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The Doctoral Degree in English Education

Allen Carey-Webb

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The
DOCTORAL
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in
English
EDUCATION

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Allen Webb
Editor

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DEDICATION

*To those brave and questing teachers
who have furthered their professional development
by pursuing doctoral degrees in the broad fields of
English and literacy education.*

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INTRODUCTION



Allen Webb

English education is an exciting, interdisciplinary field at the crossroads of the humanities and the social sciences. Traditionally focused on the definition and acquisition of language arts content and skills in the public schools, English education addresses research and theory in rhetoric and composition, literary studies, reading, language acquisition, speech and communication, and civic, cultural, and personal literacy. An eclectic field, its practitioners draw on learning theory and research, literary theory and scholarship, popular culture and social theory, and studies in media, film, and emerging technologies. English education takes in a broad range of literacy research, and, at times, is referred to as “literacy education.” It is concerned with assessment, of students, of content knowledge, of practices and programs and is engaged in defining the field of English and language arts studies. English education draws from quantitative and, especially, qualitative research, with a strong emphasis on classroom-based practitioner knowledge. The field of English education serves English teachers—from the time they decide to pursue a career, through their induction into the profession, and toward their continuing professional growth.

The 1993 Modern Language Association (MLA) Teacher Education Project and the resulting book *Preparing a Nation’s Teachers: Models for English and Foreign Language Programs* edited by Phyllis Franklin, David Laurence, and Elizabeth B. Welles examine the responsibility of English and Foreign Language Departments in the preparation of future public school teachers. The authors of this study point out that in many English Departments significant percentages of majors are preparing for careers as teachers and thus that most literature professors are, intentionally or not, teacher educators. This study supports the national consensus that teachers need a strong knowledge of their subject and a major in the discipline in which they intend to teach, now required by No Child Left Behind legislation. Interestingly, there is evidence of a long-term shortage of public school teachers and increasing numbers of undergraduates enrolling in teacher education programs. For English

Departments with declining enrollments Cy Knoblauch has argued that one way to recruit majors is to develop concentrations in English education. Where I am now a professor of English, Western Michigan University, well more than half of our majors are earning secondary certificates—and the numbers are increasing. Even in departments where there are only a small number of English majors planning to be teachers, such as at flagship research universities or selective liberal arts colleges, some English majors do harbor public school teaching ambitions. While preparing teachers, then, ought to rightly be a concern of literature professors, many English Departments also have faculty who specifically specialize in English education.

At universities where teachers are prepared, English and Education Departments need specialized professors who take as their primary responsibility the preparation of language arts teachers and who engage in research into the definition of the content area and best practices for the teaching of English in the public and private schools, K–16. English education faculty connects studies in English, literature, composition, and theory, with language arts teaching in the public schools and colleges. They have historically played a major role in the formation of English education as a discipline and in the activities and governance of the National Council of Teachers of English, (NCTE), the International Reading Association (IRA), and the American Educational Research Association (AERA) and their affiliates. Because they are closely related fields, composition specialists often have responsibility for English education programs, and English education has a component group in the Conference on College Composition and Communication (CCCC). As they engage in research and write articles and books for scholarly journals and professional teachers they bring a shaping influence to the teaching of English. They are often key figures in local, state, and national debates and policy decisions. Typically these faculty members have public school teaching experience, graduate and doctoral degrees in English education, and extensive knowledge about the teaching of literature, language, and composition. In many institutions, methods courses taught by English education professors are required by state and national accrediting institutions, such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). These professors may become involved in the leadership of the NCTE and IRA and active members in the Conference on English Education (CEE), their professional home. Indeed the CEE was founded, in part, to address the development of doctoral programs in English education (chapter 10). Although professors do come to these responsibilities from various backgrounds, this book contends that these professors, whether located in English or in Education Departments, are best prepared in doctoral programs in English or literacy education.

Certainly graduate students and professors in English education will be greatly interested in this book. It sets forward models of doctoral education that many

departments will be anxious to draw on and offers a wealth of ideas for how to improve existing programs or develop new ones. It will serve as a guide to best practices for the balancing of English and educational content, for mentorship, graduate research, and the integration of technology into graduate education. Given that there has been little published discussion about the topic, this book will set the standard for the preparation of English education faculty. As *The Doctoral Degree in English Education* engages with the basic tensions and possibilities of the complex, interdisciplinary position of English education it helps define the task and responsibilities of the professoriate. It provides a model analysis of doctoral programs in a given field and will be a necessary institutional and library resource.

This book is essential reading for doctoral students in English education, a natural text for inclusion in any graduate seminar in the field of English or education. Chapters on evolving graduate student identities, developing research agendas, writing dissertations, teaching methods courses, understanding the field of English education and responsibilities of English education professors, and entering the job market and profession will be personally meaningful to these readers and academically relevant as they enter, engage, and reflect on graduate studies.

This book also has special institutional importance as it responds to a long-term need and developing crisis in the field of English education. Tenure track positions for professors of English education have for many years been short on applicants. As Baird Shuman wrote in 1972, "At the present time, it is a fairly well acknowledged fact that the Ph.D. in English is a glut on the market. However, the job market for the person with a doctorate in English Education is not quite so bad" (79). Or James Papp thirty years later (in 2001), "Beggars the question of why doctoral programs are not producing more people with comp, tech writing and English ed qualifications and why they continue to produce several hundred candidates with qualifications narrowly confined to, say, Victorian Literature (my own doctoral field) for every matching job" (16). My research into the job market for English education professors in English Departments in the 2001–2002 and 2006–2007 academic years, reported in chapter 15, indicated that large numbers of advertised positions went unfilled due to lack of candidates.

Stephen North claims that there are 3,500 institutions in the United States hiring English professors and only 140 that produce doctoral graduates (61). Similar numbers exist and can be put forward regarding Departments and Colleges of Education. Whereas English professors in many specialties may enter a highly competitive job market, in the specific case of English education there are clearly far more universities with potential need for English education faculty than there are institutions producing doctoral graduates in this specialized area. If this marketplace is promising for new English education PhDs seeking positions either in English or Education Departments, it is, at the same time, troubling. As long

as there is not a sufficient pool of PhD candidates, faculty positions in the field will erode and the standards for the preparation of new English teachers will be jeopardized. The shortage of faculty is leading universities to eliminate tenure lines in English education, replace regular faculty in English education with part-time or adjunct faculty, and reduce hiring requirements in the field. Given the important work that English education faculty performs, the loss and downgrading of these positions has serious and disturbing consequences for our field. A shortage of English education PhDs undermines the vital link between universities preparing teachers and the public schools themselves. It diminishes the pool of deeply qualified people to guide practicing teachers toward quality reading and research in English education and provide relevant in-service education. Many dissertations written by teachers in doctoral programs in English education, in modified form, have become published professional books powerfully influencing the profession. The shortage threatens professional teacher organizations such as NCTE that has relied heavily on people with PhDs in English education for direction and leadership.

Because of the diverse opportunities for those who earn doctoral degrees in English education, in public schools, in universities, in curriculum and administrative positions, in departmental leadership, etc., a “glut on the market” for the degree seems unlikely. As Ben Nelms, an elder statesman in the profession, put it in an e-mail to me about this book, a PhD in English education “virtually assures good employment opportunities for doctoral graduates who happen to finish at a time when college/university hiring is down (as happened to my students in the Nixon backlash of the early 70s) or who, for whatever reason (marriage, family, personal preference) are unwilling to move to the part of the country where positions may be available in any given year.”

The Doctoral Degree in English Education gathers the testimonies of doctoral students and their professors as they develop the still-emerging field of English education. This book demonstrates that doctoral study is a discipline-changing undertaking and a life-changing experience. A select group of public school English teachers consider earning a doctoral degree but are discouraged by a lack of information about programs, misinformation about the job market for PhDs, or a missing vision of the value and excitement of doctoral work in English education. *The Doctoral Degree in English Education* will thus also be of interest to these teachers. A doctoral degree in English education is an ideal path for those who wish to develop their abilities as English teachers. It is a fine degree for public school teachers who want to earn the most advanced degree in their field and develop their knowledge and skills as a teacher, and it offers a path to professional leadership. Such a degree is also an excellent preparation for work as a curriculum specialist in a local or state school administration position. Given the relevance and marketability of a PhD in English education, *The Doctoral Degree in English Education* will be of interest

to those who are already or who would like to consider teaching at the community college or four year college level.

There has been scant attention in the published record to the preparation of doctoral candidates in English education. There are no books addressing this topic. (It does not come up in either Andrea Lunsford's *The Future of Doctoral Studies in English* or in Stephen North's *Refiguring the Ph.D. in English Studies: Writing, Doctoral Education, and the Fusion-Based Curriculum*.) Although there was a discussion about doctoral education in English Education at the time of the founding of the CEE in the 1970s, the topic has almost not been addressed in the last thirty years. An article written in *English Education* by Martha Young in 2000 drawing on the work of a CEE commission discusses in broad terms the qualifications for English teacher educators. Another piece on mentoring of doctoral students by Stephen Koziol and his graduate students appeared in the same journal in 2003. Given the lack of attention to doctoral education, this book provides a much-needed service to the English education community. Making comprehensive information about doctoral degrees in the field available to a broad audience is a critical step in addressing both the quantity and quality of English teachers, leaders, and faculty. This book highlights and supports the role of graduate education in the broader profession of English teaching.

The Doctoral Degree in English Education is organized chronologically, researching the experience of doctoral education from the decision that teachers make to enter such programs, to the experience of new graduates beginning their work as professors. The first chapter, "Weighing the Options: Public School Teaching to Doctorate in English Education" is an edited transcript of an interesting discussion between public school teachers, English education graduate students, and new English education professors. The discussion sets forward the factors teachers face in the difficult decision to leave or extend established and successful careers and enter doctoral programs. These factors include uncertainties about balancing a desire for professional growth with family and personal priorities, income and location, and above all: the possibility of separation from the high school teaching jobs they love. This chapter reports on the concerns and perspectives of teachers entering doctoral programs—vital information for all concerned with such programs.

Similar interests, experiences, and aspirations mark English teachers earning doctoral degrees, yet the degree fits differently into a variety of career paths. Recognizing the moments of inspiration, the unexpected turns, and the emotional and financial choices involved, Renée T. Clift, Sharon Chubbuck, and Wendy Burke in "Where Can the PhD Take You? Lessons from Diverse Career Paths" tell the stories of their careers and how their doctoral degrees in English education led toward educational leadership in their diverse positions at the University of Illinois, Marquette, and Eastern Michigan University. This chapter acknowledges some of the serendipitous professional and personal factors that contribute to

career decision making. An interest in drama in high school leads to a secondary teaching position leads back to a dissertation on theater education. Events like reading John Steinbeck or having a baby bring changes in values and plans—a teacher returns to the university and graduate school after twenty years in the classroom. These narrative inquiries provide models of English teacher personal and professional growth, fostered by doctoral studies. Given the diversity of their experiences, it is not surprising that the authors argue for English education doctoral programs that explore a wide range of ideas and invite students with a variety of motivations and interests.

Combining a secondary English teaching identity with that of a doctoral student may mean separating from one group of peers and one set of expectations and entering another. In “Being and Becoming an English Teacher Educator: Constructing Identities in an English Education Doctoral Program” Richard Beach, a distinguished professor of English education at the University of Minnesota and Amanda Haertling Thein, his doctoral student, write about how passing through the different stages and activities of a doctoral program involves negotiating different “worlds.” New English education doctoral students report that a gulf may begin to open between themselves and their colleagues, friends, and even family members as they adopt the language and values of their doctoral program. This shifting of identity continues as they take on new roles as researcher, teacher of methods courses, dissertation writer, and as they go still farther, beyond the perspective of their mentors. Beach and Thein argue that careful mentoring is crucial to successful completion of doctoral programs as they note the stress, and the possibilities, that these new roles involve.

At Florida State University doctoral students are supported in an apprenticeship supervising student teachers and they develop community and understanding of the field in a one-credit seminar taken together every semester. In “The Rhythm of Conducting and Reporting Doctoral Research in English Education” Pamela Sissi Carroll and Susan Nelson Wood collaborate with their doctoral students, Cheryl Kopec Nahmias, Marlow Matherne, and Jennifer S. Dail, as they share the excitement of developing research questions and projects in their mentored and collaborative work. Courses and work in schools provide inspiration for the questions that the doctoral students choose to investigate. Once questions are identified, students move on to determine the most appropriate method to research their questions. Beginning with smaller projects these students work toward conference presentations and publications often before the dissertation itself is underway. A series of vignettes describe English education doctoral students discovering and developing a diversity of research areas from hypertext writing to self-assessment of reading achievement of middle school students. The authors defend a model of English education research that is contextual and qualitative,

that involves extensive time spent in middle and high school English classrooms, that is undertaken alongside classroom teachers, and that acknowledges classroom teachers as its most important audience.

Activities above and beyond graduate course work are vital to becoming a researcher and professional leader and to developing a quality doctoral program. In “Beyond Coursework to Community: The Real World as Springboard to Research” Katie Van Sluys, first-year professor of English education at DePaul, describes her doctoral experience beyond the seminar room. From observations of students writing in elementary school classrooms, and serving as a Reading Recovery liaison, to facilitating teacher study groups, to serving as a graduate assistant on a grant, Van Sluys, a former elementary school teacher, came to realize that she was “braiding together the very categories [she] would be evaluated on as a professor—teaching, research, and service.” Her work in local school districts and with local teachers made her graduate studies seem all the more meaningful and engaged her as part of a “community of practice,” opening up sites for research and establishing a pattern for her work as a professor of English education.

Helping students to write their dissertations in an interdisciplinary field is clearly the central challenge doctoral programs in English education face. In “APA or MLA? Negotiating the Multiple Discourses of English Education” Lisa Schade Eckert describes her experience researching and writing a classroom research dissertation as the first English education doctoral student in the English Department at Western Michigan University. While the literary analysis and literary theory Eckert learned in her graduate English studies are the jumping-off point for her investigation, she also discovers the need for social science qualitative methods and human subject research. Conducting her study in her own high school classroom (while simultaneously balancing the demands of graduate study) Eckert found that the concept of the “teacher-researcher” provided a model to work from and authenticated her stance as the teacher of the class she was investigating.

In “What is English Education? A Research Agenda” James Marshall, professor of English education at the University of Georgia, sets forward the importance of dissertation research into the institutional and discursive construction of the field of English education itself. Marshall argues that doctoral student research might consider how the interaction between English and Education Departments, communities of practice in the public schools, and standards mandated by state and national organizations impact the preparation of English teachers and their performance in the field. This chapter invites doctoral students into the conversation about how the field of English education is defined and how it might be assessed, suggesting a path of inquiry particularly relevant to future teacher educators.

One of the most important responsibilities of English education professors is teaching methods classes to students in certification programs. In “Preparing

English Educators: An Apprenticeship in Teaching” Pam Grossman, professor of education at Stanford, and her two doctoral students Peter Williamson and Christa Compton, describe the evolution of a program at Stanford where doctoral students work closely with a faculty member over two mentored semesters, before taking on full and independent responsibility for teaching methods courses. Williamson explains the transition from thinking about sharing the “binders and boxes” of teaching materials he had created as a high school teacher to thinking about how to cultivate instructional thinking in his students. Compton finds commonalities between high school and college level teaching even, to her surprise, in the area of classroom management, while, at the same time, she develops a whole new level of awareness about her own teaching that she identifies with “principled practice.”

Prior experience as a public school teacher significantly influences becoming a teacher educator and a supervisor of interns, according to Melanie Shoffner and Kimberly B. Pyne. In “Living in the Liminal Spaces: Lessons Learned as Supervisors of English Student Teachers” fellow doctoral students in English education at the University of North Carolina, Chapel Hill find that now that they are working at the university, mentor teachers both question their credibility and look to them for superhuman answers. They constantly must reevaluate their prior experiences as classroom teachers and the theory and broader perspectives they are learning in graduate school as they reenter the public school classroom to interact with mentors and supervise interns. Their student teachers undertake great challenges and undergo enormous changes—with their university supervisors always at the ready. As supervisors Pyne and Shoffner learn to “ask questions, make multiple suggestions, or simply listen as student teachers talked their way into possibilities.” The complex and “liminal” position between student teacher, mentor teacher, and university provides one of their most important learning spaces as doctoral students.

Understanding the nature and history of the doctoral degree in English education is essential to readers of this book. While providing a sampling of English education dissertation topics that range as far back at 1909, Jason Wirtz in his chapter “Historical Development of the PhD in English Education” links interest in the degree with the organizing of the CEE in the 1960s and the first articles on the subject in the CEE journal, *English Education*. In a founding article, Oscar Haugh summarizes the conclusions reached at a 1968 conference on doctoral programs in English education bringing together ADE, MLA, and NCTE leadership and drawing on extensive survey data by Dwight Burton. Haugh described the doctorate in English education as preparing “the student for a variety of careers depending upon his [sic] interests and capabilities. This preparation is designed for those who will become supervisors of English programs in the elementary and secondary schools, college teachers of English methods courses and supervisors of student teachers, and those engaged in research in English Education as well as

those directing graduate students engaged in research in English Education” (3). In a formulation that is much modified in current programs, Wirtz paraphrases Haugh’s proposal that the PhD in English education be comprised of 50 percent “English (literature, children’s literature, rhetoric—oral and written provinces, and linguistics)” 25 percent “English education,” and 25 percent “practicum experiences and dissertation.” Wirtz argues that the central hub for the development and improvement of doctoral programs in English education is the professional organization, the Conference on English Education.

Establishing the field of doctoral study in English education should also involve national evaluation and recognition of English education doctoral programs, argues Anne Ruggles Gere in her essay “Establishing the Field: Recognition, Interdisciplinarity, and Freedom in English Education Doctoral Studies.” Gere also describes a tradition of interdisciplinarity in the doctoral program in English education at the University of Michigan. This program allows students an unusual measure of freedom in selecting coursework, moving between departments, and developing dissertations. The close association between English education and composition studies provides a community of support for doctoral students in a joint program between two departments.

Establishing a departmental home can be complex, risky, and even uncomfortable as Marilyn Wilson and Julie Lindquist describe in “Reconfiguring English Education Doctoral Programs as ‘Third Spaces.’” They describe the realignments of English education doctoral programs with rhetoric and composition that took place at Michigan State University, bringing together CCCC and NCTE approaches. They argue that English education doctoral programs need to go beyond the traditional tripartite focus on literature, writing, and language to more accurately and fully reflect the teaching of English that now takes place in secondary and university programs. Critical literacy, the politics of literacy and language, emerging technologies, and teaching in linguistically and cultural diverse communities create new possibilities for doctoral students. Wilson and Lindquist describe how their program extends the responsibilities and opportunities of its students through diverse teaching assistantships, graduate student colloquia, professional portfolios, mentoring relationships between doctoral students, workshop support for teaching, participation in university committees, recruitment efforts with potential doctoral students, political activism, and community service.

Certainly one area where English teaching and doctoral education are evolving is in the integration of technology. In their chapter “New Technologies and Doctoral Study in English Education” Ewa McGrail at Georgia State University and Robert Rozema at Grand Valley State University address the question: What new skills and knowledge do doctoral candidates need in the wake of the emergence of new technologies? They argue that technological changes are profoundly affecting the

nature of literacy in our society, transforming texts, reading, and writing. New technologies are entering into instructional practices and creating new possibilities and challenges in an important emerging field of educational research.

A vital concern for all audiences of *The Doctoral Degree in English Education* is the experience of doctoral students gaining employment. In “My Buddy and Me: Lessons Learned from Shadowing a Fellow Doctoral Student” Darren Crovitz describes the sizeable role that doctoral students play supporting each other in this process. At Arizona State University, Darren meets Aaron Levy, a year ahead of him in the doctoral program and with whom he has much in common. Aaron leads the way into a variety of experiences, particularly NCTE conventions where he provides “the straight dope from the front lines of English education employment.” The collaboration leads Darren to develop his thinking about entering the profession and preparing for the job market. As time passes he also comes to recognize his responsibility to the doctoral students now following in his footsteps, and he establishes a series of informal meetings and a listserv. In addition to providing a plethora of information about preparing for employment, the chapter gives a wonderful model of fellow graduate student mentorship.

As I mention above, the job market for professors represents a crisis for universities and a boon to new English education PhDs. Drawing on a survey of English education jobs advertised in English Departments, in the chapter “English Departments and the English Education Job Market” I describes a severe shortage of PhD graduates, that, in the 2001–2002 and 2006–2007 job markets, meant that between 37 percent (‘06–‘07) and 51 percent (‘01–‘02) of the searches in English Departments for professors of English education were cancelled because no qualified candidates were available. I examine data about the availability of English education positions in English Departments, the types of universities where those positions appear, the desired qualities of graduates, the makeup of the typical English education assignment, where and how positions are advertised, and what qualifications are desired. I conclude with recommendations for the expansion of doctoral programs in English education and how to make English education faculty positions attractive to potential candidates.

English education PhDs in the academic job market hired in either English or Education Departments are still likely to find themselves with cross-disciplinary responsibilities. For those hired in both departments simultaneously, interdisciplinarity becomes a way of life. Janet Alsup describes living at the juncture of different discourses and the excitement of cross-disciplinary work in her essay “My Two Identities: Negotiating the Challenges of Being ‘Jointly Appointed.’” Living in the middle, Alsup, a professor at Purdue, carefully describes the different belief systems and purposes of English and Education Departments. Her understanding of the responsibilities of the English education professor carries weight for all of us

in the field, in whatever departments we work or study. She concludes her chapter with crucial advice about the involvement of English education PhDs in professional organizations such as NCTE and CEE.

The appendix “Identifying, Researching, and Applying to Doctoral Programs in English/Literacy Education” offers help and suggestions to prospective doctoral students as they attempt to find, learn about, and apply to doctoral programs in the field.

Taken together, *The Doctoral Degree in English Education* is itself a testimony to the values and practices of English education. Close description of a wide range of programs and narrative inquiry from participants at all levels of doctoral education paints a picture of best practices for preparing educational researchers and teacher educators. The chapters address collaboration, career growth, and the professional development of English teachers that takes place in doctoral education. *The Doctoral Degree in English Education* invites its readers to see the excitement and value of research and teaching across the humanities and the social sciences, in a field where both perspectives are respected and needed.

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Considering Doctoral Studies in English Education



CHAPTER I

Weighing the Options

PUBLIC SCHOOL TEACHING TO DOCTORATE IN ENGLISH EDUCATION



Jen Clyde, Shannon Mortimore, Jeremy Schnotala, Aaron Levy,
Robert Rozema, CJ Gilbert, Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil,
Allen Webb, Dan Baker, Lisa Schade Eckert,
Jennifer Conrad, Jeanne Smith Muzzillo

Doctoral students, public school teachers, and English education professors, mostly students or former students at Western Michigan University, but also from Arizona and Purdue, discuss the decision to me to apply to the doctoral program but I had turned him down, my internal response was, “I did what? Can I go back and fix this? Of course I want a PhD!” Then I remembered: While a PhD might prompt me to advance to a higher status position, teaching high school is what I love to do. Every day I am not with teenagers is like a full day of holding my breath underwater. Now that I’ve explored some of the professional experiences offered at the university level (an MA in English education), my deepest wish is to return to overloaded, hyperactive classrooms full of baffling, inquisitive fifteen-year-old kids. I know I still have more to learn, but I have no desire to be other than what I am: a high school English teacher.

Shannon Mortimore: Jen’s response reminds me of what I left behind a year ago in pursuit of a doctoral degree in English ed. After earning my MA in English education at Western, while teaching high school, I felt invigorated to continue my coursework. The master’s helped me to refine my teaching, and the more I learned, the more excited I became about applying these new strategies in my high school classroom. It seemed the perfect situation. I was able to engage intellectually with a group of my peers, interested in the same ideas and theories, and then see how these theories applied in my own classroom practice. I think, as a result, my last year of teaching, my sixth, was extremely successful. I made major strides in teaching writing, for example, something that I had struggled with previously.

I applied to the doctoral program with all of the enthusiasm I had garnished from my MA, and when I was accepted, the choice became clear. A doctoral program was an opportunity to focus on bettering myself as a teacher, though I didn't really think of myself as anything but a high school English teacher. A year later, though I am a doctoral student and the classes I teach have changed dramatically, I still find my wisdom, focus, and energy drawn to that beautifully chaotic place that was my high school English classroom. It was a "room of my own"—an environment that was completely shaped by my own enthusiasm, progress, sacrifice, and creativity. The relationships I built with the kids were extremely enriching; I keep in contact with many of them today.

What I have gained in the exchange is the ability to learn more about myself as a teacher—the strategies that would have helped me engage my students in more meaningful practice. Ironically, this makes me want to employ this practice back in my high school classroom. Certainly, the experience of entering a doctoral program has been bittersweet. There is energy, possibility, and vigor in both scenarios. Yet I often wonder what I have left behind in order to "move forward."

Jeremy Schnotala: Jen, I went through the exact same discussion in my head. I love teaching high school. I've actually taught an English education methods course at Western Michigan, and though the class was great and the students were energizing to work with, there is NOTHING like watching a high school student in your classroom get excited about a writing project or connect with a work of literature. At this point in my life, I can't see myself working full time anywhere but in a high school. Even as I say this, I realize a need for challenge. I don't know if I've ever taught so excitedly or with such inspiration as I did during the few years I was getting my master's degree. Things seemed fresh daily for me and my students. Everything from research in the classroom to newly introduced works of literature brought vivacity to my teaching. I loved that. And even though I didn't enter complete doldrums when I finished my master's, I felt like something was missing.

I don't enjoy studying methodologies and pedagogies as much as I love studying new literature and trying new things in my classroom and in the theater, so I at first assumed that the doctoral degree in English education wouldn't be for me. I also know that at this point in my life I really have no desire to teach English education methods courses full time. So why am I in the doctoral program? Well, the decision finally came together in a few discussions I had with Allen. I realized that part of what makes my

teaching exciting IS the theatrical flair I bring to the classroom. I never realized that theater could actually be an aspect of English education, complete with scholarly works on theater education. I began to do some research and realized that theater needed more prominence in the English curriculum. So that's where I am. I'm not going to give up teaching high school English. At least for now. But I am going to pursue this degree and see where it takes me.

Aaron Levy: Jeremy and Jen, I really connect with both of your journeys. I am a former English and Theater high school teacher who eventually found himself in an English education doctoral program at Arizona State University. I really enjoyed teaching high school. It gave me the opportunity develop a creative writing program with a regular and advanced class, produce, direct, and tour a YA play that I wrote, and eventually manage a successful theater program. Like Jen, I delighted in the everyday trials and tribulations of the teenagers who were in my classes, on my basketball team, and in my plays. I still miss being a part of their lives on a day-to-day basis. It's a gift that I think few teachers take for granted.

