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# Culture Shock and the Practice of Profession

## Training the Next Wave in Rhetoric and Composition

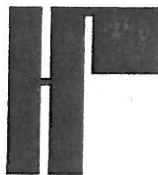
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# What Schools of Education Can Offer the Teaching of Writing

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Rhetoric from its earliest incarnation was aimed at educating citizens and potential leaders who had practical needs to communicate. Although rhetoric as currently construed in speech and communication departments has an uneven relationship with practice and general educational responsibilities, the field of composition and the teaching of writing remains very much concerned with education. Its primary site of study and intervention is the required first year university writing course with its developmental extensions. The field extends further into university education through Writing Across the Curriculum and advanced writing. The regional and

national Writing Projects also tie the field to K-12 education, where related work is carried out under the rubrics of language arts and English education. Composition has as well been one of the main sites of higher educational reform since the 1970s. Composition helped develop and spread such innovations as learning laboratories, peer-learning groups, collaboration, wholistic rubric-based assessment, portfolio assessment, process pedagogy, coordination across the curriculum, and faculty development seminars across the disciplines. These innovations have then spread through all disciplines and all levels of education, often with the involvement of composition specialists.

Although we need to look broadly into people's full life experience to understand writing form, use, skill, and development in individuals and society, the profession of the teaching of writing, nonetheless, is inextricably tied to schooling and formal education. The history and impetus for schooling has been tied to literacy education, from the earliest Egyptian and Greek scribal academies and Hebrew houses of study through the expansion of religious, civic, and commercial education in the last several centuries. It is no surprise then that most recent educational reform movements focus on literacy, although sometimes so heavily weighted toward reading as to obscure writing. The most recent recognition of the centrality of writing to education has been the recent announcement that, at the urging of the University of California, the College Board is adding a writing sample to the SAT I college entrance exams (Trounson). All these affinities between composition and the broader enterprises of education suggest that much might be gained by strengthening the ties between graduate studies in composition and graduate studies in education.

As the teaching of writing started to become a profession in the second half of the last century, before English departments would offer graduate specializations in composition, education schools in fact provided a welcoming home. Many of the first set of degrees in writing came from the education schools at the University of Texas at Austin (sponsored by Jim Kinneavy), the University of Michigan (often sponsored by Richard Young), and New York University (which still offers specializations in writing). Multiple graduates of the education schools of State University of New York Buffalo, Ohio State, and the University of New Hampshire found their way into the profession as well as graduates of many other education schools. An informal query to the H-Rhetor listserv in July 2002 identified almost 70 compositionists with doctorates from education schools, including many leading figures of the field such as Rick Beach, Anne Beaufort, Pat Belanoff, Steve Bernhardt, Lil Brannon, Lilly Bridwell-Bowles, Hugh Burns, Wayne Butler, Suresh Canagarajah, Elizabeth Chiseri-Strater, Barbara Couture, Janet Emig, Ann (Matsuhashi) Feldman, Anne Gere, Keith Gilyard, Bob Gundlach, Joe Harris, Irv Hashimoto, Mary Lynch Kennedy, Barry Kroll, Janice Lauer, Marty Nystrand, Lee Odell, Sondra Perl, Donna Qualley,



Jackie Jones Royster, David Schaafsma, Cindy Selfe, Geneva Smitherman, Patti Stock, and Jim Zebroski.

As English departments began to develop graduate programs in the teaching of writing during the 1970s and 1980s, the English degree became the preferred path into the profession because composition programs largely were under the auspices of the English departments and thus compositionists were hired by English departments. Almost all graduate programs in composition are now situated within English departments, with most of those having a curriculum embedded within the literature degree. These programs have drawn on literary studies' long concern for detailed examination of texts (for the purposes of deepening of reading of literary texts). To some degree in some instances, the composition specializations within literary departments have broadened the cultures of their departments to be concerned with text production and texts of a nonliterary character. Only a few composition programs within English departments, however, have independent degree requirements (Carnegie Mellon, Iowa State, Purdue, Eastern Michigan). Syracuse University offers a graduate composition program through its independent Writing Program. Only the University of California, Santa Barbara (UCSB), and New York University offer programs primarily housed in schools of education. Two programs (Michigan and Utah) offer partnerships between English and education. Several other programs are in English departments that also have specialists in English education, who provide some link to the educational world.

