

CPTSC

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CPTSC

Council for Programs in Technical and Scientific Communication

Table of Contents

Thursday, August 20, 2009

<p>Session 1 9:00-11:00</p>	<p>About CPTSC 3</p> <p>Meeting Minutes27</p> <p>Plenary Paper & Discussion, Location: M209 <i>Peter Kastberg on Knowledge Communication</i></p>	
<p>Session 2 11:15-12:15</p>	<p>Panel 2A: Complementary Disciplines and Their Potential Contribution to Programs in Professional Communication</p> <p>Language for Special Purposes <i>Jan Engberg</i></p> <p>Knowledge Communication <i>Peter Kastberg</i></p> <p>Rhetoric of Science5 <i>Dale Sullivan</i></p> <p>Technical Communication <i>Jeff Grabill</i></p>	<p>Panel 2B: International Perspectives in Scientific and Technical Communication</p> <p>Possibilities for Technical Writing Programs: International Study Abroad Collaborations.6 <i>Nicole Madison</i></p> <p>International Collaboration: Adapting NYIT's Professional and Technical Writing Degree for Use in China7 <i>Kevin LaGrandeur</i></p> <p>Integrating an International (Global and Local) Language Emphasis in Your Technical and Scientific Communication Program8 <i>Judith Edminster</i></p> <p>Incorporating International Perspectives into the Study of Technical and Policy Discourse13 <i>Susan Lawrence</i></p>
<p>Lunch</p>	<p>Lunch will be served in the same room as the LSP participants - the admin supporters have not decided upon which room exactly yet</p>	
<p>Session 3 2:00-3:00</p>	<p>Panel 3A: Media, Usability, Design</p> <p>Programmatically Engaging the Medium-Message Conundrum: Critiquing the Media We Use.13 <i>Nancy Allen</i></p> <p>Programmatically Engaging the Medium-Message Conundrum: Medium as Disciplinary Challenge? 14 <i>Steve Benninghoff</i></p> <p>Beyond Usability: Rhetoric of Emplaced Use 15 <i>Michael Salvo</i></p> <p>Teaching the Language of Participatory Web Design and Communication15 <i>Pavel Zemliansky</i></p>	<p>Panel 3B: International Perspectives in Scientific and Technical Communication II</p> <p>Building Networks: Local Contexts, Global Connections 16 <i>Doug Eyman</i></p> <p>Graduate Program Recruitment Strategies: From Local to International18 <i>Michael Day</i></p> <p>Modern Cultural Studies: A Call for Extensive Research of Globalization in the Online Classroom 18 <i>Diane Martinez</i></p> <p>Cultural Literacy and the Engineering Curriculum: Teaching Engineers International Technical Writing 19 <i>Joseph Jeyeraj</i></p>

<p>Session 4 3:15-4:15</p>	<p>Panel 4A: Teamwork, Collaboration, Project Management</p> <p>Project Management as a Global Trend for Organization Work: Implications for Technical Communication.21 <i>Constance Kampf</i></p> <p>Power between Virtual Team Members: Balancing between Product or Process Know-How and Local Market Insight.22 <i>Birthe Moustén</i></p> <p>Bringing Academic Journal Peer Review Practices to Local Writing Programs: Collaborative Assessment and Distributed Grading. 22 <i>Keith Comer</i></p>	<p>Panel 4B: Serving Students</p> <p>DISing Service: The Language and Discourse of Program Administration in Academe. 23 <i>Teena Carnegie</i></p> <p>Increasing Diversity in Technical and Scientific Communication.24 <i>Gerald Savage & Natalia Matveeva</i></p> <p>We're Just Not Seeing It: New Challenges in Teaching and Preparing Students with Disabilities.25 <i>K. Alex Ilyasova & Christine Hubbell</i></p>
<p>Session 5 4:30-5:30</p>	<p>Panel 5A: Positioning A Technical Writing Program Inside an English Department: Creating an Exception to the Rule</p> <p>Hybridizing Literature and Rhetoric.26 <i>Miriam Mara</i></p> <p>Minding the Gap. 27 <i>Andrew Mara</i></p> <p>Finding a Workable Structure and Balance: Contrasting a Tech Comm Program in an English Department with Alternatives at Other Universities.27 <i>Bruce Maylath</i></p>	<p>Poster Sessions</p> <p>Self-Sponsored Technical Communications: Sustaining Global- and Local-Community Life <i>Nicole Brown</i></p> <p>Online Education and Multicultural, Multinational Student Populations <i>Emily Thrush & Susan Popham</i></p>

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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Panel 2A: Complementary Disciplines and Their Potential Contribution to Programs in Professional Communication

Each presenter will represent a disciplinary perspective, describing how it contributes to research into practical communication and suggesting what graduates from that discipline could contribute to degree programs in the other areas. The panelists will also explore the intellectual connections and gaps between these fields in an effort to explore international relationships and collaborations. The overall goal of the panel is to encourage program directors to consider conducting searches for faculty in disciplines that they have not yet explored. We believe the panel will do this by articulating these closely related disciplines, describing their approaches to research and teaching. Ample time will be reserved for discussion. ■

Rhetoric of Science's Contribution to Practical Communication

Dale Sullivan, North Dakota State University

Keywords: rhetoric, critical perspective, controversies

When I first began studying technical communication in the late 1970s, I found that several people in the field were conflating technical and scientific communication. They often taught writing for engineers, technical report writing, or some other form of technical writing, and they seldom taught writing in the sciences. Nevertheless they often published in the field of rhetoric of science.

I took this split interest as a strategy for surviving in the academy. If you had the right education, you could be pretty sure to find a position teaching technical writing, but much of the scholarly material in the field of Technical Communication was pretty thin gruel in those days. Rhetoricians studying science, on the other hand, were producing substantial work, so if you needed to publish or perish, and if you needed publications with substance, the rhetoric of science was a good research field to enter. I thought I could get a job by becoming a technical writing specialist. I thought I might get tenure by publishing in the rhetoric of science. It turns out I was right on both counts.

Rhetoric of science is a research field within rhetorical studies. It emerged in the early 1970s and continues to be a robust area although Dilip Goankar tried to tell us in the 1990s that rhetoric was unsuited as a critical perspective in science studies. A few of our champions sallied forth to do battle with Goankar, but most people simply continued studying scientific discourse and writing papers about it. The papers got published in prestigious journals, and they began to be cited by people in other disciplines like the sociology and philosophy of science.

So in answer to the question, What is the rhetoric of science?, I would answer that it is a critical perspective grounded in the 2,500 year-old discipline of rhetoric that focuses on scientific discourse among scientists and within the public sphere. Although some critics use categories drawn directly from classical rhetoric, such as theories of stasis, of pistis, of genre, many draw on modern rhetoricians, critical theorists, and cultural studies theorists. It is not the vocabulary or even the theory that forms the boundaries around the rhetoric of science as much as the disposition of the critic. The sociologist of science is interested in the social structures of science. Some of them have focused on how language works in these communities, and when they do, they occupy the same territory as the rhetorical theorist although their vocabulary is different. Rhetorical critics are interested in how scientists try to persuade their colleagues, the general public, and policy-making bodies. They are interested in how scientists create knowledge through discourse.

As a result, rhetorical critics usually focus on published materials, sometimes a collection of texts from collaborative research groups, sometimes a series of published articles and other documents produced by the same scientist, sometimes documents from science, law, and public hearings that cluster around a particular issue. Although they criticize texts, they contextualize

each text within a scientific controversy, and they may report findings from ethnographic studies and interviews as well. So, like rhetorical studies in general, rhetoric of science explores persuasion in social contexts; it's just that the rhetorical situations are ones in which the communication of scientific knowledge plays a central role.