But like Jeremy, I did feel like something was missing. I was naive to think that as a high school teacher I would be joining a community where my colleagues would love to write and talk about reading, as I do. I thought that I would be part of an environment where we could discuss the "art" of teaching and become "artists" together. I found very nice and giving people, but I did not find collaborative folks and I certainly did not find writers. It was great work, but it kept me there often until seven or eight o'clock. And no matter how well we did, whether we produced shows that performed in front of sold out crowds or not, they still don't pay you any more. So when my wife became pregnant, I started to look at other options.

Also like Jeremy, I did not want to give up my strong theater interests by entering an English education program. In fact I first looked into a PhD in child drama but found that it was too research-based and not performance-based at all. When I interviewed with the English education folks at Arizona State, they not only assured me that my theater background wasn't an issue, they encouraged me to utilize it. They showed me that there was more than enough room for research on YA theater and that they would value that work.

Still hesitant to leave the high school, like Jen, I enjoyed the difference I was making and felt guilty leaving my students behind. I quickly learned, however, that I could have just as much of an impact (if not more perhaps) by teaching future teachers. I became really intrigued by the pedagogy and

methodology research and practice introduced to me during my doctoral program. And originally that was the part I was dreading!

A long story made a tad short: I just turned in my grades yesterday and completed my first full year as an assistant professor of English education at Kennesaw State University. I'm teaching methods courses that have challenged me, but that I'm enjoying more than any class I've ever taught in my life. This position grants me the opportunity to talk/teach about writing and teaching, my two passions. Ironically, perhaps, I also teach the graduate playwriting course here and will probably teach the undergraduate course. It looks as if I'll be the primary figure in creating a playwriting program here equal to the other creative writing programs in our English Department. So through my English education program I have been able to find a way to address and utilize all my passions. I couldn't have asked for a better deal.

Robert Rozema: I loved my eight years teaching high school for many reasons: the daily immersion in literature, the interaction with colleagues, the constant variety, and yes, especially, the students. Most of all, I felt I was part of a larger effort to accomplish a greater good. I worked hard to become a better teacher and believe I was slowly gaining wisdom and a reputation as a tough, but good, teacher.

At the same time, though, I was still itching to go back to school—for some reason, I was never quite content as a high school teacher. I got back into a graduate program at MSU in 1997, but quickly fizzled out when the graduate chair told me my dissertation idea was a dud. That and reencountering the theory wars was enough to convince me that a PhD in literary studies was not for me. There was just too big a disconnect between my high school teaching and the theory I was reading. No one ever made the effort to connect the two worlds, though many of the doctoral students were teachers themselves. So there I was, teaching high school English, content but still looking for something more in higher education. That's when I ran into Allen at Western, where I started graduate school in 1999 for a third time. After the first night of his Postcolonial Literature class, we had a conversation in his office.

Allen sold me on English education right then. He showed me the hundreds of applications for a literature position opening at WMU, including ones from Ivies, and the half-dozen or so for an English education position. He told me that the stuff I was already doing in my high school class—experimenting with MOOs, using Webquests and threaded discussions, designing web pages—could actually count

toward my PhD research. It was an eyeopener: I had always thought my dissertation would have to be about some obscure author or work. Instead, I could use stuff I already knew! It was then just a matter of time. I began chipping away at coursework, though my MA classes lessened that load considerably. After two years of part-time course work, I made the plunge and went full time. Plunge is probably too strong a verb, since I actually dreaded losing my cushy position and initially only opted for a one-year leave. But when the funding came through, thanks to Allen's hard-fought advocacy, I knew I could swing it.

Most English education students are like me, I think. They have a few years of teaching under their belts, want a strong connection between their lives as graduate students and their lives as students, and can only be tempted away from their financially secure jobs by programs that are nearby and that will fund their efforts.

CJ Gilbert: It seems like a trade-off—you get to focus more on your students in college but the students are older and don't offer quite the same kinesthetic experience. Is teaching at college satisfying in ways that high school wasn't?

Aaron Levy: I would say, yes and no. Originally when I made the leap from a full-time high school job to full-time university teaching, I missed my students, sure, but I didn't miss the tremendous paperwork load, the territorial, and gossipy, and close-minded "colleagues," and the long days that often went into the evening. I did, however, miss coaching, directing plays and the thrill of performance, and building a program. Those were immediate senses of loss, but they were quickly squashed by the satisfaction of being able to TEACH. I mean really teach and not have to worry about classroom management or implementing my discipline system. I didn't have to worry about parents calling the school because I taught some obscure short story. I felt, in fact, how I felt when I graduated from high school as a student and went to college—liberated. I finally was out of the restrictive environment that made me feel like I couldn't tap my teaching potential.

That said, supervising student teachers for the last three-and-a-half years, I can honestly say I miss teaching high school. I'm enjoying my job so much now that I don't think I'll go back, but when I'm watching student teachers struggle and strive, I get a pang to return. Sometimes I imagine jumping up in the front of the classroom and just taking over for a little bit because teenagers, often treated like mutants by the better part of society, continue to capture my sense of humor and my heart.

Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil: I know the feeling. It is so hard letting go of our high school teaching. We are used to getting all of that attention (positive or negative!) from our students, and then all of a sudden, we aren't in front of a high school class anymore. Another issue that has been difficult is the relationships we have with our students. I see my high school students at the mall or at the supermarket and it is hard not to feel "left out" when they tell me what they have been up to. Although I still keep in touch with my students, letting go of the teaching part of the relationship is hard, especially when they tell me what they read last week. A question, though...is it completely good to "let go" of our old lives? Do we have to? Much of what I do here at Western Michigan in this doctoral program relates to teaching public school, yet I am having a hard time really remembering what it was like! I feel like in order to have credibility as an English educator, I need to remember the ins and outs of the secondary school day.

Allen Webb: When I went to graduate school I had no idea there was such a thing or field as "English education." The first time I heard of it was in my next to last year in my doctoral program in literature— a professor pulled me aside and told me that the field existed and that since I had public school teaching experience I might be qualified for it. What was your experience learning of the existence of this field?

Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil: I guess I have had a different experience; I learned about English education almost by default. I initially planned to get a PhD in literature, applied to many programs, and then some personal circumstances changed. I simply put everything on hold. I knew that I wanted to pursue graduate studies at some point, and thought it would be in literature. But at that same time, I took a class with Brian White at Grand Valley State. It was a class that addressed teaching literature with critical theory; we also talked a lot about Jeffery Wilhelm and helping students to actually enter the books they are reading. This class was a life-changing experience for me. It had never really occurred to me that I could REALLY study about the actual teaching of English beyond classroom management issues and simple lesson plans. Once I took the class, I was hooked, and decided to pursue more studies in the field. Here I am in my final year of doctoral studies.

Dan Baker: Three years into a doctoral program in English education at Western, I'm still not sure I know what "English education" is exactly,

but I'm learning. For me, it isn't just about writing or literature. It involves (can involve) sociology, politics, and how people learn. In short, this field is much more complicated than I imagined. When people ask me what the degree entails, it is hard to explain. It is not "education" and it is not just "English." This degree requires much more than tackling one or the other separately: it asks that we investigate both and find the connections that exist. More importantly, it asks that we then explain and teach others about those connections. I have to know two separate discourses, and I have to try to successfully navigate both English and education. Only now do I realize how daunting (but not impossible) the task really is.

Allen Webb: I don't think I really understood the whole issue of research and publication that is involved in being a professor when I decided to enter a PhD program.

Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil: One thing that has helped with this issue is remembering that many of our graduate class projects or papers can be turned into conference presentations and journal articles. Allen has been helpful in reminding us that we can direct our coursework to pursue our interests and that our classes should be helping us to get ahead in the academic world. Many times, when writing a paper, I have thought about when/how this paper might be appropriate for another audience. For example, I sent a multi-genre project that I wrote for Connie Weaver's Grammar and the Teaching of English class to the *English Journal* for a grammar pedagogy issue. Although it was not accepted, I still think it's amazing how all of the theory about writing for real audiences has been true in my case— instead of writing as simply a means to an end (just a paper to end my semester, for example). I now write with purpose.

Lisa Schade Eckert: The adage "publish or perish" is absolutely true if you accept a position at a Research 1 university as I did four years ago. Honestly, nothing else really matters as far as tenure goes. Hours spent attending meetings, or even more disappointing, hours spent with and for your students don't necessarily translate into a valued CV line. My situation is even more interesting in that I am tenure-track in the College of Education. Ironically, the emphasis is even stronger on publishing and grant writing than teaching; the assumption is that a professor of education should already be an excellent teacher.

The transition from high school teacher to college professor is a fundamental paradigm shift. I now think about the profession and ways

that we can progress on a national scale, whereas I used to think about my classroom teaching and progressing in my teaching practices each year.

Dan Baker: As Joel Spring makes clear, 25–30 percent of teachers leave the business by year five. Why? The number one reason is not low salary. It is problems with parents and/or administration.

Aaron Levy: My wife was hired in the English Department and she suffered at this new school. At our old school (yes, that's where we met) we worked with our colleagues, but hardly meeting officially. Our new principal was a strong believer in micro-management and so there were meetings all the time. There was a mandatory school-wide meeting monthly, which was difficult because it was before school, and then departments were meeting and micro-meeting on a consistent basis. It drove my wife nuts! She had to attend department meetings, honors meetings, ninth-grade and tenth-grade meetings, and American Literature meetings. That's too much.

CJ Gilbert: I admit that after my second year of teaching I thought about quitting mainly because of parents and administration. That's what why I switched schools—and that made all the difference in the world. When I worked with people who want to support me but who also had high standards, I felt challenged and encouraged.

Jennifer Conrad: I am very lucky because I have an incredible administration. My principal supports what I do in my classroom, defends me against parents on the attack, offers his ear when I need to vent, and encourages me to go to conferences/workshops that would improve my teaching. Bill treats our staff with respect and expects us to work as a team. He does everything in his power to help us become better teachers. If I were to leave the profession at this point, my reason would be the parents. I don't know how many times this trimester I've had a parent tell me how to do my job or flare at me because I won't pass his/her student for breathing. Some of the parents in my community don't think education valuable; they found jobs without a high school diploma, so why does it matter if their kids don't graduate? I get very frustrated with parents not holding their students responsible and then blaming me when their students won't do the work (and possibly fail). What keeps me in the classroom at times is feeling that I may be the one teaching young people to take responsibility for the choices they make and to have higher expectations for themselves. While that helps the students, it also helps society as a whole. In my mind,

it's like voting for millages even when you don't have kids—you still want to help out the future of your community, even though you aren't directly or immediately benefiting from the funding.

Dan Baker: I have to admit that the issue of money is something that concerns me. When I first learned what professors make at the start of their career, I was, to say the least, taken aback. I was making pretty good money as a high school teacher—more than I will as a beginning professor, it seems. Thankfully for me, I have a partner who is quite understanding and supportive. With the help of the fellowship that I receive from the department, we are doing okay. But, to be truthful, I have to teach an additional class to really make ends meet.

Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil: Although I miss my teaching salary, which was really quite generous (the best in the area by far), I have found that with a well-organized budget, we are more than able to get by. We eat out very little, buy clothes at secondhand shops, take simple, creative vacations, drive used cars, and don't have cable. I think that because we love what I am doing (studying at WMU and being home with my kids) we are willing to make it work out financially. I can't imagine working full time as a teacher and having children AND being able to study full time at the graduate level...so NOT working full time as a teacher really works out for us. Because my spouse works and provides benefits, I can't say that we are suffering.

CJ Gilbert: For the last two years, I've been teaching part time at a high school so that I can spend my mornings with my daughter and then in the evenings I go to graduate school to work on my MA degree and/or study. My husband's job made this possible, and it worked but it also burned me out because I have trouble doing a "part time" job on anything. And because I do not have a fellowship, the first nine months of grad school came out of our savings and the last fifteen months became a very ugly loan. Given that starting salaries for professors are not much higher than what I'd be making as a teacher (full time), I don't want to rack up further debt getting a PhD and then not be able to make the loan payments when I probably won't have a full-time job. So I am holding off earning a PhD.

Aaron Levy: My wife and I went from being two full-time high school English teachers to one stay-at-home mom and one full-time doctoral student. We decided to struggle financially and suffer early on in our kids'

lives when they would be ignorant to it. Oftentimes, I would strap on the baby-backpack-do-hickey and the baby and I would vacuum the house together with him checking out the terrain from slightly above my head. Sometimes this exercise would sooth him enough to doze off and I would brainstorm about publishable articles. My wife and I didn't know how to do something without multitasking. Sitting and watching a television show would be a sin if we weren't eating at the same time and grading papers during commercials.

As a new professor, I have no regrets. We're getting out of debt, our kids are getting older (three-and-a-half and two years old), and we're starting to see the new life we built. But it was hard. There was a great deal of sacrifice beyond just the PhD program requirements. But life is not always neat; it's messy and you can't always plan things so they fall in line. At least that's what I keep telling myself.

Jeanne Smith Muzzillo: Hello, fellow paupers! Here's an almost opposite end of the professional spectrum: I will graduate with my PhD from Purdue at the same time my son finishes his bachelor's degree. Actually I have two sons in college right now and I have just finished my fifth year in the doctoral program. My advice is very similar to one of the conclusions in the book *Nickel and Dimed*, that is, in today's economy we cannot make it alone. I have shared housing with other grad students, living in university owned houses chock full of character. I learned so much about other nations, and about how we learn, and about communities within schools. Saving money has provided me perhaps the richest lessons of my work here.

Jennifer Conrad: My professors never said anything about the job market. I was able to discover the reality as I worked in the English Department as a secretary. Our English PhDs were having a hard time finding full-time and tenure-track jobs because there were so few out there. The English education graduates, however, were getting tenure-track jobs right away in other states. Even with that said, the job market became a serious factor in my decision not to join the PhD program. There are two things I'm not willing to give up for a job at the college level: working with my husband and living near my family. The honest reality is that I would have to move to find a tenure-track job, which would mean moving away from my family and no longer working with my husband. I'm not willing to make those changes in my life. I suppose I could get my PhD and still teach at the high school, but I'd rather invest my time in conferences, workshops, and classes in which I'm interested.

CJ Gilbert: Exactly! Jen's reasoning is much my own: While I know that I'm interested in a PhD, I'm just not willing to subordinate the rest of my life to that goal. I'd have to take time away from family (child, husband, parents), friends, and students in order to travel to classes at some other university, and then, for a job, I'd likely have to move my entire family or endure a long commute. That said, if I had gotten the MA under my belt before being a parent, I probably would've been receptive to the idea of traveling away for a year or so to do my PhD because I have heard that the job market is good. There are just so many different jobs English education PhDs can do (English ed. programs, writing centers, professional development coordinators, etc.) and so few to go around!

Aaron Levy: When I interviewed for the program at Arizona State I asked what the job market was like. They told me that they have placed 100 percent of their graduates. I couldn't believe it. There was never that kind of positive job placement statistic coming out of my MFA program! I was insistent on a program that would lead to a definite career. But I was also overanxious about it. When I entered my job market year, I applied for everything! I applied for over forty jobs. None of them were necessarily, at least at the time, where I wanted to live. I wanted to stay in Arizona, but there were no jobs in state. I also was very interested in the Pacific Northwest and there were no jobs there either. Most of the jobs were in the East or Middle America, places I never imagined moving. Like Georgia. I never thought we'd end up Southerners, but it's beautiful here and it's a great place to raise a family.

My advice is to not get as anxious about the job market as I did. Your best bet is to concentrate on writing some publishable articles and do as many conference presentations as you can. Try your best to supervise student teachers and teach a variety of courses, if possible. These things will make you a desirable candidate on paper. The job market is good and I suspect it will stay that way for awhile.

Gretchen Rumohr-Voskuil: I feel like my experience here at WMU has helped me to become a more "desirable candidate." We have been encouraged to publish, present at conferences, go to NCTE, interview job applicants, and meet campus speakers. Of course, all of these experiences are also great in helping me to become a better English educator, too. And I continue to hear that if I am willing to move, I will not have any trouble finding a job.

Aaron Levy: Gretchen, It sounds like you're being prepared well. Folks on the job market need to really do their "research" about the institutions for which they are applying. While I could have worked at a Research 1 institution, I found that the traditional research agenda was not to my liking. I was willing to trade one course load for a little more freedom with my research/writing agenda. Life in a Research 1 institution is different than a Research Intensive or just a master's level or an institution that just has bachelors' degrees to offer. One is not better or worse per say, but one may be more suited to you and your interests.

Allen Webb: Although CJ is right that a PhD in English education is great preparation for many different leadership positions, including continuing to be a public school teacher, it is a degree people often pursue to become a "teacher educator," a person who teaches teachers. If I am comfortable in that role now, it was not something I would have felt at all ready to do when I left the classroom. I did feel I had a few things to offer to other teachers, but I really didn't see myself become a professor who taught teachers. That came later.

Jeanne Smith Muzzillo: This is a consuming subject with me. I ask my undergraduate students why they are pursuing an education degree the first day of class. Honestly, I am alarmed when they say: Because I love kids, because I have so much patience, because I want to influence the youth of today. Yikes. First, I think that by the time I meet them in their methods courses I should be able to tell a difference between these students and daycare providers who began careers right after high school. I want to hear them speak in psychological terms, know some theoretical support for practice, have specific reasons for their strategies (not just classroom maintenance), be politically savvy. I want them to be interested in how English is/can be interdisciplinary, and actually have some lesson ideas for collaboration. I hope for vertical and horizontal articulation. No, I'm not interested in training altruistic saints! I trust that if we teach teachers to teach well, all those wonderful scenes from *Mona Lisa Smile* and *Mr. Holland's Opus* may happen on their own.

Robert Rozema: Now I teach preservice teachers, which I enjoy tremendously. I sometimes miss the immersion in the literature and the interaction with high school kids, but I absolutely love working with college-age students. The stress here is different, coming more in big waves than the constant water torture of high school teaching ("What did I miss

yesterday? Was it important? Can I go to the bathroom? Why are we reading this stupid book?"). But for me, this feels like the right fit.

Dan Baker: As a part-time teacher of teachers at WMU, I now present myself to my students as a former teacher with classroom experience and as someone who does not have all the answers about teaching. I simply represent one voice, one story. It's taken a couple of years before I reached this point. Early on in my teaching here at the university, I really struggled with what it meant to teach future teachers. For example, time and again, I found myself "telling" students what to do in the classroom (based on my own experience) as opposed to letting them think about what they might do. Also, I struggled with feeling like I had to protect them so that they wouldn't make the same mistakes that I did. In time, I've learned that this is silly. I am not a parent. I am their mentor, someone who is interested in challenging them to explore their own perception of what a teacher can be. I am there to challenge their thinking, to raise questions. In fact, I now see my students as colleagues, fellow educators interested in making education and the teaching of language arts more interesting, more critical, and more connected to students' lives. In other words, I am still a teacher. I am still doing what I want to do as I work with future teachers: I get to teach.

I don't miss parents ridiculing me and fellow teachers—teachers who were working really hard to change schools, classrooms, and how we think about teaching. I don't miss poor administrators—those interested more in status quo, test results, and per-student dollars than in working with kids or with teachers. I don't miss tracking, and I don't miss honors classes or parents, teachers, and administrators that continue to ignore kids labeled as "dumb," "average," or "at risk." I don't miss lazy teachers that teach by handing out worksheets and dittos; that play favorites in their classrooms; that would rather coach than pay attention to their kids' academic needs; that don't have the courage to question the status quo. I enjoy "teaching." I do not enjoy "schooling." There is a difference. Only after I left the secondary level did I really come to understand this reality. At the college level, I get to teach—teach future teachers about the difference between the two.

CHAPTER 2

Where Can the PhD Take You?

LESSONS FROM DIVERSE CAREER PATHS



Renée T. Clift, Sharon Chubbuck, Wendy Burke

This chapter is about uncertainty: the kind of uncertainty that is inherent in the teaching profession; the kind of uncertainty that is, at once, liberating and exciting and confusing and educative. This chapter is also about becoming, the kind of becoming that results from bringing existing realities into the simmering cauldron of new ideas, quests for significance, and desires for action. We base our chapter on three stories of the coauthors' unfinished journeys as educators, although not all of us label ourselves as English educators. We are all White, female, middle-class professors who are teaching in university-based Colleges of Education. Sharon and Wendy worked with and for Renée while in graduate school. We vary in full-time secondary school teaching experience and in university teaching experience. We are united by a belief that teachers are important, that preparing successful teachers and preparing successful students depends, in part, on educators' commitments to social justice, and that higher education should be accessible to all. We also believe that policies and people who have views that are different from ours as well as people who share our beliefs all continuously shape the contexts of teaching.

Some would argue that teaching is best understood as deeply embedded in the identity of the teacher as a whole person (Goodson). Reducing the teacher to a specific element of practice, as opposed to looking at the individual as a whole can be demeaning and will ultimately provide an inaccurate picture. We agree with this but we also feel that teaching is a political process occurring in an environment that is anything but neutral.

It is also a pragmatic process. Teachers and administrators continuously struggle to balance scarce resources, competing demands, compelling needs, personal commitments, and time constraints. As English educators, accidental or intended, we work for our students, their students, our selves, and our institutions. As the following stories show, we are continuously learning what our work is, what it means, and how to accomplish it. Understanding who we are as English educators, teacher educators, and educational researchers only makes sense in the context of the stories we tell—

stories of events that moved us to various points in our careers, stories of others who influenced us, stories of how we wrestled to find significance and meaning in theory and practice. We are borrowing from narrative inquiry in this chapter because this process is able to encompass a greater complexity of teaching by contextualizing practice in the multiple nuances of our more holistic identities (Carter).

Over the last two decades, research designed to increase understanding of the practice of educators has benefited from an increasing use of narrative and its larger focus on the educators' life stories (Carter; Clandinin and Connelly). Pulkinghorne described narrative inquiry methodology as the extraction of data from a storied account that "combines a succession of incidents into a unified episode...an account that preserves the complexity of human action with its interrelationship of temporal sequence, human motivation, chance happenings, and changing interpersonal and environmental contexts" (6). In the three narratives that follow we each discuss our evolving identities as we moved from undergraduate to graduate studies and our ongoing work in higher education. We explain how our career trajectories are guided by rational and less-than-rational choices, opportunities that made some choices more palatable than others, and demands placed on us by our work settings. We each experience this iterative process in unique ways, but we are all aware of the ways in which others define us are not always in synch with how we would choose to be defined. Furthermore, we are all continuing to acquire the knowledge, the skills, and the temperaments that match our identities—as we perceive them. Our work promotes certain identities, and, at the same time, we seek to modify or transform our work settings so that our contributions and talents are allowed more full and complete expression. We begin with Renée, who has been in higher education the longest, followed by Wendy, who received her degree in 2000, then Sharon, who graduated in 2002.

RENÉE, THE GENERALIST (?) TEACHER EDUCATOR.

I grew up in a southern university town, raised by middle- to lower-middle-class parents whose thoughts differed on the necessity of a college degree for girls. They did agree, however, that I should be encouraged to pursue paths that were important to me, and they attended all of my choir concerts and high school plays, whether I had a solo or one or two lines or served as student director. They, along with my grandmother, taught me that arguing a point is a good way of clarifying one's own thinking—a value that I now try to pass on to my children and both my undergraduate and graduate students.

I became a teacher by virtue of good test-taking skills and no money for college. The State of Florida guaranteed me four years of tuition and books if I would

become a teacher and would teach in public schools for four years. My high school forensics experience and my fascination with the magic that theater creates were my base for majoring in teaching—my English classes were not. Oh, I did well enough in English, but I didn't really like it. Literature was okay, but analysis... why? True/false recall tests? Give me a break. Writing research papers...for whom? What does it matter? But, having English certification would help me get a job and the University of Florida would let me concentrate on speech and theater, with only a few required courses in language, composition, and literature. So, I became an enthusiastic stagehand and an ambivalent English student.

One aspect of my education had a major impact on my view of what teaching was and should be. I attended segregated schools until junior high, when the schools slowly began to integrate African American students into formerly all White institutions. I became confused when people I respected did not want racial integration and talked about genetic inferiority. I became even more confused when both my university English curriculum and my education courses did not help me understand literature from across races, not to mention literature from authors or countries in which English was not the first language. So, I became an underprepared first year teacher in a racially and socioeconomically diverse high school. I was not underprepared in terms of lesson planning or classroom management, but in terms of knowing how to relate to people who did not share my home culture and in terms of knowing how to choose curricular materials that would be varied, interesting, and relevant for my students. I was very fortunate, however, to be teaching in an era in which thematic instruction was the norm and teacher choice regarding curriculum was paramount. I read a lot; I learned a lot. I became an okay teacher of literature; I knew nothing about teaching writing, but I developed a flair for encouraging a wide range of students to participate in successful drama productions and to write and perform their own scripts.

During this time, I also picked up a master's degree in school administration. At the time, it was the only graduate level option in education at the university closest to me. I learned in this administrative course of study that I never, ever wanted to be a high school principal. I also learned that I liked reading organizational theory and educational philosophy and I liked arguing ideas. So, taking a giant risk, I asked for a leave of absence from my high school teaching job and drove across the country to California and a Stanford University doctoral program in curriculum and teacher education, with a minor in psychology. There, I earned an assistantship supervising student teachers in English and assisting with their methodology courses. I became resigned to the fact that those research papers I hated so much in high school were going to become my way of life, from then until now. BUT I was very happy to learn that research meant more than hours in the library. Research meant posing questions that mattered to me and to others,

collecting and analyzing data, and arguing about the insights into those questions that were prompted by the data. Race mattered; teachers and their effectiveness mattered; teaching writing as a key to literacy development mattered. And around all these questions, disagreement among smart and concerned people made me realize that searching for answers was a never-ending quest.

I immersed myself in learning. In my psychology courses, I studied cognitive and social development. In my education courses, I studied curriculum design and evaluation and the relationships among instruction, learning, and individual differences. My assistantship evolved into a research assistantship on a project that would eventually produce and explicate the concept of “pedagogical content knowledge” (Shulman). I studied with wonderful people who taught me how to do research and how to be a mentor to graduate students. I also worked with a cadre of graduate students who taught me how to argue politely and who helped me begin to think more and more deeply about issues of social justice. For my thesis, I studied the ways secondary student teachers could design and implement dramatic activities across the curriculum. As the completion of my degree grew near, I realized that I would not go back to a high school classroom as a full-time teacher.