My experience in an education department since 1997 suggests to me the value of immersing composition studies within education, unmediated by a literary or English department curriculum. Schools of education provide a very different way of looking at writing and at the work of people entering into the profession of the teaching of writing. This view of writing and its teaching, nonetheless, is in many ways more compatible with the goals, approach, ideology and epistemology of composition; further, the education world offers much knowledge, research method, theory, and practical savvy that would be of benefit to us.

First, putting writing within education situates it in an academic world that values teaching and student development, and has rich traditions of thought and research on teaching and learning. Respect for classroom practice, the professionalism of teachers, and the motivated engagement of students are core values shared between composition and education, as Danika Brown and Thomas Miller point out in Chapter 14. The personal motivation and research trajectory of many education faculty, like those of composition faculty, are closely tied to classroom experience and classroom issues. Education faculty work closely with students and teachers, observing learning processes, aligning research concerns with teachers' and students' concerns, and recognizing the local wisdom in situated practice. Culturally, they are very close to composition faculty and researchers,

in many ways closer than literary scholars are to compositionists. They respect egalitarian dialogue with practitioners in all job titles, publications meant for the practitioner, the production of materials for use in the classroom, and the development of curricula and educational programs as serious professional contributions. They share with compositionists the institutional difficulties in getting credit for such work, but they continue with the undervalued work because it is central to their mission of improving schools. Although graduate students in the UCSB program in Language, Literacy and Composition have had some withdrawal symptoms from the culture of English departments, they have found very welcoming and compatible colleagues in their new culture of education.

Second, composition shares many theorists with education, such as Bakhtin (e.g., *Dialogic, Speech Genres*), Vygotsky (*Mind, Thought*), and Freire, and it is enlightening to view writing theory in relation to other major educational theorists who indeed lie behind our work like Pestalozzi and Dewey (*Democracy, Experience*). Other theorists and researchers important in education working in areas of learning, motivation, and self-efficacy deserve to be better known in composition. The practical result of educational interest in learning, teaching, and motivation is that in the UCSB program students have available seven different courses in learning and educational theory from both cognitive and sociocultural approaches.

Third, being in an education school situates composition research within already developed qualitative and quantitative social science research traditions. The social sciences are sources of complex and interesting knowledge and inquiry far from the reductionist critiques one often hears in the humanities. Education schools are in fact among the most interdisciplinary units on campus. My department contains people with PhDs in anthropology, sociology, experimental psychology, clinical psychology, counseling, education, English, linguistics, mathematics, political science, and statistics, among others. At the very least, if ethnography is now a research method of choice in the teaching of writing, it helps to have several people with backgrounds in sociology and anthropology deeply trained in qualitative research methods. Typically in graduate programs in education there are extensive offerings in all manner of methods. My department offers approximately 30 methods courses, about evenly split between qualitative and quantitative, and most doctoral students have to complete at least 5 of them. Included among the qualitative courses are introduction to qualitative research methods, qualitative interviewing, small-group analysis, classroom ethnography, community ethnography, textual analysis, discourse analysis, narrative analysis, and research methods for writing and writing processes. Within the quantitative tradition are courses in descriptive and inferential statistics as well as advanced courses in hierarchical linear modeling, structural equation modeling, and single-case experimental design. Furthermore, the program is built around a

series of research milestones, including first- and second-year projects as well as exams, proposal, and dissertation. Also it is quite common for students to gain some part of their assistantship support by working on funded research projects, mentored by their advisors and other faculty. Students also have an opportunity to participate in interdisciplinary emphases in language, interaction and social organization; cognitive science; human development; and quantitative methods. As a result, every student graduates with a strong research background.