What could a person who specializes in the rhetoric of science contribute to a program in practical communication? First, the rhetorical critic is able to teach several classes including writing in the sciences (a class that is becoming more widespread as a writing-in-the-disciplines class), rhetorical theory, and rhetorical criticism, as well as rhetoric of science. Second, this person can help students learn rhetorical criticism as an interpretive and critical method that students will recognize as a close relative of literary criticism. In other words, the rhetorical critic can often bridge the gap between Literature faculty and Technical Communication faculty in the same department because their critical methods look like literary criticism methods, but the texts they study are closer to the technical documents in business and research environments with which technical communication faculty work. Third, the rhetorical critic can usually bridge the gap between the English faculty and the communication studies faculty. Although not all communication studies departments have rhetoricians, many do. Rhetoricians from English and communication may be in different departments on campus, but they are usually in the same sessions at professional conferences. Finally, the rhetorical critic provides an informed critical perspective. Often, because of the "two cultures" split, literary theorists criticize technical and scientific culture, but they just as often have little familiarity with these cultures because they suffer from xenophobia. At the opposite extreme, technical communication specialists know the technical world very well but have often adopted a supportive, non-critical stance toward science and technology. Rhetoric of science specialists are often critical of power asymmetries in scientific and technical discourse, but they also have intimate knowledge of particular scientific controversies and the rhetoric used by scientists.

Although I think rhetoric of science is a very important disciplinary perspective that should be represented in every practical writing program, the rhetoric of science critic will often reside on the margins of the practical communication program because science writing is not widely taught and is in not in demand by industry. Also, the critical stance of rhetoric can work against developing a trust relationship with the technical and scientific communities. ■

Possibilities for Technical Writing Programs: International Study Abroad Collaborations

Nicole Madison, Angelo State University

Keywords: internationalization, localization, cultural dimensions

While many universities move to a more "market-based" model, instructors in our field have had to adjust, which often means proving that each assignment in our courses supports some higher learning objective that will add value to student education. One such "value added" topic is internationalization and localization. The need for technical writers to be able to function in a multi-cultural and international job market has been well documented. But can students really understand how different cultures approach rhetoric and writing differently if they do not have the chance to see the documents in use in that particular culture? Is merely introducing the cultural dimensions of Hofstede and Hall and other "culture-generalists" enough?

Some market analysts and cultural commentators would argue that no one can truly understand their own culture, let alone other cultures, without at least one immersion experience. Martin Gannon (2008, p.39) stresses the fact that many companies that may be the future employers of students in our program will not even consider a candidate for management if he or she hasn't lived or

studied abroad. This drives home the fact that in order for students to become valued assets in their companies, they may have to take that next step and go abroad.

As a result of these market forces across the disciplines, Angelo State University, a small, regional university located in West-Central Texas, has moved to ensure that all students in our program are offered discipline-specific opportunities to study abroad. As a result, Nicole Madison (Assistant Professor of Professional Writing) and Gabriela Serrano (Assistant Professor of Literature) have collaborated to form a study-abroad opportunity in conjunction with the University of Torcuato di Tella in Buenos Aires, Argentina. This opportunity is available to professional writing and English students from Angelo State University. During the study abroad experience, students will have the opportunity to study examples of technical and professional writing in its cultural context, as well as to read Argentina's great literary works in its native setting.

In relation to the conference theme of globalization and crossing borders, this presentation would discuss the benefits, pitfalls, and strategies for negotiating the creation of a study abroad program for technical and professional writing majors in times of limited budgets. The planning and creation of such a program may take a minimum of 18 months to 2 years. Administrators who wish to create a similar program will benefit from knowing the logistics of creating a program, how to negotiate the proposal through the multiple administrative layers, and how to recruit and guide students through the application process.

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International Collaboration: Adapting NYIT's Professional and Technical Writing Degree for Use in China

Kevin LaGrandeur, Ph.D., New York Institute of Technology

Keywords: globalization; program
administration; curriculum, undergraduate;
intercultural communication

NYIT and a major Chinese technical university, NUPT in Nanjing, have recently formed a joint venture in which NYIT programs and degrees are offered at the Chinese university. This has entailed actually building a new, separate section at the Chinese campus for the joint school. Monetary obligations are shared, but the programs and their courses are taught and administered by NYIT personnel in cooperation with the Chinese government and the local university administration.

Some of our programs need to be adapted to fulfill the different cultural, governmental, and institutional needs of China. Right now, we happen to be trying to adapt our Professional and Technical Writing major (which is one emphasis in our English degree) to fit the NUPT administration's and the Chinese government's needs. This is part of an overall plan to offer an English degree there, and it has brought up some interesting issues and problems, which we are still in the process of trying to resolve. These issues can be divided into those stemming from limitations on the American side of things and those originating in the Chinese way of doing things.

Chinese administrative issues are as follows:

The biggest problem is that, because of a rather weighty bureaucratic structure, the Chinese university cannot adopt our degree program in its entirety. As one of our upper administration officials says, "It seems that the provincial government in China dictates what kind of English major can be offered at what kind of school." So, local plans to adopt pieces of our program are frustrated by a centralized method for dictating degree maps, which precludes localized deviations. Chinese universities, in general, are interested in very pragmatic

programs. They like to focus, for instance, on preparing students for jobs as translators. So it is unclear where any non-linguistically-oriented classes, like literature, creative writing, or even some forms of professional or technical writing would fit their needs, because they are not interested in having their students produce original documentation so much as teaching them how to convert communication from one language to another.

Also, based on conversations with Chinese faculty and administrators, it seems that the provincial government in China dictates what kind of English major can be offered at what kind of school. They tend to limit their degrees based on the mission of the university. NUPT is labeled as a technical college, which restricts what we can offer. Since their focus is on providing technical students (like engineers) with practical skills, like English translation ability, some classes for technical writing may be limited.

The Chinese administration is, for cultural and bureaucratic reasons, reluctant to commit themselves to giving specific outlines of what they want to do. This has made planning difficult. Our Dean has tried to solve this problem by presenting them with a series of options and asking them to indicate what they like or do not like about them. That way, the Chinese government is prompted to act more quickly.

The American administrators, on the other hand, are faced with the following issues:

Because the Chinese campus is technically an extension of our home campus, NYIT cannot alter its own English/Professional Writing program too much in order to tailor it to the Chinese campus. This would cause accreditation problems in the U.S. For example, the centrally-planned Chinese curriculum for the English major includes required classes such as Military Theory; Introduction to the Theories of Mao, Deng, and Jiang; and Field Work in Military Training. These may not pass muster with American accreditation agencies.

Because NYIT has other foreign campuses in the Middle East and Canada, whatever program we devise has to be flexible enough to be usable in those places, as well as at home in the U.S.

Right now it seems our best option is to use some form of the Professional Writing track of our English program as a starting point or template for fashioning a workable program for the Chinese technical university (as well as the other campus sites around the world), but we still are not sure which road to take. We continue to research these issues in cross-cultural curriculum-formation, and we certainly are interested in how other universities deal with some of these issues and problems. ■

Integrating an International (Global and Local) Language Emphasis into Your Technical and Scientific Communication Program

OR

How to Save Your Graduate Courses When the Administration Axes Your Program

Judith R. Edminster, Bowling Green State University

Keywords: graduate certificate, international focus, global

This presentation describes how Bowling Green State University (BGSU) saved and re-situated the graduate program in Scientific and Technical Communication following rumors of its possible discontinuance by the College of Arts and Sciences. Our survival strategy included developing an online graduate certificate program in international scientific and technical communication. The graduate certificate draws on our S&TC program's existing strengths in international technical communication as, for several years, international students represented a significant percent of our applicant pool and made important contributions to the now defunct Master's program. It also draws on newer strengths in international technical communication theory, online course delivery, and digital literacies. By combining the existing and new

strengths, we sought to re-map the boundaries of our precariously positioned face-to-face curriculum through the development of online learning spaces, serving both non-traditional student markets and on-campus constituencies.

Working in concert with the Rhetoric and Writing Program, and by including a proposal to help all English faculty develop online courses, three faculty members applied for an Ohio Learning Network grant for a digital studio. Using a learning community model, we carved a conceptual space to evaluate, and even migrate some curriculum toward an online environment. With the resources provided by this grant, two non-tenured faculty members were able to triangulate several programmatic needs in the department and eventually create a new programmatic iteration.