A doctorate incorporating developmental and social psychology with curriculum design and instruction; a master’s in administration; experience supervising prospective English teachers; and experience teaching high school speech, drama, and English. With these varied credentials I sought and obtained a job at the University of Houston that was best described as generic teacher education. The actual job required me to draw on my background in administration, curriculum development, social justice, evaluation, and teaching and learning, but not psychology and not anything related to English education. The research agenda I first began, however, kept me in touch with the process of learning to teach English in addition to thinking through issues of teacher leadership.

When I moved to the University of Illinois at Urbana–Champaign, I thought I was developing a graduate program in teacher education and continuing professional development. Some days, as I work with a state-wide project to provide support to new teachers, I still think that. But I have become an English teacher educator. When the university implemented an experimental, school-based, secondary teacher education program they needed an instructor. They needed me to teach because of my commitment to linking school-based and university-based teacher education. And so I called my former graduate school colleagues for their course syllabi and began teaching English methods. Today, as I write this, they still need me to teach the methods courses. And I now identify myself as an English educator. I am refreshed and renewed by the enthusiasm of our talented undergraduates and by the commitment and thoughtfulness of our graduate students. I still depend heavily on my English education colleagues here to teach me. They make me read

biographies and literature I would not read on my own; they share resources and syllabi. And I share resources with them. Indeed, my current research project, a longitudinal study of graduates from our program is becoming a resource for continuously improving our curriculum (Clift, Mora, and Brady).

While my graduate studies did not prepare me in terms of content for my work in English education, they did prepare me to be resourceful and they connected me with people who can and do help me learn and act. Some days I wonder if, and when, I will be labeled a fraud. On other days, I know I belong in several worlds and that they synthesize to help me become a better and better teacher of doctoral students, some of whom will become English educators.

WENDY'S QUEST FOR SOMETHING MORE

As a White, upper-middle-class female who attended an elementary and middle school within walking distance of my safe neighborhood, I took many things for granted about school and learning, and about all that I was provided to help me succeed in school. I didn't have to think much about learning specific skills such as reading, writing, or listening that were necessary for my having a successful start in school. I looked and sounded like other students who were successful in this school culture. I never worried about the stability of my home life or my family's economic future.

An event in my sophomore year of high school began to change my "taken-for-granted" approach to school. I read three works by John Steinbeck and wrote a report on common themes, issues, and questions that emerged across the texts. This assignment pushed me to think more about analyzing an author's work while creating new connections between my own understandings and the commonalities among the three pieces. I realize now that this was, in some ways, my first experience in behaving like a scholar. I saw that I loved to explore my own questions and ideas independently, and throughout my years of schooling, the English/language arts classroom was one of the few that ever facilitated this kind of learning. I learned how to find my own voice and to begin the process of valuing it as a critical dimension of my own educational becoming. Yet coupled with these positive experiences was a nagging feeling that, up to this point, I didn't have to strive too hard to meet others' demands of me. I often privately wondered if I was able to "get by" because I was relatively likeable and worked to be pleasing to the teacher. Such fears followed me throughout my experiences in school and continue to be difficult to share.

I enrolled as a chemistry major at the University of Illinois in order to pursue a medical degree and become a psychiatrist. To my dismay, many required courses served to "weed out" those who were mediocre or unsuccessful. I found that I was no longer one of those students who easily got the As and Bs in math and science

classes, but I did continue to excel in my English, literature, and writing classes. Thus I eventually pursued an undergraduate degree in the teaching of English at the secondary level with a minor in women's studies. Even though I failed to complete my initial degree plan, I still felt enough a part of the system that I didn't see myself as a failing student nor as a student who could not finish college.

As I learned to become a teacher, it became clear to me that the power of the individual teacher is measured by her ability to negotiate a balance between what is critical for her students to learn and know and what is viable within the system. I often felt as a teacher, and now as a teacher educator, that I periodically must prioritize my goals for my students, the class, and myself in the immediate sense of time and the given context or I run the risk of feeling an overwhelming sense of despair, hurriedness, and leaving too many aspects of my work unfinished. That I feel I am not doing all that I can to enact my beliefs about how to instill passion for learning and teaching is a quality that I am working to embrace as the motivation to continue to be educator in today's political climate. The professors and graduate students who most profoundly motivated me taught me how to use language and ideas to further understand others' experiences as well as my own and to think of my role as an agent of change. It was through connecting to others in my classes, their ideas, and the literature that my vision of community became clearer, multilayered, and multicultural.

Like many beginning teachers, I was hired late in August, just a few days before the school year began. As I took a hard look at what I was supposed to teach to three "average-tracked" sophomore English classes, one junior-senior "remedial" English class, and an elective speech class, it became profoundly clear to me that I was a long way from knowing how to choose appropriate materials for the assigned age groups, let alone having the ability to structure my teaching in terms of teaching strategies, essential questions, and, most importantly, student learning. At the time, however, I didn't think much about how I would know what students were learning. I simply knew that the only way I could hope to become the English teacher I had envisioned as my ideal was to get to know others in my department, strengthen links with my professional organization, and search for and read as much as I could about the teaching of English.

Beginning in my second year of teaching, I was asked by several members of my department to become a member of the School Improvement Team. At the same time, I decided I needed more "intellectual stimulation" to further support and enhance my teaching. I took advantage of the State of Illinois' offer of scholarships for women and people of color interested in becoming administrators and entered the University of Illinois' master's program. These two experiences greatly broadened my understanding of school politics, policies, and organizational leadership. The master's program offered some degree of flexibility and a terrific

opportunity to focus on school reform and the role of teacher leadership. I wanted to become part of a community to think more about how to instill a sense of passion, intellectual curiosity, and joy within the teaching community and serving on the School Improvement Team seemed to offer that community. But, as a teacher in this school community, I felt isolated and at times a little bored by the routines, and I could not seem to make an impact on changing policy or practice in the ways that I knew would be necessary to enact the theories to which I was now deeply committed.

I realized that I needed to create a new direction for my career and personal life. So, even though the thought of becoming “a researcher” was very foreign to me as a person who never identified with the profile of “scholar,” I decided to take a tremendous leap of faith and pursue a doctorate in curriculum and instruction at the University of Illinois. I quickly came to understand that I was entering a culture that was different from my master’s program. In the doctoral program, the curriculum and instruction was much more co-constructed by the professors and the students. Individual interests were proudly worn on each person’s sleeve and these interests gave voice to one’s identity in the academy.

Because of my interest in administration, leadership, and school reform, I studied the relationships among teacher leadership and school improvement. During my doctoral program, I also held several graduate assistantships that added to my journey as a teacher educator. I taught several generalist undergraduate education courses, supervised student teachers, helped to manage external reviews for a journal, and assisted with the state review of our certification programs. These experiences helped me connect my own experiences as a teacher with my affinity for asking questions and investigating the interaction of multiple variables. They also allowed me to continue discovering what motivates people, including myself, to engage in meaningful learning and teaching.

When I completed my degree, I began working at Eastern Michigan University. I became very involved in working within our teacher education program with other faculty members as we focused on better addressing K–12 learning in our teacher preparation program. Each semester, I work to create a learning community that inspires and stimulates teacher candidates to find their voice and understand their own development as teachers of all students as intricately linked to their own becoming as human beings. I also have worked closely with in-service teachers to further link their own pedagogical decision making with student learning and achievement. As an outgrowth of this work and because of the evidence of the impact diversity has on student achievement, I have pursued addressing my own cultural competency. Now as a teacher educator, my work with beginning and practicing teachers reflects this strong commitment to diversity, student learning, and school reform.

SHARON AND HER THREE CAREERS

My position as a teacher educator at Marquette University, helping prepare future English teachers, is my third career. In the early stages of my career development, I would never have anticipated finding myself here. My early educational experiences were fairly uneventful. Growing up in a small midwestern community, with White, middle-class, college-educated parents, I always enjoyed school and did well. I consistently leaned towards English and social science classes and becoming an English teacher seemed like a very reasonable path. Studying English literature in college, however, never felt satisfying or particularly relevant to real life issues. While I could do the work and at times enjoyed it, this academic pursuit seemed more like a game and clearly did not engage me. I found myself regularly asking, "So what?" Exploring the "So what?" factor began to drive me.

Classes with a linguistic emphasis engaged me more; I was drawn to the study of language itself, with all its intricacies, its dependable patterns, its living variability and evolution, and even more, its powerful role in both forming and negotiating the social relations of life. While I frequently left my English literature classes feeling frustrated, I left these language classes with a sense that they promised significant answers to my "So what?" question. I experienced a similar positive response to my education courses as I learned more of the art and science of teaching. I loved grappling with concepts to discover the best arrangement and the most compelling presentation to engage students in gaining understanding, constructing personal meaning, and developing reading and writing skills. I loved teaching and, even more, I loved that it offered a significantly meaningful career. My "So what?" question seemed to be satisfied.

And so, my first career was teaching middle school language arts in public schools in a small, racially homogenous midwestern town. For the next eleven years, I taught seventh and eighth graders and thoroughly enjoyed the experience. One conversation with my middle school principal during that time stands out now. We were discussing how much I enjoyed teaching and he commented that I would be good as a teacher educator. It was just a shame, he said, that being allowed to do that work required "jumping through so many educational hoops." I remember agreeing, thinking that I would enjoy the work of teacher education but the thought of pursuing a PhD was a remote, unlikely impossibility. Whatever he meant by the comment, I was convinced that I could never do the work required to earn that degree.

My second career began when my second child was born and I chose to stay home to raise my son and daughter. That eight-year hiatus from full-time teaching did not stop all my teaching involvement, however, as I did substitute work in my children's school and held a variety of volunteer and part-time positions, where over time, I experienced teaching all ages from preschool to adult. In that process,

I discovered that neither the content nor the age of student was as significant as the teaching/learning process itself. While I loved teaching language arts to young adults, I realized that my greatest pleasure came simply from teaching—whatever the content, whatever the age of the student.

In the context of staying at home with my children the “So what?” question emerged again with Marcus, an African American boy in my son’s kindergarten class. Marcus, and soon his younger sister, Mikela, frequently came to our house to play, making a positive connection with me that continued when I was the substitute teacher in their classrooms. I enjoyed getting to know the children and their mother and, as a teacher, I appreciated their eagerness to learn and her determination to support their educational experience. Yet, over the next few years, I was frustrated and confused as I watched both Marcus and Mikela fall further and further behind academically. Marcus, in particular, struggled, and I was nagged by the question of what caused this struggle. Eventually, I wondered if Marcus and Mikela’s home language, African American Vernacular English and not the Standard English expected in classrooms, was interfering with their academic success. Puzzling over the experiences of these two children brought me back to graduate school and the pursuit of my PhD. I wanted to gain the knowledge needed to help end the achievement gap I had watched develop over the years, and so I focused on the specific language issues of African American students and the impact of those issues on literacy learning. This area of study held enormous “So what?” implications and I was eager to explore the topic and, in doing so, began preparing for my third career as a teacher educator.

Yet, stepping back into college life was not an easy task. I still felt the pull of traditional gender expectations that looked askance at pursuing such full-time work while my children were still at home. The voice of my principal, implying that perhaps I was not cut out for the academic requirements of a PhD, still echoed in my head. And finally, I hadn’t done any serious academic work for over twenty years. I clearly remember the first course, looking at the readings and assignments and thinking, “I can’t possibly do this.” Fortunately, my instructor encouraged me to stay and later provided excellent mentoring and support. My classmates and I formed a study cohort that evolved into a wonderful social cohort with me as the adopted “mother-in-residence” to my younger peers. I slowly discovered that the world of academia, while requiring a lot of work, suited me well, and my family actually grew stronger as my own strength developed.

As my study and research progressed, my understanding of the issue of racial academic disparity was also transformed. I realized that my own and other White teachers’ unexamined racism, as well as school institutions of curriculum, pedagogy, and policy that are built on White norms, required as much, if not more, attention than any concerns related to the language spoken by students of

color. My dissertation eventually focused on well-intended White English teachers' unexamined racism that produces lowered expectation and uncritically supports institutional policies that marginalize and disadvantage students of color. The "So what?" question was enormously pertinent and preparing for my third career was supplying some meaningful answers.

The School of Education at Marquette University with its emphasis on social justice, particularly in urban contexts, seemed to be a good match for me. The job included one English education class each year with the rest of the teaching load divided between more generalist undergraduate policy and introductory courses and graduate-level teacher research courses. In all the courses, the embedded emphasis on social justice is prominent. I am fortunate to work in the company and encouragement of colleagues who love teaching and share my passion for the "So what?" answer that teaching for social justice affords. And once each year, I teach my English education class, the class that brings together all my interests and talents, the class I enjoy the most. Every once in a while, I step back in surprise to see myself here, a professor of education. I would not have predicted this when the path started so many years ago, but I'm glad to be here.

SO WHAT? A COMBINED DISCUSSION

In 1977 Shuman encouraged pursuit of doctoral degrees in English education with an eye towards a broader variety of jobs beyond college training of preservice teachers. He recommended that doctoral programs provide flexible, individualized programs tailored to the interests of students in order to enhance those varied job possibilities. Our narratives would support such flexibility and would go well beyond the recommendations of the Conference on English Education's Commission on Graduate Programs in English Education, which defined program constituencies as, "[s]tudents who are increasing their knowledge of literature, language, and learning for their roles as English teachers; and students who are developing, directing, and evaluating literature, language and learning programs for their future responsibilities as English teacher educators" (246). They went on to specify content including knowledge of the discipline and interactions with related programs in "composition, literature, drama, speech, linguistics, psychology, sociology, anthropology, philosophy, bilingual, and English as a Second Language" (248).

This focus on content with no corresponding, specific attention to the nature of the students who populate P-16 classrooms, the political environments in which some thrive and others do not, and the troubling issues of wide variations in equity and access inadvertently implies a static program content, one which may be immune to the influence of the diverse constituents who are drawn to the field by

intent or by other forces. Now, in 2008, we wonder how that panel would respond to our narratives and our career paths. Would they still maintain the focus on content as primary and seemingly immutable? We would hope not.

While we are different people who arrived at our varied professional experiences through diverse paths, our combined narratives reveal some interesting commonalities that might speak to an emerging definition of what comprises an array of possibilities for graduate programs in English education and the role the constituents play in that process. Our learning began with privileged environments that supported learning, although the nature of our privileges is quite different. We all took some financial and emotional risk in working toward the doctorate. Each of us came to our graduate programs through less-than-direct routes. Thus, we recognize that many of the attributes and qualities that we cultivated as learners are results of far more than coursework—especially coursework in literature. For Renée, the high school English classroom was a vehicle to support a love of theater, but her graduate work was an eclectic blend of experiences and learning that coalesced around a clear identity as a scholar engaged in critical inquiry. Wendy turned from an initial dream of psychiatry to English education, only to find her graduate interests piqued more by school reform and teacher leadership than literary devices. Sharon's English classroom was a forum for linguistics, and her entry into doctoral work focused on the relationship of language and race to achievement issues.

Because we all have been able to create our own doctoral programs, our programs vary widely from what might be considered as emphases in English education. They supported our risk taking and heightened our tolerance for ambiguity while, at the same time, impelling us to seek answers. Those answers did not always lead to English education, as a career choice. They enabled us to interact with many educators within and outside of English education, thus enabling us to create a resource base that continuously expands as our need to learn more increases. We are clearly products of praxis—the recursive interplay of old and new, of theories and experiences interwoven in mutually shaping ways. That process of becoming continues in the doing of our professional work. Woven throughout each of our narratives and the reflection that supported the formative process is a consistent drive for significance—for the formation of questions that matter, for reform of schools and empowering of teachers, for antiracist work that will improve the learning experiences of children of color and for curriculum and teaching that can create a more equitable access to higher education. Our professional practices are shaped by that drive for significant work and an activist stance towards the field. Our experiences in learning and work further shape our understanding of the nature of that significance and activism.

In looking back at these commonalities, we would argue against any definitions of programs in English education that would deny the individuals who enter such

programs an opportunity to explore a wide range of ideas and to interact with people from a variety of backgrounds, motivations, and desires. We would also caution against programs that marginalize people who are not focused on research-oriented careers in graduate-degree-granting institutions. For us, the educational experience, particularly at the doctoral level is not about prescription. Rather, it is about following passions and gifts, tracking down answers to questions that matter, and being willing to wrestle with issues and content in order to find a semblance of meaning from which to act. And, finally, it is about learning to impose meaning on events and experiences in the midst of uncertainty, with the courage to revise that meaning on an ongoing basis.

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**Making the Transition
from Classroom Teacher
to Educational Researcher**



CHAPTER 3

Being and Becoming an English Teacher Educator

CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES IN AN ENGLISH EDUCATION DOCTORAL PROGRAM



Richard Beach, Amanda Haertling Thein

This book documents many of the challenges facing English education doctoral programs in preparing a new generation of English educators. While addressing these challenges certainly requires programmatic and curriculum changes, in this chapter, we argue that it is also important to frame these challenges in terms of the identity socialization of doctoral students—the need to help doctoral students develop the various practices and roles associated with being and becoming an English educator.

In entering a new cultural world of a doctoral English education program, students are constructing new identities through academic socialization that help them define the practices, discourses, dispositions, skills, norms, knowledge, and attitudes associated with being a member of a particular program as a community of practice (Wenger). Students undergo anticipatory socialization, prior to entering a program, related to decisions that seeking admission to and being in a program serves to address their needs and interests associated with being a future doctoral student (Tierney and Rhoads; Gardner, Hayes, and Neider). For example, while many teachers acquire a master's degree in education that may focus on aspects of theory and practice, determining that one wants to pursue a doctoral degree involves considering whether one is predisposed to focusing on research. Once the student is in a doctoral program and takes up the identities associated with being a student in that program, they must then determine whether they are a good “fit” with the program—whether being a doctoral student is consistent with their beliefs, values, and long-range career goals.

This academic socialization requires a lot of nurturing and mentoring related to providing students with practices, discourses, dispositions, skills, norms, knowledge, and attitudes constituting what it means to be a doctoral student.

Without this nurturing and mentoring, students may struggle. In a study of what she described as the “hidden crisis” in doctoral programs, Lovitts argued that about half of all doctoral students drop out or do not complete the degree not only due to their academic ability, but also due to the lack of effective socialization in their programs. She found that students often lack knowledge of the expectations for succeeding in their programs—information about the informal ground rules (Lovitts 50–81). Similarly, another study found students had a lack of clear guidance about the purposes, value, requirements, and different phases of their program (Golde and Dore 18, 44).

Lovitts also found that part-time students who make up a large percentage of the doctoral student population, often did not have the opportunity for informal interaction with faculty or peers through collaborative research projects, everyday interactions in the hallway, and conference participation/presentations essential for being and becoming an English educator (83).

This lack of effective academic socialization was also evident in a large-scale survey study of doctoral students’ perceptions of their programs in eleven fields (not including education) in twenty-seven universities (Golde and Dore 44). (See also Gaff for a summary of research on doctoral students’ socialization.) Because most of these programs were housed in Division 1 research institutions, many of these students were being socialized to assume the same roles as their advisers—to become researchers. However, the reality of the job market is that most of the tenure-track faculty positions are not in Division 1 schools, but in schools that focus on teaching. The doctoral students in the survey study did not believe they were being prepared to assume teaching roles—creating a mismatch between socialization in the program and the actual roles students assume in their work. Another study of 32,600 students enrolled in programs in 399 universities found that these programs provided students with little preparation for and supervision of TA work; only about half of the students reports training in ethics, professional responsibilities, public speaking, grant writing, and working in teams (National Association of Graduate and Professional Students).

Students also report that they are often perceived or positioned in their programs relative to their status or value in often contradictory ways—as both low-level workers and colleagues or as both teachers/researchers as academic “others” (Taylor and Holberg 608). This positioning reflects the limitations of their socialization experience.

Effective academic socialization also involves more than simply acquiring disciplinary knowledge. It also involves acquiring certain dispositions or habits of mind, identified in one study as a curiosity for new knowledge, a sense of independence and self-direction, and humility (Gardner, Hayes, and Neider, 293). This study found that discussion of these dispositions and habits of mind were more

likely to occur later in a program than in the beginning of a program, which may be due to the fact that beginning students are focused more on acquiring knowledge and skills as opposed to reflecting on their larger identity construction constituted by these dispositions and habits of mind.

THE IMPORTANCE OF IDENTITY SOCIALIZATION AS ENGLISH EDUCATORS

All of this points to the importance of identity socialization in English education doctoral programs—helping students define their identities as English educators. Because graduate students entering English education programs are typically middle or high school English teachers, defining themselves as English educators requires them to adopt practices constituting new identities as teacher educators, researchers, scholars, student teaching supervisors, mentors, and participants in professional organizations.

This process of redefining or revising one's identity involves moving from the status of a peripheral outsider to the status of an insider through acquiring practices and beliefs valued in a community (Wenger 167). However, as we argue, all of this is complicated by the fact that there are multiple, often competing communities or social worlds involved in English education doctoral programs—graduate school rules and expectations, advisers/advising committees, research or disciplinary communities, teaching, the job market, the K–12 school world (in which students are often full-time teachers), and family (Lundell and Beach). Succeeding within each of these worlds often requires adopting quite different identities and practices consistent with the larger objects or purposes driving these different worlds. For example, succeeding in the world of research does not necessarily mean that one is successful as a K–12 classroom teacher, and vice versa.

Each of these different worlds places its own demands on students, requiring them to adopt quite distinct identities consistent with the larger purposes of contradictory “activity systems” (Engeström chapter 4). For example, the graduate school at the University of Minnesota could be defined as a world or system that is driven by the object of encouraging students to complete degree programs in a timely manner based on rules and policies having to do with taking enough courses to remain “active.” If they work in a full-time teaching job, as do many English education doctoral students, they may have difficulty completing their coursework in a timely manner consistent with the rules of the graduate school. Also, unlike full-time students, part-time students miss out on the valuable experience of being a full-time member of a community (Lovitts 83). Moreover, when teachers are operating in K–12 teaching worlds, they foreground their identity and practices as a classroom teacher. However, as doctoral students, they also know that they are

operating in the world of the graduate school, requiring them to foreground the different demands of that world. They must then also redefine their relationships with their K-12 teacher colleagues, particularly when they begin to adopt critical stances that challenge those colleagues.

Rather than frame this repositioning as a narrative of advancing upward and onward into a more privileged position, we perceive this repositioning as learning to negotiate different allegiances to different worlds that value *different* practices. We argue that being successful in a doctoral program involves the ability to negotiate the competing demands of these different worlds, while at the same time, maintaining as well as possible one's different identities within each of these worlds. This suggests that doctoral programs need to acknowledge and support this identity negotiation as part of students' socialization into the profession.

Supporting students in their identity negotiation requires effective mentoring, something that goes beyond simply advising students. Mentoring involves providing ongoing, continuous support and advice, particularly through engaging students in collaborative projects where mentors and mentees share experiences. Unfortunately, students are frequently disappointed with the quality of their mentoring and support (Nettles and Millet 99). One study of nine thousand doctoral students found that, while they were assigned advisers, 30 percent of students reported receiving no mentoring (Nettles and Millett 98). In some cases, advisers do not take their mentoring role seriously or simply do not devote the time necessary to be an effective mentor (Mullen 2005; 2007). Also, effective mentors may not receive institutional support or rewards for their efforts.

To assist students in their identity negotiation, effective mentors need to be willing to experiment with a range of different mentoring approaches, tailoring those approaches to meet their students' needs (Mullen 304–305 2005). In some cases, rather than adopting an expert/novice perspective on mentees, they could adopt a co-mentoring role in which they work collaboratively on an equal basis with their mentee. Or, they could support the development of mentee cohorts in which students work together on research projects or activities; advisers could then model practices and dispositions within these projects or activities. And, they could employ online or e-mentoring to continually interact with advisees, particularly those who are may not be full-time students on campus (Mullen 304–305 2005).

Effective mentoring also involves establishing a sense of mutual trust, honesty, and respect based on a set of shared goals and interests (Johnson 27; Mullen 312 2007). Both mentor and mentee need to perceive each other as partners in a joint, collaborative venture designed to help the mentee achieve success in their program.

Creating working relationships with mentees may be challenged by differences in mentor and mentee's race, class, or gender. One study found that students from

higher social classes were more likely to have positive working relationships with mentors (Nettles and Millett 221). Given the need to support a more diverse population of doctoral students, this suggests the need for mentors to recognize how their race, class, or gender attitudes may influence establishing working relationships with their mentees by reflecting on their own identity construction around race, class, or gender differences.

And, effective mentoring involves setting clear expectations regarding students' completing dissertation in a timely manner and publishing their work, publications that are important in seeking employment. Analysis of survey data of from the Graduate Education Survey of 13,552 students enrolled in humanities and social science programs from 1982 to 1997 found that programs and advisers who communicated these expectations to students had a significant effect on attrition rate and completion (Ehrenberg and Jakubson et al. 145).

Mentors therefore need to both nurture and support advisees and to also push them to complete their degree if they want their advisees to finish and obtain employment. The assumption that spending more time on their dissertations will result in a higher quality dissertation and therefore better employment opportunities is not supported by survey data (Ehrenberg and Jakubson et al. 145).

In this chapter, Richard Beach describes the different identities he has assumed as a veteran English educator of some thirty years at the University of Minnesota. Amanda Haertling Thein also describes her experiences as a graduate student and advisee of Richard Beach. In his role as a mentor, Richard is doing more than simply helping a student complete his/her degree. He is also helping students perceive themselves as future faculty members in a range of different kinds of academic settings. In describing the mentor/mentee relationship between Richard and Amanda, the purpose is not to portray Richard as the ideal role model for Amanda, but rather to examine the ways in which one English educator served to guide and mentor one graduate student, including dealing with the challenges of being and becoming an English educator during a doctoral program.

THE MENTOR'S AND STUDENT'S RESEARCH WORLD

One of the distinguishing features of a doctoral program is its emphasis on research and on becoming a researcher. In the Golde and Dore survey, while about three-fourths of doctoral students were interested in conducting research, only 65.1 percent reported that they were effectively prepared by their program to do so (14). Less than half (43 percent) indicated that they were prepared by their program to publish research, and about half (44.7 percent) reported having the opportunity to be engaged substantive roles in research projects (Golde and Dore 13).

