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REDEFINING THE UNDERGRADUATE ENGLISH WRITING MAJOR

An Integrated Approach at a Small Comprehensive University

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The steady growth of undergraduate majors in rhetoric and composition in the last two decades has prompted discussions about the challenging development of these majors. In this chapter we will discuss the development of an undergraduate writing major with an integrated model at a small comprehensive university. This model provides us with a means of addressing some of the challenges faced by any English department in developing an effective undergraduate writing major. The first challenge is the difficulty of modeling an undergraduate writing program on graduate programs in rhetoric and composition. A second challenge we address deals with the place of undergraduate writing programs within liberal arts and professional schools of higher education. Within our own discipline of English studies, the undergraduate writing major must also address historical challenges in bridging the splits between theory and practice as well as between rhetoric and poetic. We also discuss the challenge that first-year writing programs often do not value how the integration of rhetorical theories and practices can benefit all students, not just writing majors. English departments trying to implement an integration model may have to address the challenge of traditional roles of English faculty that reinscribe the split between reception and production of text. Finally, the development of a new integrated undergraduate writing major presents potential challenges to curricular design of rhetoric and composition graduate programs.

INTRODUCTION: THE DIFFICULTIES IN MODELING AFTER GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

It is important, first of all, to examine the way undergraduate composition programs have taken cues from graduate programs. The current status of the undergraduate writing major is “an amorphous and still-developing construction” with diversity in “missions, purposes, and course requirements” (Carpini 2007, 15). Inarguably, the development of undergraduate comp/rhetoric programs owes to the steady growth of graduate programs in this field. Comp/rhetoric today is no longer “the stepchild of the English Department” (Kinneavy 1971). Several comprehensive surveys on doctoral programs in comp/rhetoric over the last four decades attest not only to the field’s growing legitimacy but also to its “growth, consolidation, and diversification” (Brown, Jackson, and Enos 2000, 240). In 2004, Brown et al. found such programs to be thriving, with increasing numbers of students, while the overall number of English majors declined. The growing legitimacy and increasing vitality of the surveyed graduate comp/rhetoric programs has created more supportive guidance for establishing and redefining undergraduate writing programs in general.

While drawing upon the vitality and legitimacy of graduate programs in comp/rhetoric, undergraduate programs have difficulties in modeling after such programs. One challenge involves the assumption that undergraduate students, lacking the maturity of graduate students or the practice of teaching, do not need the theoretical foundation that underpins graduate programs in comp/rhetoric. This assumption derives partly from a failure to understand the transformative power of rhetorical theories, along with writing process theories. Such theories have not only challenged the core curriculum of English studies but have also redefined important principles such as knowledge, language, text, reading, and writing. While this redefining power has been recognized in scholarly journals and professional conferences, many still believe that these theories should remain within the purview of graduate studies. Undergraduate writing programs designed with these assumptions tend to focus only on creative writing or professional writing skills.

The integration of comp/rhetorical theories faces widespread resistance at the undergraduate level, but it is widely acknowledged that continued growth in this field persists as a professional development opportunity for graduate students. As Brown and others conclude, rhetoric and composition “is now well positioned to assume an even more

pivotal role in the academic instructions that prepare our students and the professional environments that employ them” (2000, 11). In contrast to the low demand for English graduate students in general, PhDs in comp/rhetoric are under-produced, according to Gail Stygall (2000, 382); this is due largely to initiatives and programs that prepare graduate students in this field for a too-broad spectrum of teaching, research, publishing, and administrative roles. These roles rely heavily on general expertise in multiple areas such as general writing programs and writing center administration, business, professional, and technical communication, and, most of all, rhetorical and composition theories and pedagogies. So, while advocating professionalism for graduate comp/rhetoric programs, many are unsure how to effectively implement professional courses such as business and professional writing, Web publishing and editing, and teaching writing in undergraduate curriculum for the sake of promoting future employment.

