Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition Meeting Minutes

2015 CCCC l March 18, 2015
Convention Center l Tampa, room 16, first floor

Welcome & Panel Introduction

Chair of Consortium of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition (CDPRC), Kris Blair opens the meeting with a welcome to all and a brief history of the consortium.

Kris provides us with the agenda for the day, introduces all executive board members, invites all of us to the RC's CCCC session: a roundtable session on **Thursday, March 19, 3:15-4:30 p.m., Convention Center, Tampa CC, Room 11, First Floor (Session D.14):** "Mapping the Future of Doctoral Programs in Rhetoric and Composition," featuring Carrie Leverenz, Texas Christian University; Kelli Cargile-Cook, Texas Tech University; Jean Ferguson Carr, University of Pittsburgh; Mara Holt, Ohio University; Malea Powell, Michigan State University; and Shirley Rose, Arizona State University.

Kris introduces panelists--Benjamin Miller, Carrie Leverenz, and Jim Ridolfo.

Panel Presentations

CDPRD Program Listing

Speaker 1: Benjamin Miller, CUNY Graduate Center
Title: "Beyond Elevator Stories: Scaling Up Our Knowledge of Comp/Rhet Dissertations"
Abstract: This presentation will report on a study of roughly 2,700 doctoral dissertations (completed in 2001-2010) tagged by their authors as studying "language, rhetoric and composition," in order to get a handle on graduate students' uptake of methods and subjects in pursuing the PhD. Brief consideration will be given to overall method frequency; method correlations within individual dissertations; and the distribution of topics, as determined by an LDA topic modeling approach. Choosing a major research project like a dissertation involves a delicate balance between ambition and completion, between the obscure and the already known. Through this study, I hope to provide a better sense of what is common and rare in doctoral research in Composition/Rhetoric.

Bio: Benjamin Miller is a PhD candidate at the Graduate Center, CUNY, an Instructional Technology Fellow at CUNY's Macaulay Honors College, and an editor of the *Journal of Interactive Technology and Pedagogy*. He received a CCCC Chairs' Memorial Scholarship in 2012, in part for his work on the Writing Studies Tree, a crowdsourced database of academic genealogies in composition, rhetoric, and related fields. Ben has taught writing at Columbia University and Hunter College, CUNY. An article stemming from his dissertation research on dissertations was published in *CCC* in September 2014.

Speaker 2: Carrie Leverenz, Texas Christian University
Title: "Telling It Like It Is, But How Is It?: The Job Market for Rhet/Comp PhDs"

Abstract: In this presentation, I will report on the first year of a three-year survey of the job search experiences of Rhet/Comp PhD students. Published reports about the job market in English continue to offer dire warnings about the dearth of tenure-track positions, but few of those reports consider both the number of positions and the number of applicants in specific specializations. While Rhet/Comp job candidates continue to fare better than their peers in literary studies, we as a field rely primarily on anecdotal evidence or the experience of recent graduates when advising students about the job market. The purpose of this three-year study is to document the strength of the job market in Rhet/Comp and to describe whether and how it might be changing.

Bio: Carrie Leverenz is Associate Professor of English and Director of the Institute for Critical and Creative Expression at TCU, where she served as Director of Composition from 2000-2006 and as Director of the New Media Writing Studio from 2006-2010. Her research focuses on writing program administration and computers and writing, with special attention to cultural difference. With Amy Goodburn and Donna LeCourt, she co-edited *Rewriting Success in Rhetoric and Composition Careers* (Parlor Press, 2012). Most recently, she has published work investigating the relevance of research in design studies for the teaching of writing. Her next project involves reclaiming writing about teaching as a valid and valued means of knowledge-making in Rhetoric and Composition.

