

Rhetoric and Composition

Fall 2016 Program Newsletter

Graduate Students Innovate through Collaboration

When thinking about graduate school, many people imagine the solitary student toiling late at night on research, reading, and writing. Such a picture is, without a doubt true, but it is not the full truth. For, while graduate students do work alone, they also come together to initiate innovative collaborative work.

Nowhere do we see the value of such self-sponsored collaboration than in the accomplishments of our Rhetoric and Composition graduate students. From two digital archives to an assessment symposium, graduate students working together have crafted significant projects, underscoring that learning is a collective as well as individual endeavor.

Created in the Classroom: Two Archives Emerge

Perhaps the most publicly visible projects that emerged from graduate student collaboration consist of the FSU Card Archive, a collection of over four thousand digital postcards and stereocards, and the Museum of Everyday Writing, a collection of nearly three hundred artifacts of everyday writing.

The subject of two articles, the recipient of one award, and a flourishing enterprise involving more than



50 undergraduate interns, and 15 graduates, the FSU Card Archive began as a brainchild of Katie

Bridgman, currently assistant professor of English at Texas A&M- San Antonio, and Stephen McElroy, currently Director of FSU's Reading Writing Center. As graduate students in a 2011 digital humanities graduate seminar, Bridgman and McElroy approached Dr. Michael Neal with a proposal for their seminar project: creating a digital archive for Dr. Neal's collection of 300 postcards from a local collector.

Together, they determined on Omeka as their software platform, devised metadata, and began the process of transforming material cards into their digital

counterparts. Then, Bridgman and McElroy shifted to an Archive 2.0 system that allowed people who visited the site to add cards, tag cards, and create their own exhibit. This shift expanded the nature of the Archive, allowing undergraduates and graduates to participate in this highly collaborative venture.

A similar dynamic characterizes the emergence of the Museum of Everyday Writing. Created in 2014, the MoEW began as the idea of Jenn Enoch, Megan Keaton, and Sarah Marshall, who proposed the project as part of their work in Dr. Kathleen Blake Yancey's



Everyday Writing Seminar. As Keaton reports, the process of creating the Museum was a large scale collaboration amongst

both graduate students and faculty members. As the seminar professor, Dr. Yancey provided direction throughout the process, Keaton reports, and Dr. Graban was particularly helpful with the metadata, Enoch adds. Dr. Neal and Dr. McElroy also drew on their past experience to offer advice on content management systems.

With such support, the project has evolved to include undergraduate interns who upload artifacts, create exhibits, contribute to the archive's blog, and pursue individual projects, expanding the scope of collaboration on this project and its importance.

Produced by Presentation: The Assessment Practicum

The joint development of two digital archives by graduate students is complemented by the development of an assessment practicum. The assessment practicum is a one-credit course focusing on assessing nontraditional assignments. The practicum provides students with the opportunity to engage theoretically and practically with assessment.

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While Dr. Yancey is the instructor of record of the one-credit practicum, it developed from a panel composed of Erin Workman, Rachel Efstathion, and Amy Cicchino who presented their papers at the 2016 conference of Writing Program Administrators. Focusing on administrative support for TAs during times of transition, the panel asked compelling questions such as “What kinds of professionalization opportunities might continue to benefit TAs?” According to Cicchino, the panelists’ questions

Student Spotlight



Robert Cole is a first year Rhetoric and Composition PhD student and has a multitude of interests in the field. These include multimodality, digital literacies, composition theory, digital pedagogy, rhetorical theory, and digital archives. He received his BA in history from the University of Alabama and his MFA in Poetry & Creative Writing from Northern Michigan University. He has spent

the previous six years as the Composition Publications Coordinator at Auburn University at Montgomery where his research was focused on incorporating creative nonfiction practices in developmental composition and the intersections of composition pedagogy and digital writing. He has also spent two years as a Visiting Professor at the Air War College's Center for Writing Excellence.



Christina Giarrusso is a second-year MA student who received her BA in English Education at the Florida State University. She is currently a mentor to students in the first year of the graduate English program. She also teaches

ENC 2135, focusing her class on assemblage in the hopes that students will begin to better understand the ways that texts build off one another. Her current research centers around assemblage and its potential pedagogical implications for first- and second-year composition students. Assemblage provides yet another way of looking at composition, bringing into conversation ideas of plagiarism, borrowing, attribution, history, copyright, ownership, and originality. It can offer a new way in for students grappling with research, genre, and context.

“What kinds of professionalization opportunities might continue to benefit TAs?”

prompted audience members Dr. Yancey and Dr. Deborah Coxwell-Teague to collaborate with the

presenters on the idea for practicum.

Currently, the thirteen students enrolled in the course meet four times during this semester, exploring strategies for responding to and assessing nontraditional assignments. Additionally, participants explore what they individually value about response.

These diverse, student initiated projects show the collaborative power and innovation graduate students bring to enriching the program. Given the drive of the graduate students and the support of the faculty, no one will be surprised to see more inventive, collaborative projects in the future.

Rhetoric and Composition Recognition

Kathleen Blake Yancey and two former FSU doctoral students, Liane Robertson and Kara Taczak, recently received the 2016 Council of Writing Program Administrators Best Book Award for *Writing Across Contexts: Transfer, Composition, and Sites of Writing*. Exploring the pedagogical theory of Teaching for Transfer in addition to evaluating the success of the practice, *Writing Across Contexts* was also the recipient of the 2015 CCCC Research Impact Award.

At the recent 2016 International Writing Center Association (IWCA) conference, **Aimee Jones** received the President’s Future Leaders Scholarship. According to the IWCA website, the award is given to a peer tutor who demonstrates “strong leadership skills and interest in writing center studies,” the award recognizes Aimee’s five years of work at the Reading Writing Center in various capacities and her dissertation which focuses on international students using the writing center.