In spite of these resistant attitudes, surveys suggest that comp/rhetoric has irrevocably changed undergraduate English curriculum. Between 1976 and 1986, undergraduate comp/rhetoric courses became more widespread across institutions, which offered more variety in specialized writing courses, similar to graduate writing courses, such as composition theory, rhetorical theory, business, technical, and professional writing, and teaching writing (Werner et al. 1988). According to a MLA survey of undergraduate English programs during the 1991–1992 academic year, about 53 percent to 77 percent of course offerings were devoted to writing courses, and 14 percent to 38 percent to literature courses (Huber 1996). A review of online catalogs demonstrates the growth of undergraduate comp/rhetoric programs, named and configured differently across institutions.

Undergraduate writing majors have always been bookended: an over-emphasis on first-year writing programs on the one end and graduate programs in comp/rhetoric on the other, according to Stygall (2000). This overemphasis creates two challenges for undergraduate writing major programs. First, undergraduate comp/rhetoric programs cannot easily follow the models for doctoral and master’s programs in rhetoric and composition. Neither the Great Books model (like that of Harvard or Yale) nor the Expertise model (like that of most research I and II schools) fits. The Great Books model “discourages programmatic diversity” (Young and Steinberg 2000, 392), and the Expertise model merely *introduces* undergraduate writing majors to theory. More importantly, though,

models for comp/rhetoric programs have inherited the entrenched rhetoric-poetic split, among other splits, which greatly hinders the healthy growth of English departments, including their faculty and majors. As comp/rhetoric professors and literature professors fight their theoretical battles, the overall strength of a department weakens or drains completely, and the students' holistic development is oftentimes sacrificed by the faculty's perpetuation of such a split.

A second challenge involves recent scholarly and institutional overemphasis on first-year writing instruction, while positively promoting to the public the importance of writing and the importance of teaching writing, has constructed a negative notion that "writing instruction is exclusively skill-based and that it is to be administered to those with 'substandard' writing skills" (Howard 2007, 1). Such an emphasis creates an institutional rationale for separating rhetorical theories and strategies from writing skills. The result is that it physically separates first-year students into two groups: those who need more practice in writing skills and those who can be exempted by placement exams or other standard tests.

To configure an undergraduate comp/rhetoric program, one must develop a more desirable model to cope with all of these challenges. During the 1980s, some graduate comp/rhetoric programs, like that of the University of South California, Texas Woman's University, and the University of Pittsburgh, attempted to connect rhetoric and poetics (Chapman and Tate 1987). As Chapman and Tate warn in their survey, such an integration in many cases can be only cosmetic, because a genuine integration must ask literature, rhetoric, and composition faculty to reexamine their own fields in relation to English studies as a whole and to redirect their attention toward the holistic intellectual growth and professional preparation of their students. Drawing upon socio-epistemic theory, we believe that genuine integration happens when we position undergraduate writing major students as both consumers (interpreters and critics) and producers of text and when we encourage them to use writing to engage, challenge, resist, and revise their own realities, as well as those of their communities and professions.

In this chapter, the example of a small comprehensive university outlines how rhetorical and writing theories have been actively integrated into our undergraduate writing major curriculum—journalism, professional writing, academic writing, literary writing, book design, computer-aided publishing, and the teaching of writing. Instead of expecting students merely to practice or prepare for future development, the

integrated approach emphasizes the public use of writing, reading, editing, and English teaching abilities in near-professional performances. At Millikin University, the point is that writing is a profession, and with an integrated curriculum, students can gain entry into the profession as undergraduate students. However, the integrated model, though developed at a small comprehensive university, can provide theoretical and strategic framework for developing undergraduate writing majors at a variety of institutions.

Developing a Model of Integration for an Undergraduate Writing Program

The English department at Millikin University, a small comprehensive private university in Decatur, Illinois, has developed an integrated model of an undergraduate English writing major over the last fifteen years. The department emphasizes public student performance as writers, readers, and publishers. Through a combination of rhetorical theory and practice, English writing majors gain rhetorical strategies and demonstrate production capabilities necessary for professional employment or admission to graduate studies.

