Friday Plenary Address

Absence and Action: Making Visible WPA Work

Melissa Ianetta

First, I would like to thank the conference organizers for the opportunity to address you, for I am well aware of the honor of speaking to this group that has been so important to my professional development.[1] One of the gifts of speaking on occasions such as this is the opportunity to think about the organization, the conference theme and, yes, oneself in a common place—such as this room—and through our commonplaces—the values of our field. In her 2004 CCCCs Chair's Address, Kathi Yancey described such convocations as "inhabited with the echoes of those who came before and anticipating the voices of those who will follow—we pause and we commence" (297). The value of these moments, she tells us is, in part, "a function of how we understand them, how we connect to other moments, how we anticipate the moments to come" (297).

Such connections are what give this occasion personal meaning, for my experience with CWPA has been plaited into my scholarly understanding of administrative work since my first CWPA conference in 2005. I had just taken a job as assistant professor and director of writing at my current school, the University of Delaware. Like some other lucky new WPAs, I had negotiated attendance at the workshop and conference as part of my signing agreement. During that time in Anchorage, I was blown away by this organization—by its energy and vision and by the usable strategies I took away from the meeting. Increasingly over that week, however, I became apprehensive about the job to which I'd so recently committed. Along with my research and teaching, I, with the help of my staff, would be responsible for running the writing program, the writing center, and the WAC initiatives. Such a range of commitments, I was coming to realize, might not have been the smartest thing that I'd ever taken on. But it worked out. So to any new WPAs out there, who are also wondering what they got themselves into, I say: "Just first do the job they're willing to reward, and you'll be fine."

I've been at every meeting of WPA since my first one (well, save one). During this time, I've moved from junior faculty to mid-career-verging-on-senior faculty, and I've experienced this organization from a variety of perspectives: as a member of its board and its committees; as its breakfast organizer; as a reviewer and author for its journal; as a conference institute facilitator; and of course, as a conference presenter. Through these experiences, it has felt to me like this is the conference where I shaped both my administrative philosophies and the means by which I work towards these newly-formed ideals.

Our conference theme, too, "The WPA as Worker," strikes a note dear to my interests because my research has long been concerned with how individuals' work—as authors, as rhetoricians, as editors, and as directors of writing centers and programs—gets described and institutionalized and with the implications of these identifications for our understandings of past events and of our current professional state. As one might expect, then, I drew inspiration from and hope to contribute to this conference's conversation about WPA as Worker. My ideal would be to contribute to that combination of vision and strategy that I have found so nourishing. (Even if that contribution is merely a resounding rejection of my argument!) Towards such ends, I would like to open with two stories for my time as director of writing that are, hopefully, suggestive of one challenge presented by our collective handling of WPA as Worker and that will serve as my focus today.

The WPA as Invisible Worker

Scenario One: I'm early in the second year of my term as director of writing. It's that idyllic time when I'm familiar enough to know all the nearby parking lots and important administrative deadlines but new enough that I don't yet know what everyone—including me—is going to say in Every.Single.Meeting. On a crisp fall day, one of the advanced graduate students in my department comes to me asking for a letter describing his teaching excellence. I am more than surprised, for this particular TA has told me, variously: that I take the teaching of writing too seriously; that my focus on the teaching of writing is unintellectual; and that I should be more like a friend than like an administrator with the new TAs, for they, too, take me and the teaching of first-year writing too seriously.

On the one hand, I get that. For him, I'm the new kid on the block and that my ways are not his ways nor the ways he has been taught. I get, too, that he's got the struggles of an obscenely competitive literature job search stressing him out. And he's actually a fine person, and I really do wish the

best for him. On the other hand, however, he's made his opinions of me and my ilk widely known. So I've got to wonder, why would you want a letter written by someone you think is kind of a nitwit? Moreover, I haven't worked with him at all. He hasn't taught first-year writing during my time, I haven't seen him teach anything, and I've assumed we would simply end our connection in cheerful, mutual un-interest.

While I can live with that, I can't imagine why he'd want a letter from me—or why he thinks I'd write him one. When I ask, he tells me that he wants one because, according to his advisor, it's expected that his teaching portfolio, like all the other TA portfolios, will include my letter of ringing endorsement. While he admits that he's never taught a writing class while I've been in this position, his advisor has assured him I will, nonetheless, write him laudatory lines. According to his advisor, you see, I am the Director of Writing, so it's actually my job to put my seal of approval on all TAs to help them get positions in this highly competitive marketplace and thus boost department placement rates.

That is one understanding of the WPA as Worker.

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Scenario Two: Now we are going to go further back in my tenure as a WPA, back to my very first days working with faculty-level associate directors in both the writing center and the composition program. One associate director, now retired, whom I'll call Pat (not a real name) and I have a very tense relationship right from the get-go because, while Pat is a really wonderful person, a long-term community member, and a solid teacher, I am unable to tell how Pat is spending administratively assigned time. Moreover, this individual hates it—*hates it*—when I ask for an account of this portion of the job. I think we realize that we are at an irresolvable impasse that day Pat looks at me in anger and frustration and says, "But you're an administrator. You know you can't list what we do! We go around cleaning up little piles of poop so that the program runs! And a program runs together—you can't separate out what I do from the work of the teachers! How do you want me to account for that? There's no predicting or inventorying this job!"

That is another understanding of the work of the WPA.

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I open with these stories because these are two moments that have stuck with me through my administrative term and because they signify for me ongoing problems in the representation and reception of our work as WPAs. For while my role in the scenarios may reverse—moving me from

the judged to the judging and the misunderstood to the misunderstanding—the root of the problem is the same:

- How is WPA work understood by others?
- How do we represent our work in a way that is legible?
- How are those representations working out for us?