The literacy education doctoral program at the University of Minnesota believes strongly in the need to provide its doctoral students with doctoral research seminars in literacy education. All students in our literacy education doctoral program are therefore required to take three doctoral research seminar courses during their program. At least one research seminar is offered each semester. Richard has taught seminars in the areas of research on literary response, and, in fall, 2004 and 2006, a course on Identity Construction through Literacy Practices, a course he has also taught at the UCLA Graduate Department of Education. This course focused on theory and research related to different ways in which identities are constituted through social practices and tools such as language, narratives, genres, and discourses. Students read about perspectives of cultural model theories (Holland and Lachicotte et al.), narrative theory (Rhymes), critical discourse analysis (Gee; Rogers), critical race theory (Bonilla-Silva), sociological concepts of cultural capital and class (Bettie), cultural/media studies (Kelly); sociocultural/activity theory notions of literacy (Engeström); and literary response (Schweickart and Flynn).

This course also served as a forum for students to explore issues of their own identity development in the doctoral program in class discussions and on a WebCT discussion board (students are identified by pseudonyms). One of the issues that emerged in the discussion was the challenge of repositioning oneself in relationships with peers, teacher colleagues, and family. One student, Lorrie, expressed her concerns with issues of exclusivity associated with becoming a doctoral student:

[I have] resistance in assuming an identity and discourse stance that positions me as a person with understanding and capabilities that others—without agency in that social context—do not have. Given the power of that kind of agency to create or deny opportunities to people, it's a dilemma for me....I struggle with the idea of membership in this social world—I have not yet figured out how to do this while continuing to shape my identity as a teacher who does not make assumptions about others' capabilities and capacity to learn based their abilities to enter into and exhibit mastery of the dominant Discourse and associated prescribed practices.... How do I earn agency as such is defined within the cultural norms of an institution of higher learning, and could that position me in a way that does not increase or enhance my agency (it does with some) in working with other practicing and preservice teachers or with teaching students in the K–12 system?

Lorrie is addressing the challenge of adopting the identity of a doctoral student while at the same time maintaining her ties to her K–12 colleagues. She is particularly concerned about this issue because, as someone who has a strong

interest in working with teachers and as a student-teaching supervisor working with cooperating teachers in the field, she is aware she will be perceived by her colleagues in a different light.

Her concerns led to further discussions on the WebCT discussion board about ways to effectively negotiate one's role across these different worlds. Martha noted the difficulty of being perceived as a doctoral student by people outside of academia:

When I first started my PhD program, I told everyone what I was doing. (I was very proud.) But now, I hardly tell anyone (though I'm still proud), and I almost dread it when other people (all those people I had told) bring it up. I think it goes back to the identity-thing—to the way others perceive us. I love talking academics with my peers here at the U—especially with classmates who have read the same material I am reading. But when people outside of academia find out that I am working toward my PhD, I generally become uncomfortable—so much so that I try to avoid telling people that I'm working on this degree.

Another student, Michelle, described the difficulty of disclosing her status as a doctoral student:

I echo your sentiments about the conflict you are experiencing about sharing your current identity as a graduate student. (To share or not to share)...The fact that I'm struggling to find commonalities in topic conversations with friends outside of the U is a real burden and personal dilemma I have experienced in the past year.

Another student, Ellie, expressed concerns about the ways in which acquiring new languages and discourses reflect differences in status even within the graduate school:

A lot of people going into academia, it seems, think "talking the talk" is one of the biggest perks of entry. Some PhD students (from another department) in a class I took here last year seemed to love nothing more than speaking academic-ese and adopting the scholarly identity. Those that didn't know how to speak or act were soon silenced—but I'll bet as second-year students, they have taken up the very same Discourse that kept them anonymous as first-year students. Breaking that pattern would seem quite difficult.

These students' concerns about how they are perceived by peers and friends highlight the ways in which identity construction is linked to allegiances to

certain worlds. In their graduate school world of other students and faculty, these students experience a new-found sense of agency and status, particularly through their ability to employ new social languages and discourses. At the same time, they also experience frustration with the process of learning these new discourses, as well as a sense of alienation from friends and family who may not understand or appreciate their work and new identities.

In the seminar, through discussing ways of negotiating competing allegiances to different worlds, the students were recognizing that such negotiations are an inevitable part of being in a doctoral program and of adopting new identities.

AMANDA'S REFLECTIONS ON HER IDENTITY NEGOTIATIONS

In the following reflections, Amanda notes how becoming a doctoral student involved assuming new and different relationships with her peers and family members.

When I first began considering leaving my position as a high school English teacher to become a full-time doctoral student, I made an appointment to talk about my concerns with my adviser from my master's program. One question he asked me was whether I had a significant relationship. In fact I had just become involved in a relationship with the man who would later become my husband. Nick told me that completing a doctoral program is much like becoming immersed in a new relationship—and he suggested that prior relationships often suffer or even fail as one becomes immersed in this process—he cited his own failed engagement as an example. At the time I didn't believe that doctoral work could have such a profound effect on my relationships with others and my social worlds, but during the course of my program, it became clear to me that it could.

I was fortunate that my relationship with my husband weathered my doctoral program with little trouble. I believe that one factor in the success of this transition was the fact that this relationship was new when I began my doctoral program. Mike knew from the day he met me that I intended to begin a doctoral program that would take me at least four years to complete. He knew that my goal was to become a professor of English education. In many ways Mike did not know me when I was fully immersed in my identity as a high school English teacher. Additionally, we moved across the country for me to attend graduate school. Beginning a doctoral program in entirely new surroundings and away from many of our old social worlds in some ways protected me from the dissonance of my identity shifting in my old surroundings.

Other relationships were sometimes more difficult to negotiate. As a high school English teacher I worked in a department of sixteen wonderful teachers who were my friends at work and sometimes beyond. While I intended to keep in touch with these people, I found it very difficult to do so and have had little contact with them. I keep in touch primarily with one close friend, who also left the school and moved across the country. Despite the fact that my family still lives in the community where I taught, I have never been back to visit the school. Perhaps surprisingly, this is the social world that seemed to fit the least well with my new social world as a doctoral student. Part of me felt a sense of guilt in having left teaching behind for a career as an academic. This feeling was especially pronounced when I first began my doctoral program in education. While my colleagues were very supportive of my decision to go back to school, I also got the sense that some folks thought I saw myself as too good for the “real” work of teaching. I found myself not enjoying the extra hours I could sleep in the morning with my new schedule, but rather feeling very guilty that I was not already “in the trenches,” as I would have been as a teacher. Part of this guilt was tied to a sense that graduate work was in many ways luxuriously self-focused in contrast to teaching high school. Part of this was also tied to a sense that I was no longer a productive adult, but rather that I had somehow regressed into being a college student again. The shift between the concrete daily schedule of a teacher and the relative autonomy of a doctoral student left me feeling a bit lost at first.

Studying the discipline of English education in particular was surprising difficult in some of my relationships with my friends. My closest friend and I were both English majors in our undergraduate programs. While I went on to become a teacher, she became a lawyer. While we often shared books with one another, I found it very difficult to talk about things like literary analysis with her. In college we both learned to study literature through a New Criticism theoretical stance. However, as a doctoral student my work became embedded in sociocultural theories of response to literature—a very different way of thinking about literature. I found myself so personally involved in my research that I did not want to talk about it with her. My world as a college English major and literature connoisseur conflicted with my world as a graduate student in English education. Instead of talking about my work with my friend I began to talk with her primarily about the day-to-day stresses of being a doctoral student.

It also took me several years to learn how to talk about my work with my mother, a veteran elementary school teacher. My mother has a master’s degree in education and is truly a master teacher. A highly respected

teacher in her school and her district, she is an educational leader in the community. While my mother has never been anything but supportive of my choices, I wondered for several years how she could possibly take my research into English education seriously given that she was obviously more expert than I was in the day-to-day practice of teaching. My mother is involved in different discourses of education than I am. She knows a great deal about how teaching strategies actually work in the classroom. She struggles daily with the reality of the standards movement and the culture of No Child Left Behind. She constantly negotiates issues of race and social class in her classroom and in communications with parents and community members. When I was a high school teacher my mother was a great sounding board and could give me advice on nearly any issue that I was dealing with. However, as a doctoral student I became involved in a discourse of education that was far more oriented toward theory and progressive classroom practices, rather than the realities of classroom life as many teachers perceive them. When I initially began talking to my mother about my research into sociocultural aspects of teaching, learning, and literacy I had trouble explaining how this work would have real worth to practicing teachers. Despite the fact that my mother and I were working in related fields, I basically avoided talking with her about work for several years.

As my program has drawn to a close I've become much more adept at negotiating across academic discourses of education and practical discourses of education and I'm able to clearly explain why this research is important to the everyday practice of teaching. I now enjoy sharing my writing and my ideas with my mother and find that our discussions are mutually beneficial.

Over time, Amanda learned to negotiate the shifts in her relationships with others with allegiances to different worlds. For example, as she acquired new theories of literacy learning, she initially avoided talking with her mother as a practicing teacher, but then later developed the ability to share her theoretical perspectives with her mother.

REPOSITIONING IDENTITIES WITH CHANGING WORLDS

What complicates these identity negotiations is the fact that the different worlds themselves are continually changing, leading to changes in one's identities. Older, traditional beliefs and ideas are challenged and then replaced by newer beliefs and ideas (Engeström).

Since Richard began teaching in the late 1960s, the disciplinary world of English education has been continually evolving. He notes the ways in which his own identities and stances shifted as the profession changed since the 1960s.

As a high school English teacher in the late 1960s in Glastonbury, Connecticut, a position I took primarily to escape having to be drafted, a sure ticket to go to Vietnam, I was a strong believer in the need to teach conceptual frameworks consistent with Jerome Bruner's "spiral curriculum" ideas popular in the 1960s. For my master's degree thesis at Trinity College, Hartford, I studied the influence of teaching Northrop Frye's narrative patterns on students' ability to interpret literature. At the time, I believed that students needed to be taught Frye's patterns as a conceptual tool for analyzing texts. I conducted an experiment in which I found that if you teach students to identify types of narrative patterns, they could do so—not a very earth-shattering finding.

Once I began work in the English education doctoral program at the University of Illinois in the early 1970s, I began to adopt the reader-response orientations of my mentors, Alan Purves, James Hoetker, Alan Madsen, and Jerry Walker. I was also inspired by the emerging research on reader response by James Squire, Charles Cooper, Don Gallo, Fehl Shirley, Ben Nelms, and others. I then recognized that my earlier top-down attempts to teach conceptual framework such as narrative patterns failed to consider the variations in students' knowledge of different texts reflecting certain patterns or their bottom-up inductive ability to define their own connections between texts. I therefore became a strong advocate for a transactional literary response approach to teaching literature.

Then, in the 1980s, given my increased interest in composition research, I switched my focus to more of a cognitive-processing perspective related to work on revising and literary response strategies, as well as an empirical approach to studying writers' self-assessing/revision and use of response strategies. While I still subscribed to a transactional theory, I now advocated the need to teach response strategies as a set of distinct cognitive processes.

However, in the 1990s, I adopted a critical literacy, socialcultural perspective on literacy learning that rejected the cognitive-processing model of teaching separate strategies in favor of focusing on creating meaningful, inquiry-based projects and contexts in which students acquire language, genres, discourses, and critical perspectives as tools (Beach and Myers).

With each of these shifts, I assumed a different identity in terms of allegiances to colleagues, peers, or professional organizations, which, in turn, began to perceive me from a different perspective. While I may have

been perceived as a “cognitive-processing” person in the 1980s, I may have then been perceived as a “critical literacy” person in the 1990s, requiring an ongoing renegotiation of my professional relationships with others.

Similarly, doctoral students are also “persons in history” (Holland and Lave), experiencing changes in theories and approaches to teaching English. As new paradigms emerge to challenge old paradigms, students align themselves with these emerging paradigms, as when students declare themselves as a “critical-literacy,” “post-process,” or “integrated reading” advocates, is itself a repositioning of identities and professional allegiances in an evolving discourse.

And, as they move from the school worlds to the worlds of their program, they may experience tensions between the prevailing theories of literacy learning between their schools and their program, as well as tensions within their schools and program, tensions that serve to challenge their status quo identities and relationships with others. If they are full-time classroom teachers, they may start to take up perspectives that challenge status-quo practices of literacy learning operating in their schools. In some cases, this leads to tensions with colleagues who now perceive their colleague/doctoral student as assuming a different identity inconsistent with the school culture.

TRANSLATING/SYNTHESIZING THEORY

One of the primary roles of English educators is that of a translator or synthesizer of theories from other fields—literary theory, learning theory, anthropology, sociology, cultural studies, etc.—for use in English education contexts. Translating often complex, complicated theories from other fields into a language that can be readily understood by K–12 teachers is often a challenge for Richard’s doctoral students.

In the identity construction research seminar, students were reading texts based on anthropological, sociological, literary theory, and cultural studies perspectives. They noted that they often had difficulty understanding some of the arcane academic language in these texts. In a WebCT posting, one student described the challenge of understanding the abstract language of anthropological theory used in the primary text in the course, perceiving it as divorced from reality:

I find the text to be very thick. The concepts of class, critical discourse analysis, positional/figurative/positional/relational identities, etc. are difficult enough to wrap my brain around without the authors using their purposely-lofty language to discuss it. I find it ironic that the authors use this “academic” language to position themselves as knowledgeable and credible in the field while discussing the deliberate use of language for social

positioning...it seems that academicians get sucked into the higher ed culture and are no longer able to write like real people. It seems to me that if you have a message worth writing a book about, why not write about it in a way that a wider audience can appreciate it?

It's just that in this journey of being a PhD student at the illustrious University of Minnesota, I have felt the vacuum of that culture pulling me in. Luckily most professors that I have encountered here at the U relate to others (students and educators in the field) as real people. I think it would be useful if authors like [the text authors] would write with more passion and less "posing." I appreciate Dr. Beach's efforts to make this text more accessible for folks like me.

This student was initially struggling with what she perceived to be inaccessible academic language. Eventually she will need to be able to interpret such language so that, as Richard was doing in the course, she can translate that language for her own students. Acquiring the use of new languages, discourses, and disciplinary stances comes through practice, something that the seminar fostered through exchanging dialogue-journal entries and WebCT postings. In reflecting on these exchanges, one student noted that in having to summarize the readings and apply the readings to his own research, he was actively engaged in learning to be a translator/synthesizer: "the act/process of writing did a lot of work in shaping, documenting, and 'canonizing' my identities." Another student, a local college professor, noted that while she needed to use her writing to be perceived as a graduate student/professor, she was negotiating with adopting different identities in different contexts.

ADOPTING ALTERNATIVE IDENTITIES

Effective English educators also need to learn how to move seamlessly between quite different worlds, particularly the world of the university and the world of K–12 education. Learning to move between these different worlds involves learning to highlight that identity that is most valued in a particular world. So, when Richard is working in school contexts, he assumes more of his former K–12 teacher identity and when he's working in the university, he assumes more of his professor identity.

In the seminar, students discussed the ways in which their identities shifted across different worlds, including worlds outside of education. These shifts were particularly apparent for one of the assignments related to how identities are mediated through the use of media texts. In describing her role as a popular culture fan in a WebCT posting, one student noted:

[W]hen we had to talk about our “fandom,” there were some things that I wasn’t willing to admit I watch/listen to because I felt they weren’t compatible with my college professor/graduate student identity. At the same time, we were invited to “confess” in a way, so I had to find something that was somewhat out of the college professor/graduate student mainstream identity. Then when we talked about it in class, people almost always said, “Well, this is out of character for me, but I really enjoy...” Like maybe we have a preferred public identity, but we also are aware that this is a construction that isn’t consistent with all of the rest of our lives.

The seminar therefore served as a site for students to publicly explore new alternative versions of themselves that may differ from the voices they adopt in writing more impersonal research reports. Through their exchanges, they were practicing ways of adopting different identities valued in a range of different contexts, practice that is essential to learning to navigate between different worlds.

“DEEP PARTICIPATION” IN RESEARCH

Doctoral students also learn to assume the identity of being a researcher. Assuming this identity involves more than simply taking research methods courses. It involves engaging in collaborative research with faculty and other graduate students. Consistent with the idea of an apprenticeship model in a community of practice (Wenger 11), Richard’s students experience firsthand ways of designing and conducting collaborative research projects. In these projects, he no longer treats them simply as students, but, because the success of the project depends on his students’ contributions, he treats them as co-researchers, resulting in a shift in their status and agency.

This collaboration has been described by Paul Prior as a “deep participation” (102). Based on research on graduate students’ participation in graduate-level seminars, Prior contrasted graduate students who are merely “passing” (101) through their programs by completing assignments or engaging in “procedural display” (Bloome, Puro, and Theodorou 266), with “deep participation” through participation with faculty or peers in collaborative research projects or writing. Prior found that students who were engaged in “deep participation” were more likely to be successful in their programs because they acquired hands-on experience of being a researcher on long-range projects.

Amanda was involved in a two-year collaborative research project with Richard and another doctoral student, Daryl Parks (Beach, Thein, and Parks). The three engaged in studying a multicultural literature twelfth-grade class taught by Parks

during the academic year of 2001–2002. The study focused on how discourses of race, class, and gender influenced students' responses to multicultural literature.

One important component of the study was how school and community shaped the students' discourses and identities. Daryl conducted interviews with members of the local community as well as analyzing artifacts associated with the school's history. Amanda conducted field observations of a variety of classrooms, several lunch periods, athletic events, and a student assembly, as well as general observations of the hallways during passing periods and physical descriptions of the building. She also observed classrooms, taking field notes in which she noted the nature of the students' social interactions in class discussions.

Throughout this process, Daryl and Amanda were adopting the roles of researchers, applying the theoretical perspectives they acquired in research methods courses to actual practice. And, in this "deep participation" as Richard's research colleagues, they learned the norms, expectations, and discourses needed to negotiate the research worlds of academia and English education (Prior 102).

In the following reflection, Amanda notes how she acquired the identity of a researcher through participating in this project.

As I've visited with doctoral students from programs across the country, one thing that still surprises me is students who refer to their advisers as "Dr. Smith" as opposed to by their first names. My relationship with Richard has never been one in which I think of him as "Dr. Beach," but has always been one in which I think of him as "Rick." From my first correspondence with Richard, I was invited to be a colleague, not just a student.

That's not to say I was always confident in that role. I was twenty-six years old when I began my doctoral program and had taught for only three years. I was a well-respected teacher and I had an excellent experience in a master's program that left me eager to read, learn, and conduct research. Still, I felt strongly that I needed to prove my maturity and my intelligence as I began my program.

This was easy enough in my coursework—this was a discourse I knew well. I did the reading, wrote the papers, and eagerly shared my ideas in class. Being a research assistant was different. Richard gave Daryl and me a great deal of autonomy in conducting this study, and we desperately wanted to do it right. I found that I was good at carefully observing students' interactions in the classroom and in school events, but I was less adept at talking about my interpretations with Daryl and Richard. Conducting a research project taught me that I must take all the concepts about which I was learning in my coursework and use those ideas to interpret what I saw in a high school English classroom. The ideas I learned about in my coursework were sometimes difficult, but synthesizing and connecting these

ideas, and then using them to think critically about our actual classroom research was the truly complex part of this work; this was a very new set of practices for me. Additionally, these practices required me to learn a new discourse, and nearly an entirely new language in order to talk about what I was learning. For me, this was the most challenging part of learning to participate in the world of research. Schooling up until this point in my life was largely based on practices of reading and writing—things I found easy. It was not based on speaking extemporaneously or making sense of large bodies of research on very specific topics. When Daryl and I met with Richard at our frequent meetings in which we discussed our research project, I initially found myself nearly unable to talk about my ideas—I didn't have the words yet. At first these meetings were somewhat nerve-wracking and stressful for me—I wanted so much to be able to do this work. But it soon became clear to me that these meetings were places for me to actively try on difficult new discourses—this ultimately built my confidence in my “fluency” in the discourse of research. Richard literally spoke to Daryl and me in language that we didn't know yet—this served my construction of an academic identity in much the same way that one might learn a foreign language through a teacher who only speaks the foreign language in the classroom. I slowly learned how to “speak the language” of this new discourse, and eventually became proficient.

Additionally, I found that our research project helped me actively make sense of my coursework. While many students in my program used imagined research projects in their courses on research methodologies, I was able to draw upon my knowledge of a study in which I was actually involved. In a course that I took on critical ethnography from Carol Berkenkotter, I even developed a new direction for our study based on further questions I wanted to explore and a new methodology I was learning. Because I was an active, intellectual participant in a research project throughout the first years of my doctoral program, my coursework was much more authentic than it might otherwise have been.

Being part of this project involved me in many other practices that are valued in academic discourses. For instance, I learned what kind of time and energy goes into coding, analyzing, and writing up qualitative research. I also learned how to write proposals for national conference presentations, and I learned how to present different pieces of research to different audiences. Finally, I learned a great deal about the delicate balance that must be maintained in collaborative relationships with others. All of these factors helped me to prepare for the shift between my identity as a doctoral student and an emerging identity as an assistant professor.

One implication of the value of engaging in collaborative research as described above is the need for programs to consider requiring students to spend some extended period of time—a semester or year—as a full-time graduate student, something our program is considering. The drawback with such a residency requirement is that students who are full-time teachers need to obtain a leave from their schools, something that may not be available for them. The next best option may be for faculty to conduct collaborative research with these teachers in their school settings.

ACQUIRING THE IDENTITY OF METHODS INSTRUCTOR

Another important identity associated with being an English educator is that of being a methods instructor. Adopting this identity involves continually modeling teaching techniques and then self-consciously calling attention to how one developed those techniques. Unfortunately, doctoral students often received little formal preparation for teaching methods courses. While most of the students in the Golde and Dore, survey indicated that they were prepared to conduct research, half to three-quarters of doctoral students in the survey indicated that they were not prepared for teaching, even though 83 percent indicated that teaching was a reason they were entering academia (21).

Given the parallel experience between doctoral students becoming teacher educators and their students becoming teachers, doctoral students teaching methods courses could make explicit how they are thinking about their instruction in a methods course through asides during a class as to why they are organizing a discussion in a particular manner or reflecting at the end of a class about their choice of certain methods as consistent with certain beliefs about teaching.

Richard therefore attempts to model the process of openly reflecting on issues of pedagogy in his own teaching, modeling ways of making explicit asides about teaching in his own classes in which his TAs are enrolled. By making transparent decisions about use of certain techniques as consistent with certain beliefs about teaching, he is making explicit how beliefs shape practice. Such an approach serves to encourage preservice teachers to shift from being students to becoming teachers in which *they* need to devise methods consistent with *their* beliefs and attitudes (Smith and Basmadjian et al. 30).

In Amanda's course on developments in the teaching of English, she draws on ideas of learning through activity and reflection and on a critical pedagogical philosophy in constructing a democratic, student-centered classroom. In her methods course students co-facilitate class discussions on academic texts and then apply theories and ideas learned in these texts to construct fifty-minute secondary

class lessons that they “teach” to the rest of the class. As in Richard’s class, students in Amanda’s class are encouraged to construct their own philosophies of teaching based on theoretical and practical knowledge gained in the program.

In mentoring doctoral students as they are teaching courses, rather than prescribe certain solutions, Richard encourages them to share their concerns and challenges and then have them derive solutions consistent with their own beliefs and attitudes (Smith and Basmadjian et al. 16–17). (See also “Preparing Future Faculty” by the Association of American Colleges and Universities 21.)

COMPLETING THE DISSERTATION

One of the most important and challenging phases of a doctoral program is completing the dissertation. One-quarter to one-half of students do not complete the degree because they do not complete the dissertation (Lovitts). Students are also taking longer to complete the degree—from 5.6 years in 1971 to 8.9 in 1999 (Lovitts 154). To study these issues, one of Richard’s doctoral students, Dana Lundell, studied eleven doctoral students engaged in writing their dissertations from five departments at the University of Minnesota in 1997–1998. She found that while the writing of the dissertation itself is a major challenge, equally challenging were the students’ social and political negotiations with the graduate school and departmental rules, advisers, committee members, TA teaching demands, peers, families, and the potential job market. In some cases, these worlds failed to provide students with the support necessary to complete the dissertation. In other cases, students were successful because the systems provided explicit socialization of these practices, instances that suggest ways for improving the overall experience.

One of the major challenges students face involves selecting a dissertation topic. Lundell’s study participants noted that they often faced a dilemma of selecting a topic that would be approved by their adviser as opposed to topics that might have a positive appeal on the job market. Students sense that certain topics that are “hot” or that are related to the criteria of potential positions may have more appeal than more esoteric topics.

In assisting students in selecting dissertation topics, Richard attempts to provide students with as much latitude as possible so that they select a topic about which they have a strong interest—knowing that a student will be devoting at least a year of his or her life to exploring that topic. At the same time, he encourages them to frame their topic within the context of the existing research as well as the potential job market. For their written preliminary exams, he asks them to begin writing their review of the related research so that they can position their own topic within the context of others’ research. This review also helps them sense which topics are of high interest to which researchers in which fields.

In reflecting on her process of selecting a dissertation topic, Amanda notes several observations.

In choosing my dissertation topic I drew on my research experience, my knowledge of current problems and issues in English education, and my own questions that arose in our earlier study. My research experience with Richard was critical to my selection of a dissertation topic. On the practical side, this experience gave me a good gauge for the kind of study I could complete within the time frame I set for myself. For example, as I chose my topic I knew how much time it would take me to write up ethnographic field notes every day. I knew the benefits and the liabilities of transcribing my own data. I knew how to use NVIVO software in my analysis, and I also had a sense for my own style of analysis and writing. Additionally, I knew how to negotiate systems such as internal review boards for both the university and the school district. In other words, my research experience in working with Richard made the logistics of planning my dissertation dramatically easier than they were for many of my peers.

I also drew on findings from our research project in developing my dissertation topic. In our study of high school students' responses to multicultural literature in the context of one high school classroom we found that students' involvement in social and cultural worlds outside of the classroom had important connections to their interpretations of and responses to literature in the classroom. This research led us to a rich understanding of the school and classroom culture as greatly influenced by a dominant discourse of White, male athleticism. However, as we analyzed this data, I found myself wanting to know more about the diverse community of girls in this school and how girls negotiate identity and agency within this White, male-dominated culture. In addition to wanting to add to the research I conducted with Richard, I also became increasingly interested in gender and stance toward literature. In particular, I became interested in the gendered aspects of reading and response practices that girls engage in outside of the classroom and how understanding these practices might shed light on stances girls take toward literature read in the classroom. My interest in knowing more about the gendered culture in this community and in learning about the intersection of inside and outside reading and response practices led me to my dissertation topic.