With Millikin's institutional emphasis on the integration of theory and practice, the English department seeks to create a holistic model encouraging students and faculty to embrace reading, writing, publishing, teaching, and professional technologies in English studies. Simply put, our model of "doing English" celebrates opportunities: to read a variety of texts, to create new texts for a variety of audiences and purposes, to publish original works, and to understand the role of rhetorical and writing theories for personal, professional, and community literacy.

RESISTING THE PROFESSIONAL SCHOOL AND LIBERAL ARTS SPLIT

"What do you do with an English major?" The answer we often hear is that English studies provide students with general critical and analytical thinking skills that will be useful only in other professions. Other disciplines can claim an immediate application of disciplinary knowledge and professional skills. If we accept this assumption, we do not believe that students need real-world experiences to practice their reading, writing, and publishing abilities. At Millikin, English faculty have resisted the idea that the humanities are a "preliminary" area for students to develop general skills. Instead we embrace the idea that English writing majors can engage in professional activities related to reading, writing and publishing.

How can English faculty bridge this supposed gap between general liberal arts skills and vocational preparation? At Millikin, we celebrate writing as a profession. We declare the several contemporary professional writing career avenues available in journalism, editing, publishing, entertainment, literary arts, business, industry, and nonprofit sectors. Professional writing is not limited to technical or business writing. Creative writing, for example, is understood as a possible area of professional writing. No matter what the professional context, Millikin faculty encourage students to take writing performances seriously and to publish finished work.

Professional Writing Courses Developed

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, the English department created several new advanced professional writing courses, and we established a professional writing internship program. Eventually, we offered several variations of advanced professional writing courses such as report writing, grant writing, public relations writing, and newsletter writing to give English students and others more specific learning opportunities. This effort proved quite valuable to students in search of work after graduation.

In the late 1980s, Deborah Bosley (now associate professor of English and director of University Writing Programs at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte) developed Millikin's professional writing internship program. She sought professional writing internship sites throughout the central Illinois community, providing English students with the opportunity to immediately employ their writing and analytical skills in a wide range of workplaces. The writing, editing, and publishing internships provided students with access to networks of professionals, leading to professional employment. The internship experiences also led to an awareness of needed improvements in curriculum. Reviewing the professional writing internship reports from both students and site supervisors, Millikin English faculty decided to offer more courses in editing and publishing, especially using current technologies for designing newsletters, magazines, brochures, Web sites, and related materials. The professional writing internship program continues to be a strong element of our English writing major, communicating the professional nature of writing.

The Publishing Requirement

In addition to developing traditional analytical reading, writing, and thinking skills, Millikin English writing majors need competency with

the technology necessary to publish in the contemporary professional workplace. As editors and publishers, they need to create rhetorically effective texts in all possible media including print media, Web media, and new forms of interactive hypertext media. When writing is professional, when it makes a difference in the “real” world, when it reaches a public, it does so because it has been presented or published.

As the English faculty took up the question of how to prepare students for professional success, we borrowed valuable curriculum design strategies from programs in the fine arts, natural sciences, and professional schools. We saw the importance of hands-on workshops, laboratory experiences, studios for practice, and deliberate instruction on the use of the tools used by professionals in the discipline. We needed a computer-publishing classroom and lab for English writing majors. Grants in 1991 and 1996 allowed us to both develop instruction for computer-aided publishing and to create a media arts center, which helped the English department develop instruction in Web publishing.

But effective curriculum development is more difficult than acquiring a publishing lab. We needed to truly integrate publishing instruction into our curriculum in ways that made it clear to the students that the computer technology is merely the current professional tool of the trade. Students needed to know how to use the current technology, but the long-term goal was to learn how to get engaging writing out to the public—the rhetorical act of publishing—regardless of changes in the technology.