Speaker 3: Jim Ridolfo, University of Kentucky
Title: "Lessons from Rhetmap: Mapping the Rhetoric and Composition Job Market from 2012-2015"
Abstract: In this presentation, I discuss how rhetmap.org has developed over the last three years to include information about doctoral programs, the job market past and present, and other mapable field data. I will provide an overview of job market trends, rhetmap.org usage data, and point to future directions for field research. I argue that rhetmap.org as an engaged digital humanities project serves as a catalyst for enabling other kinds of work and reforms such as making the past and present job market more transparent to prospective doctoral students, and that this work can be taken even further by greater program-sourcing and visualization of rhetoric and composition doctoral data and placement information.

Bio: Jim Ridolfo (Ph.D 2009 in Rhetoric and Writing, Michigan State University) is Assistant Professor of Writing, Rhetoric, and Digital Studies at the University of Kentucky. His books include *The Available Means of Persuasion: Mapping a Theory and Pedagogy of Multimodal Public Rhetoric* (with David Sheridan and Anthony Michel, Parlor Press, 2012), *Rhetoric and the Digital Humanities* (co-edited with William Hart-Davidson, University of Chicago Press, 2014) and D*igital Samaritans: Rhetorical Delivery and Engagement in the Digital Humanities* (forthcoming from University of Michigan Press in 2015). Ridolfo is a recipient of a 2012 Middle East and North Africa Regional Research Fulbright, and is the recipient of the 2014 Richard Ohmann Award for Outstanding Article in College English.

Benjamin Miller
Miller argues that dissertations make knowledge and they make the discipline. His research analyzes proquest metadata from 2001-2010 reviewing 2,250 dissertations (1,800 dissertations in Consortium school and non-consortium of 450), asking what methods do graduate students turn to and what topics

do that discuss. Drawing on Carter, Hanson, and North to build his analytic categories, he looks at both method and topics, drawing on co- occurrences to demonstrate coverage, tendencies, and gaps in our research methods and topics.

Carrie Leverenz

Prompted by the question whether or not she was providing accurate information about the RC job market, Leverenz designed and distributed a survey to graduate students on the job market to find out what they wish they had learned during their graduate work. Student acknowledge hoping for more opportunities to take on administration and practical approaches to teaching and administrative work.

Jim Ridolfo

Ridolfo discusses the development of the rhetmap project, and that discusses its first iteration that identified 78 rhetoric and composition programs with additions up to 92 today. This project turned next to MLA job list histories inputting data from 1965-2012. He noted the historical shifts in terms such as the first rhetoric job in 1965 with rhetoric and composition coming in 1971, and 1990 with digital rhetoric. To date, the site receives 1,209 unique views and 4,284 views.

Presentation Q&A

Kris calls for questions from audience members.

Discussion

Panelist were asked a range of questions, and much centered on knowledge-making in our field, including a range of methodologies and sites of inquiry for our research. There was a sense of the need to this internationally about the role of rhetoric and composition and our discipline's need to prepare students for positions globally. The discussion also included a sense that we should take diversity seriously, fostering approaches that seek to disrupt rather than normalize. Also, there were questions about the alignment of classical western rhetorical traditions with cultural, multilingual, ESL, digital, and other areas of interest. On a practical level, the discussion included suggestions that RC programs should:

- Teach a range of methods, be more explicit about program's description, and help students tag their own work.
- Advocated for what we do well and do that. Answer the important question of what distinguishes your program and do that work.
- Bring job market data as a case example and create professional courses. Make your program's placement data available.

Break Out Sessions

Tables were asked to talk about the strengths of their programs and make suggestions for ways to further support RC students in their programs of study. Each table was asked to report.

Break between Panel and Business Meeting

Business Session

Kris asks all remaining participants to introduce themselves. Kris directs us to the agenda.

Updates and Reports from Committee Members

Website and Listserv Migration--Kris Blair

Kris took over as chair after last year's CCCCs, and her priority was to transition the website and listserv. These had both been at University of Illinois, but Gail Hawisher, upon her retirement, was interested in migrating them. Kris and Craig completed the migration of both the list and website to Bowling Green. The list transition was a relatively smooth process, and after recent discussion, it has been cited that anyone can be added to the listserv, not just program directors including graduate students. Job ads are posted there and other information of interest to a wide audience, and thus, the desire is to share this information widely.