What's important to note is that my dissertation topic was related to Richard's primary area of inquiry in that it deals with sociocultural aspects of response to literature. My topic was also directly tied to the research we conducted earlier at the school—my topic developed from questions that grew out of our initial research. Finally in studying both in-class and

out-of-class reading practices, I developed a new area of inquiry. As for my methods of analysis, I drew on methods learned in our earlier study, in my coursework, and in current scholarly work that I became involved with through national and local conferences and meetings. In particular, I used Critical Discourse Analysis after participating in study groups and conferences on the topic with Richard (Fairclough; Gee). In sum, I developed a topic that was related to research I knew well, areas of scholarship that are currently “hot” (such as Critical Discourse Analysis), and areas such as gender that I found intellectually stimulating regardless of other factors.

PRESENTING DISSERTATION RESEARCH

Doctoral students also often find that they receive little assistance in preparing for the job search; one survey study of six thousand PhDs indicated that the job search assistance was a “culture of neglect,” with 41 percent of respondents indicating that they received no assistance related to their job search (Nerad and Cerny 10). Central to assisting students in the job market is to help them begin to present their dissertation research and other papers at NCTE, AERA, CCCC, CEE, NRC, and MLA conferences so that they can begin to become known in the field and, at those conferences, to network with others in the field. In some cases, Richard co-presents with students or encourages them to submit their own research-in-progress. And, Richard’s Department of Curriculum and Instruction requires that part of students’ final oral defense consist of a public presentation of their research, the kind of presentation they will need to do when they give job talks.

Participants in the dissertation study who were successful in obtaining positions became actively involved in making conference presentations, writing for publication, and networking. In the process, they began to redefine themselves as no longer simply students, but as potential colleagues with others in the field. As one of the participants noted:

One of the ways the dissertation gets done is if you can see yourself not as a graduate student but as a professional peer and imagine yourself as an academic, as a scholar, and not as a graduate student. So yea, there is a transformation that has to occur in your confidence, and partially I think that comes through writing. (Lundell 504–505)

Another participant recalled being the only graduate student on a conference panel and having another panel member refer to all of the panel members as “scholars”:

So it was this really funny thing where this guy would say, well, we're all professors, we're all scholars, and I had to laugh. He looked at me and I said I'm not a professor yet, but I'm relying on that ethos. I mean I'm the only person here who doesn't have a Ph.D., so it's a funny thing and I came in thinking, ooh, he called me a scholar. I'll never forget, that was the first time someone called me a scholar, I mean, am I a scholar? Oh, I guess I'm a scholar. (Lundell 505)

In the following reflection, Amanda shares her own experiences of presenting at conferences.

Attending conferences and meeting well-known people in my field was very important for construction of my identity as a scholar. I'll never forget watching one of the best scholars in my field literally trembling and shaking throughout her presentation at a national conference. Moments like this taught me that even the best of scholars are also human beings who sometimes lack confidence and poise. Conferences and meetings also gave me opportunities to share my work with people whose work I admired. Again, I was surprised to find that these people did not always have all the answers and that they took my work very seriously. Finally these events afforded me the opportunity to get to know other doctoral students and junior faculty members from across the country who were typically eager to share their experiences with me and to offer me advice. All of these experiences were critical in my transition from a student identity to a faculty identity; they were also key experiences in the genre of academic social interaction that became very useful in on-campus job interviews.

Presenting research at conferences was one of the most important aspects of my preparation for the job search. During my first three years in my doctoral program I presented many times with Richard. During my final year I independently proposed and presented my dissertation research at several national conferences. For me the transition between presenting with Richard and presenting my own research felt very significant. I literally had the sense that my first individual presentation at a selective national conference was like a coming-out party or like the moment when training wheels are removed from a bike. It was proof to me that I could hold my own in this discourse community of which I had worked so hard to become a member.

Participation in national organizations and conferences helped me find my place in the field of English education. This sense of place grounded my academic identity as I "marketed" myself in my job search. Having a

solid idea of who I was and who I was becoming as an academic helped me to apply for positions that were best suited for me; it also helped me to be savvy in determining whether particular schools and departments would fit well with my interests. Finding my place in national organizations helped me to recognize my place during my job search.

To negotiate the competing demands of these different worlds, doctoral students need to learn to assume different identities. For example, in writing the dissertation, students have needed to adopt an impersonal rhetorical stance and style consistent with the dissertation genre—a genre that is changing now that students are writing in narrative or auto-ethnographic modes. Students in Lundell's study noted that when they were attempting to adopt an authoritative persona, they had to do so in an impersonal style that undermined their creativity. As one participant noted:

On the one hand, it is about detachment, and on the other hand, locating the source of authority within oneself. It's about a self that, well, you're proving yourself. The dissertation is about the ideas, about you and your creative capacity, but it's also so detached from your person and kind of transcendent. So on one hand...it legitimizes a self, but it's a detached universal self...hard to explain. (Lundell 493)

Students were also struggling with how to adopt a certain persona relative to the audiences they were addressing. They were not sure as to whether they were writing simply for their adviser and committee members, and/or for a larger audience of potential readers, including potential employers. One student noted that while her committee is obligated to read the dissertation, the committee does not necessarily represent her "general audience" constituted by certain disciplinary perspectives not represented on her committee, audiences who may also judge her work in terms of employing that student for a position (Lundell 494). Without a sense of an audience beyond her immediate audience, she perceives little purpose in the writing other than "procedural display" of competence related to completing the degree (Bloome, Puro, and Theodorou 266). Yet, without effectively addressing her immediate audience, she may not pass the dissertation. As she notes, "It's like I'm going to write a book and no one's going to come. You know, it's like putting on a performance and having five people in the audience" (Lundell 494).

Richard attempts to help his students write for larger audiences within an article or book in mind. He therefore references how broader potential audiences, leading theorists in the field for instance, might respond to the student's arguments.

LEARNING TO DEFINE ONESELF BEYOND ONE'S MENTOR

Students sometimes frame their doctoral experience as “learning to be like mentor X.” While students certainly assume the stances, attitudes, and practices of their mentors, they also need to learn how to establish new directions and personas that go beyond those of their mentors. In socializing doctoral students, one of the major challenges is how to push students to define their own goals and agendas in ways that represent their own interests and needs.

These goals and agendas function to define a trajectory associated with certain research interests or commitments to certain beliefs or causes, trajectories that may conform to or vary from those of a mentor. Amanda notes that having a clearly-defined agenda also helped her select courses, paper topics, and issues that were consistent with her interests and needs.

I entered my doctoral program with several goals. First, I wanted to be involved in academic research. Second, I wanted my doctoral work to lead me to a career as an academic. Third, I wanted to study issues related to using multicultural literature in secondary schools. Having these three goals prior to beginning my program helped me to select my program and to focus my studies from the beginning.

I came to the University of Minnesota because the program fit with my goals. To begin with, the University of Minnesota is a research-intensive school where I could train to do academic research. However, just as important to me was that I could work with someone who studied student response to multicultural literature (Richard), and that I was offered a chance to begin a research project right away. This “match” between my goals and the program I chose streamlined my doctoral program in many ways.

The collaborative research project I conducted with Richard was directly tied to my interests and was a means to construct empirical knowledge about the questions I brought with me to the program. In thinking about what we were learning in our study and what I wanted to know more about I was able to choose courses that would provide useful theoretical and methodological framing. For example, I chose to take a doctoral seminar on critical ethnography through the Department of Rhetoric because I wanted to know more about how we could ground our study in the institutional culture of the school as well as the culture of the community. I also took a doctoral seminar called *Race, Literacy, and Bakhtin* as a means for thinking about how past, present, and future utterances manifest in students' classroom discussions of diverse literature. Within my coursework, I also typically chose paper topics that would help

me better understand our study and that would help me construct my own new directions for my dissertation.

For me, the result of having a streamlined, focused doctoral program was that everything I did in my program came together with a sense of cohesion as I planned, carried out, and wrote my dissertation. In other words, my dissertation was not an isolated study, writing project, or worse yet, a hoop to jump through. Rather my dissertation was a synthesis of my four years of doctoral work. For example, the critical ethnographic methodology that I used in my research was based on the ideas I learned in the seminar on Critical Ethnography—my ethnographic narrative on the culture of the school and community began as a piece for this class. My choice to study girls was born out of questions that developed for me as I worked with Richard on our collaborative study. Coursework on Bakhtin, response theory, social worlds, and critical pedagogy helped me construct a theory of literacy learning and stances readers take toward literature.

Amanda's reflection demonstrates how she defined her long-term goals as consistent with Richard's research interests, but then later moved in some new directions associated with defining her own research focus.

We conclude by noting that Amanda's four-year experience as a doctoral student involved more than simply taking courses and completing her dissertation. During her program, Amanda was learning to adopt a new set of identities—that of theorist, researcher, collaborator, methods instructor, and conference presenter, all of which were essential in her obtaining a tenure-track faculty position at the University of Pittsburgh. To foster the development of these identities, Richard provided her with the experiences and opportunities to practice these different identities, which are only acquired through experience.

We therefore believe that effective academic socialization of doctoral students needs to provide students with opportunities to explore a range of different identities that go beyond simply being a student. To produce a new generation of English educators, it is essential that English education doctoral programs include practice in being researchers, methods instructors, and, ultimately, scholars contributing knowledge to the field.

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CHAPTER 4

The Rhythm of Conducting and Reporting Doctoral Research in English Education



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Our aim in this chapter is to describe the process of learning to conduct and report research via doctoral study in English education. As faculty members and doctoral students in an English education program, we represent most of the academic career stages. Sissi is a professor who coordinated the English education program for ten years before becoming chair of the Department of Middle and Secondary Education. Susan is an associate professor who is now the coordinator of the English education program. Jennifer is a tenure-track assistant professor who completed her doctoral work at Florida State University. Cheryl is a doctoral student in English education at FSU who also has a university job as a research fellow, and who just moved from the prospectus to the dissertation writing stages. Marlow is a full-time high school teacher of English and an English education PhD in the FSU program who is on the cusp of taking the preliminary examination to begin writing his dissertation prospectus. Determined to present a balanced view, something between the ideal and the impossible, we chose the concept of “rhythm,” a phenomenon described by Edith Sitwell as being a “principal translator between dream and reality” as we report on doctoral research as it occurs in our English education program (Sitwell xv).

The “rhythm of education,” according to Alfred North Whitehead, is a series of movements learners make, a process involving three distinct stages (26). Modeled on the work of Hegel, Whitehead named these steps of intellectual progression: the stage of romance, the stage of precision, and the stage of generalization. Whitehead’s stages serve as a fitting frame for organizing our discussion regarding what it means to be a doctoral student learning to conduct and report research in English Education. Program particulars will vary depending on the university, but the rhythm of growing as an educational researcher, we suspect, may be fairly universal. We situate our description of doctoral study in English education in our

program at Florida State University, a program with a rich history of scholarship and more than fifty years of commitment to producing teacher educators capable of conducting educational research in the field of secondary English language arts (please see appendix B, Representative Doctoral Dissertations from the Florida State University English Education Program, 1959–2004).

Using Whitehead's stages as the background for the three major goals of our program, we explain how doctoral students within our program find topics, select sites, and choose methods for their research, ultimately identifying audiences and venues for reporting their results. While Sissi's and Susan's voices provide a background beat as directors of dissertations and experienced English education professors, it is the voices of Jennifer, Cheryl, and Marlow that emerge throughout the chapter to underscore the rhythm of becoming a researcher in English education. Our intention is to infuse the ideals of a doctoral program with the realities of the three-stage process.

RHYTHMS OF STAGE ONE: ROMANCING THE RESEARCHER

The romance stage precedes all learning, according to Whitehead, at least in terms of the psychology, or readiness, of the student. Termed "the stage of first apprehension," romance labels the point at which a learner first encounters the material and begins to understand the "unexplored connections with possibilities half-disclosed by glimpses and half-concealed by the wealth of material" (Whitehead 28–29). Part excitement, part anticipation, and part wide-eyed adventure, the start of a doctoral program is a critical time for those entering the realm of educational research.

This stage of the process works best, we believe, when the student has substantial experience in public school classrooms, arriving at the door to doctoral study with a certain level of prior teaching and content knowledge, committed to making the shifts necessary in an English teacher education program. A requirement for admission to the doctoral program at Florida State University is that applicants have experienced at least three years of teaching at the middle or high school level. As a result of this requirement, each of our doctoral students enters the PhD program as experienced classroom teachers. The prospect of making the transition from middle or high school teacher to university-level instructor is therefore, for most, daunting yet imaginable. Yet even the familiar habits of teaching do not always translate to success in the university context, so we support the doctoral students' development as university instructors at the same time that we push them to learn to see classrooms as fertile research sites.

Classrooms as Teaching Sites: The Apprenticeship

In order to ease them (beginning doctoral students) into the role of university teaching, we employ an “apprentice” model as often as possible; as an apprentice, doctoral students work with faculty members to co-teach a course for one semester before being assigned sole responsibility for the course. Most of our doctoral students also enter with experience having mentored preprofessional or beginning teachers; they have served as the cooperating teacher in student-teaching internships or field experiences for undergraduates who are learning to become teachers of English language arts. The idea that they will be supervising student teachers while they engage in doctoral studies is also therefore challenging but exciting.

Classrooms as Supervision Sites: The Mentorship

In order to help them move from the role of a middle or high school teacher who hosts a student teacher in his or her secondary school classroom, into the role of a university supervisor of student teachers, we also provide doctoral students, as often as possible, with a semester-long mentorship in supervision. During this mentorship, they work alongside a faculty member as he or she makes visits with student teachers and cooperating teachers in area schools. Through experiencing this mentorship, the doctoral student learns firsthand about the relationship triad: university supervisor, cooperating teacher, and student teacher. These efforts address the problems that Smith and Basmadjian et al. point to when expressing concern about the tendency within English ed. programs to thrust new doctoral students into new teaching and supervision roles. These efforts also serve as the basis for developing a researcher’s eye, as classroom teachers, now doctoral students, gain new perspectives on teaching and learning, establishing distance from their own classroom dilemmas, and participating in the larger issues of teacher education. Recently these efforts have been formalized with our addition of a one-credit-hour doctoral seminar in the supervision of field experiences.

According to Marlow, the process of shifting his teaching identity from a focus on the needs of adolescents to his role as a teacher education and supervisor of preservice teachers takes time.

As a full-time public school teacher and part-time doctoral student, I focus on solving problems quickly, which may or may not involve the sources and roots of those problems. Solving problems is not a luxury for classroom teachers, but a question of survival, of being able to handle the daily pressures of the job. But if I want to become a teacher of teachers,

my focus must narrow, must slow down, and must be as objective and methodical as possible. Sure, my overall aim will still be to solve problems, but they might be problems without obvious solutions, problems that only lead to more questions. The teacher/doctoral student is pulled between these poles: the practical and the theoretical, the public school and the university, the realities of the classroom and ideal of the academy.

I was unaware of such things when I first entered graduate school, not that it would have affected my decision. When I started, my goals were pretty simple: I wanted to move beyond the classroom while giving back to the profession and a doctoral degree seemed a means to this end. It also appeared doable, and by that I mean it was affordable (I could do it without adding to the huge loans I still owe for my master's degree) and I projected it would be a three- to five-year commitment. Several years later, I still have the same goals, although I now know the time commitment will be substantially longer than my original prediction. I've also gained experience in teaching at the university level, my first encounter with students of education outside of supervising a student-teacher internship. In short, I've begun to make the first tentative steps from teaching adolescents to teaching teachers. And I have started looking for research questions in my own classes and in the enterprise of education itself.

Classrooms as Research Sites: The Relationship

Of the full-time graduate students in our doctoral population, those who determine that they want to engage in classroom-based research, whether they are pursuing questions related to the traditional, special field of interest, or cross-disciplinary categories of research, have to find ways to get access to a classroom. The fact that our doctoral students work in the schools as supervisors of student teachers helps provide them with choices regarding classroom settings for their research. It also fulfills the practical need of introducing the doctoral students to a variety of teachers in different school settings, so that they can select their preferred research site from a several choices.

Cheryl has been able to use relationships that she has established as a student-teacher supervisor to accommodate her needs for research sites.

Besides filling the void I sometimes feel from not being in a public school, supervising our undergraduate interns has also provided me with invaluable access to local teachers who have helped me in my own research. In one such case, two teachers in a local high school English Department allowed me to conduct a miniethnography that investigated the question

of how department culture impacted their instructional decisions and beliefs about student learning. Both teachers willingly completed teacher beliefs surveys and allowed me to observe and interview them on multiple occasions as I conducted my study. What's more, in a subsequent semester, one of these teachers allowed the students from my Teaching Reading in the Secondary English Classroom course to conduct a semester-long dialogue journal project with her struggling readers.

The efforts to gradually introduce classroom teachers into the roles of university instructor and supervisor, and into the professional culture of the academy, do little, though, to prepare our doctoral students to begin to define themselves in the role with which they are least familiar and most uncomfortable: researcher. Since doctoral students seldom enter our program with backgrounds as researchers, they have ponderous questions about research and about their role as researchers. These questions are, for most of our doctoral students, weightier than the ones related to their new teaching, supervision, and even the learner roles.

Like many doctoral programs in English education, we spend a large portion of time devoted to helping doctoral students develop and expand their concepts of research and researcher (Smith and Basmadjian et al.). Our primary aim, therefore, is to help them enter into the culture of educational research.

Initiation into the Culture of Research

Because we want doctoral students to be able to define themselves not only as teachers and mentors, but also as researchers, one of our program goals is to provide doctoral students with many opportunities to read research, to ask a variety of questions and determine what kinds of methods will best allow them to address the questions, and to experiment with various methods of collecting and analyzing data. We start to move toward this goal with our doctoral students during a one-credit-hour doctoral seminar that they take each semester while they are completing coursework.

During the initial semester of a doctoral program, the seminar is designed to welcome our doctoral students into the culture of English education as an academic discipline, to their prospective stance as teacher educators, to the practicalities related to choosing courses and committee members, the processes that inform decisions about dissertation topics, and ideas regarding conducting and reporting research. In this first semester of program participation, our doctoral students study the nature of the field from the perspective of a teacher educator, and read then discuss publications that introduce them to a swathe of the broad range of ways that the field is defined and described by those who are recognized as experts within it. Faculty members and College of Education staff contribute to the

conversations, supplying information about realities within the academy at large and within our institution in particular, when necessary. But it is the doctoral students themselves who lead the conversations. They use the seminar as a risk-free time and place to raise questions about their research interests, to posit positions, to work through confusion, and to announce achievements that they experience as they begin to identify themselves as teacher researchers.

The first-semester doctoral seminar, while it ostensibly focuses on introducing doctoral students to research designs, questions, and related issues, actually helps students recognize and navigate what Labaree refers to as “the cultural clash that frequently occurs when representatives of two distinct realms of professional practice—the K-12 teacher and the university researcher—collide in a research-oriented program” (15). Their growth toward becoming researchers demands that they understand and reflect on their own dual identity as classroom teacher (with goals related primarily to improving the literacy and attitudes toward learning among their adolescent students) and as doctoral student (with goals related to learning more about and contributing to the body of knowledge within the discipline). During subsequent semesters, the doctoral students explore various research models, reviews of literature, questions that have been asked regarding English, education, special interest fields, and cross-disciplinary connections. Eventually the seminar is a place to write research “think pieces” and abstracts, to develop small study and dissertation plans, write project abstracts, prepare humane subjects committee proposals, investigate grants, and consider other research-related documents and tasks. All of this is done with the support of the English education faculty member who is hosting the seminar, and with the feedback and assistance of the cohort of doctoral students that is moving through the program synchronously.

Unfortunately, Marlow began the FSU English education doctoral program prior to the time that we instituted the doctoral seminar. He has, near the end of his coursework, joined the seminar as an “advanced” doctoral student, and thus provides valuable insights into its contributions to the first goal related to conducting and reporting doctoral research—initiating students into the culture of research.

The seminar, even though I started it after I had been in the doctoral program for several semesters, has really helped me understand the kinds of research that are characteristic of education as a field in general, and the kinds of studies that those in English education have done, in particular. I have gotten excited about the possibilities of revisiting studies of grammar and usage, of doing huge sweeping studies of writing instruction, and of investigating the politics of standardized testing, all while talking with colleagues in the seminar setting.

The hardest part of seeking a doctoral degree is getting your arms around the whole concept of searching for a research question....it is not something I was trained to do as a professional educator, nor was it stressed in any of the graduate work I did toward my master's degree.

Like Marlow, Jennifer completed the program prior to the initiation of the doctoral seminar, and she recalls struggling with the idea of finding a research focus.

I began the doctoral program having what now seems like a somewhat silly concern that I would never be able to find a topic for my dissertation. At that point in time, though, I was thinking of it as just that—a topic—rather than a research question that genuinely concerned me. As I went through my coursework and naturally developed questions prompted by reflecting on readings, discussions, etc., I began to realize that I was full of questions that needed answers. The daunting part of the task of beginning to define what my dissertation study might look like then changed: too many interests and unanswered questions!

RHYTHMS OF STAGE TWO: FINDING PRECISION

If the romance stage is about readiness, uncovering the width of a subject, then the precision stage is about finding a system for exploring the width. Whitehead defined precision as “the stage of grammar” saying it “forces on the students’ acceptance a given way of analyzing the facts, bit by bit” (29). Precision could be considered the fine art of using tools well. As doctoral students begin to refine their knowledge, they seek skill, the foundation, so to speak, on which to build Thoreau’s castle. In stage two of doctoral study, novice researchers identify what it is they need to know, and then they participate in experiences designed to provide language and method, the means for doing the work. At FSU, precision is learned formally, through a series of required research courses, and informally, in a culture of apprenticeship and interaction with various professors and student scholars.

Questions About Research Methods and Content

Our doctoral students acknowledge that questions about research start swirling in their minds before they begin taking their first classes. They also acknowledge that, at this stage, “research” is usually synonymous with “dissertation” in their doctoral student lexicon. Early questions related to the process of conducting research include these:

- ✦ What will I do for my dissertation?
- ✦ How will I find issues to explore?
- ✦ Where will I conduct my study?
- ✦ Which methods will I find in order to investigate my questions?
- ✦ Will I be able to offer answers to others in the field?
- ✦ Will my answers help students become better learners of English, more literate citizens, more compassionate and purposeful humans?
- ✦ How long will this take?

Doctoral students also ask questions about the content of research in our field. In its early years, the doctoral program in English education at FSU earned a reputation for its strong focus on disciplinary issues, such as the teaching of language and writing. One example is the FSU Curriculum Study Center, which was developed as part of the federally-funded Project English effort in the 1960s. Under the leadership of Dwight Burton, Project English at FSU included the design, implementation, and evaluation of three junior high school language arts curricula, one using a tripod model, one organized according to themes, and one arranged on a Brunerian model. Of the twenty-two Curriculum Study Centers established in colleges and universities across the United States, only the one at FSU systematically tested and reported on the effectiveness of teaching approaches that they designed and implemented (Simmons, Shafer, and Shadiow 103). Another example, which also emerged in the 1960s, is Frank O'Hare's FSU 1971 dissertation study, "The Effect of Sentence-Combining Practice not Dependent on Formal Knowledge of a Grammar on the Writing of Seventh Graders." In his research, O'Hare used traditional, empirical research methodology to investigate questions of interest to those in the disciplines of education and of composition research. Because of these strong roots in traditional research within the disciplines English and education, the program has been able to grow, confidently, in other research directions.

Today, in addition to concentrating on the traditional discipline of English and raising questions about English and education, students in the doctoral program are encouraged to raise questions and design research projects to investigate interests that emerge from the other two categories of doctoral research in education that Richardson identifies: special interest fields that draw on an "area of educational

practice or a particular student grouping,” and cross-disciplinary studies, including social, cultural, and critical studies (4). In the current program, students are free to choose from among the three categories of doctoral research in education (Richardson 4). Those who are interested in the traditional fields of English and education are still encouraged to generate and probe questions that are related to the theories, research, and practices that apply to literature, written composition, language, and media studies. At the same time, students who are drawn to special interest fields are encouraged to focus on raising questions about teacher education, and to develop their critical eyes in regard to the theories, research, and practices that illuminate questions about the ways that teachers of English learn to teach, and the ways that teachers carry their content, pedagogical knowledge, and dispositions into their middle and high school classrooms. Other students realize that it is the cross-disciplinary connections between areas of English and sociology, anthropology, psychology, linguistics, philosophy, communications, and other fields of study that intrigue them. For these students, we provide opportunities to examine the theories, research, and practices that are associated with critical pedagogies and cultural studies.

Conception of “Research” Broadly Defined

In order to help students conduct research, we have established a second program goal: to help doctoral students define “research” in ways that reach beyond the word as a synonym for “dissertation study.” As English education faculty, we are committed to helping our doctoral students try on their new researcher roles while we are available to help them tailor the roles to their own interests and strengths. In order to try on different roles, our doctoral students have to take time to conduct and report on small-scale research projects while on the path to conducting and reporting on the big study: the dissertation. Toward this second goal, we work with our doctoral students through a sequence of courses and experiences that are designed to help them assume the researcher’s role with slow but steady confidence and expertise. While we have no control over the contents of the general educational research courses that all doctoral students in our College of Education are required to complete, we can work with our doctoral students as they move through those courses, helping them as they shape questions that are appropriate for English education, as they develop pilot studies, and as they learn the language and processes of research in these courses. We can also apply their learning in general education research courses to projects that they engage in while completing their required English education coursework.

Learning What it Means to be a Researcher in the Field of English Education

Usually, our doctoral students move through a sequence of research development that follows the stages described in the following paragraphs. Simultaneously, they are engaged in teaching undergraduate courses, supervising student teachers, and taking courses. They shift their focus to the dissertation only after they pass a “preliminary” examination that allows us to evaluate their content knowledge, research flexibility and knowledge, and their readiness for the demands of engaging in research and writing a dissertation.

Identify a Research Question

Take advantage of required courses and related research projects. Jennifer, who was drawn to grammar issues during her initial year of doctoral studies (as a vestige of her experiences as a teacher of sixth graders who struggle with usage issues and her professional development work that often focused on correctness over content), discusses the metamorphosis of her research ideas, ideas that developed through her coursework and through her own engagement in research projects.

