sustainability, responsibility

To continue our growth and progress in the field of technical communication, we must consider how we fit into current initiatives in areas such as education, industry, and the environment. As technical communicators, we have the rhetorical tools to communicate and argue for sustainability, but should this be part of our curriculum and our responsibility as professional communicators? This presentation will explore questions surrounding how we define sustainability in our field.

The first of its kind, the Dominican University of California formed a Green MBA, offering a degree in sustainable enterprise. Many other universities have followed and created programs that incorporate sustainability. The Association of University Leaders for a Sustainable Future (ULSF), who “works to strengthen the capacity of colleges and universities to make sustainability and environmental literacy a major focus of teaching, research, service, and operations,” cited the following fields as offering degree programs or sustainable development as major theme: agriculture, applied science and technology, architecture and design, business,

economics, education, engineering, environmental management, environmental studies, general or multidisciplinary studies, international studies, and law.

Many of these fields are the content of technical communication, so what part does our field play in their goal for sustainability?

We have the responsibility to teach students a variety of skills and rhetorical tools, so is sustainability something that we can weave into our curriculum, or should we leave it to fields such as those previously listed to prepare future practitioners? If we do support it, how are we uniquely situated to contribute to the sustainability initiative? How do we balance both promoting sustainability within our field and communicating sustainability as practitioners?

These are some of the questions my presentation seeks to address and discuss. This presentation will report on current curricular development in the area of sustainability and explore how the field of technical communication can respond to this movement for sustainable growth and development.

The University as a Knowledge Entrepreneur and the Role of Technical Communication

Marian G. Stone, Arizona State University Polytechnic

Keywords: business knowledge, entrepreneur, market awareness, venture development

An entrepreneurial spirit is sweeping across college campuses today and Arizona State University has articulated its vision to be a knowledge entrepreneur. What universities teach, how they teach it, and how they operate is at the heart of the work in

entrepreneurship. Programs in technical communication need to be a part of this business picture by continuing to understand and reassess how we operate.

This position paper reveals that in 2006 some scholars focused on business issues

and their relevance to technical communication programs. By examining these ideas through the lens of the knowledge entrepreneur it shows us that we need to continually reassess how we operate. As Tom Duening, Director of the Entrepreneurial Programs Office of the Ira A. Fulton School of Engineering indicates, academics need to add market awareness, venture development skills and a venture growth orientation to our mix of skills.

In some respects we are already doing that in our programs. Last year, for example, the following ideas were shared with CPTSC:

- Wanda Worley from Indiana University-Purdue University Indianapolis conducted research through surveys and usability testing to study students' perceptions and knowledge of the TCM Certificate and the usability of the Certificate Web site. Her goal was to better market her program and grow programs.
- Kelli Cargile Cook at Utah State University and Carolyn Rude at Virginia Tech are conducting longitudinal studies of the academic job market in technical communication. Because an imbalance between faculty supply and demand is creating problems and compromising the development of the field, their work is enhancing our ability to predict and plan data on the academic job market.
- Michael Martin from University of Wisconsin-Stout discussed that moving courses online is one goal as state funding is shrinking. His work focused on examining application software and training for each faculty member and obtaining grant monies for release time.
- Susan Katz focused on reducing time to complete the MS in Technical Communication at North Carolina State University through replacement of the master's thesis with a projects course. This resulted in a reduced average time of degree completion from approximately 5 to 2.5 years.
- Diane Allen, Emil Towner, Pamela Brewer and Kendall Kelley, PhD students from Texas Tech University, discussed responding to market forces by raising new revenues, employing different media for institutions and equipping students with new knowledge and skills to compete in the workplace.
- Emil Towner discussed that online education offers economic incentives that go beyond cost savings for the institution. Towner said the incentives derive from three perspectives the technical communicators already in the workforce, the corporations who employ them, and the universities that offer online graduate programs.
- Diane Allen from Midland College discussed the necessity to rely more on external funding, instigating market and market-like behaviors in both faculties and administrations to enhance wealth production.

Yet we need more emphasis on these business skills. Faculty and administrators need to work together to study and improve the business side of what we do, so that our programs and institutions grow and function more productively. By technical communication departments improving program marketing, predicting and planning data, enhancing revenues, reducing time to market, improving skills and training, and understanding current

and future needs, we will successfully help students, programs, institutions, and the

workforce function as enhanced knowledge entrepreneurs.

Curricular Implementations of Sustainable Web Production

Karl Stolley, *Illinois Institute of Technology*

Keywords: curriculum, technology, Web design

Many technical-communication instructors conceive of the Web as an information space experienced solely through a Web browser on a personal computer. But this conception is based on outmoded fifteen-year-old practices and technologies—i.e., WYSIWYG Web editors, “Save as HTML” functions in Microsoft Office, HTML table-based page design, to name a few—that are oblivious to current methods and standards of Web production. This lack of awareness of new, innovative means of communication on and through the Web hinders the development of Web-intensive and Web-related courses in technical communication.

That is to say that neither “Save as HTML” functions nor WYSIWYG editors can fully engage students in Web production that goes beyond the browser—and therefore into other areas of technical communication. For example, students in an editing or (print) document design course might work with an XML editor to produce Web-available, single-source materials for an organization needing to simultaneously deploy and update print, Web, and kiosk versions of their documents. Students in a visual rhetoric course might examine the use of CSS for styling a single Web page for different audiences and devices (projectors, handhelds, print) to explore the potential for visual *rhetorics* in different mediums for differently abled users—not just PC-based browsers for users with good vision.

A sustainable Web curriculum must feature a core sequence of Web-intensive courses that extend the rhetorical and theoretical preparation students encounter across their program of study. Each course

in the sequence should introduce increasingly intensive technological production activities, grounded in the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C)—standard languages of the Web (e.g., XHTML, CSS, and the Document Object Model, or DOM; XML and its applications). This Web curriculum must encourage students to explore and strive for:

- Production literacy at the language/code level
- Software and platform independence, including familiarity with free/open-source alternatives to proprietary software (e.g., Dreamweaver)
- Backward- (as appropriate) and forward-/sustainable compatibility
- Single-sourcing of text, image, media, and code

To build and implement such a curriculum, technical communication programs must develop a sequence of Web-design courses, rather than just a single course (as is now common). One course cannot cover the expanding range of Web discourse (from pages and sites to Web-based applications), particularly for the “semantic Web,” which demands a new literacy of production goals, techniques, and standards that involve more than the visual design of a Webpage or even a Web-site.

Ideally, there must be productive, program-wide discussions to determine an appropriate emphasis and to provide suitable opportunities for hands-on experiences with Web-oriented production across all or most courses in technical communication. This radical move might entail:

- Positioning the Web design courses earlier in the curriculum, so that students may bring a shared production literacy to other courses.
- Encouraging instructors of nonWeb courses to establish a flexible consensus as to the place, in each course, of Web-oriented production as it relates to the subject matter and the instructor's expertise.
- Ensuring that instructors of the Web-specific courses adequately prepare students for the program's wider curriculum.

Enhancing a Technical and Business Writing Program Through Distinct Courses

Cynthia McPherson, *University of Alabama/Huntsville Texas Tech University*

Keywords: subject matter knowledge, undergraduate curriculum

In 1985, Elizabeth Tebeaux called for writing courses that blend business and technical writing. She reasoned that because scientists and engineers often conduct business and business administrators sometimes work with technical material, students in those majors should be taught together. In addition, the principles of concise, clear, direct, and focused writing apply to both business and technical writing. Although a professional writing class, particularly at the sophomore level, can effectively introduce students to the typical kinds of texts (e.g., letters, memos, reports, instructions) that they may write in the workplace and hone general writing skills, distinct technical writing and business writing courses may better serve the students – and enhance the program – by providing employers with students who have some focused practice in the language and content from their fields.

Programs that offer technical writing and business writing as separate courses at the junior/senior level can provide instruction more tailored to the individual disciplines represented by the students. Instruction steeped in material from a student's discipline can be especially effective for students who will become subject matter experts who write rather than technical writers or communicators. At the junior/senior level, the coursework becomes more focused as students move

into the core courses for their majors. Because the core courses emphasize concepts and practices in the discipline (subject matter knowledge), there may be little time for discipline instructors to give to the rhetorical features of the discipline – the writing style, language, genres. Technical writing and business writing courses fill that gap. However, to offer the best reflection of the subject matter and sufficient practice in writing for the particular field, technical writing and business writing need to be distinct courses in their own right.

The essential distinction between technical writing and business writing may not be so much in the assignments themselves as in the material with which the students work – the subject matter of the assignments. There are several ways technical writing and business writing instructors can focus their courses on subject matter from the students' fields:

- Pursue documents and subject matter information from the disciplines represented in a given technical writing or business writing class. It is easy to start with some general business or technical documents, but instructors could try to find documents from the specific fields of their students in that class for that semester.