For our writing majors, every publication is a rhetorical act, a public performance. English faculty seek ways for majors to encounter writing, editing, and publishing experiences in the real world. As writing students encounter venues for publishing, they learn lessons that come only from public performance—they learn that hard work and discipline can result in public recognition of a quality performance. And, as the students’ record of successful publicity grows into a strong portfolio of accomplishments, they also learn that public performance pays well, in the form of professional internships, or jobs in writing, editing, or publishing.

How do English faculty and students reach a public in English studies? We present research and analysis on campus and at conferences—we collaborate with our students and invite them to participate. We host readings of poetry and literary texts. We publish our students’ work in a variety of print and Web media. For English studies, such means of performance are types of publication. And as much as Millikin English students remain shy, hesitant, and apologetic, they

also get the point: professional writing works because it reaches people who value it.

Even with our success in preparing majors for rhetorically effective public performances, we still must continually remind each other, our administrators, our students' parents, and our students why we emphasize publication so much. By embracing publishing as the key professional engagement in English studies, our students and faculty have a professional stage where we can employ our traditional skills and knowledge in order to become shapers and definers of the future profession.

TRANSFORMING UNDERGRADUATE WRITING MAJORS

There have been many attempts to redefine English studies and its contributions to society. One approach was an emphasis on building contemporary rhetorical and literary theories—in English we study texts in order to improve our theories. Another approach was greater emphasis on specialization of literacy research—in English we study texts in order to better understand cultures, genres, or even the cognitive science of reading and writing. Specific practical applications of English studies also came into prominence including programs in technical writing, new media studies, and the teaching of composition. One of the most bizarre results of these reform efforts was a growing split between literary and rhetorical studies. Some professors in English studied the reception of text (literary studies) while others studied the production of text (writing).

At Millikin, the English faculty avoided this split for obvious reasons. First, Millikin's mission has always emphasized a combination of professional and liberal arts. In the early 1990's, the English faculty conducted a study of English alumni, to see what the graduates were actually doing with their English degrees. The answer was very clear: many were professional writers, journalists, editors, English teachers, managers, lawyers, and graduate students or professors. There was no split between theory and practice in their careers. They were clearly engaged in both the reception and production of text. It was evident that there were many careers directly related to English studies; we needed to revise our curriculum at that time to enhance learning experiences for all English majors and directly prepare them for those careers.

While the Millikin University English writing major began in 1986 with a strongly recommended professional writing internship, students had no specific requirements other than to take six advanced writing courses. They exhibited little common knowledge or shared skills. Most

knew a word processing program but clearly lacked basic technical knowledge of contemporary publishing and editing. They knew broad literary history but lacked knowledge of the intellectual heritage of rhetorical or contemporary writing theories. Based on this assessment study of the major, the Millikin English department faculty deliberately embraced integration of writing and reading in all of its programs, both within the department and through general education curriculum service. As a part of this effort, the English faculty redesigned and added several core curriculum requirements: Western Classical Traditions, Applying Writing Theory, and Senior Writing Portfolio.

In reconfiguring the Western Classical Traditions, which formerly emphasized reading great literary works from the ancient Greek and Roman cultures, faculty deliberately integrated the simultaneous emergence of rhetorical and poetic theories in ancient Greece. Students read some of the same texts as before, but the focus of discussion shifted to the emerging role of writing and the rhetorical act. Additionally, in redesigning a history of rhetorical theory course, Millikin faculty moved from emphasizing a survey of rhetorical theories to examining the ways contemporary rhetorical theories can be used and applied for research on writing, research on composition or rhetoric, and for direct use in professions such as teaching, editing, or publishing.

