

# *Why Don't Our Graduate Programs Do a Better Job of Preparing Students for the Work That We Do?*

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It can be hard to raise such questions because the profession has historically distanced itself from the world of work. We have all encountered colleagues who dismiss teaching business or technical writing and think teaching writing is generally about mechanics. Such integrally related attitudes are a product of the conflicted history of the discipline, reaching back to the establishment of college English as a field of scholarly research centered on literary studies, with publications on rhetoric and composition largely confined to the mechanics-driven textbooks identified with the “current-traditional” paradigm. Much of the work we value was placed beneath the concerns of the profession as professors came to think of themselves as disciplinary specialists rather than educators. Such assumptions enable those of us who teach in research institutions to assume that our graduates

**Profession:** The declaration [. . .] of one entering a religious order; hence, the act of entering such an order; [. . .] a particular order of monks, nuns or other professed persons; [. . .] the occupation which one professes to be skilled in and to follow; [. . .] the function or office of a professor in a university or college.  
(*Oxford English Dictionary*)

“Professionalization” and “academicization” are not neutral principles of organization, but agents that transform the cultural and literary-critical “isms” fed into them, often to the point of subverting their original purpose, or so deflecting them that they become unrecognizable to outsiders. What goes in is not necessarily what comes out, and this is one reason why the things the institution seems self-evidently to stand for to insiders may scarcely register on outsiders. (Graff, *Professing Literature* 5)

*I must confess that I have always hated English and feel that anyone who would choose this subject as their profession is totally whacked out of their skulls.* (from a student's course evaluation)

will carry on the studies they began with us, though they will likely do quite different work than we do—if they get jobs.

Such assumptions continue to operate at a tacit level even as the profession begins to pay more attention to teaching than it has since the MLA established itself as a scholarly organization and closed down its Pedagogy Section a century ago. Nonetheless, whenever a colleague passes us in the hall and asks us what we are working on, we immediately respond by talking about our scholarship, for “work” in such commonsensical exchanges means research, not teaching and certainly not service “obligations.” Colleagues with heavy “teaching loads” and little time to do research tend to fall into an awkward silence in such conversations. Just as we define our “work” as research in such professional pleasantries, we generally understand our area of work as a field of scholarship, and our graduate programs are largely oriented to teaching students to understand the work of the field in just such terms. As a result, students are presented with a conception of the profession that inevitably excludes most of them and much of what they do, for those who go on to teach four or five classes a semester in community colleges and other broad-based institutions will have learned to think of themselves as occupying marginal positions in “the field” as readers of work done elsewhere. In this respect, graduate studies in English do not simply ignore teaching and service, they systematically misrepresent the work that most of our graduates do most of the time—if they get jobs.

Writing program administrators take pride in being more pragmatic about all this. We know how to get the job done, ignore holier than Dow attitudes, and chuckle at the studied absent-mindedness of colleagues, when we have time. We are the pragmatists who manage budgets, determine what gets taught, and train the teachers. We like this work, and many of us are good at it, surprisingly good given the fact that we were never taught how to write a budget and English professors do not generally have much business sense. But all that is changing. Those of us who have graduated since the eighties have had access to professional studies in rhetoric and composition. We, in turn, are offering WPA seminars to the next generation of compositionists so that they can understand that writing program administration is a profession and not an avocation. We WPAs have established our own research tradition, complete with the scholarly journal that you hold in your hands. Richly textured accounts of the work we do are being published by respected university presses. Linda Myers-Breslin’s *Administrative Problem-Solving for Writing Programs and Writing Centers* (1999) presents detailed scenarios to teach compositionists how to cope with the problems that confront WPAs on a daily basis. Myers-

Breslin and her collaborators provide future WPAs with a sophisticated and nuanced sense of the complexities of training teachers, staffing classes, securing needed resources, establishing writing centers, and building writing across the curriculum programs—while producing the publications needed for promotions in the profession. While it should become a standard text in WPA seminars, *Administrative Problem Solving* also merits close ideological analysis because it provides multivalent texts for critiquing the institutional assumptions, constraints, and priorities that define writing programs.