Kris asks that participants provide her and Craig with feedback on the website, and she notes that different stakeholders might need different points of entry.

Kris calls for questions about the technology migration process. No questions.

Treasurer Report--Kris Blair for Helen Foster

Kris explains that Helen Foster, our treasurer, could not be in attendance, and she explains that the RC Consortium has some money left from the time the RC consortium collected annual dues. Kris invites Joyce Neff, former Chair of the RC Consortium, to provide the historical information on collecting annual $10 dues per program. Joyce explains that they had anticipated needed these dues for miscellaneous printing and other needs. Joyce noted that some of the money most recently went to the 20th Anniversary Celebration of the RC Consortium that happened in Las Vegas (2013).

Kris, then asks if these monies might be used to develop resources for the website.

Cindy Selfe asks a question about who owns the CDPRC data, and she notes that NCTE should provide resources to manage the data. Kris notes that the funds might go to updating the technological function of the site to make sure the data could be housed there.

Cindy notes that the repository of data might be linked through the consortium page, but there is a call to have NCTE actually fund the data portal.

Visibility Project Liaison--Louise Phelps

Kris invites Louise Phelps to provide updates on the visibility project, and Louise explains that she began the project to make rhetoric and composition visible professionally in national databases. Louise wanted CDPRC to gather and control our own data. Louise notes that we need data on undergraduate and

master programs and writing programs. Louise discusses the conglomerate of data and the need to connect it.

Louise notes that she is currently working with Canadian and American writing studies, and she explains the huge problems with making writing studies visible in Canada. She calls us to keep an eye on the work across that border. She will update us next year about this cross-border project.

Louise and Christine Tully also are working on the transitions taskforce, and we are creating a databank to connect different generations of scholars. Louise explains that when she founded the retirement sig, it quickly expanded to include a range of career transitions. Louise does suggest, however, that there is a substantial gap in late-career mentoring. The cross-generational session was received positively.

Louise suggests, in sum, that we need to teach graduate students to identify their dissertations appropriately as rhetoric and composition projects.

Kris mentions the professionalization process can begin early through the cross-generational project.

Hugh Burns thanks Louise for her leadership on the national research council and identifying rhetoric and composition as a code. Hugh asks for clarification if any member of our field is working with the National Research Council. Louise explains that rhetoric and composition was not present in the NRC's, and it was considered an "emergent field." By the time the NRC completed its survey, there was criticism that the data were outdated. Louise mentions that it is important that data gathered from all programs include multiple categories, and we have SIP codes that be added to that. Most people does not know about those codes, and an effort should be made to inform colleagues.

Archivist Planning--Kris Blair for Janice Lauer

Kris reports on behalf of Janice Lauer, the CDPRC archivist, and she explains Janice's work to preserve the paper archives of the CDPRC. Janice expressed an interest in passing along this work to a new member. Kris will be traveling to West Lafayette to collect the archive materials. Kris lauds Janice's work to organize the expansive archive of notes and other materials related to CDPRC's work. Preservation is important, but we want to find out the role of NCTE to help the standing committees to maintain this work, and we need to identify a curator and figure out, too, how to partner with other standing committees to ensure that data is gathered and maintained by the larger institution of the NCTE.

Malea Powell shares the archive updates of NCTE, both paper and digital, and she notes that there is no necessary reason why CDPRC cannot be maintained by NCTE. She notes that we can speak now to the current officers and Kristen Suchor.

Malea suggests that NCTE/CCCC may benefit from further support from CCCC to our community. The call has been for a better database to collect materials related to our field's interests.