More precisely, today I want to focus on individual representations of ourselves on our campuses, the problems we can associate with these public representations (and absence thereof), and to focus on new ways in which we can begin to advocate for ourselves individually and for our work collectively by asserting and rendering ourselves visible to our institutions in our work as WPAs. To these ends, the remainder of my talk will have three parts:

- First, I will share evidence from in- and outside our field that suggests to me this invisibility of many of our actions.
- I will then turn to the extant scholarship, both to incorporate voices that have addressed concerns contiguous to mine today and to look at ways in which our disciplinary common places abet the non-representation of our work.
- Finally, I will conclude by offering some practical suggestions for ways in which you (yes, you!) might make more present, more visible, your own work as a WPA.

First, then, I turn to investigate absence. I want to consider the invisibility of many WPAs at home and abroad. (By the way, as you will note as I proceed, I am using the designation WPA to include leaders of all kinds of writing programs—writing centers, basic writing, WAC, and composition programs.) It first became clear to me that some of our individual labors were obscured when I was co-editing *Writing Center Journal* with Lauren Fitzgerald, who so kindly introduced me today. As subscriptions were handled out of my school, there were occasions when I'd have to find an anonymous subscriber. The contact information would just say "Writing Center, Institution of Awesome," and I would have to figure out whom in that writing program to contact about subscription problems. A good twenty percent of the time, I would have to give up: There was simply no way of telling from its web presence who ran the writing center or program. While my fruitless clicking was admittedly frustrating, I wondered how the invisible administrator felt about their lack of representation. Was it an institutional or individual choice not to be associated with their center on the web? Did local culture not make visible the individual, or did the individual, believ-

ing attention should be on the program or center, not its WPA, submerge his or her identity?

During such hunts I noted that, even in those cases where WPAs were named, there was little or no representation of their expertise, their accomplishments—or most often, even their face. Contrast that absence, if you will, with the visibility of those administrators featured prominently, a group that included deans, provosts, or in departments like mine, the chair, individuals who are authorized to address cyberspace as a Voice of the Institution—as seen in figure 1, taken from a departmental welcome page of an institution in which the English department houses the writing program.

Welcome from the Chair

Literature is central to the human quest for meaning. It's a unique vehicle for finding ourselves, for navigating our course in an often confusing and complex world. Because it speaks to our imagination, literature allows us to approach the moral, ethical, social, and political dilemmas of the human situation in an integrated way. The beautiful and the well-argued, the felt and the reasoned, the actual and the possible, the message and the medium: students of literature—undergraduates, graduates, and professors—do not treat these spheres as distinct aspects of human existence. In our department, they bring them together.

We take seriously the high promise of literary activity in the quest for meaning. This promise can only be kept, we believe, if our students develop a broad range of skills, including:

- Creativity
- Nuanced judgment
- Advanced reading, writing, and research skills
- Critical self-reflection
- Producing and communicating knowledge in open-ended, highly interactive settings
- Sustained attention, deep focus
- Understanding and working with theories of interpretation

Figure 1. Welcome from the chair.

When the writing program is housed in a department of English, then, its public voice and often, its face is that of the Chair—a figuration that may or may not align with the intended message of the writing program or its administrator. The work of the WPA, in such instances, is not publically visible. It is quite literally de-faced.

My experience, admittedly, could be merely anecdotal—impressionistic feedback from impatient, editorial clicking. In order to check this happenstance experience against a broader data set, however, I looked at twenty-two department profiles of WPAs at my institution's eleven benchmark schools. This survey improved my understanding of how some WPAs in environments similar to my own represent themselves, even as it confirmed my sense that some of us do not represent our administrative work in our

public self-imaginings. In general, we are scholars first, teachers second, and . . . administrators? Well last, if at all. Most WPAs whose pages I reviewed do not represent their administrative work, and those who do (which was, like, three people) merely name the program in which they work—not what they do in it, why they do it, or what they achieve.

Such lack of representation—and the acceptance, even embracing, of the resulting anonymity contributes, I think, to the problems outlined in my opening scenarios. For one, if we render our work only in those categories used by our faculty colleagues, whose professional identities and thus valuation systems are comprised almost entirely of teaching, research, and the zest of service, then we should expect that our colleagues will either presume our administrative roles fit whatever parameters suit their understandings, as in my first scene. Or as in my second vignette, remaining silent about our activities can make it difficult for us to articulate our own achievements as WPAs and to advocate for ourselves and our programs.

Arguably, and indeed accurately, one might say that many of the individuals whose representations I perused are not WPAs; they are rhetoricians, historians, and other scholars of writing studies merely serving as the WPA. Yet, if one is serving as the WPA, isn't that information as worthy of description as the classes one is currently teaching or the research project one is about to undertake? If we don't assert this work as worthy of being seen or being attended to, how can we suggest it is worthy of respect, reward, or resources?

I am not faulting my colleagues for this absence of their activities. For one, my own institutional web presence has been similarly mute. For another, it seems to me that this obscuring of our administrative work characterizes us collectively as well as individually—it comprises some sort of community commonplace. As an organization, for example, we have awards at the graduate and post-graduate level for scholarship, but there is no "WPA of the Year Award." This observation is certainly not a criticism or call to action—I cannot imagine how such a thing could exist: Who would serve on the committee (not me!), and how they would decide?— but it does suggest to me that, as a field, we haven't nailed down what essential excellence in WPA work looks like. Yet we feel confident that we know what excellent scholarship *looks* like, and any of us who have won or awarded teaching citations can testify, we think we know what *that* looks like. So how do we think of administrative activity that we—the Council of Writing Program Administrators—do not seem to see its excellence clearly enough to offer similar citations?