Fourth, education schools offer programs in areas that open up important issues for writing and the work of people entering writing; in all these areas, as well, there is important research that writing people should be more aware of. As Shirley Rose and Irwin Weiser, Chapter 8, argue, many who enter the field of writing wind up at some point in their career with some administrative or programmatic responsibilities. Education schools typically have extensive offerings in areas such as administration, leadership, and organizations—including concrete and theoretical coverage of finances, management, and policy. Although these offerings are typically designed for school and higher education administrators, much in those courses is relevant for people who will run writing programs or writing centers. Writing program administrators (WPAs) are in fact higher education administrators and many of them move up to higher levels of university administration. Such studies also help us to understand the institutional role and situation of composition. The more we understand the history, organization, and politics of the university the better we can understand and improve the position of writing programs. Similarly, specialists in writing are often concerned with teaching assistant TA training and faculty development; education schools often have specialists in preservice teacher training and in-service faculty development. Furthermore, some departments are developing research specializations in teacher education and teacher learning, turning these practical concerns of teacher supervision into areas of scholarly inquiry. We are developing such a cluster of research at UCSB.

Composition as a field has identified personal, expressivist, and autobiographical writing as important to learning to write. These forms of writing raise questions about teacher responsibility and student personal development in courses; schools of education may have specialists in counseling, psychology, and development that can help us explore those issues in responsible ways. My department contains full degree programs in clinical, counseling, and school psychology. Another underdeveloped area in composition is writing and disabilities; schools with programs in special education (as we have) give us the opportunity to develop serious research in these areas. Multiculturalism, diversity, and class mobility are other areas where the extensive work in education schools can help composition advance its thinking and research.



Because of this coordination of interests, the big issues facing education schools reverberate with longstanding concerns of writing programs, such as testing and assessment, where writing has developed many of the tools of authentic assessment that are counterposed against the machine-scored exams that are now being widely imposed. Other issues that writing has long experience of include the relation of form and formal skill to expression, meaning, and practice; reflective understanding and self-management; collaborative learning and the relationship between individual and group learning; the use of technology in the classroom and in distance education; and equity and access to opportunity for all students. In these discussions, the teaching of writing has much to learn as well as much to offer.

Finally, being in the same department with specialists in primary and secondary education gives us deep and daily ways to explore the relation between teaching writing at the university and in primary and secondary schools and to consider development of writing abilities throughout the lifespan. We can view the relation to K-12 writing in ways that go beyond immediate issues of articulation or even sharing of classroom methods. Working with literacy educators at all levels helps us understand the course of students' writing experiences as they move through the stages of schooling. It helps us see the development of writing as part of a more total development of literacy and literate engagements with the social world. It also helps us see learning to write as a lifelong enterprise, within which the term or two of college composition is just one chapter. In an education school I have been able to develop just such a course that traces the development of writing abilities throughout the lifespan. That course has brought into relief that at least as important as the cognitive growth and expanding skills repertoire associated with writing development are the different experiences and groups one is socialized into mediated by writing. Working with people in K-12 literacy also sets the stage for much deeper collaboration across levels of literacy learning, as I and my students regularly engage in projects that cross the boundaries of educational institutions and bring us into collaboration with professionals and graduate students working with the schools.

Having an expanded K-20 perspective also helps us consider the relations among educational institutions of different levels, and to understand the changing nature of universities and writing programs within the entire history of education and educational thinking. The rise of the modern university, for example, is deeply related to the development of modern high schools that, despite other impulses, have been predominantly designed as college preparatory institutions. Any consideration of access to higher education needs to take a holistic view of the entire educational system that produces students already substantially sorted by the time of college entrance decisions. The current re-evaluation of college entrance exams has revealed that although some predictors of college success are margin-

ally better, the pool of qualified students is pretty well determined by high school. The fact that far and away the strongest indicator of college success is high-school grade point average already indicates that schools have already directed students' life trajectories.