- Provide sample documents with clear technical or business content—for example, NASA technical reports, software design documents, and specifications for technical writing and annual reports, company profiles, and industry overviews for business writing. By reading, summarizing, and discussing typical documents in their fields, students become more aware of the appropriate writing styles for the genres, content, contexts, and publications of the discipline. By reading and discussing documents from allied fields, students begin to recognize how the different fields handle different writing situations.
 - Create assignments that focus on technical or business content. In other words, build the course around subject matter knowledge rather than genres. Assignments and readings in technical writing and business writing courses that reflect the content of the students' core courses allow students to discover not only the general conventions but also the subtleties of working with the language and forms of their fields. In a technical writing class with majors from several disciplines, students can explain concepts, terms, or processes from their fields to the other students. An assignment to summarize an article, report, or other document with content specific to their discipline for audiences with varying levels of expertise in the discipline provides students with practice adapting content for specific readers while immersing the student in the language of the discipline. A reading journal asking students to analyze the writing style of documents produced in their field forces to them to think about the particulars of the language typical in their field. Students can be encouraged to identify the particular activity or “thing” a document intends to accomplish (see Kain & Wardle, 2005) so that they begin to understand how documents result from specific needs and situations.
 - Partner with the discipline instructors to support the subject matter (and writing) assignments in the core courses with writing assignments in technical writing or business writing. For example, if a finance or investment course requires students to develop a portfolio of investments, the business writing course would require a prospectus for the portfolio. The technical writing course might require a software test plan from a computer science major in a programming or software design course.
 - Provide opportunities for students to talk to subject matter experts about their writing. Interviews via email or guest speakers can provide enlightening information about working and writing in the field.
- Students who leave a technical writing or business writing class with a stronger grasp of text in their fields may be more confident in their ability to write in their field and thus feel better prepared to step into the workplace. Employers may be more likely to hire new graduates when they know that the technical writing or business writing course has given the students ample writing, and reading, experience with subject matter from their field. Distinct technical writing and business writing courses, then, can enhance a program by producing students with greater exposure

to the subject matter of their field and greater confidence in their writing ability, which, in turn, makes them attractive to employers.

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Reshaping Careers for Teaching and Administration in Technical and Scientific Communication

Moderator: Rebecca E. Burnett, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Reshaping Careers for Teaching and Administration in Technical and Scientific Communication

Rebecca E. Burnett, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Andrew Cooper, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Karen Head, *Georgia Institute of Technology*

Keywords: job placement, market demand

The job market demand for more professionals with PhDs in technical and scientific communication and cognate disciplines continues to outpace the number of graduates specializing in these fields. This dearth of highly qualified candidates with training in technical and scientific communication is compounded at the administrative level with even fewer qualified candidates.

Although many people are quite capable of managing declining budget resources, scheduling classes, and dealing with personnel issues, what else does the administrator of a technical and scientific communication program need? Expertise in rhetoric? Experience as a practitioner of workplace communication? Experience as a teacher of technical and scientific communication? Knowledge of pedagogy? Knowledge of technology? Knowledge of workplace culture? Expertise in program assessment?

This panel has a two part task: First, the panel members will share a broad job description for program administrators in technical and scientific communication that can be borrowed and modified, particularly

by programs working to define administrative roles. Second, the panel members examine various career trajectories that bring people into the administration of programs in technical and scientific communication and explore three common trajectories:

Speaker 1 comes to technical and scientific communication program administration with a PhD in rhetoric.

Speaker 2 comes to technical and scientific communication program administration with a PhD in literature.

Speaker 3 comes to technical and scientific communication program administration with a PhD in creative writing.

1. Specifically, the panel members propose provoking discussion about the following questions:
What should be included in a job description of an administrator of a technical and scientific communication program?
2. What benefits/advantages come with program administrators who have academic preparation in rhetoric, literature, and creative writing?

3. What problems/disadvantages come with program administrators who have academic preparation in rhetoric, literature, and creative writing?
4. How can programs in technical and scientific communication make administration interesting and productive as a career path?
5. How can success in administering programs in technical and scientific communication be assessed?

Principles of Sustainability for Professional Writing Programs from an Ecological Perspective

Moderator: Donna Kain, East Carolina University

An Ecological View of Professional Writing Programs

Douglas Eyman, George Mason University

Keywords: disciplinary collaboration, ecology, program location

Although there is a growing trend toward the establishment of stand-alone writing departments as separate(d) from traditional English departments, there are still a great number of writing programs that are (and will likely stay) within departments of English. Many relatively recent departmental schisms have been caused by a combination of resource allocation disparities (where the work of the writing program brought in the bulk of full-time equivalency but the English department used the majority of those resources to fund tenure lines in literature) and a lack of respect for writing studies as field of study with its own theories, methods, and histories. In addition to the literature/writing tensions facing many English departments, the dynamics of power and resource sharing are further complicated by the differences between composition and professional writing goals and pedagogies. Short of a systematic atomizing of the English department into more and smaller departments (ultimately fighting for resources that used to be allocated to the single departmental entity), there appears to be no adequate and universal solution to the tensions and disparities that surface within more comprehensive English departments. This is not to say that there aren't some

departments that work well (indeed, I am currently in one of those departments), but even exceptionally well-balanced programs often have room for improvement. My focus here is on finding new ways to communicate with and interact with the other communities within a comprehensive English department in ways that highlight shared goals and interests rather than focusing on differences; one way to do this is to move from a political framework to an ecological one.

In ecological terms, the departments in which we operate can be viewed as distinct ecosystems in which professional writing programs act as both producers and consumers (in terms of resources) that must interact with the other species in the system (e.g., literature, creative writing, linguistics), all in competition for limited resources. For a healthy ecosystem, the goal is to resolve this competition through symbiosis. An ecological view reinforces the notion that the programs that comprise the department are interconnected and that a sustainable infrastructure requires that attention be directed toward enacting mutual (as opposed to commensal or even parasitic) relationships with all of the inhabitants of the system.

Symbiosis describes a range of relationships between organisms, and

although in scientific terms, symbiotic relationships include such inequitable forms as parasitism and predation, in more general terms, the idea of symbiosis is of a positive, mutually-beneficial relationship—and that is how I use the term here. In ecological systems, symbiotic relationships may be either obligate (necessary to the survival of at least one organism) or facultative (where the relationship is useful but not vital). The most negative form of symbiosis is synnecrosis—an interaction between individuals or populations so mutually detrimental that it results in death; this is the relationship that leads writing programs to split from English departments and form their administrative organizations. Although this may be the best outcome in some specific instances, I believe that comprehensive departments offer distinct advantages in terms of resource acquisition (both material and intellectual forms of capital) and as a location that provides the infrastructural elements that support a wider range of intellectual inquiry and provide opportunities for collaboration across the many fields and specializations that make up the full discipline of English Studies.

Thus, rather than advocating for increased synnecroses (where writing programs remove themselves from English departments), I have been instead looking for metaphors and mechanisms that can help mediate tensions and negotiate more complementary modes of coexistence. In ecological terms, these modes have two main forms: mutualism and commensalism. Mutualism represents an interaction between individuals or groups where both derive a benefit. Commensalism benefits one community or organism while the other neither benefits nor is harmed by the relationship.

I turn to these ecological metaphors because they allow us to look at the complex inter-relationships of actors and communities within a particular ecosystem

in terms of production, consumption, and resource sharing rather than in terms of power. As rhetoricians, professional and technical writing faculty are trained to see persuasive acts as invoking and enrolling power structures in fairly particular ways—and although we understand power, as Foucault theorized it, as not simply a negative (the result of a stronger force dominating a weaker one), we still tend to situate our view of departmental politics in terms of power struggles. We need, I would argue, to modify or short-circuit our core beliefs in the way that rhetoric and power work and instead engage ecological mechanisms that can help us to negotiate mutualistic relationships between and among the various constituencies of comprehensive English departments.

A case in point: the GMU professional writing faculty recently initiated a sweeping curriculum revision of both our graduate and undergraduate professional writing programs. We changed program and course titles and requirements, and added several new courses to the BA concentration and to the MA. There seemed to be a great deal of subrosa resistance to our proposed changes; one of the most immediate conflicts of interest was the establishment of a professional writing methods course: up to this point, all of the MA students had to take either a nonfiction writing (read: creative writing) methods course or a literary studies methods course (neither of which taught methods professional writing students needed to know to begin work on their MA theses). Removing these requirements meant fewer students in the extant methods classes—and the number of students per class is one of the primary mechanisms for determining resource allocation. Initially, our position appeared to be privileging at least a commensal position (where our program benefitted without really harming or helping anyone else in the department) or, worse, a parasitic position (where our move would

benefit us and decrease resources currently allocated to different groups).