This absence of administrative visibility and lack of tools to address it goes beyond individual institutional contexts and into the wider field.

We've got narratives of what we look like when we teach writing, and we've got tools to help us change those narratives, like Linda Adler-Kassner's *The Activist WPA* and Keith Rhodes's work on branding. But what about the narrative of the individual WPA? What are those images? Where are they located? Why are there no WPA memes on the "Because Rhet/Comp" Tumblr site?[2]

The lack of forwarding of the individual WPA on both our professional and play websites is unsurprising, however; for such a submersion of individual achievement in the collective community can be found in the scholarship, too. We have scholars such as Bruce Horner drawing our attention to the ways in which "WPA work, like 'women's work' appears to be more shared (and somehow less real) than other work" (168). It seems to me that we agree with—and so are constricted by—this idea of WPA work as "more shared" in the manner Horner describes. Indeed, we often embrace this innately collaborative work in the manner of associate WPA Pat, to whom I referred earlier, or as in the 2011 symposium of junior faculty published in *WPA: Writing Program Administration*. Invited by assistant editors Lori Ostergaard, Greg Giberson, and Jim Nugent to respond to these brief essays in print, I noted the means by which each untenured WPA placed him or herself as one among equals, forwarding an egalitarian ideal. I asserted that "we see the longing for and exaltation of a community of like-minded peers" (181). Such utopias might be a blissful place to live (or not, depending on your personality type). But offering a representation of the individual (particularly, as in this case, probationary individual) WPA as "but one among equals," especially when operating in a system such as the one Horner describes, seems to me to further erase those hard-wrought WPA labors that work towards the collegial ideal.

"But, Melissa," you might be thinking by now, "haven't you heard of the Evaluating Intellectual Work of Writing Program Administrators document? Doesn't that do the job of representation?" I do think quite frequently about and quite highly of this document. As a piece of collective action, it goes to great lengths to render WPA work as intelligible under a common faculty valuation system. But I don't think it directly addresses individual, ongoing issues of personal representation. For one, it's a document that argues a broad and general vision of WPA work, not the specifics for each of our positions. My thinking here profits from the thinking of James Porter, Patricia Sullivan, Stuart Blythe, Jeffery Grabill, and Libby Miles, whose "Institutional Critique: A Rhetorical Methodology for Change" describes and calls for "rhetorical practice mediating macro-level structures and micro-level actions" (612). Such practices, they claim, "insist that sometimes individuals (writing teachers, researchers, writers, students,

citizens) can rewrite institutions through rhetorical action" (613). While the Intellectual Work document articulates and circulates an important disciplinary vision, then, today I am more interested in local renderings of visibility in the vein described by Porter and his colleagues.

I am also interested in rendering visible those activities that may exceed the boundaries the statement describes. The enthymemic value of WPA work as intellectual work seems to be an address to traditional faculty—or those who have traditional faculty identities—arguing that "we as WPAs are as you are." If that works for you on your campus, more power to you. Indeed, I'd say that such careful self-fashioning in an image that my colleagues would recognize and approve of accounted for a fair chunk of my own energies on the run-up to tenure. As we will see in a few minutes, the rest of my daily work and episodic achievements—that labor for which I was actually hired—alas, didn't make it into my tenure file since it was not legible under my faculty's traditional hierarchy of values.

So while I want to emphasize that I think the Intellectual Work document does a good job at doing what a document can do, the public absence of individual WPA's work that I've sketched here suggests to me that this document isn't enough—can't be enough. Too much of my day and my achievements are unseen or diminished when I try to render them in the categories my colleagues embrace. So in addition to the collective action that the Intellectual Work forwards, we need individual action—strategies to render visible WPA work, leading to both the valuing of the individual and to a broader understanding of the professional WPA. Such action, I think, would help to counter the disappointment that Laura Micciche described in 2002—and was felt, respectively by me and my colleague in the vignettes with which I opened this talk.

Such a rendering of individual efforts, I think, might require large scale re-conception of the work we do, aligning our representation of at least some of our administrative efforts with the kinds of representational strategies used by senior administrators, rather than those of other faculty. I realize that such a suggestion might initially cause some of us to bridle, for it's a WPA commonplace that our work is, essentially, faculty work. In a recent discussion of "street cred" on WPA-L, for example, discussants cited WPA authority as rooted in, variously, conversance with the appropriate theories, formal training in the discipline, political wisdom, knowledge of the history of the field of English Studies, an understanding of local students, and experience teaching those classes that one's colleagues value (WPA-L "street cred"; "WPAs Housed"). All of these are good and worthy, I think, but they seem to me to emphasize the ways in which we argue that we are like our colleagues at the expense of some of our actual activities as WPAs.

Compared to your average English department schmo, I know a tremendous amount about disciplinary history, for example, but that's not where I spend my days. Indeed, my nine years as director of writing convinced me that my job is *not* like that of other faculty, and that is precisely where *my* persuasive powers lie. When I trim myself down to what is easily apprehended by my colleagues, I do fade into the pack; I do look like them, albeit like a lesser version of them—but perhaps at the expense of my own accomplishments. Put another way, most of what I do just doesn't fit into a typical faculty identity basket.