Even more fundamental perspectives into the development of writing abilities may emerge from consideration of the writing development of students with disabilities. The differing pathways to learning to write experienced by students with disruptions of visual, aural, social, or other capacities pose questions of what it is we learn when we learn to write, how we do write, and what capacities are engaged. Because of our school's special education programs, in my writing-related courses I often get students knowledgeable about disabilities and the interaction of disabilities and learning. Composition students who develop interests in alternative paths to writing development have expert faculty to consult in areas of disabilities and clinical psychology.

One indicator of the kinds of learning opportunities for compositionists that can occur in graduate schools of education and the kinds of research trajectories that might develop is in the projects students have taken up in the first few years of our specialization of Language, Literacy and Composition.

Do students and professors agree on the meaning of teacher comments?

Teacher comments and theories of writing

The nature and function of informal personal writing posted in a first-year women's dorm

The alternative writing development of a child diagnosed with mild autism

Trauma writing

Degenerative diseases, writing, and identity in aging professionals

High school journalism: the informal writing curriculum

The relation of written symbol to meaning for students whose first language is American Sign

Note-passing among junior high school girls

Dialogism in the writing process: Where do revisions come from?

The rhetoric of statistical significance

The rhetoric of research traditions in education

Perception of authorship among technical writers

Definitions of academic writing and the relation to assessment procedures

The relation of K-12 writing exams to college admissions and placement writing exams

Are engineering students satisfied with a technical writing curriculum?

Teacher beliefs about academic writing

Educational journalism as shaping public perception and politics of education

To this point I have been presenting only the perspective of a professor invested in supporting and building a program. The perspectives of four students currently in the program give a sense of what it is like to be part of the program.

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### FRANCIEN'S ACCOUNT

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The first, Francien Rohrbacher, just entering, explains her choice of program:

I am attending a graduate composition program in education because I want to be involved in postsecondary writing instruction at the teaching and administrative levels. Attending the MA program in English with a rhetoric and composition emphasis at California State University, Northridge (CSUN), and teaching freshman composition showed me how university and departmental educational policies affect writing instruction. However, because I tend to question policies and procedures, I was not satisfied with merely following university and departmental policies as they pertain to writing instruction—I wanted to be involved in changing and implementing policy as well. Thus, my experiences at CSUN led me to pursue a PhD in composition and a career as a writing professor and administrator at the postsecondary level.

Because my educational and career goals have a composition emphasis, I assumed I would apply to rhetoric and composition PhD programs, most of which are housed in English departments. Furthermore, the theories that have primarily informed my writing research and pedagogy are theories I learned in English; thus, I felt comfortable staying in the English department fold. But I wanted to attend a PhD program that met certain criteria related to my goals. For one, because my career goals include teaching and administration, I wanted to participate in a PhD program that teaches education theory and pedagogy, research methodology, and administrative practices and policies. But I wanted the program to value and encourage scholarly pursuits in composition. I also wanted to work with scholars from interdisciplinary backgrounds, which would help me understand how theoretical frameworks in other disciplines complement composition. In addition, I wanted to learn how writing fits into the "big picture" of postsecondary education and to understand how and why education-



al policies are implemented and change as the role of the university changes. And I wanted to study in a program free from the literature/composition dichotomy. In short, I wanted to be in a graduate education program—I just didn't know it.