As a capstone requirement, in the fall of the senior year, the English writing major students integrate hands-on applications of broadly ranging curricular instruction. In the Senior Writing Portfolio course, students gather together the materials they have been shaping in various rhetorical discourses and reflect on their identities not only as consumers but, more importantly, as producers of text. In this way, students celebrate their accomplishments and recognize their multiple writing identities. Students realize the integration model as they articulate who they were, who they are, and who they want to become as writers. The classroom then becomes what James Berlin, in his study *Rhetorics, Poetics, and Cultures: Refiguring College English Studies*, terms a “site of discovery, not simply of recapitulation and transmission” (2003, 159). Drawing on past writing experiences, students shape their future writing identities through reflection on the integration of traditional disciplinary splits between poetic and rhetoric. As students engage in such reflection, they discover the ways in which private and public, theory and practice, reading and writing, teaching and scholarship, and the literary and rhetorical traditions work together to create a holistic

view—not only of the student but, more importantly, of writers and their communities.

In light of the historical progression of the integrated model at Millikin, writing majors now have a range of integrated experiences. In the tradition of curriculum models like Carnegie Mellon's undergraduate English program and others described by Berlin, faculty in our program actively “decenter its curriculum, both in the theory that goes into its construction and in the non-hierarchical arrangement of its elements” (2003, 150). In doing so, we expose students to a variety of roles as readers and writers: the scholar, the cultural critic, the theorist, the creative writer. While a deliberate sequence emerges as we advise our students, Millikin English majors decide how to shape their experiences in the program. Some options are specifically guided by curriculum and others are elective, both within and beyond the major. New space is thus provided to prepare students for the workplace or for alternative graduate study in composition and rhetoric or creative writing. Such preparation asks students not only to allow the discourses in which they participate to shape themselves but also to deliberately and constructively shape discourses. Rather than creating narrow boundaries, this “polylogue” of integrated English studies creates the lived, synthesized experience of the whole student.

The holistic approach positions students as active, independent agents at the center of text production. However, as students discover their niche and work to explore their identities as writers, they may begin to resist the model of integration that helped them arrive at the decision to pursue a specific writing identity. While students are advised to continue their integration of reading and writing experiences, they often complain about having to take courses outside their narrowed scope of a writing concentration. This resistance to the integrated model, along with students' struggles to connect themselves to theoretical and rhetorical theories, signifies the prominent challenge faculty face as they work to move students beyond the narrow sense of identity that seemingly splits creative and professional writers.

One way the department has worked to meet such challenges is to introduce students early on to real-world practice with a variety of writing and publishing projects. Such breadth in experiences with advanced applications in writing theory helps students connect classroom learning and experiential learning. Publishing projects, in particular, provide a necessary forum where students draw on knowledge from a range of

courses with the goal of making new contributions to the discipline. Under the umbrella of publishing, Millikin has found the key for bringing together theory, teaching, and poetic and rhetorical production. Rather than reinforcing the traditional splits among these, we see them as co-responsible elements that work together in the creation of the whole: the whole text, the whole student, the whole curriculum, the whole faculty member.

To accentuate the possibilities of such a holistic approach to learning, we ask students to engage in writing, editing, and publishing activities either loosely connected to or outside their advised set of courses. Such activities include writing for the school newspaper, the *Decaturian*, the department newsletter, *The Projector*, or the university alumni magazine, *Millikin Quarterly*; serving as an editor for the literacy magazine, *Collage*; completing a teaching internship with the first-year writing program; attending professional conferences, such as The Association of Writers & Writing Programs (AWP) and Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC); joining the Bronze Man Book publishing company; and serving as research fellows or writing center tutors. This broad range of experiential learning provides students with more opportunities to diversify and enrich their experience. Students who major in writing engage in learning communities beyond the classroom. These advanced opportunities for integrating theory and practice prepare our majors for a variety of professional opportunities.

REDEFINING THE FIRST-YEAR WRITING PROGRAM

As the writing major took shape, Millikin's general education program also underwent drastic changes in 1995. Under the old GE curriculum, the first-year writing program relied heavily on the process model and banned literature, under the assumption that students only needed intense instruction on mechanical and organizational writing skills and did not need to develop critical reading skills. There was a clear split between form and content. Students were taught to pre-write, write, and rewrite. On the other hand, incoming honors students, exempt from first-year writing courses under the assumption that they have mastered writing skills, took seminars that were literature-based surveys of western civilization.