Consider these diminished depictions of administration and the strategies of erasure with the representations and attendant rights of other faculty-administrators on your campus: When was the last time that the chancellor or president of your institution felt like he or she had to assert that his/her role was, in fact, intellectual work? Or your provost had to argue that his/her work had real value? Or your dean had to prove that she/he was conversant with the theories and pedagogies dear to the heart of a particular group of faculty? What we want from senior administration, I think, is that they administer well, or at least in a consistent and predictable fashion, and that they conduct their business in such a manner that we know if they are doing a good job. It is my final contention today and my ongoing experience that both our desires for consistent and legible university administrators and the strategies of senior administration offer representational tactics that can be used to suit a range of WPA goals.

Such openings may seem counterintuitive and yet, as we now turn to the examples-and-call-to-action portion of my presentation, I hope to show that when it comes to strategies for representing our work, there are other places to go besides the limited options available at the overlap between one job (the WPA) and another (mainstream faculty).

To demonstrate both the kinds of scholarship that initially suggested this avenue of inquiry to me and the resources that might ground such an investigation, I turn now to a work I found close to home, an essay from the Associated Departments of English, a professional organization that might be thought of as the English chair's CWPA. This essay, called "You Want to Be a *What*? Transitioning from Chair to Dean," was written by one Iain Crawford (former chair, former dean, former provost, current director of undergraduate research, and current Mr. Melissa Ianetta—this last is an employment-secure position, pending ongoing and endless review and evidence of improvement). This brief informational essay was published during my last year of graduate school, and if it wasn't for the familial connection, I don't think it would have crossed my radar. In this essay, Crawford states that "the chair who contemplates advancing from what is a more or less

temporary leadership role and into a permanent administrative career will find the transition itself a complex and usually lengthy rite of passage" (66).

At the time this was being written down the hall from me, I didn't give this argument—or, to be totally honest, the entire essay—much thought. But rereading this work now, I can't help but note the difference between the chair's temporary role and those who are pursuing a "permanent administrative career." I wonder which category we in this room fall into? Perhaps each of us would answer this differently. Mine is only one story but not an uncommon one: I've been a WPA of one sort or another since graduate school, and I've just signed on to direct my writing center for another three years. By the end of my latest contract, that'll be seventeen years in writing program administration. When I mentioned to my associate dean in passing that I might be ready to try the faculty life after a nice, round twenty administrative years, he pished that I could never be happy out of leadership.

Exchanges such as this one make me realize that I am more of a permanent administrator than any department chair I've worked with. I've realized, too, that even those WPAs who may merely consider themselves as *serving* as WPAs, who do not identify in their soul or their scholarship as *being* WPAs, nevertheless have seemed to continuously be administering something since they first started. Most individuals I know rotate among various administrative posts, merely taking a few years off here and there for a baby, a book, or a sabbatical. Even though they do not identify as a WPA, they do that work continuously—and invisibly. No wonder my senior departmental colleague thought I was a letter-writing machine— what other image had I given him? We need, I think, more strategies to make this work visible. Just as Linda Adler-Kassner and others have argued so eloquently that we need to reframe our stories about teaching writing, so too we each need our own WPA story to counter those our colleagues invent for themselves, such as that nice woman in the basement who writes letters. There are many ways to do this. In our scholarship, in our conversations, and in the very way we present and perform ourselves, we can educate our colleagues on what faculty administrative expertise is and why they should think it's awesome. This might look different across contexts, but to show the ways in which we can hide and highlight this expertise, I'll focus the remainder of my comments on administrative representation in one of our most ubiquitous professional genres: the vita.

Making Visible: The WPA Vita

The vita seems to me ripe for such inquiry. It's an element we can use today for common comparison since we all have one. Usually when we pull ours

out, we're trying to prove something: that we're worthy of promotion, tenure, nomination, citation, accreditation—something. So we all have experience, expectations and use for this representational tool. At some point, many of us learned some lore-based strategies for writing one. In fact, in graduate school, you may have been taught to write two kinds of vita: research and teaching.

First, the research vita: In my department, the first page of a typical research faculty member's vita looks like figure 2. In fact, I'll go further than saying this is what a typical vita looks like: this is what our vitae are mandated to look like. Apparently, the year before I was hired, our tenured faculty—impatient with what they saw as increasingly incomprehensible padding—decided to go to a one-size-fits-all vita for tenure-track faculty. The template, I was told, is based on the vita of a friend of mine—a very smart literature scholar who had never administered anything and who progressed smoothly through our typical departmental book-for-tenure standard. It makes sense, then, that for a scholar whose promotion (and, indeed ongoing employment) hinges on the publication of single-author books with a university press, such an accomplishment would be front-and-center in the document that serves as their professional representation.

For my/our purposes today, figure 2 is what results when I used this departmentally-sanctioned form of legibility to make myself look very much like one of them. As you can see, I have a book (okay, a textbook, and a coauthored one at that, but at least it's from a publisher my colleagues will know well), articles (some from journals they've heard of and thus legible sources—although not as many as they'd expect to see at my stage in the professorial game if I were normal tenure-track faculty). Later on in the document, I list the courses I've taught. Although, my colleagues might think, there's not *nearly* as much as teaching as evidenced by many of my writing colleagues, most of whom are on teaching-intensive tracks in our department. Indeed there's not even as much teaching as performed by a tenure-track literature faculty member—scholars who will have individually-authored monographs as well as essays by the time they tenure. What do I show in this gap? Just those two lines naming my terms as director of writing and director of the writing center. That's it, and that seems to me a paltry substitution for scholarship and teaching that renders visible the respective accomplishments of my research- and teaching-track peers. In other words, this rendering of my research and teaching sort of brings up the question of what I've been doing with my time.