I discovered the benefits of graduate education programs the year I began researching graduate programs, when I met a student in the Language, Literacy and Composition (LLC) program in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education at the University of California, Santa Barbara. She discussed the program's high regard for composition, encouragement of interdisciplinary research, and preparation of students to enter teaching and administration at all educational levels. This conversation prompted me to explore graduate programs in education, and I learned that there are a number of graduate education programs with composition-related emphases (such as emphases focusing on language or literacy issues) or emphases that allow students to engage in composition studies. And, more importantly, I decided that a graduate program in education would fulfill my criteria more satisfactorily than a graduate English program would. As a result, I applied to two graduate programs in education (and a program in English that had emphases in writing program and writing center administration) and chose to attend the LLC Program in Education at UCSB because it ideally suits my educational and professional goals. Although I have just formally begun my PhD studies at UCSB, in the summer of 2002 I worked with Dr. Charles Bazerman on a research project where we examined standardized writing exams to assess how they may define academic literacy at different educational levels. This experience reaffirmed my decision to attend the LLC Program at UCSB, since I worked with a respected scholar in the field of composition while I learned how issues of writing assessment relate to issues in education.

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### RENÉ'S ACCOUNT

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The second student, René Agustín De los Santos, is entering the second year of the program and has begun to shape his research interests in light of his first year's experience.

Just as compositionists have much to gain from an even more total immersion in educational studies, as Charles Bazerman notes, I believe that those of us who also identify with the discipline of rhetoric have much to reap from such an exposure. In an environment such as that provided by a school of education, rhetoricians can expect contact with a diversity of methodologies, theories, and practices that comple-

ment and, more importantly, augment our investigations into how people use language to be and act in the world.

My own exposure to diverse theories and practices that are not strictly text-based or literature-oriented, such as found in Vygotskian-based theories of activity, has opened up for me some new intriguing lines of inquiry into the (rhetorical) activities in which people engage that I myself did not expect to find. For instance, let us take the case of the rhetoric of nation-building. Although the literature relating to the rhetoric of nation-building has pointed toward a "new political ecology of rhetoric" (Salazar xvii), both as a test case for rhetoric and for "the relevance of rhetoric studies in a postmodern democracy" (Salazar xix), the very methods and theories utilized to construct such a case rely almost exclusively on classical rhetorical theory. Although that framework is useful in highlighting the complexities involved in (re)shaping a nation into a postmodern democracy, such a framework is not without its limitations. How, for example, do we account for the myriad voices and perspectives that inform and are informed by the rhetorical process of nation-building that do not necessarily rely on or conform to Western or Eurocentric concepts of deliberation, oratory, *persona*, and community?

It appears suggestive to me that any effort in constructing a theory of postmodern democracy, as it relates to rhetoric, must be willing to incorporate and extend beyond the confines of classical rhetoric, and even, I dare say, the boundaries of literature studies. Our efforts, for instance, may benefit from taking into account the growing literature on literate activity and knowledge production in the academy (e.g., Andersen, Bazerman, Prior, Winsor) and other accounts based on activity theory that seek to provide more interpenetrated, laminated, and perspectival accounts of human activities. Although some may see such scholarship activities as imprudently (and dangerously) divesting ourselves from our humanist and rhetorical cloaks, I strongly believe programs of education extend to us rhetoricians the possibility of what can be called a "rhetoric-plus," a perspective complemented by such theories and practices that more fully accounts for the complexity of our postmodern realities.

We live in intellectually (and politically) stimulating times, which we have yet to adequately examine; any possibility of expanding our intellectual repertoire, as I believe my particular program of education permits, should be embraced.

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### CHRIS' ACCOUNT

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The last two statements are from students in the first cohort in the program, now entering their fourth year. Chris Johnston is considering which of the directions opened up to him he will follow in his career.

I entered the PhD program in Language, Literacy and Composition at UCSB immediately after completing an MA in English at a California State University. Entering as part of the first cohort in the newly established program, I shared concerns with my colleagues, all of whom also had MAs in English, about studying composition in an ed school. Our advisors told us not to worry and to just concentrate on doing good work, but we remained concerned about academic and employment opportunities after finishing our PhDs. Would we be hireable in English departments? Most of us had thought that we'd be seeking employment in English departments, but what other academic departments might be commensurable to the innovative interdisciplinary approach toward writing studies offered by this program? What were the advantages to not only studying in, but also perhaps seeking employment in, a department of education while maintaining a focus on composition studies? These were just some of the questions considered in the first couple of years of working toward the PhD, but we continued learning and working on a variety of projects.