Understanding the problematic nature of the split between composition and literature, the English department worked with faculty to embrace a new integrated model for first-year writing. According to Nancy DeJoy, former director of Millikin's first-year writing program

and author of *Process This: Undergraduate Writing in Composition Studies*, “creating an approach that bridges the gap between reading and writing without setting aside the idea of process is vital as we respond to questions about the places and functions of reading in first-year writing classrooms” (2004, 70). Millikin faculty transformed the two-semester, skills-based, first-year writing sequence and the literature-heavy honors seminars into interdisciplinary courses renamed Critical Writing, Reading and Research (CWRR) I & II, required of traditional and honors students. This allowed us to integrate a broader conception of reception and production of text. All students would then benefit from a deeper understanding of the interrelated nature of reading and writing.

Bridging the gap between reading and writing allows faculty to reintegrate a wide variety of texts, including literature, into the curriculum of the first-year writing program, opening a wider range of texts to students. It also enables faculty to move beyond the skills-based, process model of the first-year writing experience and incorporate a wide range of experiences for students. Most importantly, this new model asks that faculty members view students, even and especially first-year students, as contributors and participants in the important academic disciplines of reading, writing, and research. We resist traditional curricular models so that students can contribute to rhetorical situations, conversations, and contexts. We invite students into the field as participants by asking them to write about “the histories, theories, pedagogies and practices informing their literacy educations” and to construct “their literacy experiences in writing classrooms” (2004, 16). Situating students as participants, we have been able to help them understand that what they have to say is important, that it can make a difference in the world. In this way, students are able to recognize their own positions as readers and writers and can locate themselves among the various discourses they encounter as they move forward as democratic citizens in a culturally diverse world.

According to Berlin, such a model helps students “establish their own agency in ongoing issues of public discourse . . . [and] engage the experts in debate to offer their own position, from their own perspective” (2003, 152). This new conception of the student has taken much effort to support. It was difficult for faculty members within the program and across the university to accept a new vision of the first-year writer. As was the case with Carnegie Mellon, “the commitment to integration has still not been worked out in the entire curriculum” (2003, 153). At first, some faculty resisted the vision of the student as contributor.

However, the majority of current faculty members embrace this model, and as new faculty members come to teach in the program, we see evolving and marked differences in the relationships faculty establish with first-year students. Those who recognize the importance of moving students toward a participatory understanding of their agency, toward what DeJoy calls “a critical understanding rather than mastery of the way things are” (2004, 19), see the difference such an approach makes in student attitude and performance in the classroom. When students are able to make the unfamiliar familiar by learning to examine and contextualize what they read and write, and to relate those examinations and contextualizations to their own identities as readers and writers, they are more likely to become invested in their own learning and discovery.

Significant curricular and instructional changes took place as a deliberate result of re-constructing the first-year writing program based on a model of integration. Re-conceptualizing notions of text allows faculty to integrate various theories of audience and purpose so that students are not simply practicing writing but also theorizing their roles as readers and writers in order to become more effective rhetorical communicators.

Whether taught by TAs or full-time faculty members, with a common text or not, the first-year writing program can benefit from this integrated model developed for the writing major program. Bringing a wider range of texts to the first-year writing program and to the undergraduate writing major is something all universities can embrace. The benefits of embracing the integration of rhetorical theories and practices into the first-year program and the undergraduate writing major are: 1) students engage in the reception and production of a variety of texts and rhetorical models; 2) students recognize their own agency as knowledge-makers; and 3) students engage in the fundamental, theoretical questions in English studies, such as what is text, who and what constitutes an audience, what do we mean by purpose, in what variety of contexts do we write, how does theory become a part of practice, why do we consume, produce and reflect on text? Using the model of integration to address these questions in both the writing major and the first-year writing program provides continuity of experience and a sense of autonomy for both students and English department faculty.