Composition programs contain some of the richest sites in the academy for assessing the institutional and ideological possibilities and actualities of public access, general education, and the teaching of literacy. Faced with overwhelming responsibilities and underwhelming support, WPAs tend to devote much of their time to crisis management. In considering how to prepare the next generation of WPAs, I want to expand the frame of reference to look beyond the confines of the field to include outreach, community literacies, and the varied points of contact between public and academic discourses. This broader frame of reference is essential if leaders of writing programs are to be effective as critical intellectuals committed to the broad-based reforms needed to make state universities into institutions of public learning. This is the most valuable work that I can imagine for us and our students.

**Despite the establishment of graduate studies in composition, the teaching of writing remains largely invisible in the discipline. Professions tend to view teaching and writing as transparent and unproblematic, and this tendency became even more problematic with the reduction of English studies to a disciplinary specialization. While WPAs have helped make writing, teaching and learning more visible, we need to continue challenging the hierarchies that define academic work, and we need to help teachers of writing organize to redress the worst working conditions in higher education. These efforts are critical to fostering democratic public education. To prepare students to advance this project, we need to exploit disciplinary trends to forge links with broader institutional and social needs.**

**To prepare people to do the work that we value, we need to think hard about the terms employed in writing programs.** Because so many of our responsibilities do not fit within the limits of the profession, professionalism mystifies much of what we do. English professors do

not view high school teachers let alone community literacy workers as part of their profession, and college teachers are divided by disciplinary boundaries that limit their abilities to engage in general education, outreach, and minority recruitment and retention. The work of the academy is evaluated by the traditional hierarchy of research, teaching, and service (Denham, et al.). The constraints imposed by this hierarchy are compounded by the opposition of functionalist and belletristic values that make the humanities impractical and writing merely mechanical. The assumptions upon which these hierarchies are based are being called into question by technological and institutional changes that are can be exploited to open up critical space for reconsidering the purposes served by such value systems. A rhetorical stance on writing and learning can help us to develop a practically engaged and politically oriented response to the broader changes that are redefining what it means to be literate.

**To prepare students to transform public higher education, we must help them develop the critical awareness and practical skills needed to make productive use of converging institutional, disciplinary, and public trends.** Several important trends converge on a civic sense of rhetoric and composition. Our identification with the civic tradition of Isocrates, Aristotle, and Cicero has strengthened our concern for political discourse and the arts of citizenship. As we became aware of how The Rhetorical Tradition idealized the virtues of being an educated white male, we expanded our histo-

ries to include the rhetorical practices of women, workers, people of color, and others with few opportunities to study how to give virtue to power. This research carries over into studies of social movement rhetorics, which have been a mainstay of scholarship in communications but remain overshadowed by the focus on academic discourse in composition studies. These trends are particularly important now because rhetoric is becoming reestablished as a field of study with its own courses and majors (see T. Miller, "Rhetoric"). These trends contribute to the social turn in composition studies. Rather than being defined by the individual

Young and Steinberg have analyzed the establishment of the graduate rhetoric program at Carnegie Mellon as an example of how the university sought to achieve "comparative advantages" by systematically considering "social needs," "disciplinary trends," and "institutional resources" (394, 398). My categories are derived from their interesting analysis of the motivations behind one of our most influential graduate programs.

composing process, academic discourse is being taught in more openly political and rhetorical terms as composition courses expand beyond editorializing to include activist modes of inquiry such as service learning, ethnography, and institutional critique.

**These civic engagements open up new possibilities for writing programs' outreach to schools, literacy centers, and community colleges.** These efforts have the critical potential of instituting a broader public stance in general education. However, they need to be founded on an activist political orientation to ensure that they are more than a pragmatic professionalism that is consistent with the popular tendency to invoke civic virtues to foster volunteerism as a solution to social inequities. Pragmatic professionals in college English such as Stanley Fish tend to accept established disciplinary borders as boundary conditions for raising pragmatic questions about how received conventions serve the needs of practitioners. Such pragmatic questionings also serve the purpose of gaining competitive advantages for the questioners by demonstrating their disciplinary mastery of the conventions of the interpretive community. Of course other sorts of pragmatism are possible, including the pragmatism of Dewey that Bushman has cited as a model for WPAs and the "prophetic pragmatism" of Cornel West that Linda Flower has used to frame her community literacy work.