Using BGSU's Provost-championed University Academic Plan (Inquiry, Engagement, and Achievement) as both exigence and starting point allowed us an additional measure of freedom in establishing the program. The Academic Plan emphasized new ways to integrate online technology as part of the university learning experience—vaguely-defined as “new media and emerging technologies.”

Also voiced in the Academic Plan is the university's renewed commitment “to develop students who seek intercultural and international engagement and who possess a capacity to relate to diverse others at home and abroad.” The international focus of the certificate supported this institutional commitment as well.

Further support for the graduate certificate's international focus is contextually situated in the university's exchange program with Xi'an Foreign Languages University in China. Under this agreement Bowling Green State University has the flexibility of sending two or three faculty members or graduate students to Xi'an Foreign Languages University in exchange for three Xi'an graduate students or faculty members who come to Bowling Green. Our S&TC Master's program, when it was still intact, regularly accepted and enrolled students and instructors from Xi'an under this agreement. S&TC faculty also participated in the exchange, teaching courses in technical writing at Xi'an and working with Chinese graduates of our former Master's program to establish a technical writing program at Xi'an. As Ping Duan and Weiping Gu (2005) pointed out in their article, “The Development of Technical Communication in China's Universities” (p. 434) technical writing, as a subject of study, is virtually non-existent in China. At least two Chinese MA students at Bowling Green have produced Master's theses documenting the current need for technical writing programs in China and exploring the feasibility of establishing such programs at Xi'an and other, more technically focused universities. As the need for such programs to support China's rapidly growing technological and global economic development continues to grow, an online graduate certificate program such as the one we have developed may appear extremely attractive to a variety of Chinese businesses and industries interested in developing employee communication skills as a long-term, quality management strategy.

In addition, many of the potential students for this program are in industry seeking ways to increase job security or to improve their abilities to communicate in an expanded, global market, but lack the flexibility of being able to come to campus for primarily daytime classes. Others are seeking to upgrade or update certifications of skills and knowledge without need for a degree. And as it has turned out, Rhetoric and Writing Ph.D. students have also found that the certificate enhances their *vitas*.

Gradually, student performance objectives for the program began to take shape. After completing the program, students would possess the ability to:

- Create common technical vocabularies within “transaction” cultures as they are socially constructed through intercultural interaction;
- Analyze cultural bias;
- Employ forms of project management that facilitate intercultural collaborative writing (dialogical rather than hierarchical);
- Apply “learning organization” management concepts in order to learn from diversity;
- Develop collaborative relationships that generate mutual knowledge within “transaction” cultures;
- Assess and reflect on their collaborative processes;
- Design effective usability tests for documents with international or culture-specific audiences;
- Develop evaluation criteria for processes and products; and
- Analyze processes by which specific cultural values interact.

The 12-hour curriculum, which can be completed in one calendar year, eventually included courses in (1) Professional/Technical Writing (2) Professional/Technical Editing (both with an emphasis on international communication situations) (3) Research in International Professional/Technical Communication, and (4) Ethics in International Technical Communication.

International technical communication has traditionally focused on developing both the awareness and the skills necessary to understand how cultural difference affects communication in various technical contexts and to plan for and design documents that meet the needs of both culturally-diverse and culturally-specific audiences. This certificate program relies to some extent on this traditional approach by teaching such skills as (1) how to analyze cultural bias, (2) how to analyze international and nationally specific audiences, (3) how to design effective usability tests for documents with international or culture-specific audiences, and (4) how to translate the culture as well as the language of technical documents. In addition the program places significant emphasis upon the growing awareness in technical communication research that the application of static notions about particular cultures on the part of technical communicators can degenerate into the reinscription of cultural stereotypes that obstruct communication rather than facilitate it. Thus our certificate program also emphasizes the need for technical communicators to understand that (1) every communication situation is context-specific, (2) although context includes culture, cultures do not communicate with each other, individuals do, and (3) the culture that defines individual international communication situations is a shifting and often ephemeral “hybrid” or “transaction” culture constructed by participants as they interact and negotiate their cultural differences. The certificate is designed to prepare students to function in the global workplace by instructing them in how to apply both knowledge about culture and knowledge about negotiating cultural difference in individual communication contexts. Once we are successful in recruiting more international applicants, the online certificate will situate communicators from different cultures in a mutually constructed third space via the use of online discussion boards and virtual classroom courseware tools. This hybrid space cannot be mapped out in advance of the communication situation, but instead must be negotiated.

To support communicators on understanding their possibilities as negotiators of meaning, we have created a program that allows a certain degree of accountability while offering some flexibility in creating a route for negotiating cultural difference within the socially constructed spaces where students work as technical communicators. As Carl Lovitt (1999) noted, organizational cultures and professional discourse communities may shape communication in international contexts more significantly than national culture does (p. 8). In his dynamic, process-based model, “international professional communication is constructed by the participants through dialogue, improvisation, and negotiation” (p. 11). For Lovitt, these situations can “neither be described nor understood as the juxtaposition of two preexisting cultures; rather, the “culture” that defines this encounter is constructed by the participants during their interaction” (p. 10). Through paralogic dialogue and improvisation, a third culture, whose dimensions cannot be anticipated in advance, is negotiated. This is one theoretical position that informed our conception of the certificate program.

As we continued this curricular re-mapping process, I found it useful to adopt a cultural studies perspective—specifically, a postcolonial one. When English departments began to administer writing instruction to future engineers, scientists, and students in other technical fields, the departments in effect “colonized” emerging technical discourses arising out of those disciplines. I chose the postcolonial approach as a way to analyze this sometimes “odd couple(ing)” of English and Technical Communication. As Bernadette Longo has discussed in her book *Spurious Coin*, early technical communication textbook authors reinscribed in their texts the tension between liberal arts curricula and technical curricula in various ways. The notion that science and engineering students’ educations were “deficient for producing the type of well-rounded engineer who could understand human issues” (Longo p. 137) was prevalent among many academics, including science and engineering researchers and teachers themselves (pp. 135-137).

Yet this tension between curricula played out quite differently in the work of Philip McDonald, author of the 1929 writing text *English and Science*, who advocated that technical students would benefit more from reading the histories of civilization and science than works of great literature. Still the intended outcome was the same—to bridge the gap between the arts and the sciences by implying that students of diverse technical specializations should accept their “common background of culture and humanism, which would...weld together the various groups of technical specialists...” (McDonald quoted in Longo p. 138). The focus on working to efface the differences between technical fields with an appeal to a common humanistic background is interesting. I see it as having much in common with politically motivated attempts to “unify” multiple subjectivities and “paper over” difference—difference that might more productively be acknowledged, legitimated, and negotiated. Indeed the certificate program itself, with its diverse audience (both technically and culturally diverse) will not efface these differences. Instead it will allow for negotiation and articulation of difference by providing a forum in which to apply, archive and observe the unpredictable and elusive strategies students employ in those negotiations—using the features of synchronous and asynchronous dialogue in the online chat and discussion board spaces of Blackboard.

In any process of colonization, forms of difference are articulated (Bhabha, 1994, pp. 66-68). With respect to English departments’ colonization of scientific

and technical communication programs, these forms of difference are often understood as:

- Differences in style;
- Differences in the burden of information carried by text vs. visuals;
- Differences in genre;
- Differences in purpose; and
- Differences in audience.

However if we acknowledge, as Homi Bhabha did, that these forms of difference have no “original” identity as something called “technical communication,” but are, instead, authorial choices that remain “polymorphous and perverse,” cutting across a variety of writing situations identified with multiple programs in English studies, then the boundaries drawn around scientific and technical communication programs can become more fluid and flexible, allowing for the establishment of stronger collaborations between and among programs such as the Rhetoric and Writing and S&TC programs in our department. Such fluid and flexible spaces can become highly generative of innovative, hybrid instructional methods and artifacts like our online graduate certificate program.