Howard Tinberg created a taskforce on data, and Malea wants to look at collecting specific graduate program data about time to degree and other aspects of programs, relating them to research. The charge is to have a database in place, and the CDPRC and this taskforce should have a consistent role but NCTE should provide resources to sustain such data. Thus, CDPRC advises on the maintenance and curation of that data for our purposes, and we want to request a complex and scaled system that benefits members of our organization, but we do not want to have to maintain all the database. Malea and Jim will be meeting with Mark Rowe, head of IT at NCTE at Urbana, and the doctoral database may act as the forerunner to creating databases of use to us.

Kris notes that such a database would provide visibility to all CCCC standing groups.

Triangulation of data is another point that Cynthia Selfe raises as important for researchers, and these data can help with triangulation of the data.

Bill Hart-Davidson mentions that our field has excellent examples of data to support our work, and that such resources can be shared with other graduate programs, particularly running small graduate program, and it can inform their practices.

Business Items

Nominations

Kris explains that the position of Assistant Chair is open, and it is done in odd years. The full term is six years with two years in each of the roles of assistant, associate, and chair. We elect for the chair positions in odd years, and in even years, CDPRC elects members at large.

Kris explains that the Assistant Chair is a member of ex committee, newcomers committee, MA and other committees to make the consortium visible to others in our field. The assistant chair is a liaison role, one which is important to the CDPRC.

Cynthia Selfe nominates Kevin DePew, Old Dominion University
Amy Kimme Hea nominates Matthew Abraham, University of Arizona

Kris explains that other nominations can be accepted via email.

Discussion of Appointed Executive Committee Members

Kris explains that CDPRC bylaws on the executive committee are appointed by the Chair with members of the committee, and the willingness of the individual invited. Prompted by Janice's and Wendy's requests to step down as archivist and assessment members, respectively, Kris asks us 1) to consider if these roles should continue as appointments or be selected in a different manner and 2) to consider the responsibilities of these two roles.

Assessment
Wendy Sharer has been the assessment coordinator, and we are looking for someone to take on these assessment responsibilities. Kris asks what are we trying to assess and how. She also asks who might be excited and appropriate for this assignment.

Survey might be reinvigorate or different data collection processes.

Joyce asks us to see if Jim, Ben, or Carrie might be interested. Kris notes that we might tap their expertise, and look for someone to help us with the assessment.

Carrie mentions that Malea will be gathering data, and perhaps we can share the questions to find out what is already being asked.

Jim is asking for a list of names and terms to describe programs. He is asking for programs to self-identify key terms for their programs.

Kris suggests that we defer the assessment coordinator role.

Graduate Student
Craig Olson is our graduate student representative, and kudos to Craig. Kris notes that there is a local assistant, and she asks for clarification of about the assistant and is it appointed or should it be handled.

Appointed by Chair or Selected by Other Means
Kevin DePew notes that the practice has been to appoint a graduate student from the Chair's local context, someone who is already present and can help the Chair.

Cynthia Selfe notes that it should be left to the chair. Kris notes that it could be local, but it also could be located from a distance.

Louise asks for clarification to select someone at the local institution for assistant to the chair, and then, there may need a separate representative.

Kris asks if there should be a change to the bylaws? Graduate student member is under advisement of chair and other graduate student groups.

Consensus is that for now, the Chair should enforce what the bylaws say and appoint.

Theme of CDPRC Presentations at 2016 CCCC
Next year's CDPRC should work with constituents group to then invite a graduate student to participate.

Kris asks if there are suggestions for a theme and set of speakers for CDPRC session:

Need for Different Career Paths

Positive models, 2-year, administration, alternative and what we could offer as positive models.

Sue notes that coalition members might know more if they are from interdisciplinary program.

Louise notes the ways that transitions are throughout one's career.

Career diversity is another great term.

Basic Writing

Cynthia is invited to explain a conversation with Peter Adams where, with Cynthia's prompting of what CDPRC may not be doing well, he noted that we didn't do well to teach at 2-year institutions or **basic writing**.

Suggestions for Agenda Items

Kris requests that any new agenda items be sent to her via email.

Meeting adjourned by Kris Blair at 5:00pm.
Meeting minutes respectfully submitted by Amy C. Kimme Hea.