**To combine institutional critique with practical action, I will analyze the hierarchies that have defined college English. I will then review a couple of models for how literacy programs can contribute to public learning and conclude by noting how graduate students are advancing such projects in my own department.** The relations of English departments with rhetoric and composition are currently in flux, and many of us are imagining what it would be like to be able to define our work in our own terms. The opposition of functional and belletristic values within English studies has been extremely debilitating, but these oppositions are not confined to English departments and will not be left behind by departing from them. Teaching, and the teaching of writing in particular, are caught up in the institutional work of initiating novices into disciplines that tends to be invisible to experts in a field. Cynics tend to assume that such processes work best when ignored, for then only the best make it in. Even otherwise astute professionals can assume that learning and writing are unproblematic formal processes, with anyone of reasonable intelligence able to figure them out when supplied with the needed data.

**How it became unprofessional to be a teacher or writer, let alone a teacher of writing**

With the formation of a modern sense of literature, students were taught to read what they could not hope to write, and literary studies assumed a privileged position above the teaching of literacy, as Susan Miller, Sharon Crowley and others have discussed.

David Russell has examined how requiring freshman composition enabled disciplinary specialists to ignore how their expertise was rhetorically composed. The functionalist tendencies of composition are the historical counterpoint to the belletristic trends that made tasteful self-restraint a higher priority than persuasive argument when the classics were translated into English at the origins of public higher education. Reflecting upon the historical construction of such professional hierarchies can help us to imagine alternative models and modes of preparing critical intellectuals for institutional leadership.

David Russell's *Writing in the Academic Disciplines* has provided a rich historical account of how writing courses contributed to the establishment of specialized disciplines by reinforcing the assumption that writing was an unprofessional concern involving basic skills that any adequately prepared student should already have learned elsewhere. Russell has argued that marginalized freshman composition courses cannot teach academic discourse because there is in fact no "academic Esperanto" (33). The only way that students can learn to write in a discipline is to work with experts within the conventions, audiences and purposes that constitute a field of expertise. Russell's research is cited by Crowley and others, such as Joseph Petraglia, to conclude that the first-year requirement could not serve its stated purposes even if did not depend upon systematically exploited teachers. While I believe that rhetorical analyses and reflective writing of the sort that Russell himself provides can help students develop general critical and practical aptitudes, I am still thinking through these far-reaching critiques of our work.

Russell's analysis has helped me understand how ignoring writing preserves disciplines' cultural capital by limiting not just access but critical awareness of how disciplinary authority works. This dynamic explains why modern institutions of learning established incentives and structures that systematically devalue teaching and

The modern university is defined by its research mission even though it has produced more educators than researchers (Burke). Teacher preparation has low status, in part because teaching has been a major conduit for upward mobility for lower-class students since before state universities evolved from normal schools. Unlike those in other

writing as mere skills or personal gifts, peripheral to the real work of academics. A materialist analysis of such economies of knowledge-making can help us to understand how professors came to ignore the fact that they teach and write for a living.

countries, such as Germany, teachers in the United States have few professional ties to scholarly disciplines. English professors have had at best a dubious impact on the schools, often perpetuating a dysfunctional hierarchy of literary and literacy work (Russell 64-68).