CULTIVATING ENGLISH WRITING FACULTY

Both transformations—that of the writing major and of the first-year writing program—redefine what it means to be an English faculty member at

Millikin. Because we are dedicated to developing innovative approaches for teaching writing, Millikin faculty look for creative ways to illustrate to students a wide array of conversations to enter alongside a broad range of rhetorical situations in which to participate. Such innovation requires flexibility, a generalist perspective and a strong investment in the teaching of first-year writing. We attempt not only to bridge the gap between poetics and rhetoric but to preclude the traditional split between teaching and scholarship. When faculty have the opportunity to bring their research interests into the classroom and can integrate their work in literary and rhetorical traditions, not only does the quality of the program expand, but faculty are provided agency to continue their own learning. Openness to new learning and to new concepts of text suggests that our faculty know how to learn. We are teaching ourselves and teaching others how to teach. As the department grows and changes, we continue to seek like-minded individuals unafraid to break out of narrow expertise on behalf of new learning, individuals who celebrate a multiplicity of voices, personalities, and identities in students, and who demonstrate genuine commitment to the tradition of integration we have successfully established at Millikin University.

The relatively small size of our department contributes a great deal to our success in these endeavors, while a larger faculty at a larger institution might encounter difficulties for implementation. The success of our model of integration depends on faculty members' willingness to embrace both generalist and personal expertise. A model such as ours, given time, proper implementation, and faculty buy-in, constitutes a reasonable way to productively bridge gaps in the discipline and effectively and ethically prepare students for writing in the real world. Though the career of the faculty member who operates within the specialization model of larger schools and departments may not reflect such a comprehensive integration of teaching and scholarship as ours, it is possible for faculty at any institution to show respect, curiosity, and commitment toward an integrated, synthesized student experience. Any institution can encourage their faculty to gain a better appreciation of the interrelated areas of expertise in English studies, and the best institutions will find ways to encourage collaborative efforts between faculty members with different and varying expertise. If institutions continue to create barriers that prevent faculty from crossing the borders of their areas of expertise, students and programs will suffer from ongoing turf battles, disrespect, and alienation of members in the English studies community.

REDEFINING GRADUATE PROGRAMS IN RHETORIC AND COMPOSITION

In her review of Stephen North's prophetically entitled book *Refiguring the Ph.D. in English Studies: Writing, Doctoral Education, and SUNY-Albany's Fusion-Based Curriculum*, Beth Burmeister bravely proposes some questions that invite careful exploration of the models for defining and refiguring the field of English studies. One question proves both relevant and provocative: "what will we gain (lose) if we turn to undergraduate models for configuring new graduate pedagogy? For example, is it a natural extension that has simply been overlooked, or do we need to develop brand new models that may be more customized to fit graduate student expectations and desires?" (2000, 127).

This chapter is, in some ways, an extended response to her question. Writing major programs are not only housed in public and research universities but also in private and small colleges, but because "most graduate programs ignore the small college context altogether, leaving that context out of seminar discussions, advising conferences, and workshops designed for job seekers," graduates are often unprepared "for the cultural and institutional shift" (Taylor 2004, 54). While we are aware that our example comes from a small comprehensive four-year university, we believe that if graduate rhetoric and composition programs turn to this integration model at an undergraduate level for directions in future program planning, they will lose their half-century rhetoric and poetic split and gain more prepared and better positioned graduate students. They will also prove more effective in their encounters with those students who might in fact change the assumptions of the field. To collapse such an entrenched split takes collective effort and time. However, such an integration model will fit both graduate and undergraduate rhetoric and composition students' expectations and desires.