Later in this document, the sign of complete mismatch between my credentials and their expectation occurred again when I encountered the categories of *Professional Presentations Related to Teaching*. There, I just gave

up trying to use this form—how would I decide which of my professional presentations to put under teaching?

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ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT

Associate Professor, English Department, University of Delaware 2010-

Director of the Writing Center, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Delaware 2014-

Assistant Professor, English Department, University of Delaware 2005-2010

Director of Writing, College of Arts and Sciences, University of Delaware 2005-2014

Assistant Professor, English Department, Oklahoma State University 2002-2005

EDUCATION

Ph.D. in English, The Ohio State University, 2002

M.A. in English, Bridgewater State College, 1998

B.A. in English, Bridgewater State College, 1995

SCHOLARSHIP AND CREATIVE WORK

Authored or Co-Authored Books:

Published:

Lauren Fitzgerald and Melissa Ianetta. *The Oxford Guide for Writing Tutors: Practice and Research*. New York: Oxford UP, 2015.

Refereed Journal Publications (print and online):

Published:

MacArthur, Charles, Zoi A. Philippakos, and Melissa Ianetta. "Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction in College Developmental Writing." *Journal of Educational Psychology*.

Figure 2. Typical research faculty member's vita.

More important to today's inquiry, where does administrative work fit into their rubric? Should I list it under service? I think we would all agree no, but perhaps not for the reason I was told at the time of tenure. I was advised that I had already listed it above under *Academic Employment*, so to refer to it again would be "padding." I could further go into detail here about the mismatch between the perspective of the faculty gaze and my achievements—for there is a *lot* of detail in this comparison. But the important take-away is

that when I frame my work in terms of my colleagues previously-held values, the system of representation based on their work, not mine, all the things that make me awesome—things on which I spend most of my time—disappear. Seeing how tepid this vita looked, I turned to the literature on administration to create an image that better represents my accomplishments.

In his essay on transitioning to become a dean, Iain Crawford describes how the administrative vita "demonstrate[s] leadership accomplishments . . . using bulleted lists to document your achievements . . . [and bring] the administrative information to the front of the document. . . ." As he describes, "Difficult as this structure may at first feel, composing your resume in this way privileges the . . . emphasis you have chosen for your career" (68). We can see this advice to pattern your vita after your experience and your goals as enacted in the first two pages of his administrative vita, as reproduced in figure 3. You will note, I hope, the stark contrast between the first pages of this vita and the first page of my own as it appears in figure 2.

The administrative vita foregrounds the subject's primary activity just as the researcher's vita should foreground scholarly activity. Accordingly, *Education* and *Employment* is followed by *Representative Leadership Accomplishments* whose subheadings seem well suited to WPA work, including things such as *Faculty Work*, *Curriculum Development*, and *Diversity*. Experience is organized into appeals appropriate to this evidence—or, if you will, this document works to help faculty find the distinct legibility of his accomplishments, not frame his achievements in terms of their identification with their own. I won't spend overmuch time here, but it strikes me that other categories in this document—such as *Grant and Alumni Donor Development*, *Professional Training*, and *Professional Service*—are categories that could render much of our work visible.

Not that I'm saying that WPAs should precisely pattern their vitae after the upper echelons of administration. What I am saying, however, is that in addition to considering the representational strategies of arguing that we look like faculty, so too we can also argue effectively by looking like administrators. Compare, for example, this representation of administrative work with that of CWPA Past President Rita Malenczyk, as seen in figure 4.

Just as in the university-administrator's vita, here too we see leadership forwarded. As suggested in the guidelines for an administrator's vita, this document forefronts the professional decisions that this WPA has made in her career by making an argument about leadership expertise and impact. This is most definitely neither a teaching nor a research vita, but an administrative one—a WPA's vita—one that makes arguments that would be obscured or relegated to the back pages of service on traditional vitae.

Iain Crawford
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Education

Ph.D.   University of Leicester, 1982. Dissertation: "Victorian Theme and Convention in the Novels of Charles Dickens." Director: Professor Philip Collins

B.A.   University of Leeds, 1975. English and Greek Civilization. 1st Class Honors

Positions Held

University of Delaware, 2010-
Faculty Director of Undergraduate Research and Experiential Learning, 2014- ; Interim Chair, Department of English, 2011-12; Associate Professor of English, 2010-

Senior Fellow, American Association of Colleges and Universities, 2009-10

Vice President for Academic Affairs and Professor of English, The College of Wooster, 2003-09
Chief Academic Officer. Responsibilities include serving as the college's chief academic officer, coordinating the academic program, including faculty appointments, curriculum development, department and program budgets, and academic support services. In addition, oversaw operational areas, including student life, admissions, financial aid, and athletics. Responsible for 1860 students, 34 departments and programs, 160 FTE faculty, 125 salaried staff, 100 hourly staff, and budget of $32 million.