My own scholarship has focused on the translation of the learned culture into English a century before the research university was established. I have recently been studying how the subordination of rhetoric to belletristic criticism contributed to the emergence of the profession in nineteenth century America. Robert Connors's *Composition-Rhetoric* documents how reductive textbooks came to define the teaching of composition when surges in enrollments outstripped the supply of trained teachers, ending up with rhetoric confined to such textbooks as scholarship became oriented to literary studies. The modern opposition of belletrism and utilitarianism within English departments can readily be related to the modern opposition of critical and technocratic intellectuals (Boggs). Nonetheless, we are right to get annoyed when literary critics reductively identify composition with the instrumental rationality of capitalism because such arguments tend to divorce the creative freedom of the critical intellect from the work of the world. This stance inevitably defines the teaching of literacy as a service function, and by assuming it, academic critics become alienated from the broader audiences and institutional contexts they work with every day. On the other hand, we should be concerned that the increasing integration of education into the prevailing market economy threatens to have a definitive impact on writing programs that move outside established academic departments. As I see independent programs being set up as service units without majors or tenure-track faculty, I become more interested in the possibilities posed by comprehensive English departments that include applied linguistics, creative writing, literary criticism, cultural studies, composition, and rhetoric. **The challenge is to develop models of the field that enable effective collaborations among those who work with the linguistic structures, artistic possibilities, historical traditions, and productive capacities of literacy.**

Such possibilities remain elusive because even activists in the profession tend to look down on literacy work, and even while our major professional organization attempts to bridge discontinuities between graduate studies and the jobs of graduates, it continues to

ignore or misrepresent rhetoric and composition, which has become the largest area of hiring in English, accounting for 28% of all jobs from 1993 to 98. Neither advocates for graduate students such as Cary Nelson or the past president of MLA Phyllis Franklin really understands the work that we do, and **the MLA and the ADE have misrepresented hiring by failing to develop procedures that account for the intellectual work of our graduates.** As Stygall discusses, the reports published by these groups represent composition as a staffing problem not an area of scholarly work. Stygall painstakingly documents how dissertations in our area are ignored or counted in ways that distort the numbers of graduates and discount areas such as technical writing, which grew from 10% of jobs in composition to 19% in 1998.

Over the last half century, “higher education deliberately and as a matter of public policy gathered a student body that, from one point of view, would be described as ‘increasingly ill-prepared.’ Over the same half century, however, the institutions of higher education cultivated with equal deliberateness a particular kind of faculty ambition for which the best working conditions and salaries and the highest professional reputation were ever more closely linked to intellectual capacities expressed through specialized research. How could the student body’s escalating need for ‘basics’ be reconciled with institutional demands for faculty members to engage in ‘advanced research.’” (MLA Committee on Professional Employment 1164)

**Stygall provides these percentages for other areas of rhetoric and composition:**

<b>Specialization</b>	<b>1994</b>	<b>1995</b>	<b>1996</b>	<b>1997</b>	<b>1998</b>
WPA/WAC/WID/writing center	24	29	24	24	33
Computers	9.5	7	5	10	21
Rhetorical theory/history	12.5	7	7	9	13
Basic writing		4	5	5	
Literacy	1	6	1	3	1
Assessment				2	4
Community/service learning					1
Unspecified	52.5	47	58	47	27

Stygall’s essay appears in the *Rhetoric Review* issue that surveys 65 graduate programs in rhetoric and composition (380). The mission statements document how these programs are positioned, often within the

profession, sometimes with respect to teaching, but rarely by reference to broader social or political needs.

While it is unclear that all of the positions advertised in Stygall's first category were for administrators, she discusses them as if they were, and she offers numerous other points of information and supporting analyses that are crucial to consider as we reflect upon how to prepare critical intellectuals for institutional leadership (382-82). The growth in the administrative class is in and of itself significant. Does this group represent an increasingly professionalized managerial class of "composition bosses," to adopt James Sledd's term? If so, how do its fortunes relate to those of the class of part-timers who do most of the teaching of writing in American colleges? Has this administrative class grown up simply to oversee the most exploited groups of teachers in academia, or is there potential for it, for us, to serve more critical functions?