Bhabha’s description of the cultural ‘beyond’ that humanity found itself seeking at the end of the twentieth century is illuminating for me as well. I see that—as education moves online—the culture of the academy finds itself in a space/time transition analogous to that characterized by Bhabha:

We find ourselves in the moment of transit where space and time cross to produce complex figures of difference and identity, past and present, inside and outside, inclusion and exclusion. For there is a sense of disorientation, a disturbance of direction, in the ‘beyond’: an exploratory, restless movement caught so well in the French rendition of the words *au-dela*—here and there, on all sides . . . hither and thither, back and forth. (Bhabha, 1994, p. 1)

Currently face-to-face education holds a claim of “original” identity among other forms of learning. But it is time now “to think beyond narratives of originary and initial subjectivities and to focus on those moments or processes that are produced in the articulation of differences” (p. 1). I see our online graduate certificate program as an ‘articulation of difference’—a collaborative, interstitial space capable of generating an alternative identity for our existing technical communication program. This identity should not be entirely prescribed by mission statements and target markets, but allowed to be shaped by that restless, exploratory, back and forth movement Bhabha described—a movement emerging from the disorientation and disturbance of direction experienced within our program, the English Department, and the university as we seek our own ‘beyond’ in the world of online education.

I see our online graduate certificate program as a cultural hybridity—an artifact that is emerging in the moment of historical transformation that is online education. I want to exploit the “productive ambivalence” of online education as “Other”—to reveal the boundaries of traditional education’s master narratives and to transgress these boundaries from the space of “otherness” that online education has been constructed as within the academic community. Whether I can, remains to be seen.

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Incorporating International Perspectives into the Study of Technical and Policy Discourse

Susan Lawrence, George Mason University

Keywords: public and professional rhetoric, situatedness, deliberative discourses

Located near Washington DC, we are developing a programmatic emphasis in public and professional rhetorics. Students in our MA program work for government agencies, Congress, and associations that lobby Congress. Through technical writing course projects, special topics courses, internships, as well as thesis and capstone projects, we encourage students to study the relationships among technical and deliberative discourses in these institutions.

To study genres of deliberation, of course, is to study how discourse articulates with political change. In our program, then, students interpret how technical and policy discourses together may support, provide the occasion for, and otherwise shape the human activities and institutional practices by which political change occurs.

Although these articulations are rhetorically situated, it can be difficult to see them as localized practices in the US political institutions least likely to be considered "local." We seek to incorporate international, comparative perspectives into these lines of inquiry both to foreground the situatedness of the practices we are studying, and to expand our understandings of the reciprocal relationships that may obtain among technical and deliberative discourses, political action, and change.

This presentation seeks to generate discussion about how international perspectives may be incorporated into studies of technical and deliberative discourses, and invites partners who wish to pursue similar lines of inquiry. ■

Panel 3A: Media, Usability, Design

Programmatically Engaging the Medium-Message Conundrum: Critiquing the Media We Use

Nancy Allen, Eastern Michigan University

Keywords: media, tool, language

Tasks become texts become tools. It's like the refrain of an old song for technical communicators, but one we need to continually work to unpack. New media for communicating are seemingly being invented every week. The problem is, as these new media are more-and-more web- and technology-enabled, they rapidly move to 'tool' status.

Media become tools we believe we should be able to automatically connect to technical tasks for use with specialized languages. We risk becoming obsessed with the need to learn and to teach the new technologies quickly. Soon we feel that we are losing the time to deal with the complexities of rhetorical contexts, the politics and ramifications so important to consider in each writing situation. It's a tall order for our programs to address the needs of both integrating new technologies and teaching effective writing.

One approach that can offer help comes from well-known Canadian scholar and communicator Marshall McLuhan. If we use his famous declaration that "the medium is the message" and substitute the term technology for medium, as McLuhan did himself, we find both a warning and an approach to apply to our medium-message conundrum. To keep technology from overwhelming and thereby undercutting our work with language, we need to stress the ways that technology and language work differently but together to help us reach our goals. To do this, we need not only to teach the uses of a new technology/medium but also to critique its effects on the ways we use language effectively

in various situations. To help with doing such a critique, McLuhan developed a tetrad of questions to apply to the technologies/media we use in order to understand how they both enhance and obstruct our messages.

What does the medium enhance?

What does the medium make obsolete?

What does the medium retrieve that had been obsolesced earlier?

What does the medium flip into when pushed to extremes?

In this presentation I will provide a brief example of this analysis using PowerPoint, which has become a lingua franca in the corporate world. I will suggest that a similar approach can be used in evaluating other new media, courses, or even programs, though we may want to include other factors as well. ■

Programmatically Engaging the Medium-Message Conundrum: Medium as Disciplinary Challenge

Steve Benninghoff, Eastern Michigan University

Keywords: new media, development, language

Tasks become texts become tools. It's like the refrain of an old song for technical communicators, but one tech comm programs need to continually work to unpack. New media for communicating are seemingly being invented every week. The problem is, as these new media are more-and-more web- and technology-enabled, they are moving to "tool" status too rapidly.

This presentation will briefly recount two initiatives in our undergraduate and graduate programs that illustrate the difficulties of new media and this medium-message conundrum for Technical and Professional Communication programs that put a new spin on thorny and old disciplinary issues, and problematizes issues in languages for specialized purposes.

The first initiative is the development of a critical digital literacies course. The story of the course's creation forms the beginning of recognition of local-to-global, technology-to-social system perspective of writing technologies. It's a promising development for our programs in the drive to recognize and prepare students for the life-long learning and meta-technical and meta-writing roles that we really need them to play—to situate them and engage them in between the development of technology and the social change it enables. So the story shows a beginning of a moment of understanding. But it also represents an image of the problem, as the moment of focusing this perspective into a single course also suggests a certain isolation of the perspective.

The second initiative is the commencement of revision of our master's program in professional writing. Because the program is shared space among a collection of specialists in various areas of writing, the heuristic process we're engaging in is to detach goals and outcomes from particular courses, and then think through reformulating the course structure around activities or topics rather than fields. While the process sounds ideal, the moment we began to engage in the negotiations, individuals began protective calls, looking to privilege particular areas and specializations. Clearly once specializations become disciplines and establish localized spaces, they have political imperatives to maintain their own language, their own "media."

Questions for discussion:

Has anyone else found concrete strategies and tactics for shifting whole programs in a meta- or cross-disciplinary way?

How do we develop technical communication as an umbrella over a wide variety of tool-centered work specializations when they develop individual "specialized languages" and political imperatives?

How might programs, such as “new media”, enact this unifying—almost anti-disciplinarity—at their core? ■

Beyond Usability: Rhetoric of Emplaced Use

Michael Salvo, Purdue University

Keywords: user-centered, usability, methodol

“Beyond Usability” is forward looking and asserts the next generation of technical communication curricula and methodology beyond user-centered design and usability.

Through the second half of the twentieth century, technical and professional writing research has redefined the relationship between producers and consumers of technology and, more generally, rearticulated relationships between stakeholders as a network of power and action. Usability has provided opportunities for professional and technical communication programs to develop new curricula, programs, and faculty expertise as well as professional opportunities for program graduates. While these programmatic constructions continue to bear fruit, development of research methodology continues. This development reflects on the exigencies motivating the creation and rapid development of user-centered rhetoric, asserting that many of the research problems usability raised have been addressed.

Although, the problems revealed by usability have not been adequately resolved, they will not likely be left behind. However many key theoretical issues have been addressed and new methods are already being used to attend to emerging new challenges. This position paper presents emerging new constructions for emplaced use of technology, asserting new modes for renewed scholarly and professional attention, articulating critical methods for the user-centered development, design, study, and use of technologies. Drawing from a variety of disciplines, “Beyond Usability” asserts future development in such hybrid and emerging methods as Technology Ethnography, Place-based Research, and Interactive Media Design.

This presentation will address questions such as:

What promises and perils do developments in methodology hold for programs just establishing themselves in usability?

How can these new methodologies be used to construct new curriculum and professional identities?

What new partnership might such rearticulation and realignment enable?

How consistent are these emerging methods with usability and other existing rhetorical approaches? Where are they inconsistent?