The question thus became: “how can we realign these curricular changes so that they represent a mutual symbiotic relationship?” We were able to work with other communities in the department to determine a number of ways our curricular changes would benefit the department as a whole (in part due to the better support for thesis work students would get, which would take pressure off of the nonwriting faculty who were required to be readers on said theses, and in part by providing both a model and political impetus for beginning curricular reform in other MA concentrations). We did not establish a quid pro quo (which would more likely be the outcome of a political rather than ecological framework); instead, we found ways to both argue for and shape our changes to a mutualist relationship within the larger

ecology of the departmental ecosystem. Rhetorical practice within an ecological framework lead to an initial success in this case; I hope to see continued successes arise from a continued promotion of this ecological metaphor in our department.

If we can shift our metaphoric view from a political to an ecological lens, we can then also shift our tactics for garnering and effectively using resources from a field-specific view to a more holistic view; we can change our approach from field-supportive to departmental supportive. This is not, of course, a simple undertaking. Nor should the ecological viewpoint completely supplant the careful deployment of rhetorical savvy. But taking the ecological view can yield positive results, even when the other actors within the departmental ecosystem are not sharing the same vantage point.

Posthumanism as a Sustainable Model: Ecology, Institutional, and Disciplinary Change

Byron Hawk, *George Mason University*

Keywords: disciplinary change, graduate program design, program administration, sustainability

In *Human Understanding*, Stephen Toulmin (1972) mounts an extensive and detailed argument against models of historical change such as Hegel’s and Kuhn’s that are ultimately based on rationalist and progressive assumptions in favor of his evolutionary and ecological model. Toulmin is interested in how academic professions and disciplines change, and focuses explicitly on the institutional contexts that drive these changes. If we want to think about the sustainability of our professional and technical writing programs and curricula, I think Toulmin’s analysis could serve as a touchstone for theorizing our institutional situatedness in a way that provides models for action.

Toulmin criticized the assumption that historical change operates through logical progressions or stages. In his mind, this logic is apparent only when a

historiographer looks back retrospectively, cuts out the details of the historical situation, and abstracts the problem-solution logic—the logic is in the historiographer not the historical reality (p. 330). This approach is untenable for the same reason genetics or DNA alone won’t allow us to predict what a species will look like—the conditions they will be responding to and adapting in are missing from the equation (p. 330). Any new species variation comes from its adaptive response to its specific ecology, which generates different “populations” of the same species in different places and conditions (p. 333). These populations are aggregates, not logical systems or hierarchies, in which adaptation and adequacy tie change not to what logically came before or after, but to the immediate circumstances that create the conditions for change (p. 81).

Consequently, Toulmin took the ideas of (genetic) variation and (ecological) selection and applied them to the specific conditions of intellectual and disciplinary change. The key is that variation and selection have to be decoupled rather than coupled (pp. 337–340). If coupled, individuals would somehow interpret circumstances and create genetic variation in response to them in a more Lamarckian model, which is what happens in models of change that rely on human logic rather than posthuman adaptation. If decoupled, the situational and institutional elements and ideas would set the rules for the selection of appropriate variation and adaptation in a more Darwinian model. For Toulmin, Kuhn's more abstract categories of normal science and paradigm shift cover all the smaller, incremental, and ecological changes that are constantly in play and affect change.

Toulmin's model, if you don't mind the pun, sought to bring out these more local ecological relations among ideas and institutional structures that influence the ways those ideas emerge and circulate. At the most general level, he saw three kinds of authority that operate in disciplinary ecologies:

- intellectual authority based on validity of ideas,
- magisterial authority or dominance of individuals, and
- professional authority or the power of institutions and organizations.

Although his analysis in *Human Understanding* went into explicit detail on the interconnectedness of these levels, the central problem for him is how to bring these three levels into congruence. Each level is supposed to serve the needs of the immediate conditions but can develop independent interests, some unrelated to these conditions. He argued that any viable discipline needs a series of check and balances to keep individuals and programs

in line with current thinking and situational need.

If a discipline is to adapt its ideals and purposes to current conditions, it has to provide conduits for engaging and debating these ideas; otherwise, older concepts and concerns will begin to function as universal dogmas that operate against changing historical needs (pp. 279–80). Often the problem is that English is really a collection of subfields—at GMU, for example, we have literature, linguistics, film, new media, composition, rhetoric, folklore, professional writing, and creative writing. Consequently, colleagues in power and in general are often not attentive to the intellectual ideals and developments in all of these various fields. From an ecological perspective, we shouldn't just argue about these ideas, but reconfigure the conditions for the flow of information. In Malcolm Gladwell's (2005) *Blink*, for example, he noted that in the early 80s, 90–95% of classical musicians were male. Finally one woman took this matter to court and got the rules for auditions changed—today they are held behind screens so the performer's gender isn't a factor in the decision. Now the % of male to female performers is closer to 50/50. The approach was not to rationally change the bias of the older male conductors and review boards, but to change the local rules of operation to create global effects in the system. Similarly, making local changes that increase the circulation of ideas, such as a regular faculty symposium, could enhance the sustainability of our programs more than trying to change the ideology of the people in power or waiting to replace the people in power.

In addition to changing institutional practices to affect the flow of information across sub-fields, we should also change local rules of operation within our programs. If the key issue is bringing individual and institutional structures inline with current research in the field, then an

analysis of the transmission process for disciplinary content from one generation to the next is critical. As Toulmin saw it:

- a new generation gets explanatory procedures, disciplinary ambitions, critical attitudes, methods, key texts/theories from the previous generation via education;
- but, the replication process is always inexact;
- students take bits and pieces of this material and remake the intellectual content and program with each new generation;
- they respect their mentors but select ideas to accept or reject—they reappraise all questionable issues for themselves in the light of (a) all their other reading, (b) reports from fellow colleagues within their generation, and (c) the general intellectual climate of the time;
- in the end, they piece together their discipline into a new pattern—the new population adapts to their current conditions (p. 284).

This much more local process is why a “paradigm” is never overarching, but can shift in incremental ways, in different places at different times, and is never exactly the same in various populations. Because this is an ongoing process, no paradigm is ever static—there is no such thing as pure normal science (p. 287).

Toulmin argued that this generational analysis can get a good sense of disciplinary change from looking at two, five, or ten year blocks, but a full generational change is about 20 years—the time it takes for one reference group to be displaced by a successor group. Without some internal, institutional mechanism for change, curriculum built on the ideas of a previous generation can be in place for 20 years without much revision. At GMU, our

Professional Writing and Rhetoric curriculum was roughly 20 years behind current disciplinary ideas so we had to work against various older models of writing that functioned as dogmas to enact a larger institutional change. For Toulmin, it is a moral as well as ecological responsibility to keep intellectual, individual, and professional goals and purposes in line. As leaders of Professional Writing and Rhetoric programs, we should never let our programs be five, ten, or twenty years out of line with disciplinary research. As a more sustainable model, we should re-evaluate our curriculum every two years to continually update the relationship between current disciplinary concepts and local conditions. Smaller, ongoing changes to the program title, course titles and descriptions, and course sequences or prerequisites would avoid the need to do large-scale curricular overhaul every 20 years and keep this same situation from happening again for the next generation.

These are just two examples of how we might take Toulmin’s examination of intellectual ecologies and pull models of local disciplinary change out of them, but in general I think the field needs to investigate these institutional, ecological, and posthuman mechanisms in more detail. Understanding institutional processes, constraints, and possibilities is central to our programs, the intellectual and working lives of both professors and students, and to any political process or change. Discussion question: What other ways can we look at institutional, ecological aspects of our programs and develop strategies for affecting change through local rules rather than magisterial authority?

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Designing an MA/PhD Research Methods Course for Mutualism

Susan Lawrence, *George Mason University*

Keywords: curriculum, graduate, research

With a PhD program in development, undergraduate and Masters' programs in professional writing and rhetoric, and an impending reduction in faculty teaching loads, our ecology at Mason is one of scarce instructional resources. The PhD program will "start small," with a limited number of students admitted in its early years, some of whom may be enrolled part time. Lacking the PhD student bodies to fill PhD courses in a public university concerned with the per capita cost of instruction, we are encouraged to design a Research Methods course that will, at least in the initial years of the program, serve both PhD students in Rhetoric and Composition and MA students in Professional Writing and Rhetoric.

As participants in our discussion pointed out, the research activities conducted by these students will in many ways be similar. Conducting research in the workplace and in the academy, both practitioners and scholars read existing research critically, develop researchable questions, and identify methods that help answer those questions, draw on similar textual and (other) empirical methods of data collection and analysis, and report their conclusions. Thus a research methods course might easily be designed to serve both PhDs and MAs.

But developing the course, I am reminded that research is not a decontextualizable activity, and that the institutional sites, the audiences and the ends of research shape that activity in ways that implicate training for it. Educating students to do research that advances disciplinary knowledge may require instructional time and resources not needed for educating students to do research that improves quality and efficiency of production—and vice versa. Thus the imaginary Venn diagram of the

ideal Research Methods syllabi for PhDs and MAs would not be a perfect overlap: I see some protuberances extending beyond the areas of common instruction.