**Managing to  
make a  
difference**

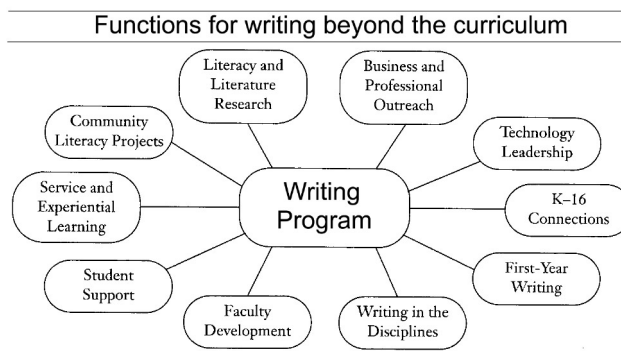
While scholarship in rhetoric and hiring in the discipline converge in support of expanding our frame of reference, there are even stronger institutional imperatives to seek out new paradigms. Composition programs tend to be the largest area of general education. They are often the most involved in outreach to the schools, and sometimes the most committed academic partners in bridge programs and retention efforts for minority students. These collaborations have the power to transform our service function if we can make them integral to the "student-centered" learning that goes on in writing centers and classrooms, and to our work with the technologies that are redefining literacy, learning, and the learned. While these pedagogies and technologies form an institutional base with considerable potential power, the possibilities for institutional transformation become even more promising when the project is expanded to include partnerships with schools, social service agencies, adult education programs, and community colleges. In addition to having broad institutional potential, these trends also have specific importance for English departments, which are beginning to consider the implications of the fact that many undergraduate majors and most graduate students will teach for a living. In some departments, rhetoric and composition specialists are hired on lines that used to be devoted to English education, and so we bear a significant portion of the responsibility to help prepare teachers who understand the constraints and responsibilities of institutions of public learning.

**One institutional model for how to achieve the civic potentials of outreach is provided by Linda Flower and her colleagues at Carnegie Mellon University.** Carnegie Mellon has been a center of

service learning and community-based research ever since Wayne Peck, a local clergyman, attended the graduate program there and went on to help found the Community Literacy Center in his church's community center (Peck, Higgins, and Flower). These collaborations have had a dramatic impact on Flower's work. She has developed models of collaborative inquiry characterized in terms of a "prophetic pragmatism" that draws on Dewey, intercultural theory, and an overreaching commitment to developing dialogues that foster hope by enabling communities to advance purposeful inquiries into the social problems they face ("Partners in Inquiry"). This work has led to her directing the Center for University Outreach at Carnegie Mellon and developing initiatives such as the "Community Think Tank" that match up academics and community groups (see <http://www.cmu.edu/outreach>). Flower has formulated civic models of deliberative discourse designed to enable diverse groups to collaborate on shared problems (Flower, Long, and Higgins). Flower has been one of the most influential scholars in composition studies almost from its beginning, and the expansion of her frame of reference beyond the individual composing process to cross-cultural rhetorics provides a model for scholarly trends of public significance.

**The civic possibilities that open up as we look beyond the teaching of academic discourse are included within the work of writing programs in Parks and Goldblatt's "Writing Beyond the Curriculum: Fostering New Collaborations in Literacy,"** which reports on the Institute for the Study of Literature, Literacy, and Culture at Temple University (see <http://www.temple.edu/isllc/>). The authors capitalize on the

Figure 1.\*



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possibilities of a comprehensive English department to expand trends in writing across the curriculum, noting that “the growing involvement of college writing teachers in various community, technology, and school initiatives signals a shift in writing program emphasis that invites us to reconsider the original social compact out of which WAC was formed” (585). Parks and Goldblatt provide the model of a comprehensive writing program shown in Figure 1. In order to foster collaborations among academic disciplines and “knowledge-producing institutions,” including community-based organizations, the Institute at Temple supports classes, workshops, lectures, and publishing projects that bring creative writers and academics together with school teachers, community activists, and various social groups. In addition to neighborhood projects, the Program also supports socially-engaged creative writing, progressive political movements, and labor organizing at a national level, for example, by working to revitalize the Teachers for a Democratic Culture. In their conclusion, Parks and Goldblatt address concerns that “writing beyond the curriculum” will spread WPAs’ efforts too thin. They stress that a more expansive sense of our core objectives may open up expanded sources of support, and that one of our central goals needs to be teaching graduates and undergraduates to become involved outside the academy, which is after all “where we live” (604).