User-centered design has changed the way technical communicators articulate audience. Becoming user-centered has changed the way the field represents itself to the world, to our home institutions, to prospective students, and to each other. This presentation asks the audience to reflect on those changes and to articulate emerging challenges to technical communication programs in an age “Beyond Usability.” ■

Teaching the Language of Participatory Web Design and Communication

Pavel Zemliansky, James Madison University

Keywords: social web communication, collaboration technologies, content management systems

My proposed position paper directly addresses two of the conference’s themes: discourse and collaboration and visual language/the language of new media.

Writing in the March 2009 issue of CPTSC’s journal *Programmatic Perspectives*, James Zappen and Cheryl Geisler argued that “newer approaches to experience design and new communication technologies...emphasize total user engagement with the technology and richer collaboration among users.” (Zappen & Geisler, 2009, p. 3). Zappen and Geisler described what they see as

a shift in web design from “system performance” and “user satisfaction” to “the quality of the user’s engagement with the system.” (Zappen & Geisler, 2009, p. 7).

Traditionally, training of technical communicators in computer mediated communication and web design has focused on usability and efficient fulfillment of specific communication and design tasks. These traditional skills will always be important. However with the advent of the social web communication and collaboration technologies, and with increasing use of those technologies in workplace settings, TSC programs need to incorporate the kinds of web design and communication training that take into account the changes brought about by the so-called “social web.”

TSC programs might move in three directions in order to implement such changes:

Give students new conceptual knowledge about the role of web designers as communication enablers.

Encourage the critical meta study of the use of social web in professional, social, and recreational settings with the purpose of understanding the best design practices.

Train students in new software tools and skills that include, but are not limited to, AJAX and content management systems (CMS), including open source systems. ■

Panel 3B: International Perspectives in Scientific and Technical Communication II

Building Networks: Local Contexts, Global Connections

Douglas Eyman, George Mason University

Keywords: international, cross-cultural perspectives, resources

The goal of this position paper is to ask participants to contribute to a range of approaches for finding and making opportunities to incorporate international and cross-cultural perspectives into professional and technical writing programs. Using the conference itself as a networking opportunity is one such approach, but it is important for programs to consider both local and global networking options and also to seek partnerships in a wide range of contexts that might support curricular development in this area.

Following the theme of this year’s CPTSC conference, a 2006 report by the Association of American Colleges and Universities highlighted the challenges of bridging the local and the global in terms of programmatic application:

despite widespread agreement among colleges and universities about the importance of global learning, AAC&U’s investigation of college practices reveals a disturbing disconnect ... too few colleges and universities offer structured educational opportunities for students to acquire knowledge, both theoretical and experiential, about the rest of the world, about America’s place in the world, and about the inequities and interdependencies that mark current geopolitical relationships.¹

The availability of resources (funding, programmatic support, faculty) may also play a significant role in the extent to which this disconnect can be addressed. One of the keywords that defines the culture of my institution is “entrepreneurial” – but the definition, at least locally, roughly translates to “we support innovation but not with funding or material resources.” In other words, faculty and programs are encouraged to pursue new curricular and pedagogical approaches, but any resources required to do so must be appropriated by the faculty who are interested in such innovation (none will be provided by the university itself).

University-wide global education initiatives are often highly resource-intensive, and this is no less so for individual professional and technical writing programs that want to develop curricula that include global, transnational, or cross-cultural emphases. At my university, there is a push to provide global perspectives across the curriculum, but to truly engage the global within the local context requires more than simply adding a few readings or a unit on localization of documentation or cultural implications of language use or visual rhetoric. In an ideal world, our program would be able to add a faculty line whose specialization is in international/cross-cultural technical communication, as well as establishing relationships and study-abroad programs with institutions across the globe. However, while there would be little political or institutional impediment to building our program in this way, we don't have the resources to develop a strong global-perspectives facet for our professional writing program; thus, if we even want to consider expanding the program, we need to do it "entrepreneurially."

Our university is surely not unique in its approach (particularly in the current economic climate); the challenge then, for our program and for other professional and technical writing programs who wish to develop international and cross-cultural rhetoric in their programs, is to find and make opportunities that are programmatically sustainable while simultaneously not resource intensive.

The following are some initial questions that I hope will be generative and I plan to record and share the answers (and example scenarios) in the conference proceedings:

How do we find partners, make connections, develop global/inter/transnational initiatives? This conference and other international conferences are certainly a good start. Could we, as an organization, support other mechanisms for networking?

What local constituents are available? Our writing center is currently working with a wide range of international students and I am working with our writing center faculty on research relating to second-language writing and intercultural rhetoric. So, one of the avenues that I am working on is how to bring the experience and expertise of the international student population into communication with our professional writing program.

What local projects or opportunities would be of interest to potential partners (students and faculty) at extra-country institutions? For instance, at my institution, which is located in the Washington DC area, there are opportunities to study the US legislative process as applied technical communication; this may well be a selling point for students and faculty from abroad to connect with our program.

What cross-cultural/international experiences or programs can serve as models for curricular development? The Stanford Cross-Cultural Rhetoric (CCR) project, which is primarily focused on first-year writing, may present one example of a program that technical and professional writing programs might tap into.

Footnote

¹ Assessing Global Learning: Matching Good Intentions with Good Practice, /Association of American Colleges and Universities (AAC&U), 2006 (Author: Musil, Caryn McTighe). ■

Graduate program recruitment strategies: from local to international

Michael Day, Northern Illinois University

Keywords: internationalize, recruitment, strategies

Recruiting the best students to our programs is an issue that concerns all of us, and in our current global economy we strive not only to internationalize our curricula, but also to increase the diversity of our programs with students from various backgrounds and nationalities. At Northern Illinois University (NIU), our graduate program in technical writing serves a fairly stable population of students, but most of them come to us from the Northern Illinois region. Like many other universities, we want to explore strategies to enrich our program by recruiting more international students.

The issue of student recruitment, for both undergraduate and graduate programs, has been discussed at past CPTSC conferences, and discussions tended to focus on individual programs' recruitment strategies (see the 2006 and 2007 CPTSC Administrative Roundtable discussions on recruitment) and methods for attracting specific potential student populations (including a 2004 panel on "Recruitment Strategies for Professional and Technical Communication Programs"). NIU is conducting an informal survey of graduate technical communications programs' recruitment practices, including those geared toward local, national, and international prospects. Reporting on the results of the survey, this position paper will build upon previous work, moving discussion toward a set of strategies that graduate technical communication programs can share. ■

Modern cultural studies: A call for extensive research of globalization in the online classroom

Diane Martinez, Utah State University and Kaplan University

Keywords: globalization, distance education, cross-cultural education

In the aftermath of books like Thomas Friedman's (2006) *The World is Flat*, the term globalization has gained tremendous popularity in practically all aspects of contemporary culture. Industry is embracing the global opportunities that a flat world affords, and education is on board with this in preparing students to work in a multicultural environment that extends beyond national borders. While academic efforts to add elements of globalization into curricula are evidenced in traditional face-to-face environments, such as foreign exchange programs, they are selective, time intensive, and sometimes costly. Distance education, on the other hand, may be the perfect environment to immerse all students in a class in a cross-cultural experience that could have a lasting impression on them, as well as give them strategies to communicate effectively with several different cultures in their futures. Additionally, the time and cost to implement such experiences may be less than traditional initiatives. Furthermore, technical communicators most likely will have global experiences through electronic means in the workplace versus traveling and working physically in another country or culture; thus, it will be to their advantage to learn about globalization through this means via online education.

Before we can begin cross-cultural educational experiences in online education, it is important to understand the influence that culture has on different aspects of the online environment. Not only must we look at how technology can be used to facilitate better understanding of culture, but we must understand how different cultures view online educational technology, as well as how they interact with it. For instance, some studies have explored ways to use technology in disciplines that traditionally relied on face-to-face interactions regarding culture, such as in medicine and social work (Hawthorne, Prout, Kinnersley, & Houston, 2009; Collins, 2007), while other studies found that national culture influences interaction in online environments, such as approaches to problems, ways students engage with the instructor and other students, as well as how they use the discussion board, chat, etc. (Bing & Ai-Ping, 2008). National culture also has been seen as a determining factor in expenditure on education and class size (Cheung & Chan, 2008).