In my coursework, I wrote many case studies that resulted from pursuing some of these smaller research questions in local classrooms. As I wrote these and began to learn more about qualitative research, I began to realize that this is what fit my personal style the best; I like more narrative writing and recognized the fit between descriptive case studies and what I already knew how to do as a writer. As a result from practicing such methods as part of my coursework, I decided to implement them as part of my research design for my dissertation, describing a classroom setting and events and conducting case studies of particular students within that classroom. I also began to learn the benefits (and drawbacks) of survey data through my courses, and proceeded to develop a survey that would be implemented as part of my dissertation study. The further I progressed in my coursework, the more solid my ideas for my dissertation were becoming and I was able to begin trying methods within that specific context.

As I sought more information on issues as a student and as I taught more courses, I began to notice how students seemed to rely on the Internet as their primary source of information and some problems that accompanied that. This observation, coupled with my emerging interest in issues of reading and literacy, led me to an area that I realized was prime for developing as research for my dissertation. My initial articulation of the

problem I wanted to study was a muddled fragment: “Middle school/high school students’ use of reading strategies in a common rhetorical situation approached through two mediums—linear, ‘traditional’ text and nonlinear hypertext.” At this early point, I conceived of my study as a comparison between two reading scenarios. I was not sure if the text should be the same with two different groups of comparable students or if it should be two different comparable texts on the same topic with the same group of students. From my coursework and my ongoing dialogue with my committee, I did recognize the problems here. There seemed to be more questions raised in terms of conducting this study than I knew the answers to. For example, I recorded one of my initial concerns about the methods I would use as, “I want to look at different uses of reading strategies but cannot measure effectiveness without looking at outcome (comprehension).”

I then evolved to considering giving one group of students a Web page to read that fit with material they were already studying in class and studying the types of moves they made as readers while navigating the page. As I thought about this and discussed it more, I realized that what I was trying to measure was not something easily tangible, as it had to do with metacognition. This led me to a method I would utilize in my study, a method I had been exposed to and practiced in a class: think-aloud protocols. This sort of evolution then became my research process for my dissertation. It was like trying on various methods I had practiced or learned about during my coursework to see how they fit with my research questions. I engaged in dialogues with my committee about these regularly, and, through these conversations, learned to critically question what I was really measuring in my research.

While I was “trying on” all of these methods and trying to solidify the direction my dissertation study would take, I was constantly reviewing literature to find a study that spoke to where I was heading. I remember practically running into Sissi’s office one day yelling, “This is it! I found it!” I felt like I had been searching forever with the elusive promise of “you will know it when you find it.” It turns out that I did! While my study did not mirror the one I found, that study did provide me with a much more solid framework in which to situate my own and a different lens through which I could view it.

This type of evolution in my research continued throughout the entire process with the title and even the research questions being continually revisited and refined. For example, at one point I had two research questions, but as I began data collection and analysis, I came to realize that there were really four discrete research questions within those larger two.

Identify the Most Appropriate Research Method

Develop familiarity with various models while building expertise with at least one. Our doctoral students, like all those in the College of Education at FSU, are required to take two educational research courses designed to introduce them to empirical research methods and qualitative research methods. Then they take at least two more research courses, choosing those that help them learn more fully and practice the methods to which they are drawn. At this point, which begins no earlier than the third semester (second year) of their doctoral program, they are able to determine whether or not the research questions that intrigue them are better suited for investigation with experimental or qualitative research methods. We encourage them, while in the general educational research courses, to position themselves in the (unfamiliar) territory of English teacher educators who are exploring an area of concern such as instruction in writing, literature, or linguistics. The abstracts, reviews of literature, and statements of methodology that they compose in these introductory courses are frequently their first attempts to write using the language and perspective of researchers.

Apply research methods to problems in English education. Concurrent with the research courses that they are required to take, our students are engaged in coursework in English education and in related areas such as higher education, national and international educational policies, reading, special education, English as a second language, school administration, curriculum theory, philosophy and sociology of education, and so on. While engaged in each of the required English education courses (there are currently five), our doctoral students create course projects that allow them latitude to ask questions that matter to them, and to determine, with assistance when it is needed, which methods are most appropriate for investigating the questions. We attempt to help students follow course sequences in which the research courses that they take outside of the English education program inform the projects that they conduct to fulfill the requirements of the required English education courses.

While they are taking English ed. courses, we require doctoral students to design and conduct small-scale research projects in English/language arts classrooms. These small-scale projects give them the opportunity to discover their own preferences as researchers, and to begin to understand how the question that one asks determines the methods one uses to investigate the question. We know that as our doctoral students push themselves to explore beyond the knowledge base and comfort zones that they already have when they enter the program, they will find new interests, bigger questions, more intriguing foci.

Cheryl recalls some of the small-scale research projects that she completed while engaged in doctoral coursework, and comments on their value in terms of her growth as a researcher.

In all but one of the five research methods courses that I took as part of my program of study, I was required to explore a particular research question in the service of learning specific research skills. For instance, in *Introduction to Qualitative Methods*, I focused on a review of literature relevant to the topic that I was exploring at that time: the development of reflective practice among English language arts teachers seeking National Board certification. In *Wendy Bishop's Research in Rhetoric and Composition*, I worked with two other students to design and implement a study of local and global revision in freshman composition that required practice in research skills such as designing a methodology, recruiting subjects, implementing a treatment, and analyzing data. The opportunity to explore various questions in these disparate settings was an important part of allowing me to “try on” various questions and methodologies. It also moved me beyond reading about how to do research and passively critiquing others' research and gave me a healthy respect for how truly difficult it is to design and implement a worthwhile study.

Cheryl was fortunate to have the opportunity to work with the late Wendy bishop, a talented teacher, researcher, and thinker. Unfortunately, our intention—that the experiences they have while in generic research courses will help our doctoral students define their roles as researchers in English teacher education—is not always so well actualized. Sometimes, a doctoral student arrives at the stage of writing a dissertation still feeling inexperienced and unskilled in the kind of thinking, writing, and research work that is needed. And sometimes we in the English education faculty are at a loss in terms of helping a student pursue a question, due to limits in our own areas of expertise and experience as researchers. We continue to work to improve this aspect of our program.

RHYTHMS OF STAGE THREE: GENERALIZATION

The generalization stage represents synthesis, the “fruition” part of the process (Whitehead 30). Generalization is the realization of the goal, and the ultimate outcome of the learning, even while the learning continues as the process reaches completion. In the journey of becoming an educational researcher, this stage begins, perhaps, when the researcher moves beyond the academy. Confidently, stepping into the field, notebook in hand, ready to observe, record, and capture the

experience requires attention to issues of professional voice, access, application, and reporting. Within the institutionalizing of a graduate program, the danger inherent in systematizing the study of research could become a narrow conceptualization of audience. At FSU, we have a third goal for our doctoral students: We want them to conduct research within and for authentic professional contexts instead of merely to address a set of programmatic requirements. We want the work they do within the program to serve our students as admission tickets into the professional conversations that occur in the journals and conferences of the field.

Active Participation in the Professional Conversation

In addition to providing opportunities for our doctoral students to become immersed in studying and conducting research in the field, we want them to be engaged as full participants in the conversations of the profession. In a practical sense, and because they are our professional colleagues, we want our doctoral students to graduate well-equipped for jobs in academia, similar to ours, and also for a variety of educational settings (such as county school board curriculum offices, state government education offices, and so on). Their experiences conducting, writing about, and presenting their early research projects contribute toward this goal.

Therefore, we work with them to develop the habit of seeking appropriate venues in which they can report their ongoing research. For some research projects, these venues might include in-course presentations or the publication of an article in a newsletter published for teachers across the state; for other research projects, appropriate venues might include national conference presentations and publication of articles in teacher-oriented journals such as *English Journal*, or research-oriented journals such as *Research in Teaching English*, or journals that tend to bridge these categories to address audiences of researchers and teachers, such as *Journal of Adolescent and Adult Literacy* and *English Education*.

Jennifer reflects on the benefits of participating in the conversations of the profession as she was learning to define herself as a researcher.

The first professional experience in the field outside of the classroom was as an undergraduate student presenting as part of a panel at the QUIG conference. When I returned to graduate school as part of the doctoral program, I remembered that experience and, with the encouragement of the faculty in the program, sought ways to become involved in presenting at and participating in larger conferences such as NCTE. I also took advantage of the opportunity offered to me to publish reviews of new young adult novels in *The ALAN Review*. I feel that such participation gave me a chance to get a sense of the field as a whole beyond the perimeter of our

university campus. It provided a safe means for me to begin to enter into professional conversations of sorts with experts beyond our faculty, and that helped to build my confidence in moving into the role of a researcher and a future faculty member.

JENNIFER'S RHYTHMS

When Jennifer began the program, she was one of two campus-based, full-time doctoral students. She started the program with a particular interest in grammar and in the reading of middle school students. That interest extended into the use of literature as a way to address reading skills instruction. While engaged in the program, Jennifer was active as an instructor, teaching children's literature and young children's literature courses, a middle school language arts methods course, and a technology for teachers of English/language arts course. She also supervised student teachers in local middle schools while she was completing her coursework. Despite the fact that it was her interests in reading and literature that brought her to our program, Jennifer's research interests eventually led her in a different direction—toward a dissertation situated in a high school classroom where she examined students' use of hypertext environments as they studied poetry. Currently, as an assistant professor of English education at the University of Alabama, she is extending her dissertation focus in a classroom-based research project, which is posited within her broader research agenda: classroom-based teacher-action research in English/language arts classrooms.

Jennifer explains how each of the small research projects that she completed as she zeroed in on her dissertation questions and project helped her define herself as an educational researcher.

When I first envisioned the process of conducting a dissertation study and writing the resulting dissertation, I honestly thought that would be my entire life at that point in time. There was so much more going on for me! I was teaching courses, working on *The ALAN Review*, supervising student interns, looking for a job, and those were just the professional demands; life was happening, too. There was definitely competition for my time. In addition to learning how to be a researcher and how to write a dissertation (a document that was a whole new rhetorical beast for me), I had to learn to manage my time. I learned to schedule everything in my life from when I needed to be at the school to collect data to when I needed to meet with my friends to commiserate about writing dissertations.

Aside from feeling overwhelmed in general as I went through this process, I felt excited every time something fell into place, every time I

fit a piece of the puzzle together with my data. I was excited to come in and share the humorous comments students made when I was working with them, despite the fact that they did not fit into my data analysis. For example, I remember asking students which of the “Fun Sites about Poetry” they had visited in my hypertext document they read for the study, and one, prior to providing the sites visited, replied, “The Fun Sites about Poetry are not very fun!” I was thoroughly enjoying the process and the stories that emerged from it.

CHERYL’S RHYTHMS

Cheryl has participated in professional conversations during several stages of her doctoral work. She has completed coursework and, drawing on her job as a research fellow, is beginning to shape her dissertation prospectus. When she began her program, she was one of two full-time doctoral students who spent most of their time on campus, either taking courses or teaching undergraduate classes. She has taught three different undergraduate courses in the English education program, and has supervised student teachers for several semesters. At the time that she began writing her dissertation prospectus, the program grew to include five new doctoral students, providing her with a cohort and foisting her into the role of leader among the doctoral students. After taking some time away from the program to have her second child, Cheryl has returned with energy for continuing her research and writing her dissertation.

Team-teaching with my major professor, Susan Wood, over several semesters became an excellent introduction to teacher action research. For our English methods course, we developed a student-initiated model of case-based pedagogy to address classroom management issues relevant to our preservice teachers. Susan and I conducted a study of this intervention over three semesters, collected and analyzed our data, and presented our research at the Florida Association of Teacher Educators Conference in 2003. Feedback from presentation attendees helped us to revisit the manuscript we were working on in an effort to better articulate our findings and contextualize them within the field of teacher education. The resulting article has been accepted for publication in an upcoming volume of *Action in Teacher Education*, and we presented our study at the Action in Teacher Education (ATE) conference in Chicago in February, 2005.

I can remember pretty precisely the point in my program of study when I made the cognitive leap from classroom teacher to researcher. During the fall of my second year, I was presenting at the Florida Council

for Teacher of English (FCTE) with Susan. I drove to Orlando with Susan and home with Sissi Carroll, our program chair; I can recall telling them both that what I was doing at FSU had begun to feel more like my *work* than my *studies*. To that point, I think that I'd always felt like I had taken a break from work when I left the high school classroom to study. Finally I was able to see the relevance of my research to the broader field of English education. That said, ever since I began identifying myself as a researcher, it's been difficult *not* to see a research question at every turn. With each new course comes the opportunity to explore new topics and methodologies—such is the danger for the novice doctoral student researcher. In an effort to reign in my questions and help me get focused, Susan suggested that I brainstorm a list of twenty-five questions that interested me, without giving thought to the feasibility of studying said questions. I did as she asked and sent her a list with notes. (Please see appendix A for a condensed list.)

Susan analyzed my questions and we met to discuss her “findings.” She waded through what I had given her and identified several “themes” that I seemed to be exploring. Then we talked more in depth about the whys and hows of the questions that seemed most compelling and most doable. I was able finally to narrow down to the following question; a question that I felt truly reflected my interests as a researcher: “How does explicit instruction in strategic self-assessment of comprehension impact reading achievement among middle and high school students?” Based on this question, I began to draft a short rationale and a stab at methodology that I could send out to my committee members for feedback. With their feedback in hand, I met with three of the members for a face-to-face discussion of my question and next steps. As a result of that meeting, I've begun revisiting the recent literature surrounding my question with new questions of my own about methodology and possible instrumentation.

MARLOW'S RHYTHMS

Marlow is a full-time classroom teacher of English who is moving slowly through coursework, with the goal of beginning his dissertation prospectus four years after he entered the program. Marlow has become a father—twice—while participating in the doctoral program. He hopes to be able to take a leave of absence from teaching at the School of Applied Individualized Learning (SAIL) when he reaches the stage of writing his dissertation. He plans to focus on some aspect of writing assessment for his dissertation research. Marlow teaches one undergraduate course per semester for the English education program in order

to stay closely connected with the university setting and program, even though the extra teaching is difficult for him and his young family. Marlow's search for a research question has been a bit different.

When I started pondering my research direction, I thought I would concentrate on technology and its role in the English classroom. I explored the history of technology integration, from educational radio to computer-assisted instruction, only to find that technology had had little effect on teaching in the last hundred years. Furthermore, its influence proved ephemeral, and finding even a clear and stable definition of the word "technology" was no easy task. This, coupled with my own personal experiences with technology in the classroom ending in technical failure, tarnished the allure of this direction for my studies. I began to search for another facet of language arts research that held my interest, and eventually I discovered an old friend in writing.

I say old friend because I've been a writer all my life, long before I ever considered teaching writing, and certainly before I explored studying the teaching of writing. Where do I go from here?...While I don't know my research question yet, I do know that I want to answer the following: How can I help classroom teachers become better teachers of writing? I am confident that once I finish, I can find a job that will allow me to assist teachers through both direct interaction and the advancement of research and theory. In the meantime I'm learning how questions can often lead to questions, awed by the Socratic nature of academic discourse. Hopefully, I'll soon find a question nobody else has asked—a question that needs an answer.

SYNCOPIATION AND SPRUNG RHYTHMS

In our program, we want students to feel like they are responsible for selecting their topics, and for establishing their own rhythms of research and productivity. If they move best to a syncopated beat, our job is to help them use that beat to establish and engage in their research agenda. We are committed to a policy of encouraging students to find their own interests, then identifying the faculty members with whom they can most effectively work to pursue that interest. The doctoral students who are (partially) supported financially by working with one of the English education faculty members on a grant-funded project often lean toward research related to the grant, at least in the initial stages of their work. Yet even in those cases, we encourage our students to continue to look for their own research interests—to keep their options open—as long as possible. We want them to experiment with research questions and methods, research sites and audiences, as they begin to make the transition from teacher to

teacher researcher. This desire is reflected in the programmatic evolution that now supports our students whether they choose engage in study of traditional disciplinary issues, special interest fields, and/or cross-disciplines ideas.

We are obliged to introduce our doctoral students to the reality of long-lived tensions, the spring rhythms, which occasionally interfere with the rhythmic flow of ideas within the conversations of our field. It has been our experience that, at least since the 1999 report of the National Reading Panel, qualitative studies of classrooms, teachers, and students are less likely to attract state or federal funding than are studies that rely on experimental designs and quantitative measures. To refuse to acknowledge to doctoral students that what Richardson describes as “considerable turbulence around questions of research methods and approaches” still whirls in education today would be dishonest and self-defeating (6). Since our program’s goals involve producing doctoral students who are successful in conducting and reporting research, and who engage as active participants in the professional conversations of our field, we are obligated to drawing their attention to this still-contentious issue.

The goal is not, however, only to help our students defend their epistemological stances against challengers. Our goal is to help them develop what Labaree calls a “high degree of methodological sophistication and flexibility” (15), and what Pallas calls “epistemological diversity” in order to enable them to navigate a vast “array of beliefs about the nature of what counts as educational knowledge” (6). We are a bit touchy about this issue, since even as faculty members and doctoral students, we still find ourselves defending the time we spend in middle and high school classrooms, conducting research alongside teachers. At times, we are called on to justify the effort we devote to translating our research into articles that are published in journals read primarily by teachers, and to defend our self-descriptions as “teacher educators.”

As a program, we are confident when we acknowledge classroom teachers as our most important audience; we know that change will most likely occur in classrooms and in schools in which teachers are informed by research. Mahiri insists that, “[w]here researchers act as implementers of their own designs, they gain better understandings of the complexities and possibilities inherent in effective teaching” and that this kind of design-based research “holds important implications in terms of [...] providing better support systems for those willing to ‘walk the walk’ of teachers” (470).

Doctoral students need to recognize and question stances that suggest academic privilege. We rely on them to work with us to extend the boundaries of scientifically-sound educational research, and to broaden the definition of appropriate audiences for research through the journals in which they publish and the conferences at which they present. We are not alone in these efforts. Michael W. Smith and Peter Smagorinski, in their final column in 2003 as coeditors of *Research in the Teaching*

of *English*, reflect on their first editorial column, when they note, “how the field was in the midst of a reconsideration of what counts as research” (417). They vowed to use the journal as a vehicle in which was presented “teacher-research, historical articles, narratives, and other modes and genres through which researchers are now conducting inquires” (Smith and Smagorinski 417). They defended their decision to include “as many well-articulated perspectives and voices as possible in considering the process and outcomes of literacy education,” in the professional conversation hosted by the journal; they referred to their “understanding that any single research paradigm is restricted in what it enables an author to formulate” and the belief that “by limiting the paradigms available to authors and readers, a journal narrows the field’s perspectives on how to consider the myriad complexities involved in understanding literacy practices and performances” (417–418).

CLOSING NOTES AND RHYTHMS

One significant way that we gauge our effectiveness as an English education program and faculty is through the success our doctoral students have in conducting and reporting research. Small but essential preliminary steps prepare them to define themselves as researchers. Jennifer speaks for us with this closing reflection.

I have come to the conclusion that a large part of succeeding in any doctoral program relies on Dewey’s notions of experiential learning and stepping forward: taking the chances involved with learning by doing. I had opportunities to try on different research approaches in varying doses, and those opportunities not only shaped my dissertation study, but gave me confidence in applying the approaches I tried out in my current research. I cannot help but look at the professional world around me and ask research questions. I see research questions as I try to describe the phenomena in our program and in our local schools. I apply many of the methods that I learned as a graduate student in my work now: surveys, interviews, careful observation, and analysis of student work, to name a few. The kinds of questions that I ask, and the methods for finding answers to them, have become ingrained in who I am as a professional. They directly shape not only how I approach research, but also how I approach all of my responsibilities as a faculty member. I have come to realize that there is never a lack of research questions—a fear that I had initially. Instead, I know now that research questions are all around me in my teaching and my service, and that my research is not a separate component, but part of the larger whole of my professional responsibilities. I conduct research in my own classes and in our local schools—where the genuine, important questions originate.

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Appendix A. Cheryl's Efforts to Formalize a Question

Hey, Susan—In each of these sections, I've italicized the questions that I think I'm moving toward. Before each section, I've just started brainstorming my feelings about the questions. I thought we could talk about these a little more when we meet before I send them out to the rest of the committee. Thanks for being patient as I wade through these! —Cheryl

TEACHER BELIEFS

This category of questions is interesting to me because I think there are real questions about what exactly teachers know and believe about reading and assessment. Many of the policies and mandates that impact teachers make certain assumptions about those teachers' knowledge and beliefs. I think the two questions that interest me most are 2 and 4 because they are sufficiently broad and, therefore, do not make assumptions about what teachers already think.

1. How do middle and high school teachers perceive the role of assessment in teaching reading?
2. *Do middle and high school English language arts teachers think that they teach reading? If so, what do they mean when they talk about "teaching reading"?*
3. Which factors do secondary teachers believe have the biggest impact on their students' comprehension? Fluency, phonics, vocabulary, motivation?
4. *What do teachers know and believe about the potential for assessment data to drive their reading instruction?*

TEACHER PRACTICES

This general category of questions interests me the most, probably, because I'm really curious about the most effective instructional practices for helping adolescents become better readers. For example, I'm curious about the impact that even a minimal level of classroom-level reading assessment can have on students' becoming better comprehenders.

5. *Do secondary teachers rely more on informal or formal assessments of reading comprehension?*
6. *How do teachers' informal assessments of students' reading comprehension align with formal assessments of their reading comprehension?*
7. *How well do students' self-assessments align with teacher assessments of comprehension?*

8. *What role does assessment play in the classrooms of teachers who have been deemed successful?*

Appendix B: Sampling of Doctoral Dissertations Written in English Education at Florida State University, 1970–2005

Year	Author	Title of Study
1959	A. Stevenson Dunning	A Definition of the Role of the Junior Novel Based on Analyses of Thirty Selected Junior Novels
1967	James Earl Davis	The Relevance of Rhetoric to College Freshman English Today
1971	Frank O'Hare	Effects of Sentence Combining of Syntactics of 7th Graders
1972	Michael Louis Angelotti	A Comparison of Elements in the Written Free Responses of Eighth Graders to a Junior Novel and Adult Novel
1976	Henry Edward Deluzain, Jr.	An Analysis of Factors Which Affect Teachers' Attitudes Toward English Usage
1982	Charles August Suhor	A Study of Media in Relation to English
1983	Barbara Hoetker Ash	Selected Effects of Elapsed Time and Grade Level on the Revisions in 8th, 10th, and 12th Graders' Writing
1989	Tom Albritton	The Texts of Teaching: A Study of the Conceptualization and Practice of College Composition Instruction Using a Literary Theory Model of Educational Research
1994	Gail P. Gregg	The Use of Storybook Reading in a Cross-age Tutoring Program to Enhance the Reading Skills of Low Ability High School Students
1997	Gary Randolph	"Fused Horizons": Collaborations and Co-authored Texts: A Case Study of a Freshman Writing Group
2004	Jennifer Dail	Reading in an Online Hypertext Environment: A Case Study of Tenth-grade English Students

CHAPTER 5

Beyond Coursework to Community

THE REAL WORLD AS SPRINGBOARD TO RESEARCH



Katie Van Sluys

This chapter describes my experience as a graduate student, assistant instructor, and researcher at Indiana University and the ways in which this experience facilitated my transition into a literacy education faculty position at DePaul University. I began graduate school in 1999 as an elementary public school teacher interested in how young children learn to navigate schools, language, and literacy experiences. Uncertain about how to enter academia, I found my route through participation in activities that moved me and my broader educational community forward. Indeed, involvement with faculty and departmental projects and collaborations became contexts for some of my most important learning. These undertakings created opportunities to learn about faculty interests and research, means of data collection and analysis, teaching expectations and practices, university systems, procedures, and contact people. Involvement with my many and varied commitments also connected me to the people, issues, and possibilities within the larger community. They provided contexts to try out what I was learning in my coursework and sites where seeds were planted for future collaborative inquiries.

In my early days as a doctoral student, I knew that university teaching responsibilities were in my very-near future so I first made efforts to attend to the teaching questions on my mind. I arranged visits to various literacy methods courses. Two of the courses I observed were taught on-site at a local elementary school. My visits there not only introduced me to university teaching, but to the world of research. Spending time in Amy Seely Flint's undergraduate methods course, I learned about one of her current research projects exploring the interaction between preservice teachers and young elementary-grade writers. Observing this course, I quickly evolved from being an observer, to becoming a participant and co-researcher with Amy in her "Authoring Study." As I became more and more involved with this project, it enabled me to connect everything I did as a doctoral student to the real world.

I knew how to be a teacher in a classroom with children, and connecting this thinking to the university classroom made sense to me, but being a researcher in classrooms came wrapped with uncertainties. Before graduate school, I had been a student and a teacher for years. I saw my daily work as action research where data from classroom life informed my curricular decisions. However I hadn't ever considered myself an academic researcher. What did it mean to engage in research? What might it look and feel like to be a researcher? And how was I to find a place for myself within this dimension of academic life? I wondered—What do field notes look like? How should and do I position myself as a researcher in classrooms? Do I interact with children? Do I just watch? How might a researcher learn about the in-the-head thinking of participants? How does one use multiple data sources collectively (i.e. audio recordings, field notes, artifacts)? These are just some of the many questions that streamed through my head as I joined this study (Flint and Van Sluys et al.).

Since I was interested in the writing experiences of the elementary students beyond the author circle venues where they convened with undergraduate writers, I began doing what researchers do. I started observing in elementary classrooms where the youngest writers spent their time drafting the pieces that they brought to the multiage (elementary and university student) author circles. As I sat at the edge of the circle during writing minilessons or near tables of children during writing times I attempted to script their talk, note their actions, and record the content and processes that surrounded the pieces they were composing. As time went on, I discovered the value in having enough dialogue in my notes to match speakers with audiotape transcripts. I learned about the importance of copying student writing and cataloging it so that it could be paired with the discursive events I was recording. I figured out how to use phrases from my teaching days like, "Tell me more about this..." or "Talk to me about the decision you just made..." to help young children make public the lines of thinking that informed their actions.

Simultaneous with my weekly field visits, I frequently interacted with the classroom teacher, other graduate student researchers, and other scholars' prior research publications. Having a place and project to apply my thinking was important. When I read Dyson's *Social Worlds of Children Learning to Write* I paid attention to her role in the field, transcription features, and thinking about young writers' social worlds. I thought about my relationship with teachers and the data I was collecting as I opted to copy and share my weekly field notes with the teacher. And as I talked with colleagues about preliminary codes and emerging questions I became more intentional in gathering the needed data to address our questions. Inching closer to initial findings, this project also became my introduction to conference proposal writing, presentation, and publication.