**The programs at Carnegie Mellon and Temple present models for how work with writing can achieve the civic potentials of institutions of public learning.** Many other programs and scholars in composition are involved in community outreach, service learning, collaborations with schools, and interdisciplinary initiatives concerned with fostering a rhetorical sense of the civic possibilities of writing and learning. Such reforms in general education are often identified with the Boyer Commission report when they are discussed in the *Chronicle* and other

Major recommendations of Boyer Commission:

1. Make research-based learning the standard
  2. Construct an inquiry-based freshman year
  3. Build on the freshman foundation
  4. Remove barriers to interdisciplinary education
  5. Link communication skills and course work
  6. Use informative technology creatively
  7. Culminate with a capstone experience
  8. Educate graduate students as apprentice teachers
  9. Change faculty reward system
  10. Cultivate a sense of community
- (<http://notes.cc.sunysb.edu/Pres/boyer>)

broadly read periodicals such as *Change* magazine. *Change* devoted an issue to civic education in 1997 that includes accounts of community-university partnerships, an essay on activist methods of “Researching for Democracy and Democratizing Research,” and bibliographies of sources ranging from Belenky through Putnam and Bellah to the National Civic League (Ansley and Gaventa). Such journals document the social currency of the civic paradigm, and also provide opportunities for critiques of the purposes it serves. Some of the accounts of value-added education and public service openly espouse a corporate liberalism that assumes that the primary mission of higher education is to prepare people for jobs. Such assumptions are consistent with more subtle forms of pragmatic professionalism and with the politics of volunteerism. Rhetorical analyses of such influential accounts can help us to exploit the critical possibilities of conflicted popular values, institutional changes, and disciplinary trends that cluster around civic *topoi*.

**How graduate students are learning to lead**

A civic approach to preparing WPAs can help us make productive use of institutional and ideological contradictions in general education and outreach, and it advances scholarly inquiries and

pedagogies of public significance. I have tried to position models for this approach in the broader development of college English to underline their historical significance. The historical dialectic of functionalism and belletrism has demarcated the teaching of literacy from critical interpretation, reducing the former to mere mechanics and orienting the latter to masterworks divorced from utilitarian needs and political purposes. Rhetoric has been identified as a way to unify and expand English studies ever since critics lost faith in the canon and compositionists established themselves as scholars (Scholes, Lanham). However, the subordination of the teaching of literacy to scholarship on literature is still the central disabling dualism in college English. Perhaps the savviest professional commentator in the field, Stanley Fish steadfastly defines “the profession” as if it were all about publishing criticism on literary works—a stance that maintains the freedom of literary studies from the world of work by systematically ignoring the institutional work done

The MLA Committee on Professional Employment recommends that graduate students be offered “Courses in pedagogy” and “experiences designed to familiarize with the complex system of postsecondary and secondary education in this country,” including internships and exchanges that provide experience with “institutional, administrative, governance, and editorial tasks” (1171-72).

by the teaching of literature. Faced with such pragmatic professionalism, many graduate students struggle to understand why their seminars are divorced from their work as teachers, and some graduate students respond to such disempowering discontinuities by refusing to give up their local communities to join the profession, deciding instead to find locally advertised and therefore fewer professional teaching positions. Faced with such choices, students from more diverse backgrounds often resist our efforts to professionalize them.

College English is experiencing an identity crisis that is manifested in an intensifying concern for the perpetuation of the profession according to Stephen M. North in *Refiguring the Ph.D. in English Studies* (see also Burmester). With the graduate program in "Writing, Teaching, and Criticism" at Albany as his point of reference, North argues that the traditional triad of language, literature and composition needs to be infused with a new sense of the centrality of writing. North's analysis takes on broader social and institutional significance when positioned in the context of Russell's study of how instituting required writing courses enabled disciplinary specialists to ignore their dependence upon writing because North's model speaks to the centrality of writing and teaching in the work of not just college English but higher education more generally. North's analysis is also aptly complemented by James Sosnoski's argument that most English professors can only be "token professionals" if the field defines itself by the research published within it precisely because such a definition excludes most of the work most of us do most of the time. Such points are crucial as we consider how to respond to the continuing tendency to equate English studies with literary studies in proposals on revising graduate studies such as the Conference on the Future of Doctoral Education held at Madison in 1999, the proceedings of which were published in the October 2000 issue of *PMLA*.