A detailed and global research initiative must take place if we are to explore effective cross-cultural educational experiences in online environments. Many times instructors use their own or student experiences to teach about culture, but that approach is limiting. Instead, it would be prudent to explore the topic of globalization from a truly global perspective by working with several countries to discover their own teaching and learning outcomes in an effort to inform our own concepts and pedagogy regarding globalization.

Questions that arise from preliminary research include:

Is there a common definition of globalization?

What influences the way globalization is taught in online technical communication courses?

What are effective strategies for teaching globalization in the online classroom?

What opportunities exist for cross-cultural experiences in online education?

Along with pedagogical issues, because this is an online environment, technology has to be part of the research, too. The two cannot be separated because content and technology are already connected in the online classroom.

Thus, further questioning includes:

Has technology really diversified the online classroom?

How do other cultures view the technology in an online classroom, such as discussion forums and synchronous activities?

How can we use technology to teach about and reach other cultures?

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Cultural Literacy and the Engineering Curriculum: Teaching Engineers International Technical Writing

Joseph Jeyaraj, Liberty University

Keywords: cultural literacy, communication, engineering

As Teresa Kynell (2000) in *Writing in a Milieu of Utility: The Move to Technical Communication in American Engineering Programs, 1850-1950* pointed out, Engineering programs since the last century have grappled with the issue of providing engineering majors the type of literacy that will make them write and speak fluently. Specifically, the conversation has revolved around whether one should do this by teaching Engineering majors, through the study of literature, culture or by teaching them writing in writing courses. Kynell argued that this tension has resulted in the formation of the technical writing course that, by teaching Engineering majors rhetoric, attempts to address these concerns.

For these reasons, the Engineering curriculum at major universities, among other things, typically includes the course sequence of freshman composition followed by technical writing. When students in engineering programs today follow this course sequence, the rationale for asking students to take these courses in this sequence is as follows: while freshman composition

teaches students foundational writing skills, technical writing builds on these foundational skills and teaches them specialized forms of writing done in various specialized technical and professional communities.

However despite what students learn in these courses, the issue of cultural literacy still remains unaddressed. When Kynell pointed out that including technical writing in the curriculum, through the teaching of rhetoric, addresses concerns about the need to teach engineers culture, she does not explain how this is done. One could argue that freshman composition, with its emphasis on basic foundational skills does not have the space to deal with the task of teaching cultural literacy comprehensively. Technical writing courses that teach, as in the case of various technical writing courses today, specialized forms of technical writing such as operational and procedural writing, do not have the space to deal with the issue of cultural literacy comprehensively.

This gap is problematic because communication and culture are interrelated, and it is not possible to deal with one without dealing with the other. In other words, if one wants to improve communication skills one also needs to teach culture, something of critical importance in the field of Engineering where students need to communicate with both specialists in their field and those in management, etc., who may not share their specialized technical knowledge. For these reasons, I argue that, among the various ways in which one can develop cultural literacy and audience awareness within engineering majors, one can do so by introducing a third writing course focusing on International Technical Writing to the writing sequence of the engineering curriculum. This course, I argue has the potential to develop cultural literacy in students and, by doing so, build on what freshman composition and technical writing have to offer.

I currently teach an International Technical Writing Course in an engineering program. This course, while teaching the different categories of technical writing, discusses, among other things, both United States culture and overseas cultures. Students in this course do assignments related both to their culture and overseas cultures. For instance, for the assignment on instructional writing, students are required to produce an instructional document for a group of overseas students, in this case Korean students who happen to be in modest numbers at Liberty University. Before doing this assignment, students spend a significant amount of time reading about International English and studying strategies they could use while writing for international readers. They read about ways students can remove various culture specific elements from their language that could confuse international readers. Students examine their own culture and decide not only how to present information about their culture but also consider what information to present. Doing so enables students to understand the extent to which their language and ways of expressing ideas can be culturally situated.

When students begin examining aspects of their culture that international students should know, it can become a learning experience for them. For successfully identifying salient information, students should try to view their culture from an outsider's perspective. They need to ask what international students need to know about United States culture. While doing so, they should also ask if this is something that could be different and alien for another culture. Viewing cultural information that they had usually perceived from an inside perspective from the perspective of an outsider develops cultural literacy and communication skills in ways that are somewhat distinctive from skills they would acquire in freshman composition or technical writing.

Wearing the spectacles of an outsider to examine information that they have always perceived as insiders has the potential for making students perceive the commonplace in a fresh manner and examine consciously what has possibly been unexamined knowledge. Consciously examining such unexamined knowledge enables students to understand how information they have always perceived one way can be perceived differently by others holding a different cultural perspective. In other words, if students, as engineers, view language as a tool that can easily communicate content to anyone as long as the language, in some universal manner, is clear, this exercise has the potential to make them aware of the extent that language use and communication of subject matter can be culturally situated.

Furthermore, while not asking students to culturally change, such an exercise creates cultural literacy by making students aware that other cultures may view the world differently, and cultural literacy means understanding how to communicate with those wearing different cultural spectacles and who may not share their own values. Such awareness is based on new information about other cultures that students learn in the course. This new information, in making them compare information about their culture with that of other cultures, enables students to acquire a sense of perspective of their own culture. Developing these skills, in turn, will increase their audience awareness and improve their communication skills or, at least, make them aware of the need to improve their communication skills.

While the Engineering curriculum in engineering programs, in order to meet the goals of ABET (Accrediting Board of Engineering and Technology) for improving student communication skills, includes writing courses such as freshman composition and technical writing, including international technical writing as a part of the Engineering Curriculum, by having the potential to develop in students cultural literacy, addresses concerns about the need to teach engineers culture and can further develop skills students have acquired in freshman composition and Technical Writing.

Reference

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Panel 4A: Teamwork, Collaboration, Project Management

Project Management as a Global Trend for Organization Work: Implications for Technical Communication

Joseph Jeyaraj, Liberty University

Keywords: visual rhetoric, knowledge, cross-cultural teams

Project Management tools and processes offer a visual approach to producing knowledge about a project in order to complete it. As project management practices are used with increasing frequency in multination and global companies, understanding the power of visual rhetoric, genre and writing processes in the context of project management documentation can be an advantage for technical communicators. In addition, project management tools and online documentation spaces are objects which cross-cultural teams use to function. This presentation will explore the potential of Project Management to be tightly integrated in Technical Communication curricula through a communications approach to project management.

Questions for discussion include:

How tightly is project management integrated into different technical communication programs?

Can technical communicators use project management documents as a

site for practicing visual rhetoric in order to produce knowledge about a project?

How does the connection between rhetoric, knowledge, cross-cultural teams and documentation genres offer a potential capstone subject for a technical communication curriculum? ■

Power between Virtual Team Members: Balancing between Product or Process Know-How and Local Market Insight

Birthe Moustén, Aarhus School of Business

Keywords: global, translation, pragmatics

Power in a global cooperation between virtual team members is an issue of major importance. However it is also an issue that has not been sufficiently researched in corporate environments. Research in this field has been ongoing for a number of years at several universities in Europe and the USA between students of science and technical writing as well as students of technical writing and translation. The interaction between these different groups mirrors the problem field in corporate life on a global scale. Questions of power will often surface in relation to questions of pragmatics in connection with cross-cultural transfer of texts. Who has the upper hand? The person in the sender culture with maximum know-how of the product? Or the person in the receiver culture with maximum know-how of the environment in which the product is going to be implemented and used? ■

Bringing Academic Journal Peer Review Practices to Local Writing Programs: Collaborative Assessment and Distributed Grading

Keith Comer, University of Canterbury

Christchurch, New Zealand

Keywords: language development, collaborative assessment, web-based assessment

Background

In many courses and departments, assessment remains only tangentially connected to programme outcomes and learning objectives. As students often attest, writing assessments tend to be inconsistent and subjective. While writing pedagogy recommends “guide on the side” approaches, evaluation practices tend to put individual graders on center stage. But what could happen when groups of writing teachers employ technological assistance and bring academic journal peer review practices to local writing program assessments? How would it be possible to have student writing assessed by more readers with greater reliability in less time?