I identify three of these here. The first allows for some symmetry in the imaginary diagram: workplace and academic researchers may be similarly invested in but have different answers to the lines of inquiry posed within this area. The second two create asymmetry: these are areas in which academic researchers may be most invested:

- The origins of research questions: Where do students look to invent and develop research questions? To disciplinary conversations with their growing call for coherent research agendas (Blakeslee and Spilka, 2004)? To theoretical paradigms? To workplace inefficiencies? To problems in the public sphere? To what extent should each of these concerns guide research agendas? These are questions that all researchers must consider but that may be answered differently from different institutional perspectives.
- An emphasis on reflexivity: What are the theories of knowledge, the political implications and the ethical resonances implicit in different approaches and methods? What are the social meanings and realities constructed in and by our research activities? As part of their ethical education all researchers should learn to address these questions, but the academic institution demands that we engage them greater depth than do (other) occupational ones.

- The role of theory in a research study: Every researcher develops a research question and selects an approach and method appropriate to answering the question, but academic researchers also, almost inevitably, mediate the two with a theory—in our discipline, a theory of language, a theory of rhetoric, a theory of society or culture. This explicit theoretical apparatus comes in addition to that implicit in approach and method previously discussed. It is also different from the ability to theorize what we do, the theory that Bill Hart-Davidson (2001) argues for in technical communication practice.

What is the function of this theoretical apparatus? As I've heard Andreea Ritivoi and Alan Gross ask graduate students: What is the epistemic gain from having harnessed activity theory (articulation theory, Bakhtinian addressivity, Bourdieu's social practice)? What knowledge claims does this theory allow you to advance that couldn't be advanced without it? Workplace studies are less likely to draw on this "secondary" theoretical machinery.

Looking at these three dimensions of research training, then, we might adopt the ecological metaphor of *mutualism*, and conceive of how each organism might benefit from its proximity to another, distinctly different one. How might a research methods course be designed for different institutions' researchers to benefit from each others' presence in and contributions to the course?

This is somewhat different from exploring how each group could benefit from being exposed to materials and assignments designed primarily for the other. I want to reach for ways that students in one program have a richer educational experience for having had the contributions of students in the other,

much as we might approach a cross-cultural educational experience. Some ideas:

- Origins of research questions: Looking to a larger ecology, at Mason we're in a region that clamors for collaborations among universities, industry, the nonprofit sector, and government. The methods course can be a place where future academics and (not so) future workplace practitioners converse about the origins and ends of research in rhetoric and professional writing.
- Reflexivity in research: We can capitalize on institutional diversity by thematizing categories that articulate with those institutions. Instead of working with a taxonomy of research paradigms like Guba's and Lincoln's (positivist, post-positivist, critical theory, constructionist), for example, take up Herndl's and Nahrwold's (2000) continuum model of research practices. On one end of the continuum they situate research that is instrumental, institution-maintaining, and geared towards promoting efficient production; on the other, research that is disruptive, institution-destabilizing, and geared towards promoting political change. This model includes the epistemological horizons and ethical dilemmas that obtain with each "extreme" on this continuum. So a discussion of research practices comprising the epistemic, the political and the ethical can begin with categories that articulate with specific institutions and, I hope, resonate with students with plans to inhabit those institutions.
- The role of theory in a research study: We might start this

discussion by noting the respective abundance and dearth of explicit theoretical machineries in academic and workplace research studies, and then pose the question "why?" given the sites, the audiences and the ends of those studies. My assumption is that the role of theory in research is not only epideictic (demonstrating values shared with a community) but also epistemic (propelling a set of claims to knowledge). Therefore "audience," if it helps provide the answer, cannot be a simple one. Considering studies that do and do not deploy theory—explicitly, at least—can open up a set of productive questions about the relationships among the knowledge claims, the institutions and the audiences of research.

As an approach to course design, mutualism directs attention to differences rather than similarities within a student population and encourages us to explore ways of making different student "organisms" beneficial to each other precisely because they are different. In this case, it led me to identify some areas of discussion in which Research Methods syllabi for MAs and PhDs might diverge, envision conversations that could

Diversity and Representation

Moderator: Gerald Savage, Illinois State University

"2+2"=Growth: Lessons Learned from an International Dual Degree Program

Mark Nunes, *Southern Polytechnic State University*

Keywords: diversity, dual degree programs, international programs

Five years ago, Southern Polytechnic State University began the process of establishing a dual degree relationship with Northeast Normal University in Changchun, in the northeast of China. Southern Poly had some fifteen years of experience in international cooperative agreements, most notably in China with North China University of

be richer for having researchers from academy and workplace as interlocutors, and suggest points of entry for student researchers as they see themselves inhabiting either institution (or both). "Theory" is a complex and multimeaning(ed) concept in our field. This paper's use of mutualism, of course, has illustrated yet a different function of theory in intellectual inquiry: adopted in the wake of a problem as appropriate to that problem, it opened up some possibly new, possibly productive ways of analyzing and solving that problem. Students will be better researchers for having examined the numerous meanings and uses of theory in their work.

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Technology in Beijing. Typically, this relationship was less formal than a true dual-degree program. Students would arrive as exchange students, then after a semester, apply as transfer students. Unfortunately, students in this situation had little sense of how many courses would transfer in, and because exchange students

are treated as transient students for registration purposes, they received little guidance in course selection. As a result, many students who transferred in thinking they had two years of study ahead of them found that in reality it was closer to three.

With the development of the dual degree program with Northeast Normal University, SPSU would establish an articulation agreement that would formalize transfer credits for specific degree programs. Although this program was coordinated at the vice presidential level, guided by SPSU's International Programs Director, former colleague Ken Rainey took the initiative of developing a technical communication dual-degree program. Ken realized that this relationship provided the university with a unique opportunity to participate in one of the only dual degree programs officially recognized by the Chinese Government. It would also provide a significant infusion of students into our degree program, establishing SPSU as a leading educator of international technical communicators.

We are now in our second year of the "2+2" program and have learned considerable lessons along the way. The first, and the one that we were most prepared to face, concerned communication skills. Although the majority of students from NENU had strong English grammar skills, their oral and written communication skills were not at a level appropriate for a college junior. We discovered along the way that one benefit for NENU in receiving official government recognition for the dual degree program was that they could surpass their enrollment quotas to populate the program. Rather than recruiting from English majors, we found ourselves with students who had entered as freshmen in an e-commerce program—parallel to the English program, but with somewhat

weaker English skills. We have had to fine tune our advisement for these students, developing two support courses specifically designed to meet international student needs, while at the same time serving the needs as a in-major elective course. We have also had to deal with unrealistic student expectations—students who anticipate an easy transition into an American classroom, only to find that the "ramp up" period is far more arduous than anything they imagined.

But perhaps the biggest "growth" related issue we have had to address is the impact of two cohort groups, one junior-level and one senior-level on the overall program dynamic. We have 83 students in our BA and BS programs; 27 of those students are dual degree students, either from Northeast Normal University or NCUT. In our BS program alone, 24 of our 69 declared majors—more than 1/3—are NENU students. Such a large number can often translate into core classes where more than half of the students are Chinese. This has made for tricky scheduling, trying to balance courses as much as possible for the benefit of native and international student alike.

In succeeding in our dual degree efforts, we have likewise created an equal number of opportunities and challenges. On one hand, we do not want to create a program in which the international student population in effect defines the culture of the program at SPSU. At the same time, we have defined a good opportunity for helping students—native and international—understanding the changing world of international technical communication. We are, in effect, moving from tactical response to strategic plan. As our program grows, we would like to see the program's international flavor become a drawing card for our degree in technical communication.

Taking Action for Diversity in Technical Communication Programs

Gerald Savage, *Illinois State University*

Keywords: curriculum, diversity planning, globalization, social justice

The increasing importance of international technical communication has forced us to recognize the need to embrace certain aspects of diversity in our technical communication programs. Commitment to diversity is now vital to sustained relevance for our field. However globalization is not the only rationale we must accept. We have a broader obligation to social justice, and this obligation should, and can, be realized in technical communication program design. This need was addressed with great enthusiasm in the 2004 annual business meeting of CPTSC, thanks to a challenge by Cynthia Selfe. It resulted in the formation of an ad hoc Diversity Committee that prepared a proposal that was accepted the following year. But relatively little has happened since.

I am convinced that the lack of action is not a problem of indifference but rather a lack of understanding where to begin and what a commitment to diversity should entail at the programmatic level and for CPTSC. Fortunately, a significant amount of research has been done in the area of diversity studies that can inform our thinking as we seek to develop sustainable policies and practices for diversity in our programs.