Unlike their predecessors ten years ago, who entered the graduate programs in rhetoric and composition with "limited or non-existent background in rhetoric and composition" (Brown et al. 2000, 11), undergraduate writing majors from this integrated model will arrive at graduate programs in rhetoric and composition prepared. Whether they want to develop further expertise in creative writing, writing theory and pedagogy, rhetorical theory, professional writing, new media or publishing, they will bring with them not only an earlier head start in advanced inquiry in their concentrated area but also a broader understanding

about the various subfields within the field of rhetoric and composition. With more undergraduate programs better preparing their writing majors for a wide variety of professional and academic contexts, graduate programs may need to shift focus toward models of integration in order to effectively recruit and successfully meet the needs of new graduate students.

We suspect that the growth of undergraduate rhetoric and composition will feed graduate rhetoric and composition studies with higher quality and more prepared first-year graduate students. This preparedness may gradually bring changes to graduate rhetoric and composition programs' criteria for admission, scholarships, and research or teaching assistantships. The growth of these prepared students will perpetually restructure the student population in graduate programs in rhetoric and composition. Moreover, because of their exposure to various writing and rhetorical theories which are currently taught in graduate programs, these students will eventually challenge the existing rhetoric and composition programs to refigure their programs in four ways.

First, since new graduate students come with a good foundation of rhetorical and writing theories, the practicum for teaching first-year writing courses may need to shift their emphasis from basic rhetorical and writing theories to pedagogical theories and practices. Second, instead of focusing exclusively on training writing program administrators for larger institutions, future faculty initiatives should also address the institutional settings including smaller colleges. Third, with an integrated learning experience at undergraduate writing programs, the new generation of first-year graduate students will look forward to faculty mentors who embrace integration of rhetoric and poetic. Last, graduate programs should develop curriculum that will allow students to experience and explore integration in their advanced studies and research activities.

CONCLUSION: PERFORMING INTEGRATIONS IN ENGLISH STUDIES

Students—first-year, writing majors, graduate students—and English faculty at institutions big and small—are all called by this model to perform integrations of reading, writing, publishing, researching, and teaching. This call for all participants in English studies to perform integrations is not new or unique to Millikin University. Many scholars in English studies have envisioned a future that embraces integration. For example, as James Berlin argues, by reconfiguring the opposition between production and consumption of texts, this integration model will point out a

direction for refiguring English studies, a direction similar to Stephen North's fusion model (2003). It also echoes Louise Phelps's belief that "the overall thrust of the field is generalist, meaning that the most characteristic features of its programs are the way they combine specialties and require students to perform integrations" (1995, 123). Some observers might notice that, at Millikin University, the English faculty are generalists who teach a wide range of courses and have become very good at "performing integrations," thus replicating themselves in their students by creating generalist English writing graduates interested in their own individualized mix of English studies. To which we respond, "That's right! Isn't it wonderful to be immersed in the rich professional life of reading, writing, editing, and publishing?"

The challenges of developing a new undergraduate writing major are very difficult to overcome because English faculty are so entrenched in traditions of specialization that alienate colleagues and reinforce a fragmented, disconnected learning experience for English students. Regardless of the ways in which institutions configure programs in rhetoric, writing, literature, culture studies, or literacy, their students are eager for a more holistic approach. The ideal undergraduate writing major model will encourage and invite students to celebrate all aspects of theory, research, and practice related to reading, writing, and publishing. Even in situations where the writing program is fragmented across the institution or across areas of expertise within the faculty so much that such integration is nearly impossible, the goals of integration can still be sought. The undergraduate writing major program should develop opportunities and means for the students to perform these integrations on their own.

What is the final message that this integration model of the undergraduate writing major provides to the field of English studies? We believe that all undergraduate writing majors need an integrated learning experience so that they can successfully perform such integration in their professional lives. They need to perform the integrations of reception and production of text. They need to perform the integrations of theory and practice. They need to perform the integrations of rhetoric and poetic. They need to perform the integrations of general analytical thinking within the context of particular professional rhetorical acts. These integrated performances will allow them to both participate and refigure our discipline of English studies.

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