Dean, School of Liberal Arts, and Professor of English, University of Southern Indiana, 2000-03.
Led School of 8 departments with 24 major programs, 98 full-time and 115 part-time faculty, 2050 undergraduate majors, and $7.5 million annual budget. Supervised: Associate Dean; Department Chairs (8); Director of Center for Communal Studies; Director of Humanities Program; Director of New Harmony Gallery of Contemporary Art; Lincoln Amphitheatre; New Harmony Theatre; Ropewalk Writers Retreat; Society for Arts and Humanities; *Southern Indiana Review*; USI Theatre

Chair and Professor of English, Bridgewater State College, MA, 1995-2000.
Led department with 40 full- and part-time faculty, 320 undergraduate majors, 75 graduate students, and budget of $800,000

Assistant/Associate Professor of English, Berry College, GA, 1985-95.
Coordinator (1994-95) for department of 12 full-time faculty and 75 majors

Visiting Assistant Professor, The University of Alabama, 1984-85

Instructor/Assistant Professor, Pedagoški fakultet, University of Osijek, Croatia, 1979-84

Graduate Teaching Assistant, Department of English, University of Leicester, 1977-79

ESL Instructor, The Finnish-British Society, Varkaus, Finland, 1975-76

Leadership Responsibilities, The College of Wooster

Through supervision of the following 23 direct reports, provided leadership to the academic programs, supported programs, and grant-funded programs; developed budgets; coordinated hiring; and oversaw campus-wide operations:

Dean of the Faculty; Dean of Students; Dean of Admissions; Associate Dean for Research and Grants; Registrar; Director of Art Museum; Director of Athletics; Director of Center for Entrepreneurship; Director of College Radio Station; Director of Educational Assessment; Director of Environmental Action and Analysis Program; Director of Financial Aid; Director of Howard Hughes Medical Institute Project; Director of Instructional Technology; Director of International and Off-Campus Study; Director of Learning Center; Director of Libraries; Director of Lilly Project; Director of Nursery School; Director of Summer Session; Director of Teagle-Funded Creative and Critical Thinking Project; Director of User Services; Director of Writing

Representative Leadership Accomplishments

University of Delaware
Co-Chair, College of Arts and Sciences Strategic Planning Committee:
• Consulted with campus constituencies to develop comprehensive planning document
Interim Chair, Department of English
• Guided department through transitional period and national search for new chair
• Facilitated hiring and mentoring of new faculty
• Increased outreach to alumni
• Developed alumni/public community outreach events

The College of Wooster
Faculty Work, Evaluation, and Compensation:
• Oversaw faculty workload modification, resulting in reduction of load from 6 to 5.5 courses per year and increased consistency of load across campus
• Restructured faculty salaries by increasing entry level salaries to match market rates and then implementing equity initiative to address compression and inversion
• Redesigned process for annual merit review to provide formal, specific feedback to each member of the faculty
• Initiated task force to redesign compensation, support, and evaluation of department chairs
• Initiated institutional membership in COACHE project to improve quality of life for pre-tenure faculty members
• Initiated task force to review quality of life issues for faculty and staff
Curriculum Development:
• Collaborated with Dean of the Faculty and faculty colleagues to develop new summer programs in China and Tuscany
• Collaborated with Dean of the Faculty to incorporate learning outcomes assessment into department and program review cycle
• Collaborated with Department of Education and Educational Policy Committee on Ohio Department of Education and NCATE reviews and on developing resources to support teacher preparation programs
• Hired first Director of Writing trained in composition studies
Outcomes Assessment:

Figure 3. Iain Crawford vita.

Rita Malenczyk
Director, University Writing Program and Writing Center
malenczykr@easternct.edu

Department of English   56 Branden Way
Eastern Connecticut State University   Tolland, CT 06084
83 Windham St.   (123)-456-7890
Willimantic, CT 06226
(860) 465-4573

EDUCATION
   Ph.D., English, New York University
   M.A., English, Washington University
   B.A., English, St. Louis University, *summa cum laude*

ACADEMIC EMPLOYMENT
Eastern Connecticut State University, 1994-Present
   Promoted to Full Professor 2006; tenured and promoted to Associate Professor 2000
Massasoit Community College, 1993-1994
   Instructor, English Department (part-time), 1993-1994
Boston University, 1993
   Lecturer, English Department (part-time), fall 1993
New York University Expository Writing Program, 1987-1991
   Graduate Teaching Associate, Writing Center Consultant, Graduate Student Administrator

ACADEMIC LEADERSHIP
Nationally Elected Leadership Positions
President, Council of Writing Program Administrators (CWPA)
Vice President 2011-2013; President in 2013-15; Immediate Past President in 2015-2017
   • Elected by the membership of CWPA, an organization with over 600 members, primarily in the U.S.
   • Chaired two national conferences: "Queering the Writing Program" (Savannah 2013); "The WPA as Worker" (Normal, IL 2014)
   • Initiated Task Force on Diversity, an effort to increase institutional, racial, and ethnic diversity in CWPA
   • Chaired national search for new editors of *WPA: Writing Program Administration*
   • Oversaw transition to new institutional home
   • Spearheaded and oversaw new process for appointment of director of CWPA's Consultant-Evaluator Service

Executive Board Member, CWPA, 2006-2009
   • Chaired Best Book and Best Article award committees
   • Served on Nominating Committee and Liaison Committee

Nationally Appointed Leadership Positions
Member, NCTE Special Drafting Group to Establish/Update NCTE Principles for Defending Intellectual Freedom in Education, October-December 2013
   • Appointed by NCTE President Sandy Hayes
   • Charged with contextualizing and updating NCTE statement on intellectual freedom for K-12 teachers

Chair, CCCC Committee on Academic Quality, 2004-2006
   • Appointed by the Chair of the Conference on College Composition and Communication

   • Charged with developing strategies for increasing labor equity in writing programs

Member, Steering Committee, WPA Outcomes Statement for First-Year Composition
   • Led workshops at CWPA and CCCC conferences to develop Outcomes Statement, 1997-1999
   • Produced final draft of Outcomes Statement, 1999; approved by CWPA Executive Board in 2000