Goals and Process

Beginning in the 2006–2007 academic year, a collaborative review project was created to enable more consistent evaluations of writing and to integrate program goals and learning outcomes with assessments. Software developed to foster this process was designed for use by diverse staff across a range of tertiary providers to include teachers from universities, community colleges, and secondary schools with ‘early college’ programs. All student essays were reviewed online in a process similar to that used by academic journals, with each submission evaluated by at least two reviewers other than the instructor of record for each student. If the initial reviewers disagreed by a preset margin, third readers were engaged. Instead of addressing the unique criteria of individual teachers, students became responsible for meeting the challenging standards of audiences composed of multiple reviewers. Further, every student’s writing was typically reviewed by at least six different readers each semester.

Results

This project transformed the review and assessment processes used to provide feedback for some 430 students in 21 sections of writing courses at three geographically separated institutions in the United States. Fourteen academic staff from a research university, a community college, and a secondary school with tertiary opportunities conducted nearly 2,000 reviews of over 800 student essays. Because of the distributed grading process and software employed,

and despite a doubling of the number of reviews carried out per person, the overall time teachers spent on assessments saw no increase on previous practice. Evaluation standards were applied more consistently, addressing long-standing programmatic concerns and student criticisms. Post-course surveys indicated nearly two-thirds of the students participating found the feedback received to be superior or equivalent to that from other writing courses, and five of every six students regarded the approach as a useful and desirable way to achieve more balanced and consistent essay grading. The methods and resources established are readily scalable for use in small or large writing programs and applicable across disciplinary boundaries in writing-intensive courses or for portfolio-based approaches.

This brief presentation will explore how similar approaches could be employed with individual courses or entire writing programs elsewhere and clarify some of the common pitfalls to be anticipated. ■

Panel 4A: Teamwork, Collaboration, Project Management

DISing Service: The Language and Discourse of Program Administration in Academe

Teena Carnegie, Eastern Washington University

Keywords: service, program administration,
budget model

This position paper raises questions regarding the role of service in the administration of technical communication programs. Of the three components of academic life (scholarship, teaching, and service) service is often the least valued. In academe, the language we use and the stories we tell about service downplay its significance. Time and time again, untenured, tenure-track faculty are advised to limit their service. Stories abound of untenured faculty being asked to take on extra service responsibilities (especially as it relates to directing, managing, and building programs) only to be denied tenure when their scholarship suffers as a result. But if we do not value or recognize service, where and how do we build experience and acquire training to effectively direct and manage programs? If service is not acknowledged or compensated, how do we recruit students, assess programs, manage enrollments and scheduling, build technological resources and complete the other work needed to sustain and grow programs?

In a climate in which the language of budget cuts is being combined with the language of productivity, the denigration of service becomes even more detrimental to small and medium size programs which rely on service contributions from faculty to maintain and develop themselves. In a recent 'new faculty orientation,' for example, the provost of my university warned newly hired faculty that they should minimize their service until after they had achieved tenure. The college in which my technical communication program resides recently revised the policies and procedures which govern departments and programs to state:

Probationary faculty are expected to concentrate primarily on demonstrating effective teaching and establishing a record of professional and scholarly activity during the probationary period, but also to make appropriate contributions of service to the department, college and university. . . . It is the chair's responsibility to ensure that any academic or administrative assignments given to a candidate do not unnecessarily interfere with the candidate's progress in meeting expectations for teaching and scholarship.

The discourse makes it clear that service is not a priority. In addition, the categories offered in the policy and procedures place administrative service alongside membership on a committee, support for student clubs, and activities such as speaking engagements and participation on advisory boards. In other

words, a faculty could meet service requirements by sitting on a committee and advising a student club. Administering a program would constitute far more work but would be considered equal in terms of credit toward promotion. It needs to be noted that at my university, 80% of the workload is assigned to teaching and the remaining 20% is to be divided between scholarship and service. Furthermore, there has been an unofficial policy at my university of denying and eliminating time reassigned to faculty for administrative purposes. So many of the faculty who direct programs do not get reduced teaching loads to do so. With recent state budget cuts, the unofficial policy has become a budget action item in which the university seeks to “analyze and eliminate unnecessary reassigned time for faculty.”

To make matters worse, the university has begun to implement a new “modified-zero based” funding model that uses data from the Delaware study to determine performance in order to allocate funding to departments. The language of this new budget model emphasizes productivity in terms of student credit hours generated. In such a discourse, service is not productive and administration of programs becomes even more invisible and devalued.

So the questions remain: how do we prepare faculty to direct programs and how do we give value to program administration? Do we need to change the language and discourse surrounding service or reposition program administration within the discourse of academe to ensure program administration is acknowledged and compensated? ■

Increasing Diversity in Technical and Scientific Communication:

Overview

Gerald Savage, Illinois State University

Natalia Matveeva, University of Houston-Downtown

Keywords: diversity goals, international, intranational

As members of CPTSC’s Diversity Committee, we have launched a study of the current status of technical and scientific communication (TSC) in historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the United States. This study is important to the programmatic focus of CPTSC in several ways: at present no HBCU faculty or program administrators participate in CPTSC. Participation from these schools is important for the diversity goals of our organization. Not only would it greatly increase diversity in our membership, but we would also be likely to be able to begin a much needed dialog about ways to effectively recruit students, hire faculty, design curricula, and facilitate transition to professional practice for underrepresented groups in the field of technical communication in the United States.

As two speakers of the panel on Increasing Diversity in Technical and Scientific Communication, we will report on findings resulting from our analysis of 80 HBCU and 31 TCU English Department websites. In cases where websites have insufficient information, we are contacting department chairs, program directors, or faculty by email to seek answers to these questions.

We believe the study relates to the 2009 conference theme by extending one of the suggested topics listed in the call for papers: “Opportunities for international collaborations.” We interpret this topic more broadly as “opportunities for collaboration across cultural, racial, and ethnic boundaries” which encompasses not only the international but intranational connections and collaborations. Although the study on which this proposal is based is collaboration by a Russian and an American researcher who both teach in American universities and the study might be construed as an international collaboration, it addresses a concern specific to US culture and the state of technical communication in US universities and industry.

In the latter sense, it is not yet collaboration; however, the purpose of the study is to lay a foundation of knowledge that should help us develop

collaborative relationships for program and curricular development not only to meet CPTSC's diversity goals, but equally to meet specific goals of all collaborating partners. We envision this study suggesting opportunities for cooperative relationships such as faculty and student exchanges, joint degrees, sharing of resources, program development research, and diversity-focused program review among other possibilities.

Seeking Inter-racial Collaborations in Program Design: A Report on a Study of Technical and Scientific Communication Programs in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the United States

Speaker 1

This speaker will report the initial set of results and answer the following research questions:

What courses relating to TSC are offered in HBCUs and TCUs?

What is the curricular function of TSC course(s) within English departments, in other departments? Required? Elective?

Is there a major or minor in TSC?

Seeking Inter-racial Collaborations in Program Design: A Report on a Study of Technical and Scientific Communication Faculty Status in Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Tribal Colleges and Universities (TCUs) in the United States

Speaker 2

This speaker will address the following research areas:

Who are the faculty (tenure-track, adjunct, full or part time, their TSC background)?

What are the implications of our findings for further study, program development, and recruitment? ■

We're Just Not Seeing It: New Challenges in Teaching and Preparing Students with Disabilities

K. Alex Ilyasova, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Christine Hubbell, University of Colorado at Colorado Springs

Keywords: disability studies, ethnographic approach, accessibility and programmatic design

Research in the field of technical communication, when addressing issues of disability, has typically focused on two different but related areas. The first has to do with, as Jason Palemeri (2006) discussed, how disability studies theories can highlight how technical communication is both normalizing certain discourse practices and is being normalized by them. The second has to do again with disability studies theories but on a more pedagogical and practical level—how, as instructors, we can incorporate disability studies theories into the classroom, i.e., what kinds of writing assignments, readings, and projects help us and students understand and address how users with disabilities engage with technical communication.