To make sense of our work, we need locally-situated, politically-engaged accounts of what English departments do. The graduate and composition programs at the University of Arizona share a commitment to maintaining close ties among research, teaching, and service. The current and past heads of the English Department have

The websites for our composition and graduate programs:

- <[w3.arizona.edu/%7Ecomp/](http://w3.arizona.edu/%7Ecomp/)>
- <[www.u.arizona.edu/~rcte/](http://www.u.arizona.edu/~rcte/)>

Graduate students have helped make the composition program a center of innovation in general education, working on grants:

committed considerable time and resources to addressing the inequitable working conditions faced by graduate students teaching in our field, but the challenges involved are daunting. In response to these challenges, we have created over twenty course-release positions for graduate students to work with service learning, computers, writing across the curriculum, writing centers, custom-published textbooks, and other grant-funded initiatives. Graduate students edit the textbook we use to collect our best teaching practices and student writings, with the royalties used for graduate student travel to conferences. Graduate students have also helped create an anthologies emphasizing the literature of our region and the writings by faculty from across our institution. The writers in

these anthologies speak to first-year students in interdisciplinary symposia on public controversies. These opportunities enable our graduate students to play leadership roles in general education and document their expertise in professional publications.

In addition to these institutionalized collaborations, our graduate students have been organizing to change their working conditions. Like administrators elsewhere, we have tried to improve those conditions but have achieved at best marginal changes. Graduate students are less invested in keeping the system running and are thus more willing to challenge its assumptions. At the University of Arizona, as elsewhere, graduate students have organized teach-ins on labor issues and have made institutional critique part of what they teach. Graduate students at the University of Arizona are also publishing scholarship of activist pedagogies that expand rhetorical studies to foreground institutional critique, as described by Porter et al. (Chaput, Braun). As a scholar and teacher, I

· with Professor Roxanne Mountford to create an educational MOO:

<oldpueblomoo.arizona.edu>

· with Professor Jun Liu to create on-line support for ESL writers:

<www.gened.arizona.edu/eslweb/>

· with Professor Ken McAllister to create an on-line writing course:

<www.ic.arizona.edu/~profcomm/new1/pc\_bg1.htm>

· and with faculty from across the university to develop resources that make faculty research on the region a resource for general education:

<http://www.library.arizona.edu/swp/>

support these efforts. As an administrator, I worry about them. At what point does teaching institutional critique diverge from addressing students' literacy needs, and whose assessments of those needs are to be used in setting the goals for composition (see Hindman)? Will graduate students damage the position of composition programs by making them centers of labor unrest? Is that a bad thing given the labor conditions we have helped make manageable?

The stratified structure of English departments may serve the needs of the tenured professionals who work at the top of the hierarchy, but English departments have deprofessionalized so much of the work that they do that the viability of the profession itself is at risk. Composition courses generate a majority of the credit hours in many English departments, and those courses are at risk of being outsourced to on-line offerings, community colleges, and dual enrollment programs in high schools precisely because composition courses have long been treated as contract work unrelated to the real mission of college English studies. **If we want to prepare graduate students to be critical intellectuals with the historical awareness and rhetorical skills needed to change this situation, then we need to be thinking about more than strategies for teaching and administering writing. We need to expand our frame of reference beyond the internal workings of composition programs, or even writing across the curriculum. Many of our students graduate with the institutional expertise, intellectual sophistication, and social commitments needed to lead general educational reforms, technological innovations, and outreach programs. If we adopt a civic stance on graduate studies, we may be able to place graduates in positions where they can use their leadership skills beyond as well as within departments of English.**

"The institutionalization of a multitiered faculty sharply divided in its levels of compensation and security of employment [. . .] threatens the communication of basic intellectual and academic values. Put at risk is the capacity of the academic profession to renew itself and pass on to the future the ideal of the scholar-teacher—the faculty member who, while pursuing new knowledge takes active responsibility for the institution, the department, and all parts of the curriculum." ("Report of the ADE Ad Hoc Committee on Staffing" 4)

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