The required coursework has been quite different than anything I had previously done while working as an undergraduate or MA student in English. For me, the bulk of this new learning was in gaining an understanding of and appreciation for different research traditions in the humanities and social sciences. Education, with roots in the social sciences, has a strong emphasis on qualitative and quantitative research methods. I took introductory courses in each and then chose to focus more extensively on qualitative research by taking a variety of more advanced courses. I focused more specifically on ethnography, combining this theoretical study familiar to compositionists with the work of M.M. Bakhtin, as a means of working toward an understanding of how classroom interaction affects writing courses. I was also encouraged to take classes outside of our department as I saw fit, and have benefited from interdisciplinary work on cyberculture and educational technologies.

At this point in the program, I have read broadly across disciplines such as linguistics, anthropology, psychology, sociology, and philosophy. I appreciate the breadth afforded to me in an ed school, both through contact with faculty from a variety of disciplinary backgrounds and a culture that respects and encourages cross-disciplinary and cross-level study. At the same time, I've kept a foot planted in the world of college composition by working as a teaching assistant in the writing program, reading deeply into composition literature, and regularly presenting at composition conferences. Through courses such as the Development of Writing Abilities and associations with ed school colleagues working at every educational level, I have developed a wider view of language development and language use than in my previous studies in an English department. This developmental perspective of writing, extending back to pre-school language acquisition and forward into professional writing and even writing in retirement,

allows me to see college writing as a point in the trajectory for which people learn and adapt knowledge about writing.

I suppose it is possible that the experience of studying language, literacy, and composition in an ed school will lead me in a professional direction I had not previously imagined, but I am getting more comfortable with that possibility. Still, I believe as the next generation of graduate students confronts issues of increasingly diverse genres and student populations, pedagogy will continue to be an important focal point for the discipline, just as it has been, historically, and feeling comfortable in the world of education will only help me to develop and question the dynamic of pedagogical approaches to the teaching of writing, and the strong research tradition of education will allow deeper inquiry into that practice. While the Conference on College Composition and Communication remains the main professional organization for composition scholars, other professional organizations and journals, such as AERA (American Educational Research Association) or *Written Communication* are expanding the scope of research, theory, and practice related to writing studies. The professional future for us, as grad students studying composition in a department of education, now seems less uncertain than when we entered the program. It seems clear now that there will be a myriad of professional opportunities for us upon completing our degrees.

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### DANIELLE'S ACCOUNT

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Finally, Danielle Fouquette has already begun a full-time professorial position in composition and reflects on the value of her graduate work in preparing her for a life in composition:

As I write this, I have just begun my first semester of full-time teaching. I have taught as a TA and part-time adjunct faculty, but this is new to me—four classes of students, department and division meetings, and a tenure-review committee are all new elements that were not part of my graduate teaching experiences. Many of the seasoned teachers I have spoken with in the past few weeks as I prepared for my first week of classes nod knowingly when I tell them of my concerns about juggling the demands of teaching, family, and, not least of all, research, saying in one form or another: This is the real world, not the ivory tower of the university.

I sigh inside when I hear these remarks because I never spent time in that ivory tower, and right now, surrounded by textbooks, syllabi, assignments, and other elements of planning, it looks pretty inviting. But the truth of the matter is, I chose to study composition in an education-school setting in part because I wanted, as Dr. Bazerman puts it, to be “immersing composition studies within education,



unmediated by a literary or English department curriculum." Although "ivory tower" might be too strong of a description to apply to programs in composition that English departments offer, I wanted an opportunity to approach writing from another perspective, one that would ultimately help me understand writing better as a researcher, teacher, and even (especially?) a writer.