The Authoring Study allowed me to dig in, engage deeply with research processes while collaborating with others in ways that provided genuine and helpful

feedback. While I valued the depth of this experience, I also wanted to explore the range of possibilities within the field. I therefore became a Reading Recovery liaison between a local school corporation and my university department, a teacher-study-group facilitator, and a graduate assistant on a grant. The Reading Recovery position fed into my early literacy inquiry required as part of my master's program degree plan, the teacher-study groups introduced me to local teachers and helped me keep fingers on the pulse of classroom life, and being a graduate assistant meant real work with Institutional Review Boards (IRBs), grants, budgets, and arranging work in the field. As a graduate student I was becoming involved in the projects beyond my coursework. I realize now I was braiding together the very categories I would be evaluated on as a professor—teaching, research, and service. In this way, I built a foundation for my own professional future. I was constantly faced with figuring out how I might incorporate a new project into my work, weighing new possibilities against what I already had going.

Becoming a member of established research projects in my department facilitated entree into the local teaching community and made my work *real*. Real work is central to apprenticeship. One becomes a member of a community of practice by doing what the long-time members do, receiving and responding to feedback, and changing oneself and the community along the way. When early research courses focused on theoretical frameworks, I took my first stab at reading and writing about process writing and critical literacy. They were both broad areas that I was truly interested in knowing more about and these course topics had potential value within project-based research efforts. When coursework called for experiences coding a data set, I drew upon a *real* data set from the Authoring Study. Together with the research team, we coded transcripts, field notes, and written artifacts from preservice teachers and young writers' interactions as they experienced authoring cycles in their classrooms. Learning to code was followed by learning how to write conference proposals, present, coauthor, and publish. When my coursework called for papers, I turned to my project experiences, wrote papers for publication and class purposes as well as reviewed books in related areas of research (Van Sluys 2000; 2003).

While classroom teaching and full-time graduate student work both called for time and dedication, responsibilities were structured very differently. Graduate days and faculty life often involve less structured days, coupled with much work to be done. For me, creating a rhythm was essential. At home mornings were for writing, working out was midday, meetings, reading, and "task oriented" work happened in late afternoons with classes usually in the evening. Days spent in the field included time for transcription or note taking immediately following visits. When teaching, I blocked time for responding to student work and planning. And, I often had lists of assignments I had made for myself. These lists included suggested readings from

colleagues and/or bibliographies, organizations to check out, Web sites to explore, or ideas to investigate. My lists often grew after conferences, and just like course assignments, they had deadlines. This, to me, was living inquiry enabling me to pursue the questions that mattered most to me.

Becoming a member of a teacher-study-group project in my first years as a graduate student initiated relationships with teacher colleagues that led to invitations into their classrooms. Through interactions I learned about their schools, their children, and the challenges they were facing as teachers. As time went on, the projects I was involved with merged. Study group members, authoring study teachers, and teachers from a professional development site where I team-taught literacy methods courses became part of a newly developing critical literacy inquiry group. I began visiting several classrooms more frequently and regularly. As I became more committed to critical literacies in elementary classrooms, I continued to wonder about opportunities for potentially multilingual learners. And, while I could not have predicted my *interests* or *the events over* three years' time, one of the classrooms involved with the critical literacy inquiry group became a new site for new English language learners the very year I was actively considering a dissertation research site. Merging my research interests with the teacher's questions and interests, a year-long ethnographic endeavor began. The research that ensued was about more than matching site criteria with the questions on my mind, it was about entering into a dialogic and reciprocal research endeavor in which I had the privilege of learning from, with, and about a classroom of students' and teachers' visions of what it might be like to become critically literate in a culturally and linguistically diverse world.

I spent a year researching the lives of elementary literacy learners and their teacher as they tackled issues of language learning and the politics of becoming literate. I spent regular time each week in their classroom; I took field notes and audiotaped their interactions. Immediately following my visits, I transcribed the tapes and merged them with my field notes. I periodically interviewed children and regularly debriefed with the teacher. Analysis was ongoing. Simultaneous with my data collection I was part of a research seminar taught by Phil Carspecken. Class colleagues and I served as peer debriefers as we shared data and emergent analysis. This wasn't the only dialogue alive during the year of data collection. I shared unanalyzed transcripts with the teacher as well as drafts of analysis. At the end of the year, I drew together what I learned about each child and compiled narratives. I took the narratives back to each child, and audiotaped an interview as we discussed their perspectives on the meaning I had constructed from spending the year with them.

Just as there's more than one way to research, there's more than one way to become a researcher. As I read, interacted with classmates, talked with teachers, and listened to colleagues at conferences, I knew with greater and greater certainty through each experience that I wanted to be one who inquired into the complexities

of life in diverse classroom spaces. My experiences helped me inch toward becoming the sort of researcher that inquired into complex practices in ways that valued participants as knowledge generators versus subjects to be researched. I carried my experiences and sense of who I was as a researcher with me into my first weeks, months, and semesters as a first-year faculty member.

Dissertation defended, job search complete, I began faculty life in an urban setting where my work with diverse groups of teachers and learners was certainly possible. The greatest change in my life seemed to be a salary. My rigorous graduate apprenticeship into what it means to live as an inquirer, researcher, teacher, and colleague facilitated a seamless transition.

As the year began, I knew I had to be constantly cognizant of balancing commitments to research, teaching, and service in ways that met both my professional needs as well as the needs of my institution. For me, this had several rather pragmatic implications. Once again, a schedule. Also, pairing teaching contexts with potential research. And, tackling the IRB early on so that I could have the needed permission for data collection within my research endeavors.

My experiences told me that successful engagement in the research dimensions of academic life requires time. To protect my research and writing life, I blocked my teaching time, designating days for teaching, responding to student work, and planning for upcoming classes. Similarly I designated writing days and protected these times from meetings and interruptions. I also knew that I needed projects in various stages of development so that I would have things to work on now as well as things to work on later. I had to be thinking both short and long term. In other words, I needed an overall vision in addition to daily intentions.

Identifying my priorities drove my decision making and actions. My dissertation had been a large part of my learning life, there were pieces tucked within its covers that I wanted more of the world to know about, and articles based on this work were first on the list. I'd selected an urban context because of my interest in teacher education, literate opportunities for potentially multilingual students, and educational change. I could also name some of my commitments as a researcher. One, I'm committed to working with practicing teachers and classroom-based inquiry. Two, I'm interested in work that contributes to redefining narrow definitions of literacy and related practices to include all children despite their linguistic background. And three, I'm dedicated to making connections between the professional communities developing understanding of literacy practices in the twenty-first century and support for early career teachers' (re)envisioning of literacy practices in schools.

To carry out my vision, I needed sites where I might work and collaborate with teaching colleagues. This meant investigating available resources within my new institution and getting to know potential elementary schools with whom I might collaborate. I began contacting and meeting with principals and designing my

undergraduate teaching to construct working relationships with two local schools. I also needed teaching colleagues who were committed to or interested in critical perspectives toward literacy. This meant finding places I could learn and grow with practicing teachers to create venues where thinking processes could be shared with new colleagues. So, as I began teaching both undergraduate and graduate courses, my students were invited to local schools for field experiences. As they worked in classrooms, I visited. I shared resources with teachers. I took notes when in classrooms and gave teachers copies. I provided interested teachers at these schools with copies of course readings. And my students' final papers/presentations were directed not only toward me as their professor but toward their colleagues and the school communities they were learning with. I was trying to plant and cultivate seeds for collaboration.

As year one of teaching was coming to a close, my students got teaching jobs. I invited them to conferences and worked to help them to develop professional connections. After one summer conference, a past student, and soon-to-be first-year teacher, wondered about collegial networks for early career teachers in our city. Soon other past students and I were recruited to begin a small network of teachers committed to critical, holistic practices in their first years of teaching. Just as their interactions were beginning, so was a new line of research.

Learning is social; we can't do it alone. We need others in our company. Just as teachers networked with each other to find support, so did I. As part of a large "class" of new faculty we often turned to each other. We organized informal monthly lunches to help each other navigate the current institutional culture as well as construct shared understandings of our roles and future possibilities. Most importantly, we supported each other as colleagues.

Over time, interactions lead to a reading and inquiry partnership with my office neighbor. While the nuances of our research vary, we share common interests and now regularly read, talk, and think together. It's a beginning and one that I hope will grow as we now work to apprentice others into the academic community.

Smith wrote that "we learn from the company we keep," and this was apparent in my story as faculty colleagues, graduate student peers, teachers, and children certainly taught me many things in our four years together in Indiana (30). However, Smith went on to write that we do so "without effort and without awareness;" this is where we differ (30). I think that intentionality and awareness of one's moves is what brings us to new places. We need to have plans, craft agendas, tell and study our stories, listen to others, revise our thinking, and imagine new futures through our work as students, teachers, and researchers. We need to have active educational imaginations where we move beyond, "accepting things the way they are, [experiment and explore] possibilities [in ways that] reinvents the self and in the process reinventing the world. [Educational imagination] is daring to try on

something really different to open new trajectories, to seek different experiences, and to conceive of different futures” (Wenger 273).

Epilogue

While this chapter alone could not capture the contributions of all of my mentors, I am deeply grateful to the contributions of all of my committee members (Jerome C. Harste, Mitzi Lewison, Amy Seely Flint, and Phil Carspecken) as well as IU and Bloomington colleagues and peer debriefer extraordinaire, Tasha Laman.

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**Discovering, Focusing,
and Writing an English Education
Dissertation**



CHAPTER 6

APA or MLA?

NEGOTIATING THE MULTIPLE DISCOURSES OF ENGLISH EDUCATION



Lisa Schade Eckert

During my first years as a professor of English education, I discovered I was different than many of my colleagues in the field. It wasn't just that I was jointly appointed, with 67 percent of my job in the College of Education, Department of Curriculum and Instruction and 33 percent in the College of Liberal Arts, Department of English; it was that I earned my degrees, from undergraduate through PhD, from English Departments. I was used to being a little different, though. I had completed my master's degree in literature while teaching high school English full time, often finding myself defending my profession to the creative writing and literature students in my graduate classes and, at the same time, defending my choice of graduate program to my colleagues in education. I graduated in 1994 without really knowing much about a specific focus in the field of English education. I continued to teach full time, pursuing further coursework in library science because I wanted to continue my education but believed a PhD in literature studies and literary theory was not likely to land a job that was, geographically and financially, conducive to a happy family life. Besides, I wasn't at all sure that I wanted to leave a rewarding career in teaching secondary English.

It was a chance encounter that led to my doctoral studies in English education. I found myself discussing the field of English education on a ski lift with the individual who would become my dissertation director; I immediately recognized that the combination of classroom experience and literary research I had begun during my graduate studies was particularly suited for the field. I applied and was accepted into a newly established program in the English Department at Western Michigan University. I would be the first English education doctoral student to blaze the trail, becoming the test case for a new degree emphasis while navigating departmental requirements originally designed for and by scholars specializing in liberal arts and humanities. At first, because of my educational background

in English, I felt right at home. But as the time for writing my dissertation drew closer, the challenges inherent in conducting and documenting teacher research in the humanities gradually came into focus. I was again finding myself in a unique position as I was situated directly between humanities and social science research.

WRITING THE ENGLISH EDUCATION DISSERTATION

My graduate research activities had been primarily focused on literature, consisting of activities such as comparing quarto and folio versions of Shakespearean drama, investigating the influence of Dorothy Wordsworth on her brother William's poetry, and researching the historical development of literary and critical theory. I was well versed in the Modern Language Association's *Handbook for Writers of Research Papers* and had always taught my students to use MLA documentation for their research projects. My research in the field of English education, however, soon shifted my attention from the content of teaching English to the methods I employed when I taught the material. My dissertation investigation drew on my background in literature and literary theory to research ways that students' reading skills could be enhanced by teaching different theoretical approaches in secondary English classes. Because I was a practicing teacher throughout much of my graduate work and had been intensely engaged with literary studies at a scholarly level, I could design a significant research project with *my* students in *my* classroom rather than participating as an outside observer. Like many English education doctoral students, I remained in the classroom for my first years of doctoral study and this made it possible for me to use my own classroom as the site of my research. As I engaged in this research I came to realize I had much to learn about educational research as a branch of the social sciences.

My dissertation research epitomized the dual nature of an English education doctoral degree; I was acutely aware of the ways my project reflected both humanities and social science methodologies. Combining elements of literary research, including textual knowledge, literary criticism, and literary theory, with methods of educational research was essential to my project. I had no experience with what seemed to me as nebulous requirements of the Institutional Human Subjects Review Board—and none of my fellow doctoral students in English had to worry about this in their literary scholarship. Besides defining the specific research question I sought to answer, I also had to consider questions of presentation. Should I be more qualitative in descriptions of data collection and analysis in keeping with my English and literary research background, or should I emphasize a quantitative, statistical assessment of the results with the eye of a social scientist? Was it still appropriate to use the MLA style of documentation for my research? I searched for

resources to help me negotiate a balance in the presentation, finally deciding that a qualitative, humanities stance was most appropriate for my particular project.

Still, I felt that I needed to justify my choice, and clearly define my rationale for balancing the dual nature of my dissertation with a qualitative analysis of my research. Perhaps I worried excessively about this issue; qualitative analysis of data is routinely employed by educational researchers, and my dissertation committee assured me that I was on the right track. But as the first English education PhD candidate in the English Department, I struggled to find dissertation models for my project. Such justification would not have been so pressing an issue if I was writing a dissertation documenting literary research or a dissertation presenting research on literacy practices in education; methodology and documentation would follow disciplinary traditions in either case. I had been, as Patricia Lambert Stock describes, “conducting research in a genre that allowed me to bring the professional tools I had learned in my interdisciplinary education to bear on my professional work [...] to collect ‘empirical’ phenomena about teaching and learning for study [...] to interpret and re-interpret those phenomena [...] to develop effective instructional materials and practices” (104). I realized that this unique combination provided authenticity to my presentation of the classroom situations and the theory that informed my practice, and that blurring the lines between what Stock calls “the classical distinction between propositional knowledge (knowing-that) and procedural knowledge (knowing-how)” was exactly the way to best address the research I was conducting (105). The results of my research into literary theory provided the propositional knowledge and the results of testing the application of those theories in the English classroom provided the procedural knowledge.

I spent the requisite hours in the library tracing the development and influence of theorists in various fields within the humanities, including psychology, history, philosophy, and literature. Data gathered in this way included specific passages of theoretical text, biographical information on the theorists themselves, marginalia, and scholarly journal articles, and analysis of this data comprised a large portion of my final dissertation. Without this broad base of propositional knowledge, I certainly could not have conducted the classroom research that constituted the procedural knowledge I sought to gain from the experience. But my research was also ethnographic social science, as I gathered data on the ways in which classroom culture influenced, and was influenced by, the interventions I designed based on my literary research. As I began writing the dissertation, I often addressed issues of socially constructed meaning and included narratives of classroom inquiries and presentations, illustrative transcripts of student discussion and interviews, student-generated artifacts of written pieces and artistic renderings, and anecdotes to highlight key points and ideas. I used these incidents to exemplify the processes in which my students engaged to construct meaning from text and the world

around them, as well as to illustrate times that my approaches and/or methods did not produce the results for which I had hoped. Including these glimpses into the culture of my classroom was essential in capturing the essence of the interaction and significance of student inquiry and their written responses. Combining these methodologies was difficult and, at times, I struggled to merge these two dimensions of my research into a cohesive whole. And I still worried.

I worried because I was also a participant in my research, interacting with my high school students as both teacher and researcher. Being “present” in the research situation and participating in the learning process provided additional insight into how students were engaging in the instructional practices I tested throughout the study, but further complicated data gathering and documentation as well. How was I to include, and document, the “me” in the mix? This didn’t seem to be either propositional or procedural. Then I read *Methods of Literacy Research*, in which teacher-research data is identified as a “new genre” with “distinctive features” (Kamil et al. 17).

[T]eacher-researchers are first and foremost teachers, who are responsible for the learning and well-being of the students assigned to them [...] a teacher researcher not only lives in the community but works in and has responsibility for it [...] The insider role of teacher researcher brings with it a unique combination: the power associated with first-person insight, the limitation of participant perspective, and perhaps a bit of tension involved with trying to simultaneously teach and study one’s teaching environment. It is this unique combination of qualities [...] that gives teacher research its individuality [...] teachers are in the best position to explore their own practice and make sense of the classroom worlds. (Kamil et al. 18)

I realized these insights and tensions formed a crucial component in the methods I employed to share my research findings, and finally began to fully understand that the joy of pursuing this research, of pursuing the PhD in English education, and embarking on a lifelong vocation was, at the very core, the opportunity to “*simultaneously teach and study*” (emphasis added). This “new genre” became the model for my writing, and I believe it is an important concept for encouraging practicing teachers to develop and share new practices. I began to view my dissertation research as part of a strong and continuing tradition of reflective practitioners and teacher researchers, many of whom have also struggled to balance research projects that require both propositional and procedural knowledge as well as the need to both teach and study. And then I began to write what I knew, what I learned, what I concluded, what I believed. I finished the dissertation in six weeks.

FROM DISSERTATION TO PUBLICATION

But that balancing act did not end when I successfully defended and submitted by dissertation. Because the English education faculty in my doctoral program was located in the English Department in the College of Liberal Arts, when I accepted a position split between two colleges, I found I was not familiar with the inner mechanisms of a College of Education and Department of Curriculum and Instruction. Being jointly appointed between the two departments and the two colleges meant learning how to navigate the procedural, cultural, and curricular requirements of each, while balancing service, research, and publication duties of two vastly different entities. At times I felt invisible, that I didn't really belong in either department. Some of my colleagues in the English Department didn't know for sure what my research entailed, even though my office was in the English Department, because I spent a great deal of time "floating" in the building across campus which housed the Curriculum and Instruction Department. At the same time, some of my colleagues in the Curriculum and Instruction Department didn't know for sure what my research entailed because I didn't have an office there, and my classes met in the building which houses the English Department. Again I found myself wondering where I fit in; again I faced the distinction of merging the humanities side of my work with the social sciences. I experienced a steep learning curve as I contemplated the finer points of the APA style manual and subtle differences in the underlying assumptions about research and documentation between that and the MLA guide. Negotiating the specifics of tenure requirements became an issue; because the majority of my appointment was in the College of Education, my tenure home was there as well, placing the emphasis of my tenure review on scholarly research in the social sciences. Grant writing became a priority, and I learned to adapt my research questions and descriptions of research methods to meet the constant fluctuations of state and federal guidelines. I still burn at the memory of spending days writing a proposal for a College of Liberal Arts fellowship only to be told only hours after I had submitted it that, even though it was well-suited for the goals of the fellowship, because the majority of my appointment was in the College of Education I was ineligible for consideration.

The biggest shock came when I was advised that it was better for my tenure file to publish my dissertation as separate articles in professional journals rather than as the book manuscript I had long assumed I would complete as a major step toward tenure. I even considered doing this, picking apart theory and methodology to highlight one concept or another, but realized that, in addition to providing evidence of student achievement and the success of introducing literary theory in high school classrooms, my dissertation told an important story that could not be parceled out. Through the words of my students in classroom narratives,

vignettes, and artifacts, and through the conclusions I drew about theory and practice, it was the story of my professional and pedagogical growth as a reflective practitioner. I knew that it was more important to support and contribute to the teacher-researcher genre, making my own small statement about the significance of practitioner research in developing policy and honoring the classroom teacher's theoretical and practical expertise, than to take a safer path to tenure. I resolved to take the risk and, with the blessing and support of many of my English education colleagues, published the book.

After all, I'm an English teacher, and navigating such a circuitous path is second nature to those of us who accept, and thrive on, the challenges inherent in such a dynamic field. I published the book but also extended my research into teacher research and adolescent critical literacy to balance my interests in English and education. Both fields, pedagogical and literary, center on the joy of constructing meaning from the twists and turns of life with language, literature, and writing inherent in teaching English as a content area. This has led to fortunate discoveries about the interdisciplinary nature of English education, similar to the experiences I had while writing an interdisciplinary dissertation. Opportunities for research, projects, and collaboration constantly presented themselves in my daily conversations and contacts. Interdisciplinarity means finding commonalities in different fields, exchanging ideas with colleagues who share a wide expanse of knowledge, making connections that are exciting and invaluable in formulating proposals, and I drew upon two collegial departments for support and advice. When I bridged the distance between my campus worlds, I had a unique capacity to make connections between theory in critical literary discourse and in developing curricular and instructional methodologies. Establishing my individual "fit" in the academic world presented the kind of challenges that allowed me to stretch intellectually and see myself and my educational goals in exciting new ways. Perhaps most importantly, I can draw on these experiences to advise and support my own graduate students as they begin to define their research interests and explore their subjectivities as both teachers and students in literature and literacy studies. In the end, I have been extremely fortunate to have experienced both the opportunities and challenges in the unique field of English education.

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CHAPTER 7

What is English Education?

A RESEARCH AGENDA



James Marshall

At a recent national gathering of English educators in Atlanta, conference organizers structured the agenda around six key questions currently facing the field. Conference participants each chose one of these questions and spent about three days in small groups exploring possible answers. The meeting as a whole was lively and useful and each group developed a number of promising approaches to the issues under discussion. I would like to focus in this essay on two questions addressed at the conference both because they are deeply interrelated and because, taken together I think, they represent a promising path forward for research in English education.

The first question—What is English education?—drew the largest number of volunteer participants and generated some of the most engaging conversations of the conference. Echoing the question, What is English?, that anchored both the Dartmouth Conference of the late 1960s and the English Coalition Conference of the late 1980s, this related attempt to interrogate the identity, shape, and mission of our field raised a broad range of new questions—some political, some historical, and all without easy answers. The second question—How can we assess programs in English education?—drew a significantly smaller number of participants (I was one of them), generating far fewer proposals and far less debate. Those of us working on this question quickly concluded, not surprisingly, that it is difficult to develop strategies for program assessment when there is no wide understanding of what exactly we are to assess. If the definition and institutional identity of English education are still under contention, then proposals for evaluating the effectiveness of English education programs, while arguably necessary, may be practically premature.

As a way around this problem, I would like to recast the issue of our field's identity—What is English education?—not as a speculative political or theoretical question, but as an empirical question, that is, as an overarching *research* question that can frame a program of disciplined inquiry in our field. If the focus of this volume on doctoral education is on classroom teachers becoming university-based researchers, the contribution of this chapter will be to suggest the value of research,

including dissertation research, on the nature and practice of English education itself, that is, on the preparation and ongoing professional education of English teachers. Such inquiry is likely to combine social-science- and humanities-based work in ways that are typical of English education's interdisciplinary practice. As doctoral students strive to become sound researchers they are also preparing themselves as teacher educators. Research on the conditions, constraints, and discourse of English teacher education is, thus, a particularly relevant undertaking for doctoral level inquiry. It is my contention that our field is greatly in need of just this kind of research.

Though we are equipped with a range of theoretically rich models for preparing teachers of literacy (e.g., Grossman; Hillocks; Smagorinsky; Gere et al.; Christenbury), and though we have developed communities of practice where such preparation is undertaken with wisdom and critical reflection (e.g., Graham et al.; Sirotnik and Goodlad), our understanding of how English teachers become English teachers beyond the borders of our own classrooms and our own campuses is both undertheorized and data-poor. Before we can effectively assess English education programs, before we can make well-informed judgments about reforming English education, we need baseline information about the institutional contexts and material conditions under which teacher preparation in English is already taking place.

In the following, I will describe three areas where I think field-based, empirical research could be critically important to our ongoing conversations about teacher preparation:

1. the institutional and discursive structures that frame traditional English Education programs;
2. the still growing power of standards in the lives of teachers and those preparing to teach; and
3. the shifting definitions of what counts as the "content" of English, the curriculum that teachers, new and experienced, enact daily in their classrooms.

Each of these, I will argue, is central to our efforts to define English education at the present time. For each, I will attempt to frame the problem and sketch a series of questions that a program of research might address.

What I will not be able to do in this essay is examine issues surrounding the growing number of alternative licensure programs that are now producing new teachers at all levels and in every subject area. These include state- and city-based programs such as those in Virginia and Los Angeles, as well as proprietary, Web-based programs now offered by the University of Phoenix and Kaplan Enterprises. These licensure efforts have proliferated so rapidly and taken so many different forms that they represent

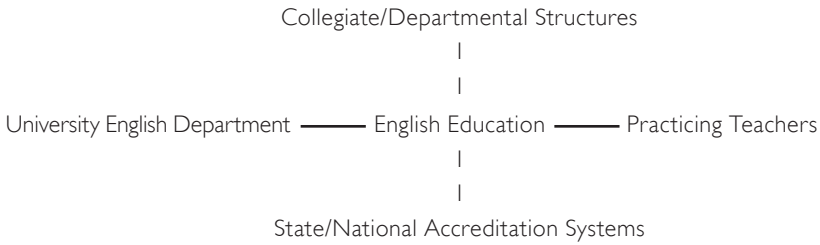
their own set of research questions—questions that we ignore at our peril. But the effort to understand who we are now should probably begin with an examination of what we have been for some time, and that is where I will turn first.

THE INSTITUTIONAL CONTEXT OF ENGLISH EDUCATION

University- and college-based English education programs, like their counterparts in other subject areas, are deeply embedded within complex institutional and discursive frameworks that preemptively shape their mission, size, resources, and priorities. Rarely freestanding departments within a college, English education programs usually share administrative and often physical space with units serving other professional goals, either in English Departments or in Departments of Teacher Education or Curriculum and Instruction. English education programs do not usually control their own budget and thus must compete for resources such as faculty lines, teaching assistants, and technical support within departmental political structures. When they are assessed by the central administration of their own institution, by state departments of education, or by national accrediting agencies such as the NCATE or TEAC, they are assessed as part of something larger—as part of teacher education generally, say, or secondary education more specifically. English education programs, by themselves, are rarely ranked in national comparisons of educational quality. The rankings that do exist for academic programs are typically based on faculty productivity and national reputation rather than on the relative educational merits of the program itself.

A search for self-definition in English education, I think, must begin with these stubborn realities. Though as a field, we profess a unique professional identity and a specific professional mission, we have yet to find an institutional space that allows for an independent jurisdiction of that identity and that mission. We are always part of something politically larger and more complicated than ourselves, and the first step toward an empirical understanding of who we are is to map that political landscape.

As a start, I'd like to suggest that we view individual English education programs as residing at the center of four discourses, each embodied in a community and each arguably larger and more powerful than the English education programs that must mediate their influence. On a horizontal axis, we might place the university-based English Department on one end and the local community of school-based teachers of English at the other. On a vertical axis, we might place the colleges and departments within which English education programs are housed at one end and the state and national professional organizations that address issues in teacher education at the other. The overall structure would look something like this:



The relationship of an individual English education program to these four discourse communities will be shaped by local history and always by local politics, but let me suggest why each of the relationships is important both to an understanding of our field and to a generative research agenda.