Regionally and Institutionally Appointed Leadership Positions
Institutional
Director, Eastern Connecticut State University Writing Center, 2008-present
   • Established and direct a Writing Center currently offering approximately 90 hours of tutoring per week and staffed by 15-20 undergraduate peer tutors
   • Teach tutor education course, ENG 275: Tutoring Writing
   • Oversee day-to-day operations
   • Developed policies and procedures for the center
   • Develop and implement assessments for center
   • Liaison with ECSU faculty and administrators

Director, University Writing Program, 1994-present
   • Lead a writing program that encompasses two first-year writing courses and a WAC/WID program, with writing-enhanced and writing-intensive courses at the sophomore/junior and senior/capstone levels
   • Created Writing Associates Tutoring Program, an undergraduate peer tutoring program of 25-30 students that now staffs the Writing Center and developmental writing courses
   • Collaborate with members of the University Writing Board, a cross-disciplinary faculty committee of the University Senate, to develop procedures and standards for approval of courses; with UWB also led a major revision of writing requirements in 2010
   • Develop and implement assessments for WAC/WID program, including survey of over 1,000 students enrolled in writing-enhanced and writing-intensive courses to determine how they perceive writing knowledge as transferring from one course to another
   • Work with faculty across the disciplines one-on-one to develop writing-enhanced and writing-intensive courses
   • Lead annual faculty development workshops to educate faculty across the disciplines in the teaching of writing

Figure 4. Rita Malenczyk vita.

Aligning with the models then, the first two pages of my actual vita—the living document that I use to represent my accomplishments in my professional life and which is reproduced in figure 5.

Melissa Ianetta

Institutional Address:
University of Delaware
212 Memorial Hall
Newark, DE 19716

Home Address:
720 South Scott Street
Wilmington, DE 19805
123-456-7890

email: ianetta@udel.edu

Education
Ph.D.   The Ohio State University, 2002
    Dissertation: *Flowers of Rhetoric: The Nineteenth-Century Improvisatrice Tradition*
    Committee: Nan Johnson (Chair), Kay Halasek, James Fredal
M.A.   Bridgewater State College, 1998
    Thesis: "Enabling Essentialism in Byron and Landon"
B.A.   Bridgewater State College, 1995

Academic Appointments
Associate Professor and Director of Writing (2005-14) and the Writing Center (2014-)
University of Delaware (Promoted and Tenured 2010)
- Directed a writing program that annually provides approximately 4,100 seats
  - Created yearlong TA instructor preparation program
  - Initiated semiannual in-service for all writing program staff
  - Chaired committee to develop outcomes and assessment cycle for first-year writing course
- Lead a writing center with a budget of $350,000, a staff of approximately 35, and that annually conducts approximately 3,400 hours of tutoring
  - Instituted peer tutoring and writing fellows programs
  - Created tutor policy and procedure manual
  - Initiated online assessment cycle
  - Over a six-year period, increased tutorial usage fivefold
- Administer a writing-across-the-curriculum initiative that annually offers approximately 330 hours of faculty workshops and individualized support
  - Collaborated on development and implementation of annual multi-day faculty workshops
  - Created ongoing undergraduate peer tutoring program and course
  - Created ongoing undergraduate writing fellow program
  - Collaborated on development of semi-annual dissertation "bootcamp"
- Authored or coauthored proposals for
  - $17,00 assessment grant (PI, funded)
  - $18,000 writing-in-the-disciplines grant (PI, funded)
  - $25,000 peer tutoring program grant (PI, funded)
  - $30,000 literature pedagogy grant (PI, funded)
  - $151,328 engineering education grant (co-PI, funded)
  - $878,000 curriculum improvement grant (co-PI, funded)

Assistant Professor and Director of the Writing Centers, Oklahoma State University, 2002-2005
- Mentored and assessed sixteen graduate student writing consultants, seven peer tutors, two departmental technology specialists and two undergraduate administrative assistants
- Designed and administered OSU-Tulsa Writing Center
- Created and supervised undergraduate peer tutoring program
- Collaborated with department head to create and administer center's $184,000 annual budget
- Authored a successful proposal for a $3,500 assessment grant

Publications
Book
Lauren Fitzgerald and Melissa Ianetta. *The Oxford Guide for Writing Tutors: Practice and Research.* New York: Oxford UP, February 2015.

Peer Reviewed Essays and Chapters
Ianetta, Melissa. "Stand 'mum': Women's Silence at the Lexington Academy, 1839–1841." *Writing Stories: Composition and Rhetoric in High Schools and Normal Schools, 1839-1969.* Ed. Lori Ostergaard and Henrietta Wood. Pittsburgh: U of Pittsburgh P. 23 pg ms. Forthcoming.

MacArthur, Charles, Zoi A. Philippakos, and Melissa Ianetta. "Self-Regulated Strategy Instruction in College Developmental Writing." *Journal of Educational Psychology.* 41 pg. ms. Forthcoming.

Ianetta, Melissa. "What is an English Department?" *A Rhetoric for Writing Program Administrators.* Ed. Rita Malenczyk. Clemson, SC: Parlor Press, 2013. 359-370.

—. "Aspasia's Purloined Letters: Historical Revisionism and the Rhetoric of Silence." *Silence and Listening as Rhetorical Acts.* Cheryl Glenn and Krista Ratcliffe, eds. Carbondale, IL: Southern Illinois U P, 2011. 23-36.

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Ianetta, Melissa, Catherine Quick and Michael McCamley. "Taking Stock: Surveying the Relationship of the Writing Center and TA Training." *WPA: Writing Program Administrator* 31.1-2 (Fall / Winter 2007): 104-124.