My presentation is grounded in a review of such studies. For example, Kalev et al. (2006), have extensively studied methods for overcoming discriminatory practices in corporate settings. Gandz (2001), in a widely publicized study, pointed to evidence for a “business case for diversity” in “enhanced corporate profits or greater taxpayer satisfaction with government services.” Such studies contrast with studies addressing diversity in academia. Roithmayer (2006), discussed the challenges faced by universities attempting

to increase diversity in student enrollments, owing to “persistent racial and economic inequalities in K–12 education, together with the increasing costs of higher education.” Sanneh (2005) pointed out that following 9/11 “a new urgency has gripped the public about turning the University into a national security enterprise” and that “difference, diversity and pluralism are seen as an obstacle, and sometimes as a threat to be overcome.” On the other hand, a number of papers presented at the Seventh International Conference on Diversity held in July 2007 in Amsterdam suggest hope for increasing diversity in higher education. Nevertheless, we need research in technical communication to understand the current status of diversity and of measures to increase diversity in our programs as well as in industry and other sites of practice.

Following are some questions I hope to address in this presentation:

- What do we mean by diversity?
- What philosophical and political stance should we take toward diversity?

After briefly framing the discussion in relation to these two questions I will outline five pragmatic perspectives from which technical communication programs need to conceptualize diversity planning and implementation. These perspectives include:

- Student diversity
- Faculty diversity
- Curricular diversity
- University policies toward diversity and the current status
- of diversity in the university
- Diversity in the ranks of professional practitioners

In relation to each of these perspectives I will discuss one or two challenges and possible courses of action. Discussion will, I hope, bring out further questions and examples of effective action.

The Graduate Student on the Search Committee: Contributions and Cautions

Christian F. Casper, *North Carolina State University*

Keywords: program administration, search committees

To help graduate students prepare for responsibilities as future department citizens, programs are involving graduate students more deeply in administrative tasks. A fairly high-profile and potentially risky responsibility is membership on a search committee seeking to hire a new faculty member. Serving on a search committee provides the graduate student with first-hand experience of the job market and the inner workings of a department. At the same time, the duties and perspective required on a search committee can be contrary to the immediate experience, interests, and responsibilities of the graduate student. I had the opportunity last year to serve on a search committee when the Department of English at North Carolina State University filled a senior faculty position in the rhetoric and technical communication division. Here I argue that graduate students have a valuable role to play on search committees but certain cautions should be heeded as well.

Involving graduate students in search committees holds several advantages for both the committee and the student. The committee gains the perspective of a member of an important constituency often unrepresented in committees of this type and the student gains valuable experience in departmental administration that can ease the transition into committee work when she or he becomes an assistant professor. The student also gains insight that can be valuable when she or he is on

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the other side of the table, interviewing for her or his first faculty position. Additionally, I personally enjoyed working with faculty from my department in an activity other than coursework and research, as it allowed me both to get to know a different side of some faculty whom I already knew fairly well in other contexts and to get to know some faculty with whom I might not have become acquainted at all otherwise.

An important question about the best role of graduate students on search committees concerns whether they should have an official vote or if they should serve in a strictly advisory role. The choice is frequently not the committee's or even the department's to make (at NC State, graduate student members of search committees are not granted voting privileges), but the question is important for two reasons: for the message it conveys about the importance of the voices of graduate students in the department and, in a related issue, for the material input of the graduate student on the committee. A member of a committee who does not have voting privileges often cannot exert the same influence on the course of the committee's deliberations as a voting member can. (Consider the influence of the delegate from Puerto Rico in the US Congress.) In my case, I did not have an official vote, but I found this not to be a great detriment because the committee on which I served sincerely valued my opinion. The same may not be true for all committees so granting a vote to the

student can help ensure that student concerns are considered fully.

The advantages of involving graduate students in search committees are significant, but some cautions need to be heeded. First, from the perspective of the graduate student, the time commitment can be tremendous. This is true, of course, for faculty also, but significant committee work is not usually expected of graduate students, and their schedules are not constructed to accommodate it. In addition, graduate students are (ideally) not long-term members of the department, nor are they paid to participate in department service. Furthermore, the flip side of one of

the advantages previously discussed is that because graduate students have not been on the other side of the table, some of the protocol may not be clear to them. In particular, some briefing or training needs to be done to ensure that the graduate student does not ask inappropriate questions. (Making small talk about family, for example, could inadvertently violate some antidiscrimination laws.) These concerns, however, are relatively easy to address through adequate preparation, making graduate student membership on search committees a potentially valuable experience for all involved.

Topiary Trees: Shaping Programs and People

Moderator: Mark Hannah, Purdue University

Growing into our Collaboration with Engineering Design: Sharing Vocabularies, Values and Processes

Alan C.W. Chong, University of Toronto

Keywords: engineering communication, instructional design, interdisciplinary discourse, pedagogy

The integration of communication and engineering design teaching at the University of Toronto has provided an intriguing set of challenges and opportunities, both on a programmatic and a pedagogical level. Working with engineering design specialists to deliver writing and oral presentation training within subject courses has demanded nontraditional approaches to communication curriculum design across our program. This paper described one significant set of adjustments to the standard process model for writing that takes advantage of an engineering design context, and addresses some of the implications of appropriating design vocabulary and blurring disciplinary borders.

Engineering design focuses primarily on teaching the design process and introducing tools for facilitating that process. Because of that, engineering design and

communication have a strong affinity: the two processes are also strikingly similar, with many parallel stages. Writing begins, for example, by determining purpose and analyzing audience, design by defining a problem to solve, requirements gathering, and stakeholder analysis. Drafts are essentially prototypes, and both need to be tested and revised before being finalized.

But the efficacy of process-based models for writing instruction remains questionable. Students reminded of the importance of audience analysis, outlining, and revision still often fail to actually engage these activities, focusing most of their time on drafting. This is especially true in engineering, where writing is often seen as a peripheral exercise of secondary importance. In contrast, design educators have a much easier time establishing student “buy-in” for the importance of the process model. Informal, in class surveys, for example, show that equivalent stages in

the design process—user analysis, requirements gathering, and testing/revision—are treated much more seriously, both in terms of perceived importance and time allotted.

We can take advantage of this enthusiasm for design by erasing the gap between the two processes, a gap that is itself largely artificial, the product of discipline specific vocabularies rather than any substantive difference. In this context, students are taught that writing is an act of design, that a report is equivalent to a designed product. Substituting the language of design, we can give essential and often neglected stages in the writing process much greater currency. When framing revision as a process of testing against established audience and document requirements, for example, we move beyond an intuitive sense of what “sounds

better” and towards a more concrete and scientific method for evaluation that engineering students are comfortable with.

As technical communication programs continue to deepen their collaboration with content courses, we need to search for and take advantage of these points of intersection. Yet as we move this strategy of blurring disciplinary lines from a pedagogical technique in a single class to a programmatic level, there are significant implications for the identity of technical communication programs, especially those housed within other disciplines. What we gain from sharing—greater currency with students—is clear, but blurring those lines may also threaten disciplinary identity. Our efforts must be informed by both a desire to explore these opportunities and a deep awareness of the complications of such collaborations.

Semester @ SEA: Student Engagement and Activism

Michael J. Salvo, *Purdue University*

Jennifer Bay, *Purdue University*

Keywords: community engagement, co-op education curriculum, internship, service learning, undergraduate

The Semester @ SEA is a new program in the undergraduate Professional Writing Major at Purdue University. Funded by a grant awarded through PLACE (Purdue Liberal Arts Community Engagement), the Semester @ SEA emulates elements of a study abroad semester and service-learning project. Like study abroad, the students work with others in their major, taking a set of intensive thematically linked classes. Following the model of service learning initiatives, the students work locally, engaged with a community organization.

This presentation briefly describes the creation of the Semester @ SEA program, ongoing activities during the fall 2007 semester, as well as preparation and registration for spring 2008 when the program is scheduled to run. We especially encourage attendance among CPTSC

attendees who have participated in study abroad, service learning initiatives, and/or extended community. We welcome your advice and experience. Although the Semester @ SEA has elements in common with a variety of existing programs, putting these elements together to create an immersive learning environment remains a challenge to our planning.

Professional Writing Majors will have the option of co-registering for two or more classes simultaneously, including a professional writing internship class (p. 488), advanced professional writing (p. 515), and rhetorical theory (p. 470). To foster student engagement in an extended community partnership, students will be required to register for the internship and at least one of the other two classes offered, but can register for all three if

scheduling allows. Students will attend meals, seminars, go on field trips, and prepare documents for use by a community organization to engage the Lafayette Community and extend their learning experience beyond formal classroom time.

During the spring 2008 semester, the Semester @ SEA will be working closely with the Tippecanoe County Historical Association (TCHA) at the Fort Ouiatanon Historical Site. Students will be designing museum displays, site signage and navigation, creating documents for paper, web, and electronic distribution about the site's history, archeology, as well as a number of fund-raising events held through the year on the site. Students will have the opportunity to earn credit for organizing, designing, managing, and presenting large-scale projects that are generally beyond the scope of individual courses.