One of the most important ways the program at UCSB offered that understanding was the removal of distinctions between learning at the primary, secondary, and postsecondary levels and of boundaries around disciplines. This is true in terms of both who my fellow graduate students in the program were and how writing, learning, and teaching were examined. In many of my seminars, I was just as likely to be paired with a third-grade teacher as someone from my cohort, and I was just as likely to read research on math education as literacy education. As Dr. Bazerman mentioned, at first this comes as a bit of a shock to someone who studied in an English department as an undergraduate student and as a student in an MA program. At times, I longed for the relative unity and wholeness that I imagined studying composition in an English department would offer, but the challenge to my previously held beliefs and conceptions about what it means to study and teach writing has, I believe, made me a better student and will, I hope, make me a better teacher and researcher.

Of course, these initial ideas about composition may have been challenged by any prolonged study of writing in any composition program, but one in particular seems unique to the program at UCSB. As Dr. Bazerman points out, the program here includes a substantial research methods component. As part of my MA program in English, which included an emphasis in composition, I was exposed to composition research that relied on a range of methods, but the program itself did not make method an explicit focus of study. Given the general culture of the department in which I studied, then, it was no surprise that my understanding of research was shaped by the close reading valued in literature classes and the philosophical and theoretical discussions held in composition seminars.

As valuable as those practices are, they will only get me so far in answering the questions I have about writing and teaching writing. At UCSB, I am learning about research methods both in concept and in practice. The methodology courses provide me with the opportunity to learn about various research methods, both qualitative and quantitative, and to consider the benefits and limitations of these methods. By working with faculty from various disciplines who have conducted a range of research in a range of settings, I developed an awareness of and appreciation for the role that method plays in results. This understanding was put to practice with the research milestone projects, which provided me with a chance to pose a research question, develop an appropriate and useful research plan, conduct research, and evaluate the results, all under the guidance of expert researchers.

The two research projects I have conducted so far look at how students and teachers view teachers' comments on student writing from both a quantitative and a qualitative perspective. Throughout the process of designing these studies, conducting the research, and analyzing the results, I have drawn directly on the skills and concepts introduced in the Gevirtz Graduate School of Education's research courses, and I know the quality of this research was enhanced by these courses, where we read about, discuss, and practice a number of different methods, including statistical analysis, ethnographic interviewing, and focused observation. My grasp of these various methods is still a bit shaky, but I deeply value the opportunity to experiment with different approaches to understanding the questions and issues raised in the field of composition. I firmly believe that the field needs its members to understand and practice a variety of methods for making knowledge, and I am confident I will be prepared for to understand, evaluate, and contribute to the knowledge base in composition.

## CONCLUSIONS

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The comments of these students suggest a very direct engagement with what writing is, how people do it, how schools and teaching can aid and frustrate writing growth, and what effect writing has on lives, learning, development, and societies. The concrete research orientation they have been experiencing in an education school has given them the power to ask and seek answers to questions that will directly benefit students and communities. As they become researchers of this centrally important human activity, their commitment to teaching and social change increases and becomes less abstract. By coming to know about writing in the lives of students and societies they find ways to make a difference. Making a difference in lives and societies through teaching and learning is one of the deepest core values of composition and of schools of education. As I read the value struggles graduate programs in composition face within English departments, as described so eloquently in other chapters of this volume, I feel lucky in finding a place where composition fits.

This is not to deny that there are disjunctions between the ways issues get raised in K-12 education and higher education, and that there are major institutional differences that separate primary, secondary, and higher education. This is not to deny that the compelling needs of K-12 education are so great as to make it difficult to argue that resources of an education school should be directed to higher education teaching of writing. This is not to deny that education schools themselves often have status problems in the university. But it so simplifies and clarifies the mission of



the teaching of writing to admit that the teaching of writing is all about education and education's place in making and remaking lives and society. It simplifies and clarifies writing research to understand that it is to find out about writing, how people do it, and how they learn to do it. And it simplifies and clarifies the development of professional teachers of writing to recognize that they are engaged in education and the research that supports education.

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