Ianetta, Melissa, Linda Bergmann, Lauren Fitzgerald, Carol Peterson Haviland, Lisa Lebduska, and Mary Wilsocki. "Polylog: Are Writing Center Directors Writing Program Administrators?" *Composition Studies* 34.2 (2006): 11-42.

Figure 5. Melissa Ianetta vita.

This document works to concretize the administrative emphasis of my position—reporting numbers related to grants, programs, and other documentable successes. While administrative work is, quite literally front and center(ed), it is followed by the highlights of my research agenda, which is appropriate, given the research emphasis of my university. While my development as a teacher is both important and ongoing, it is my tertiary area of activity, and as such, appears at a less prominent place in the document. Finally, and in contrast to the Crawford or Malenczyk profiles, national leadership is not a primary trajectory of my professional activity; thus, my work with national and international board and committees is tucked in a service category that appears later in the document.

In these three examples, then, we see the ways in which faculty administrators in various institutional contexts and in a range of positions can render their expertise legible in a genre that typically serves as a frame for research or teaching credentials. As with all writing advice, these models are intended to be generative, not axiomatic; they are meant to argue less about

the precise means by which we represent our work and more to persuade that we must represent it exactly.

Beyond the Vita: Being an Administrative Asset

As with vitae, I think, such overtly administrative strategies can serve us well in other parts of our administrative lives. In my experience, other faculty are often mystified by the ways of administration, not understanding why or how decisions are reached, querying one another why this faculty line or that program did not receive funding, attention or other forms of decanal, provostial, and presidential love. As a new WPA, I found such queryings often misinterpreted written policy or stated priorities, and I couldn't understand how faculty members could work here for ten, twenty, thirty years and still not understand how things work. And yet, *that isn't their job*, in that it isn't their area of expertise, what they were hired for, or where they spend their time. Administration is where I spend my time, and by making that visible—pointing out, for example, what office on campus might fund a colleague's pet project—may not make me look like them, but it makes me look like an asset, one that is, in fact, more rare than an individual who is strictly a high-end scholar, the kind who at a research-extensive doctoral institution are thick on the ground and whose professional expertise is often only to be useful to other scholars in their area.

This is not to say that invoking an administrative rhetoric and strategies makes me well liked, I suspect. In fact, I've got dozens of stories about well-meaning faculty who admit they do not understand why I would run something when I could, well, *not* run something. But I'd rather get a bit of colleague side eye for administrative proclivities than colleague sad eyes because, once I fashion myself in their image, they're disappointed that I just don't do as much as other faculty. More importantly, however, I think my forwarding of myself as an individual whose expertise is, at least in part, purely administrative—not administration as teaching, not administration as peer-reviewed scholarship—but as a skill set of leadership that is useful, desired, portable, and rare—makes it easier for other WPAs who will come after me. None of my colleagues, I suspect, will ask the future directors of the composition program to write letters for all the graduate students on the market. They see me as an administrator—more to be respected than loved, perhaps. But at work that's a preferred sentiment.

Such administrative outings as the ones I describe here fulfill that performance of the institutional critique called for by Porter and his coauthors, for they provide a means of using local strategies to achieve the values articulated in our statements of ideals. For administrative *ethos* can be used to

improve curriculum, negotiate labor conditions, or otherwise improve local material conditions.

Admittedly, I might cave to The Man and use the state-approved vita when I go up for full professor next year, but I doubt it. For one, in-school evaluators have gotten used to the way I present my credentials; I even got the 2014 College of Arts and Sciences Outstanding service award (the closest thing we've got to an outstanding administrator award), so I feel like they have in fact rewarded my insurrection. For another, when I look at my truncated credentials in the form I presented them today, even I wonder what I was doing with my time. By trying to look like my colleagues, I think I end up just looking watered down.

At this point, I should probably offer a word aside to those beginning or early stage WPAs, to whom I spoke in my introduction—rejecting clearly articulated department and/or institutional norms in this manner is probably work for later in one's career, either after tenure or for those on other career tracks, after your colleagues have deep experience with you. You probably don't want the first thing widely known about you is that you're "that new guy who won't follow department rules." Remember my initial advice: if you want to advance at your institution, do first what they will reward. Then, do what else you think is needed for your personal satisfaction and professional success.

However, my larger point is less about what one WPA should do and more about the strategies we use to represent ourselves as workers. Whether in conversation about what we do and what we know or when we represent ourselves on our webpages or in our professional documents, we need to use these occasions not just to represent the ways in which we are like our colleagues and their pre-existing notions of achievement but also to educate them about the ways in which we exceed their previous expectations. Thank you.

Notes

1. While its argument remains the same as when presented at the 2014 CWPA conference, I have revised this talk to render it intelligible without the accompanying visual presentation. Thanks to Iain Crawford, Lauren Fitzgerald, and Rita Malenczyk for their assistance and support.

2. The Because RhetComp Tumblr site creates truncated enthymemes asserting individual scholars as the "reason" for concepts and movements in the field; examples include "Taste/Because Blair" "Technologies of Wonder/Because Delagrange" (http://becauserhetcomp.tumblr.com).

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Melissa Ianetta is associate professor of English and director of the writing center at the University of Delaware. With Lauren Fitzgerald, she recently co-authored The Oxford Guide for Writing Tutors: Practice and Research *(Oxford University Press, 2015). Her other work has appeared in* College English, College Composition and Communication, PMLA, *and* WPA: Writing Program Administration.