The Semester @ SEA program seeks to enrich the educational experience of the English Department's Professional Writing Majors by extending their educational experience beyond the formal classroom. Engagement with a committed community agency offers advanced undergraduate students opportunity to analyze, research, and build solutions for community problems. Engagement with a committed community agency offers advanced undergraduate students opportunity to analyze, research, and build solutions for community problems. Extending engagement beyond the boundaries of individual formal classes will allow students to experience an immersive educational experience where their studies are transformed from learning about community issues to engaging and addressing community needs, ultimately serving as a resource for the greater Lafayette community. Engagement with TCHA is expected to continue over time, making this a long-term site of community engagement. Faculty will also have an opportunity to work with undergraduate

students beyond the confines of formal classroom instruction, fostering a greater sense of program camaraderie. And finally, the community will have an engaged and committed: this program moves beyond limits imposed by classroom and semester limits of instruction.

Epochal transitions from indigenous use to French trappers to English settlement trace an arc of immigration and migration in this part of the country. Transportation is a recurring theme, moving people, goods, ideas, and culture from the Great Lakes to the Wabash-Ohio-Mississippi river system; our canal heritage and railroading heritage again connect the theme of transportation to our Purdue Boilermakers. From nineteenth-century railroads to cutting-edge manufacturing and transportation, from Subaru (SIA) to Caterpillar to Wabash National Corporation, Lafayette-West Lafayette is a hub for transportation of goods and people across a continent as well as for the movement of ideas and innovation around the world.

Migration/immigration through this land we now call Indiana is an historical as well as contemporary part of the formation of our community identity. The @SEA program recognizes Fort Ouiatanon as one rich site of local history and identity characterized, on its surface, as movement of goods; however, it also symbolizes the movement of people, their cultures, and the identities. Historically, these events shape Indiana's current identity. Understanding contemporary change shapes what Indiana will become.

By creating a common space for work, inquiry, research, and community building, the Semester @ SEA seeks to create commitment and attention to community projects that cannot be addressed during regular semester structures, in which students work in unrelated and unlinked classes. Semester @ SEA shifts the classroom-centered structure of the curriculum for this final advanced semester,

and focuses students' attention onto community issues and local communities facing challenges. The students will address these challenges with the expertise they have gained in the Professional Writing major. The project will build students' confidence and expertise as well as providing opportunities to engage their communities. Faculty have been recruited to teach each of the classes that formulate the Semester @ SEA program for their willingness to more flexibly accommodate projects of community interest whose scope is beyond that of regular classroom structure. These faculty members have expressed both interest and expertise in community engagement. Semester @ Sea will be assessed formatively throughout through less formal focus group meetings as well as more formal pre- and post-testing. Students will be asked to assess their learning experience, and will collect their work into community engagement portfolios.

For Spring 2008, the pilot semester of the Semester @ SEA program, we propose to work closely with the Tippecanoe County Historical Association (TCHA) and in particular Fort Ouiatanon. This choice is particularly relevant to the PLACE theme of immigration and migration, as it is the major historical site in this sector of the state, and it is in need of historically-based writing to support the museum (and ultimately the various events held there).

The TCHA and Fort Ouiatanon face a number of challenges that are a particularly good match for the pilot Semester @ SEA program. The Fort has numerous historical displays and markers that are weathered and need replacement, allowing students hands-on experience with signage, verbo-visual texts, and multimodal writing. The displays inside the structure need to be

updated both to make their content reflect recent historical findings and to apply contemporary technologies of presentation. Professional writing students are particularly excited about and well prepared to transfer images from slides to electronic media and to build web-based materials. Moreover, the TCHA needs students to create press releases, pamphlets, booklets, and documents to support Fort Ouiatanon. Thus this project will give students opportunities to hone their craft as writers by producing documents (press releases, pamphlets, booklets, and other documents) in support of the museum at the same time as they practice their project management skills by producing a video for TCHA, the professional writing major, and the College of Liberal Arts.

In addition, the Historical Association will be seeking funding from local and national organizations, and students will research grant opportunities, write grants, and pursue funding on behalf of the THCA. Students will also participate in documenting the THCA's activities, a particular need of the organization as it seeks to document the effective use of the funds provided for its activities. Fort Ouiatanon is a historically significant site, a community resource, as well as an archeologically valuable site. Part of the longer-term goals for the Semester @ SEA project will be to build partnerships both among organizations within Purdue, local corporate partners, state and local organizations. The first year's activities concentrate specifically on Fort Ouiatanon, although connections to other organizations and sites will be pursued for future @SEA semesters. At the time this revision was completed, all three classes were filled to capacity and had waiting lists.

Virtual Case Environments (VCEs): Implications for a Self-Sustaining, Project-Oriented Curriculum

David Fisher, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*

Cindy Nahrwold, *University of Arkansas at Little Rock*

Keywords: content/course management systems, CMS, interdepartmental collaboration, online cases, project-oriented curriculum, VCE, virtual case environment

What is a VCE-Driven Curriculum?

We've developed a content management system (CMS) called MyCase that enables the rapid development of virtually represented situations/organizations (virtual case environments, or VCEs). Virtual cases are enacted over time by faculty, students, subject matter experts, and stakeholders outside the university and are mediated by the MyCase CMS. The goal of these virtual cases is for students to engage in the kinds of activity/communication prompted by the situations as they evolve during modules' progression, with the implication that by engaging in these types of activities, they're developing competencies as well as theoretical perspectives that will be transferable to their lives outside of school.

A project-based curriculum with virtual cases at its center has numerous consequences for curricular change, including:

- integration of course-materials development, both vertical integration (i.e., advanced students contributing materials to cases used by novice students) and horizontal integration (collaboration among departments and community stakeholders)
- consultative teaching (i.e., students seek help when they need it, using the instructor as a resource in their time(s) of need, rather than having information fed to them)
- online representation of situations, as opposed to online "delivery of materials" (a subtle, but important,

difference from traditional e-learning configurations).

How does the VCE-Driven Curriculum Work?

Faculty and subject matter experts across the disciplines along with advanced students help develop simulations of situations/organizations in which newer students will participate. The artifacts included in these simulations include information sources (video footage of meetings, video/audio interviews with characters, access to organizational documents, access to an organization's intranet, etc.) and collaboration tools (discussion boards, polls, surveys, email and chat) students can use to communicate with each other and with case characters (role players: actual clients, faculty members, or advanced students) about the scenario.

Although a radically project-based curriculum like the one in place at Carnegie Mellon West, see <http://west.cmu.edu/>, serves as proof that such an arrangement can work, more traditional instructor accountability and student assessment practices can map onto a virtual-case-driven curriculum by helping define student's roles in ongoing virtual cases as well as the case-development process. For example, students in a technical editing course can work on revising and editing the content for one of the future cases. Likewise, grant writing students can respond to an exigency identified in a simulation or develop materials to help fund the ongoing case-development effort.

What are the Research Implications for the VCE-driven Curriculum?

Transfer studies

Concentrate on the impact such environments have on students when they begin working outside of school. What transfers? What doesn't?

Assessment studies

Explore ways we might assess collaborative, project-based work. How would such a curriculum change the way we currently assess?

Networks-of-learning studies

Consider how teaching and learning practices like the ones detailed in this position paper may affect post-secondary education—both negatively as well as positively—especially how we develop and maintain course content as well as how we evaluate and reward those involved in

various aspects of development and delivery.

What are Some Other Important Implications?

Consider how to get higher administration to “buy into” this idea, given that such curriculum makes it more difficult to quantify teacher time in separate departments (if consultive teaching is used). Or would embracing such a curriculum result in the “weeding out” of instructors who don’t have the requisite technological skills or who don’t teach on the “technical” side of a program? (At the master’s level, UALR [University of Arkansas at Little Rock] currently offers two concentrations—technical and nonfiction—and is putting in a third one in editing.)

Furthermore, what about students who don’t wish to be involved in such a program? What options do we offer them?

Poster Presentations

Moderators: Molly Johnson & Joe Strange, University of Houston–Downtown

Breaking the Luddite: An EQ Strategy for Reducing Resistance to Change

Mialisa Moline, University of Wisconsin–River Falls

Keywords: emotional quotient, luddite, motive, pathos

Those of us who want to gain efficiency and expediency with the use of technology [in our classrooms and/or professional lives], but have not yet developed the skills to reap these benefits, may be trapped in the classic psychological ‘approach-avoidance conflict.’ We want to make these inventions serve us; we want to have the control and influence they offer us, yet we fear each time we approach an unfamiliar technological task that it will control our time, decrease our efficiency, and only influence others to see us as inept and unproductive (Ruth Wood, *Personal Communication*, October 9, 2007).

What is a Luddite?

The Luddite resists new methods for accomplishing work. The Luddite addressed herein is one who resists new technological methods for accomplishing work in the field of Technical Communication.