Both of these areas, ultimately, foreground the *users* of technical information as they examine the role of disability studies theories in technical communication. In contrast, this project seeks to look at how technical communication programs teach and prepare students with disabilities to enter a field that might or might not be ready for them. Specifically this project examines how one blind student has accessed and negotiated the curriculum in a professional and technical writing program. Additionally, we discuss her experiences of accessing information and technical language differently, and more importantly, what her experiences can teach us about meeting the needs of students with disabilities.

We take an ethnographic approach to this project, initially conducting interviews with this student as she moves through and completes courses in professional and technical communication. We examine her current access to university resources, and review and reexamine the role technology plays in facilitating access for this student to a curriculum that, at times, has been inaccessible to her. Our presentation at the CPTSC conference will contain our initial findings based on our interviews with her and our evaluation of university resources available to her, with a focus on issues of accessibility and programmatic design, including the role that technology played in addressing the needs of this student.

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Panel 5A: Positioning A Technical Writing Program Inside an English Department: Creating an Exception to the Rule

Hybridizing Literature and Technical Communication

Miriam O'Kane Mara, North Dakota State University

Keywords: program administration, intercultural communication

Where do literature faculties fit in a professional writing/technical communication program lodged in a small department? Members of the literature faculty grudgingly accept PhD programs in technical communication to gain prestige through the side door may quickly find themselves side-lined in a department that no longer values what they have to offer. In his 2006 article, Patrick Moore describes a possible past where "literature faculty also created hierarchies of power and status in their own departments, and they relegated the faculty who taught the engineers to lower status" (p. 170). In many Universities this practice of devaluing technical communication continued into the 1980s. However the recent focus for funding and development in many Universities is practical, workplace-centered programs and departments. In English departments like the one at North Dakota State University, the old hierarchy has changed, and perceptions of literature faculty can be that it has completely reversed, making literature the low-status position in the department.

In the creation and implementation of the PhD program in Technical Communication/Professional Writing at NDSU, areas of dissensus provide spaces to improve the curriculum and the collegiality. To allay literature faculty fears, the TC/PW program evolved with the input of faculty from the whole department. In addition, the program rests on a humanistic base. For example, the Ph.D. program contains an English Studies component, which asks students to complete literature course-work either in an earlier degree or when they arrive at NDSU. Yet as Moore points out "professors must compete for scarce resources" such as "the right to supervise theses and dissertations" (p. 174). Literature faculty in departments with graduate TC/PW programs can get left out of such resources or opportunities for prestige. Thus, the program and its development must work toward integration to avoid reifying departmental oppressions.

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Minding the Gap

Miriam O'Kane Mara, North Dakota State University

Keywords: program administration, intercultural communication

In "Reinventing Audience Through Distance," Edminster and Mara (forthcoming) explored how an English department with distinct Literature and Technical and Scientific Communication programs addressed a loss in faculty lines through an online certification program. This solution to a Technical and Scientific Communication program contraction helped re-position a program housed in an English department that was unwilling to blur distinctions between programs. This presentation will begin with that example and contrast it with a different way of "minding the gap" between distinct programs at North Dakota State University. Rather than creating a more streamlined online presence, NDSU has opted to blend inter- and intra-departmental resources in a more traditional face-to-face Ph.D in Technical Communication. By finding useful overlaps in faculty expertise, department resources, and university strengths, NDSU has crafted an in-situ bridge to cover gaps in approaches and resources. Through enlistment of literature, linguistics, education, and communication department faculty, NDSU has created a blended program to address the gaps that are often left by more research-oriented PhD programs. In addition, this presentation will detail how the conversations between programs and departments might and can occur so that the zero-sum calculations which cause tremendous rifts between disciplines do not end up exacerbating old antagonisms either through enforcement of the status quo or the mere flipping of power imbalances.

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Finding a Workable Structure and Balance: Contrasting a Tech Comm Program in an English Department with Alternatives at Other Universities

Bruce Maylath, North Dakota State University

Keywords: conditions, English department, programs, structure

In *Intellectual Fit and Programmatic Power: Organizational Profiles of Four Professional/Technical/Scientific Communication Programs*, Maylath, Gurak, and Grabill (2010) ask whether Technical Communication/Professional Writing programs are inevitably more successful by being independent of English departments. To do so, they examine the placement and structures of TC/PW at three universities: one where the program is housed at the college level but relies on departments, especially English, for teaching and service; another where the program began at the college level but has since been moved to a reorganized department outside of English; and a third where the program had always been housed in a department outside of English but has since been moved and reorganized to include the teaching-of-writing functions that formerly belonged to English. The authors assess the effectiveness of each structure and the factors that contribute or detract from their effectiveness. They end, however, with the example of the English Department at North Dakota State and its success in mounting and operating TC/PW programs at all degree levels.

This presentation identified the factors and conditions that NDSU's English Department shares with successful TC/PW programs outside of English, as

well as those uniquely required for TC/PW programs within English. It also commented on the absence of these conditions in many English departments elsewhere and prompted discussion about how these essential conditions can be brought into place where they currently are lacking.

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BUSINESS MEETING MINUTES

CPTSC 36th Annual Meeting

21 August 2009

Aarhus School of Business, Aarhus, Denmark

Meeting called to order at 9:15am: Kelli Cargile-Cook presiding as Chair.

1. Welcome to members and overview of agenda items.

2. Reports

Note that reports had not been collected prior to conference, so they will be collected and posted to listserv for review.

Gerald Savage informally reported on diversity, noting that the Graduate Student Scholarship had been advertized but no applications were received. The distance and cost of this years conference may have been a factor. The scholarship will be offered again next year. The research on diversity is encouraging. All members who are interested in diversity and CPTSC should contact Gerald Savage.

3. Announcements

First issue of Programmatic Issues has been published. All members are encouraged to submit papers.

Finances are strong but membership dues were not collected as part of conference fee this year. A follow-up notice will go out seeking memberships.

3 research awards were granted this year. Reports will be given at next year's conference.

Assessment committee has been formed. It's first move was to recognize work in assessment through an award. This year the award was given to Karen Shriver and Richard Hayes. Members are encouraged to submit nominations for work in assessment.

4. Other Business

Roundtable: Bruce Maylath raised a question about continuing the international roundtable. He asked if we should have one in Europe next year in conjunction with the Twente IPCC conference. The conference is in July (7, 8, 9). There would be rooms to host the roundtable. It was noted that CPTSC has paid for rooms in the past and contributed to the reception at Montreal. The host for the conference, Michaël Steehouder, was present and agreed that it would be possible to have the roundtable in Twente. Bruce Maylath indicated that he would coordinate the roundtable.

It was proposed that the roundtable be held in conjunction with the IPCC 2010 in Twente. The meeting was unanimous in supporting this proposal.

CPTSC Conference 2009: A host is need for next year's conference. A discussion followed about what is involved in hosting a conference. Factors include transportation, enough meeting space for 4 concurrent sessions, about 120 participants, catering (reception lunch, dinner, and breakfast) and excursions. Three members at the meeting indicated that they would look into putting together proposals for hosting (University of Houston—Downtown (Natalia Matveeva), James Madison University (Pavel Zemliansky), Eastern Washington University (Teena Carnegie)).

Thank You: Julie Dyke Ford and Stuart Blythe for their work on the conference. Peter Kastberg and Constance Kampf for hosting. Bruce Maylath, Jeff Grabill, and Dale Sullivan for travel information.

Awards for Service: Michaël Steehouder (Honorary Distinguished Service Award) and Gerald Savage (Distinguished Service Award).

Meeting adjourned for roundtable session.

5. Adjournment: Meeting was adjourned at 10:56 a.m.

Respectfully submitted by Nancy Coppola, secretary, CPTSC