Where Might One Find the Luddite?

Luddites may be found lurking in the academy in such soft, quiet spaces as the corner offices of traditional college English departments, lingering around the water-coolers of industry, and reveling in the red tape of governmental offices.

Why do We Need to Consider More Pathos?

Technical communication program faculty need to consider adding more pathos appeals to work towards breaking the Luddite's hold on positive growth in the field of technical communication because logos, ethos, and pathos operate together; and to emphasize one over the other (i.e., logos over pathos) due to our academic context and our perceptions of ethos in the academy produces a certain potential for producing ineffective and somewhat dry results. Working within the academy in Western environments does tend to encourage an emphasis on and predominance of logical proofs. Another reason for increasing appeals to pathos when confronting the Luddite of technology is that often the Luddite's motives are driven by fear of change, fear of loss of power, or fear of the unknown.

Fear-driven motives are complex, and they often respond well to appeals to pathos where appeals to logos and ethos may fail to move. As Coe (1996) asserts, although Maslow offers three clear sets of needs (basic, psychological, and self-actualization), he clarified that these "types of needs are not pure; needs are mixtures of different types...Motivation comes from complex mixtures of needs from up and down the hierarchy" (pp. 64–65).

Coe asked, "What, then, do users need at each of the three stages? Basic needs [respond to]...logical structures for the presentation of information [and] evidence that what you are teaching is accurate, reliable, and predictable. Psychological needs [respond to] a feeling of being part of a broader user community, a sense of mastery and competence [, and] a sense that they are not being talked down to or patronized. Self-actualization needs [respond to] encouragement to apply the information in new and unique ways...freedom to take the information and

use it as a foundation for applications beyond the immediate situation [, and] suggestions for further exploration of the information" (pp. 65–66).

How can Consideration of Motive Help?

Motive is some need or desire causing a person to act, "a philosophical [study], not ultimately to be solved in terms of empirical science" (Burke, 1969). Understanding the motives behind a Luddite's resistance may help our programs achieve growth by reducing resistance toward new methods of work through the execution of well-informed and well-planned rhetorical strategies. The old-world attitudes of the Luddite cannot stand long in the new-world order of technology when faced with a well-crafted and thorough rhetorical attack. But approaching the Luddite's prejudices requires a certain subtlety and discretion (Corbett & Connors, 1999, pp. 77–84). To best determine an effective approach for removing prejudices, we must first understand where the Luddite's sympathies lie. Improving our understanding of motive informs our rhetorical practices. Gaining understanding of motives, both logical and emotional, is key to breaking his/her resistance.

But Why Increase Appeals to Pathos?

"Fear," Aristotle said, is "a pain or trouble arising from an image of coming evil, destructive or painful; for men do not fear all evils—as, for instance, the prospect of being unjust or slow; but only such evils as mean great pain or losses, and these when they seem not distant, but close and imminent" (Golden et al., pp. 35-36, 2000). Fear of technology means pain to the Luddite, great pain and loss, a pain both close and imminent.

Technology progresses relentlessly forth in the academy. Students increase their expectations of technological expertise in their professors. Administrators

push the implementation of technology in campus classrooms and communities. Business competitors demand technological advances to maintain a competitive edge. The Luddite cannot escape it without facing tangible losses. Campbell suggested, “pain of every kind generally makes a deeper impression on the imagination than pleasure does, and is retained longer in the memory” (Golden et al., p. 121). That deeper impression becomes more difficult to dispel. Finding the right combination of appeals to logos, pathos, and ethos evolves from extensive audience analysis, and part of that analysis involved understanding motives behind the actions.

According to Aristotle, “It is not right to pervert the judge by moving him to anger or envy or pity—one might as well warp a carpenter’s rule before using it” (Golden et al. p. 281). However, using our knowledge of the structure of argument and appeals to logos as experts in rhetoric is a significant tool for breaking the Luddite’s hold. “Accepting the view that man is basically rational, they (the Romans) agreed with Aristotle that emotional proof should be used as a reinforcement of logos. But they went far beyond Aristotle and Isocrates in highlighting the value of pathos. In the Orator, Cicero suggested that impressive pathetic appeals must be used to strengthen the logos. The speaker, he said, who inflames the court accomplishes far more than the one who merely instructs it” (Golden et al. p. 51). Even Quintilian observed, “There is room for addresses to the feelings. The nature of the feelings is varied, and not to be treated cursorily” (Golden et al., p. 52). Combining logical proofs with an understanding of the emotions driving the Luddite and countering their emotional motives affords better odds for successful persuasion.

How Can One Use the Emotional Quotient (EQ) as a Rhetorical Tool?

Emotional intelligence may be defined as “the ability to be aware of and in control of one’s emotions as well as empathic with others; to motivate one’s self, and to be effective in intrapersonal and interpersonal relationships...Additional understanding of emotional intelligence (EI) or the emotional quotient (EQ) is possible by contrasting it with cognitive intelligence or the intelligence quotient (IQ)” (Hill and Rivera). We already use EQ implicitly through our rhetorical choices of appeals to pathos. Capitalizing on psychology’s concept of EQ offers us a valuable tool in gaining understanding quickly and efficiently and strategizing an effective appeal to pathos.

Several tools for measuring and improving EQ exist, including the EQ-I™ and the EQ Map® (Hill and Rivera). Consider starting with practicing the five key concepts presented at (http://www.umich.edu/~record/9900/May22_00/15.htm) and the EQ fundamentals presented at (<http://www.dirjournal.com/guides/emotional-intelligence/>). Technical communicators seeking to improve their effectiveness in breaking the Luddite’s hold on technological advances within a program should consider using more pathos, and the concept of EQ in particular as a tool to inform one’s choices for designing emotional proofs. How can we reduce the Luddite’s impact on positive growth in the field of technical communication? Put EQ tools to work in breaking the Luddite’s hold!

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Fluid Relations: Assessing Programs in Context

Margaret N. Hundleby, *University of Toronto*

Keywords: methodology, program assessment, structure, relationship, activities

I am proposing a poster presentation that looks at a key aspect of program assessment—assessing a program in context. However comprehensive and incisive a program assessment approach may be, it can often be found to downplay or ignore the crucial element of the context in which the individual program plays out its design and works toward its goals. It goes without saying that all assessment (and assessors) strive for accuracy of evaluation and satisfactory results.

Focusing on methodology and outcomes may, however, mask the need to ensure that an assessment is fully grounded in the context in which it rises and the key relationships it must account for to be both effective and meaningful (Guba & Lincoln, 1983; Lynne, 2004). The poster argues for the benefits of replacing a global measurement methodology going from start to finish without concern for the local and particular dynamics of the program to an approach keyed to purposes of both the program itself and of carrying out the assessment.

There are three areas to be considered:

- the structure of the setting in which the program exists;
- the relationship among the

elements in the setting; and

- the activities required to capture (describe) the characteristic make-up of the program at the same time as it is being judged.

The poster will first highlight a process for analyzing a setting to understand its structure, including a schematic showing the positioning of four major players—courses, departments, disciplines, and institutions. The remaining graphics and supporting text feature representations of how and why any program is both framed by the elements of its setting and operates reflexively with them to produce the outcomes being sought.

Rather than being a challenge to the recent discussions of assessment, especially of programs, that have taken place at CPTSC and on ATTWL, the claim I put forward here is one that considers how the increasing fluidity of relations between a program and its setting leave the rigid and outdated concept of context as “background” far behind. This poster comprises a story of the fluid and newly sophisticated understanding we have of setting as an active agent in carrying out an assessment that is both accurate and meaningful.

Infusing the Study of Ethics into Graduate Programs

Joe Strange, *University of Houston Downtown*

Molly Johnson, *University of Houston Downtown*

Keywords: ethics, graduate programs

Infusing ethics into the core of an established graduate program of professional and technical communication without adding hours to the degree has challenges. Surely many have added an ethics module to a course from some sense of need, but to infuse an entire program core with meaningful ethics education is a more complex proposition.

At the center of the discussion for Professional Writing (PW)/Technical Communication (TC) faculty has to be what and how to teach ethics. Rhodes (2003, p.59) argued that “specialists in each discipline can often serve as the most effective facilitators of ethics education.” He explained that ethics pervade every aspect of our disciplines, whether we are practitioners or theoreticians. Who better to teach technical writing ethics to technical writing students than technical writers? Technical writers face the ethics of the discipline daily, and thus have a thorough working knowledge of what “ought to be.”

Conversely, ethical theorists are examining moral questions from an analytical or scientific perspective and often know “what is” (Rhodes, 2003). Neither perspective is adequate by itself. Meaningful ethics education is juxtaposing “what is” with “what ought to be.” At the University of Houston Downtown, a National Endowment for the Humanities Grant provided the venue for the masters’ program faculty to add the theoretical aspects of ethics to their practical understanding of ethical conduct in professional and technical writing. With our

understanding of theoretical ethics refined, we incorporated four case studies of regionally important events and their implications concerning ethics into four core courses: Rhetorical Theory, Visual Design Theory, Project Management, and Pro-seminar.

At the seminar series conclusion, we developed modules of ethics based on the case studies for each core course. The seminar series brought the formal vocabulary of meta ethics into the vocabulary of practitioner teachers. And as Henderson (2002, p.7) pointed out, “best place for practitioner and theorist to meet is language.” Further, Rhodes (2003) suggested that teaching ethics in the disciplines is fostered by removing our academic impediments. And armed with an enriched vocabulary we added ethics to our core.

Our poster will present a pictorial narrative of our process: the seminars, cases, ethics modules in our core, and recommendations for those looking to add ethics to their courses or programs.

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BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

CPTSC 34th Annual Meeting

13 October 2007

East Carolina University, Greenville, NC, USA

The meeting was called to order at 9:10 a.m. with (38) members in attendance.

1. **Announcements:** Michelle Eble reviewed airport transportation and excursion plans that begin at 11:00 and immediately following the business meeting, respectively.
2. **Approval request:** Kelli Cargile Cook distributed minutes of the 2006 business meeting. The membership approved the minutes as submitted.
3. **Standing reports**
 - a. **Secretary** (Kelli Cargile Cook for Nancy Coppola): Draft of revised roles for CPTSC officers was distributed for review.
 - b. **Treasurer** (Kelli Cargile Cook for Karen Schnakenberg): Kelli Cargile Cook distributed and discussed the 2007 treasurer's report. Kelli reported that the investment of funds in an interest-bearing account is contributing to a positive financial situation for the organization.
 - c. **Publications** (Jan Tovey): Proceedings from the previous most recent CPTSC conferences are now caught up. Jan Tovey reported that that the call for the 2007 proceedings was in the conference packet; all participants who want to be published in proceedings must reformat according to the directions on the Call for Proposals. The deadline for submission is Jan. 15, 2008
 - d. **Program reviews** (Kelli Cargile-Cook for Kirk St. Amant): An upcoming guest edited issue of TCQ will focus on program review. Texas Tech is preparing a list of annotated citations of article over the last ten years that pertain to program assessment. These will be available on their website. Nancy Coppola provided information on the CPTSC research – supported website on program assessment that will be available soon and is a collaborative effort of New Jersey Institute of Technology and Texas Tech.
 - e. **Distinguished service award** (*Jeff Grabill*): Jeff Grabill led the effort to arrange the two distinguished service awards that were presented this year.
 - f. **Research Grants committee** (*Kathy Northcutt*): Three proposals were funded this year with a cap of \$500.00 for each for a total of \$1500.00. These projects were reported on at the conference. The committee needs input from the membership on several issues for the next call for proposals including how to handle IRB approval and accountability, which has not been required in the past; accountability for the use of funds, which can be used for travel to present at conferences; recommendations that funds support faculty/grad student partnership. The membership discussed raising caps on funding with Rebecca Burnett speaking in favor of granting the committee “leeway” on amounts. Laura Gurak moved that the distribution of funds for research project be contingent on demonstrating IRB approval if necessary. Gerry seconded the motion. The motion passed.
4. **Other Reports**
 - a. **STC** (*Tommy Barker, Sandy Harner*): Kelli noted that nominations for the Gould award are due October 15 and for the Ken Rainey award for research on November 1. Tommy and Sandy reported on ideas from discussions with STC:
 - Develop an industry/academic database to encourage collaboration
 - Have Chapter Achievement Awards recognize events that encourage collaboration between professionals and the academy

- Change the strategic plan to incorporate academic issues
- Communicate and publicize opportunities for students to other organizations such as CPTSC
- Have a separate “student day” for STC
- Require all STC research to include academic researcher
- Provide a research database
- Institute an academic rate for STC Webinars
- Allow payment of dues in installments
- Develop an “academic value” program
- Institute a graduated rate for membership so that students moving from school to work can retain student membership rate for some period of time
- Develop corporate sponsorships to provide financial support for students going to the STC conference
- Create a scholarship list, a database of all awards, competitions, scholarships, etc. available to students through STC national and chapters
- Develop a section of the STC Website specifically for students

Recommendations are in draft form right now. Once the Board acts, CPTSC may be asked to review and comment on the draft.

Sandy reported that she will participate in a conference call scheduled for the STC Board meeting to discuss the question of reducing student membership rates. Action on this will require that the Board e-mail the membership. The full board must vote to approve any change but the reduction does have the support of the Executive Committee.

STC is sponsoring a student poster competition that will include cash awards for winners. Submissions are due in January. Contact Tommy for additional information.

- b. **CPTSC at IPCC Roundtable** (Bruce Maylath): Bruce reported on the possibility of sponsoring a roundtable at the IPCC meeting in Montreal, July 13-16, 2008. The primary funding need would be \$500.00 for a room. Bruce moved that CPTSC sponsor a roundtable in Montreal as another in a series and that appropriate funding be approved. Ty seconded. Discussion: Dale asked about IPCC deadlines for papers, which are October 15 for early proposal submission and December 15 for full submissions. Laura Gurak called the question. The motion passed.
- c. **Texas Tech University Press Series in Technical Communication and Rhetoric**. Kelli passed out a call for book proposals.
- d. **Other Announcements**. Jim Zappan reported that the SUNY Press Series has been ended. Michelle Eble reminded the members that the ATTW call for papers is out now. Contact Michelle Simmons for information.

5. Old Business

- a. **Web site** (Tracy Bridgeford): The Website has been backed-up and reorganized. A program list has been created as CPTSC should have the definitive list of programs. Members are requested to check their school listing and information and send Tracy and new content. 2004 proceedings will be up in the spring and presenters will receive an e-mail requesting their position papers. Job postings will include primarily TC jobs; Tracy suggested also indicating who eventually is hired for advertised positions. The University of Minnesota has the CPTSC archives and Tracy will be looking at the cost of digitizing them and putting them online. News will be categorized by year and Tracy would like to identify graduate students by region who would be willing to work as volunteers to contact programs to ask for news. Send recommendations to Tracy.
- b. **Committee for Diversity follow-up** (Gerry Savage): A written update of the committees work was included in the conference package. Recommendations for 2008 include

- Have a panel on diversity at the conference
- Continue to respond to and implement initial recommendations
- Review and revise recommendations
- Authorize permanent diversity sub-committee of 4-5 people of whom at least 2 represent under-represented communities. Volunteers for the committee include Ritu Raju, Han Yu, Barry Thatcher, David Sapp, Gerry Savage, and Tommy Barker (to serve as liaison to STC).

The group will work on these recommendations and future projects as the executive committee has already charged it.

6. New Business

a. *Future Directions for CPTSC*

1. *Electronic Journal Proposal*. Brought forward from Executive Committee. The membership received a handout that describes a proposal that CPTSC “create a journal, available on the World Wide Web, designed to promote discussion, research, and opportunities concerning TSC program administration. Tracy Bridgeford moved to approve the creation of an online journal with Bridgeford, Karla Saari Kitalong, and Bill Williamson as editors. Mary seconded the motion. The membership discussed the motion including the structure of review and editorial boards and concern for including intellectual property rights statement. Michael Salvo offered a friendly amendment to omit terms such as “online” or “electronic” from the title and description of the journal. Tracy Bridgeford seconded. The original motion and the amendment passed.
 2. *Public relations and News Corps*. No report
 3. *Graduate student registry*. Kelli Cargile-Cook requested that Strange and Salvo follow up on issues related to recruitment and report to the membership next year.
 4. *Other*. Alice Philbin handed out a copy of her CPTSC presentation abstract and announced a project aimed at gathering and archiving the collective knowledge of the membership, particularly senior colleagues, about programs and programmatic issues. She requests input and assistance from members in the effort.
- b. **Meeting sites**—University of Minnesota for 2008, University of Aarhus, Denmark for 2009. With respect to Aarhus, Bruce Maylath suggested that the 2009 meeting be proposed for late August so that CPTSC could take place in conjunction with a conference on language for special purposes. He described the University at Aarhus and discussed the history of the idea of a European meeting and the usefulness of the roundtables at IPCC meetings. Bruce moved that the membership approve permission to plan for CPTSC to meet in Aarhus Denmark in 2009. Kevin seconded and the motion passed.
- c. **Vote on 2008 Meeting site**—University of Minnesota. The membership approved the meeting site.
7. **Invitation to 2008 annual meeting, hosted by University of Minnesota (Laura Gurak)**: Laura Gurak extended the University of Minnesota’s invitation to the 2008 annual meeting and conference.

8. Adjournment:

Recorded by Donna Kain for Nancy Coppola, secretary, CPTSC

Attachments: 2006 Minutes, Treasurers report, revised description of board member duties, electronic journal proposal, description of Philbin’s project. Call for proceedings and Diverstiy committee report were included in the conference packets.