University English Departments

English education programs, whether housed within English Departments or across campus in Colleges of Education, must always navigate the curriculum, scholarly interests, and teaching priorities of their colleagues in English. It is the English Department that supplies the “content”—at least the content in literature—that those preparing to teach English must study. Just as important, faculty members in English often model powerful approaches to the teaching of literature that faculty in English education must acknowledge and mediate when necessary. And finally, faculty in English Departments may signal to students in their established policies or in their advising responsibilities a range of complicated attitudes about teaching in public schools. Because students entering English education programs are subject to all of these influences, faculty in English education must understand them and find ways to address them as part of their own professional practice.

But scholarship in our field has told us very little about the curricular, pedagogical, or political dimensions of our relationship with English Departments. There have been very few empirical studies of the teaching of literature in the university and the ongoing debates within literary studies about the nature of texts, of reading, and of culture itself has undoubtedly affected what students preparing to teach read in their English courses and what models of teaching are made available to them there (Marshall and Smith). At both national and local levels, then, we need research that asks questions like the following:

- What kinds of texts and what kinds of reading are typically taught within English Departments to students who are preparing to teach English in public schools?

- ✦ What models of teaching literature are most typical in university English courses and what is the effect of these models on students preparing to teach English?
- ✦ What is communicated by faculty in English to students preparing to teach about the intellectual rigor and professional value of working in public schools?

Teachers of English

If faculty in English education must broker a sometimes delicate relationship with their English colleagues on campus, they must negotiate a perhaps even more complicated relationship with the community of school-based English teachers that surrounds that campus and that usually participates in the process of preparing teachers. This community of practice often incorporates an enormous range of academic backgrounds, teaching competencies, and attitudes toward university-based teacher preparation, and a great deal of research in teacher education (e.g., Darling-Hammond et al.) suggests that the power of this community in shaping the development of new teachers far outweighs the influence of education faculty.

Though there have been a number of studies examining particular dimensions of student-teacher-cooperating teacher relationships (e.g., Graham; Darling-Hammond et al.), and further studies of communities of teachers in partnership with programs in English education (e.g., Graham et al.), we've had few baseline efforts to understand the complex cultural factors that both shape and disturb the relationship between university faculty in English education and practicing teachers of English in schools. Because faculty in education must establish and maintain these relationships in order to do their work at all, it is probably unlikely that they can also dispassionately and publicly interrogate why the relationships are sometimes difficult. Still, the relationships between English education programs and communities of practicing teachers, like the relationships between those programs and university English Departments, can be theorized and examined across local contexts for the themes and patterns that cut across those contexts. Several questions may be helpful:

- ✦ How do the material conditions in which university faculty and practicing teachers live and work affect the attitudes of teachers to university faculty and to university programs?
- ✦ How do teachers working in schools view the relationship between their classroom practice and the models of teaching offered in English

education programs? How do faculty members in English education view that relationship?

- ✦ How do students preparing to teach English mediate the influence of their university teachers in English, their university teachers in English education, and the practicing teachers with whom they work in schools?

Collegiate and Departmental Structures

Because English education programs are always a part of a larger administrative unit, their size, independence, and available resources are always subject to compromise, fluctuating budgets, and shifting priorities within the larger unit. This is true, of course, of almost any academic entity—it is surely true of university departments and even colleges. But programs, unlike departments or colleges, rarely have a formal governance structure beyond an appointed coordinator or chair; even more rarely do they control a budget that allows them to make independent decisions about the allocation of resources. The number of instructors and teaching assistants in the program, the number of students to be admitted, and the number of courses that can be offered in any given term are all subject to deliberations in which English education faculty may not have a decisive voice.

But the complexity is greater still. Students in English education are almost always part of a larger teacher education program, which means that, in addition to courses in English methods, they are also probably taking courses in educational psychology, foundations of education, special education, or technology. These courses may be taught as large lectures or as small seminars; they may encourage extensive writing or require multiple-choice examinations; they may model a constructivist approach to teaching or an approach committed to the simple transmission of information. Whatever choices are made, they are beyond the control of the faculty in English education. In fact, for those preparing to teach English, courses specifically in English education may represent only a small fraction of the courses required for licensure: courses in English and foundational courses in education may absorb the majority of the hours required. This situation suggests the following questions:

- ✦ To what extent do faculty members in English education understand the academic content and approaches to teaching embodied in required education courses outside of their own area? To what extent are those approaches to teaching compatible with the approaches practiced and encouraged in the English education program?

- How do students in English Education programs navigate the complicated and sometimes inconsistent curricular landscapes of their teacher preparation as a whole? How do they make sense of the different implicit and explicit messages about teaching that they receive as part of their program?
- To what extent does any specific English education program offer a coherent and theoretically consistent preparation for the teaching of English? This question requires that we examine not only English education courses, but also the courses in English and other courses in education that are required for licensure.

State and National Accreditation Agencies

I will focus more directly on standards and mandated assessments that are a part of accreditation reviews in the next section of this essay. For now it seems necessary to observe only that English education programs, like almost all educational programs, are presently subject to an unprecedented and still growing number of standards-based evaluations. In many states, all teacher education programs must show compliance with basic resource and faculty standards for both state accreditation and the NCATE accreditation. Part of the NCATE process in English education is to show compliance with the NCTE's Guidelines for the Preparation of English Teachers. Students in teacher education programs, meanwhile, must provide performance data to demonstrate their mastery of the INTASC standards. Most states mandate that students receive a qualifying score on a standardized test as a requirement for licensure, and most teacher education programs must help their graduates anticipate a standards-based assessment of their teaching performance in their first years in the classroom. Perhaps most importantly, we may feel compelled to prepare our teacher candidates to work in schools that are driven by required assessments, even though such assessments may undermine the approaches to teaching and the habits of mind to which we are most committed.

All of these standards and all of these assessments are often mandated without the consultation or the consent of faculty in English education or any other discipline in teacher education. The standards and assessments are now part of our landscape, part of our job. To the extent that they are institutionally generated and slow to change, they are part of a "given" to which our teaching must respond. Like the teaching that takes place in English courses on campus, in other education courses in our departments, and in the English classes our students observe in the schools, these standards and assessments are now part of

what defines our work. We must prepare teachers in the presence of these four powerful influences, in answer to them, but probably not in spite of them. At the very least, we must acknowledge that the work of preparing teachers of English is both shaped and complicated by the context in which it takes place. We have much to learn about that context.

STANDARDS AS TEXTS

Over the last twenty years, standards designed to shape the performance of teachers and students have proliferated so rapidly that there has been little chance to study the process by which they are generated, their relationship to classroom practices, or their effects on teachers and learners. The NCTE/IRA Standards for the English Language Arts, for example, and the standards that anchor assessments for the National Board of Professional Teaching Standards are both highly visible, well respected, politically astute statements of educational goals and both have played a role in our professional conversations about educational policy. But important as they are, neither set of standards—nor any other set of which I'm aware—has been examined for what it finally is. The standards are *texts* that have an author or authors, a purpose, and an intended audience. We are not alone as teachers of literacy and literacy education in trying to respond thoughtfully to the standards we've been given, but we do have a specialized range of disciplinary tools for analyzing and understanding those standards in powerful ways. They are the methods we use elsewhere for examining genres of oral and written discourse, for studying the process of composition, for interrogating a reader's response. Since state and national standards, for better or worse, are now forcefully a part of what English educators must address, it seems right that we address them armed with the tools of inquiry already at our disposal.

As part of our effort to define our field, then, I'd like to propose that we ask a series of questions in two general areas: How are standards written? And how are standards read?

How Are Standards Written?

Though literally thousands of standards addressing almost every aspect of educational policy and practice have been authored, there has been little systematic study of how that authoring takes place. Like many readers of this essay, I have myself participated in such efforts, and though I don't want to generalize too far from my own experience, I believe that it is probably more typical than not. Let me sketch an informal portrait of the process.

Standards in education are usually generated by groups of people selected for their leadership roles or their professional reputations. The group often represents in microcosm a range of constituencies—different levels of schooling, different levels of administrative responsibility, and different communities of practice. They are usually invited or summoned to participate by someone in a senior administrative position—volunteers for such work are rare—and they are told that the work they are undertaking is both necessary and important. The standards to be developed have been mandated by legislation or by irresistible political pressures, and if those standards are not developed in a timely and competent way, serious consequences may follow. The group is given a timeline, perhaps some documents containing standards from other states or other subject areas, and then left to their task.

There are probably many permutations of the basic scenario, but the point of this description is to remind us of what we already know: the context for composing, the sociolinguistic space in which the writing takes place will always have a profound impact on what gets written. We have not studied the contexts where standards are composed, and we have not observed nor interviewed the authors of standards about their processes, their planning, their revisions, their hesitations, their sources of knowledge, or their sense of audience. We have, in fact, often behaved as if standards somehow authored themselves, as if they did not derive from specific contexts, by specific people, generated sometimes under specific forms of duress. Surprisingly, given our scholarly habits of mind, we have failed to ask even the basic questions about the composing processes of standards writers.

One line of research in English education then may begin to study the contexts in which standards are generated, examining the relationship among the authors, the various forms of power in play within the group, the rules or guidelines or models that are available for shaping any single standard or set of standards, and the motives, both stated and unstated, that inform the work of the writers. Research such as this may demystify the presumed authority of written standards and serve as a reminder that the process of standard writing shares at least some features with other forms of writing that are more familiar, if less insistent about their own legislated power.

How Are Standards Read?

In his careful analysis of standards-based writing assessments in several states, Hillocks' 2002 book observes that though state standards for students may seem both rigorous and straightforward as written, they can be softened in practice by writing assessments that do not call for high level skills or by scoring rubrics and protocols that reward mediocre performance. He points out that standards are written primarily for an audience of policy makers and citizens who want schools to enforce high expectations for their students. That audience may be satisfied with

the standards, he argues, even if the assessments tied to those standards fail to discriminate rigorously among different levels of performance (9–12).

Hillocks' work is a healthy reminder that standards, like all texts, have many potential audiences—some anticipated, some not. And standards can be studied, like all texts, for the ways in which they are read, interpreted, and evaluated by those different audiences. Consider the following language, drawn from New York's state standards for writing, and quoted by Hillocks:

using a wide range of forms, including those available through word processing and desktop publishing, to present information on a wide range of subjects clearly, coherently, and effectively, taking into account the nature of the audience and using various organizational patterns for developing the text (such as particular to universal, abstract to concrete, comparison and contrasts). (47)

The skills called for in this statement are intended for students in their last years of schooling or at a "commencement" level, but even so, the abilities required are numerous and sophisticated. Let us consider how the statement might be read and interpreted by four audiences: the legislators and policy makers who mandated that the standards be developed; the school administrators who will need to implement the standards in their buildings; the teachers of English who will need to teach to the standards in their classrooms; and the students who will be assessed on these standards in order to graduate from high school.

The legislators and policy makers may, as Hillocks found, be pleased with the rigor and specificity of the standard, and may use it as an example when speaking to citizen groups of the high academic standards the state of New York is now mandating. The school administrators, on the other hand, may wonder if they have the resources for computer hardware needed for students to practice "word processing and desktop publishing" in sufficient numbers, and may wonder further how they will motivate teachers of English to change their curriculum in ways that support the standard. Teachers of English meanwhile may sigh deeply over the widely ranging and incommensurate demands of the standard, while also wondering how they can possibly implement its demands in ways that map onto the needs and abilities of the students they teach. And students, if they read the standard at all, would wonder (and who could blame them?) what would be the best strategy for meeting the standard with the least amount of effort and the best chance of success.

For the policy makers who mandate standards, any specific standard is both a response to a demand (the standard has been developed as called for) and a demand calling for a response—from school administrators, from teachers, and from students. But the responses demanded from these three groups are quite different from one another. The three sets of responses require distinctive skills sets, diverse

forms of authority, varying kinds of wisdom and practical experience. And about these—about the different forms of expertise needed to implement the standard successfully—the standard is silent. The standard will be read, interpreted, and evaluated differently depending on the audience who is reading it. But the standard has not anticipated those differences, and the standard-making process has provided few forums where they could be articulated, refined, and more fully understood.

Another line of research in English education, then, may be to bring different audiences together to read and discuss the standards they have been given. If, as I've argued, standards are texts, then like all texts they are ripe with ambiguities and open to multiple interpretations. How do teachers make sense of the standards guiding their work? What do they think the standards are calling for? How do they translate that mandate into specific classroom plans? How deeply do they accept the validity or value of the standard and how does their evaluation affect their willingness to modify their classrooms? Those mandating the standards have done so in the belief or the hope that such standards would change educational behaviors. But as teachers of literacy, we have spent years studying the deeply complicated and often unpredictable relationship between reading and action, between text and behavior. We know that even the clearest texts are always transformed and reimagined in the act of individual readings, and we know that individual readings are always shaped by the predispositions and social context of the reader. If we apply these scholarly tools to standards, we may learn a great deal more about how those standards work and fail to work in the complex world of classroom life.

WHAT IS ENGLISH?

I've argued here that answers to the question, What is English education? should probably include analyses of the institutional and discursive contexts in which we participate and should also include an examination of how the standards now informing our practice are composed and read across contexts. But as educators preparing students to become teachers of English, we also have a fundamental obligation to know the subject of English as it is currently taught in schools. And I'm not sure that we do.

English as a school subject is different from others, and though that truism has been repeated many times since the Committee of Ten partitioned the high school curriculum at the beginning of the last century, it may need to be revisited in this time of extraordinary change in education. Unlike the other core subjects (mathematics, science, social studies, foreign languages), English cannot be cleanly divided into bounded topics. School mathematics can be separated into geometry, algebra, calculus; school science into biology, chemistry, physics; social studies into history, geography, government; and foreign languages into Spanish, French,

Japanese. And though these boundaries within subjects may disappear at more sophisticated levels in the disciplines (biology and chemistry, for example, become biochemistry; studies of history include the shaping effects of geography), they have become a stable feature of high school curricula and are unlikely to disappear.

English, however, often appears in the high school curriculum as English 9, 10, 11, and 12, and what goes on in classes with those numbers varies from school to school and often from classroom to classroom within a school. A particular kind of content may be assigned to specific grade levels in English (American literature, say, to English 11; world literature to English 12), but that content will vary substantially depending on the assumed vocational future of the students in a particular class. What counts as world literature for an Advanced Placement class is very different from what we would find in an ‘average’ or ‘basic’ class—so different that the classes may bear only a faint resemblance to one another. If we were to visit a sophomore class in biology, in geometry, or in second-year French in almost any classroom in the country, we might see a wide range of teaching quality, of available resources, or of student interest. But the topics covered in each of the classes, the content of the courses would probably be very similar as we moved from school to school. If we were to visit sophomore classes in English in those same schools, we would find the same range of teaching quality and resources, but we would also probably find a much wider range in the topics addressed, the texts read, and in the assessments used to measure student progress. Even if the same areas were “covered” in different English classes (the short story, say, or the expository essay), the texts assigned, the writing completed, and the conversations sponsored in the classes would probably vary enough to make the word “covered” inoperative.

I want to argue that there is a way in which English as a school subject does not exist independently of its enactment in classrooms. It has been represented, of course, in district curriculum guides, in state standards and their related assessments, and always in the materials and approaches embodied in textbooks. But these representations of the content of our subject, however specific and however well-meaning, seem almost arbitrary when compared to the content of other subjects. If I teach algebra without touching on quadratic equations, I probably haven’t done my job. But I can teach American literature, and have done my job, without assigning *Walden*, *Death of a Salesman*, *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, or *The Great Gatsby*. If I teach biology without distinguishing between mitosis and meiosis, my students will have missed something essential to their understanding of the subject. But if I teach writing without distinguishing among the traditional modes of discourse, I may be doing something right. Depending on my reasons, there is almost nothing I can’t include in my English class—from *Beowulf* to Stephen King to “*Doonesbury*.” And depending on my reasons, there is arguably almost nothing I can’t leave out of my English class—unless, of course, the English

curriculum has been preemptively determined by mandated standards and high-stakes assessments.

And this, of course, is the point. The intrusion of standards and required assessments into English classrooms is reshaping what teachers teach and how teachers teach. But we don't know for sure what these altered classrooms look like across contexts because our national studies of English teaching—of writing in schools (Applebee 1981; 1984) and literature in English classrooms (Applebee 1993)—are now about twenty years old. Without a strong sense of what English classrooms look like today—not only in our own communities, but in the widely disparate communities in which our students may work—it will become even harder to prepare those students to work in those classrooms.

Doctoral research can play a most important role helping us understand the institutional structures and contexts of English education and the nature and impact of local, state, and national standards and assessment. Our field needs doctoral researchers who can bring their acquired knowledge into the ongoing conversation about what English education is and should be.

I've argued in this essay that research that addresses the contexts in which English education does its work, the standards that have proliferated over the last twenty years, and the effects of those standards on teaching practices in the English classroom can provide essential knowledge about who we are as a field. But a more well-informed understanding of our community, our mission, and our challenges is only a first step. The larger project is to continue our ongoing conversation about the teaching of literacy and the meaning of literacy in an environment that may be changing faster than we are.

Coda

Shortly after I completed the first full draft of this essay, the *New York Times*, in its Sunday *Education Life* section, published a lead article entitled “Who Needs Education Schools?” Written by a staff writer for the *Times*, the article contains the usual canards and half-truths: that those students planning to teach are academically less-talented than their peers; that Colleges of Education are places “where the John Dewey tradition of progressive education holds sway, marked by a deep antipathy toward testing”; and that new studies are challenging the “ideological bias” and “low admission standards” of Colleges of Education (Hartocollis 24–28). Such attacks, whether authored by ghost writers for former Secretary of Education, Rod Paige or by staff in politically conservative foundations such as the Fordham or Heritage Foundation, rarely make references to peer-reviewed research and usually provide cover for their assertions by linking them to a “flurry of new studies” or to an unnamed and undifferentiated flock of “critics.” Perhaps the most disconcerting

and revealing moment in the article came when the writer quoted with respectful approval a highly negative appraisal of teacher education by David Steiner who found that the most frequently assigned texts in Colleges of Education included works by Jonathan Kozol and Paulo Friere and that “[t]heories of *how* children learn [...] were more likely to be taught than *what* children should learn, like the Core Knowledge curriculum advanced by E.D. Hirsch” (original emphasis 25).

Such is the popular and increasingly respectable view of our work in teacher education. Until we find the means to answer such criticism with persuasive, data-rich, and theoretically-grounded research, we will be subject to more of the same. Explaining who we are, what we do, and why it’s important is not simply an exercise in self-knowledge: it is now a necessary part of insuring a future for the informed, reflective practice of teacher preparation. We can’t do everything at once. But we can start with our own field and our own programs, thinking together about what they are and what they might become.

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From Classroom Teacher to Teacher of Teachers

BECOMING A TEACHER EDUCATOR



CHAPTER 8

Preparing English Educators:

AN APPRENTICESHIP IN TEACHING



Pam Grossman, Peter Williamson, Christa Compton

While we talk frequently about under-prepared teachers, we rarely address the problem of under-prepared teacher educators. Yet many of those who find themselves teaching teachers are poorly prepared for the job. We assume that experience alone is sufficient, that experiences teaching elementary school or high school are adequate preparation for teaching in professional education. We assume that because people have been accomplished practitioners themselves, they know how to help novices develop complex practices. On some level, we know these are faulty assumptions, but we persist in hiring adjuncts and graduate students to teach in teacher education programs, with little explicit preparation or support. There are always exceptions. Michigan State University, for example, has often apprenticed doctoral students into the teaching of teacher education by having them team-teach or lead one section of a multisection class, in which there are many opportunities for support (Feiman-Nemser and Featherstone; Smith et al.).

In this chapter, we describe an approach to preparing future teacher educators that is based on a model of co-teaching and attempts to make visible the complex work of educating teachers in a university context. The chapter includes the perspective of both an experienced teacher educator (Pam Grossman) and two experienced English teachers and doctoral students in English education at Stanford University (Christa Compton and Peter Williamson). The first section begins with a brief personal introduction and then describes the intentions of the model from the perspective of the experienced teacher educator. The two doctoral students then introduce themselves and explore what experienced teachers, who are also novice teacher educators, can learn from such an apprenticeship.

PAM GROSSMAN

I vividly remember the first teacher education class I taught. Having completed my dissertation research on the importance of subject-specific methods classes, I found myself teaching a general methods class. I had actually never taken a methods class

in my own teacher education program, nor had the program in which I worked as a graduate student offered a general methods class. As I sat down to contemplate a syllabus, I panicked. What are methods anyway, I found myself wondering. And what does it mean to teach methods to a class of prospective secondary teachers who planned to teach everything from art to physics?

I punted. The syllabus I inherited offered a smorgasbord of instructional strategies, based on the classic *Models of Teaching* by Joyce and Showers. I tinkered with the class, trying to work in issues of pedagogical thinking, pedagogical content knowledge, planning, and reflection. I broke the class into subject-specific groups as often as I could and searched for a wide array of subject-specific examples. And when the time came to redesign our program, I proposed jettisoning the general methods class in favor of a two-quarter sequence in subject-specific methods. I may have been one of the few professors to argue for the demise of my own class!

When I began to teach the subject-specific methods class in English, I was thrilled to be teaching a class in my subject area, but I still confronted many of the same dilemmas I had faced earlier. I had never taken an English methods class during my own teacher preparation. But this time I was able to draw upon my observations of a course in the teaching of English that I had studied as part of my dissertation research (Grossman). I drew lavishly on my field notes from that class as I began to design my own, substituting a research observation for an apprenticeship of observation. However, it wasn't until I had taught the class for several years that I began to understand, in any substantial way, the fundamental structure, purpose, and challenges of a methods course.

I was the product of an undergraduate teacher education program at an elite university. The program believed strongly in foundations courses; I remember taking the History of Education, the Philosophy of Education, the Sociology of Education, and Educational Psychology, but I cannot remember a single course that focused on the teaching of English, other than an obligatory wave at children's literature. Having earned my credential in the midst of a teacher surplus, I went on to teach in a variety of government programs, including a CETA program for young adults who had dropped out of school, Upward Bound, and in independent schools. I taught everything from American literature to life skills, basic math to existential literature. After eight years of teaching, I returned to graduate school to earn a doctorate, where I first began to think seriously about the preparation of teachers.

A MODEL FOR PREPARING ENGLISH EDUCATORS

When I began teaching in the Stanford teacher education program, I wanted to improve the preparation of teacher educators, doctoral students in English education who would go on to teach their own versions of English methods. Students in this program generally have from five to ten years of experience as English teachers, and all have been outstanding classroom teachers. The challenge involves building on this extensive classroom experience and providing the kinds of experiences that will help them develop into outstanding teacher educators. The model I developed relies heavily on an apprenticeship model, but an apprenticeship that tries to make many facets of the practice of teacher education visible to newcomers.

This model begins with the end; I have prospective co-instructors help out with the final quarter of our three-quarter sequence in Curriculum and Instruction in English, in which students are working on unit plans that integrate the teaching of language arts. These unit plans represent the culmination of the previous two quarters' work, in which we have explored the teaching of writing, language, grammar, literature, reading, drama—all the various components that comprise the English curriculum. The unit also requires that students draw on what they've learned about instructional scaffolding—one of the central organizing principles of the course. We break the students into small working groups, each led by an instructor, to get support and feedback on their units. Newcomers to the course generally begin by serving as an instructor to one of these small groups. This experience enables them to get a sense of where the course is headed and the kind of instructional planning we expect of students by the end of this sequence. We then begin co-teaching the first quarter of the class the following summer.

Co-teaching is a way of making more aspects of the work of teacher education visible to prospective teacher educators. We plan together, design assignments together, teach together, read student papers together, and even read files of prospective students together. Through this work, we both learn. I benefit from the doctoral students' more recent experiences in high school classrooms, their perspectives on teaching English, their records of their own practice, be they student papers or videos of classrooms, and their skills at leading discussions or giving feedback. I have also learned more about my own practice, as I have had to articulate the reasoning behind my decisions, to make explicit my theories about learning to teach and the role of university coursework in that process.

To make the planning process even more transparent, I generally try to experiment with some aspect of the class during the year. Some years, we have done considerable remodeling, while other years we have done the equivalent of putting in new fixtures. Creating an assignment, or a lesson, from scratch, however,

increases the visibility of the planning process. One year, I worked with Peter to create a unit on the teaching of discussion that included videotapes that he had taken of his students leading small-group discussions. Another year, Christa and I created a new assignment, and all the accompanying lessons, for designing and teaching a writing assignment. We also experimented with the use of new multimedia materials developed by the Carnegie Foundation for the Improvement of Teaching in our unit on the teaching of discussion. This kind of experimentation enables the course to continue to evolve.

Whenever possible, I try to co-teach the class with the same doctoral student for two years in a row. The first time Peter and I co-taught the course, we co-taught all three quarters, in part so we could see the full sequence unfold and so I could shape the overall curriculum. By the second year, I handed off the third-quarter class to Peter to teach with another doctoral student. Since then, I have continued this model of co-teaching the first two quarters and handing off the last quarter to my co-instructor. This is the equivalent of independent student teaching, and the final step of instructional scaffolding—the release of control.¹ While I experience a pang of regret each year when I say goodbye to students I have grown to care about deeply, I also know that they are in superb hands.

PETER WILLIAMSON

I began teaching with an emergency credential in a Bay Area school for kids who had been expelled from public schools. After several years of feeling unprepared for the challenges of teaching, I enrolled in the Stanford teacher education program for help and a credential. I then returned to the classroom to teach English and journalism at San Lorenzo High School. While at San Lorenzo, I enjoyed mentoring novices from local preservice programs, and eventually decided to pursue doctoral studies in teacher education. I returned to Stanford, where I taught the Curriculum and Instruction course with Pam Grossman and doctoral students like Christa.

When I prepared for graduate school and packed my English classroom into crates, I already knew that teaching teachers would be tough. I had done a lot of mentoring in that classroom, and I believed that I understood the struggles of learning to teach. I had helped teachers plan literature discussions, develop assessments, and create contextualized vocabulary lessons; I knew it could be hard to help others see aspects of teaching that I considered routine and clear. Still, I assumed that teaching teachers would mean showing them what I already knew about teaching. In some way, my own classroom experience would be the text I taught. As I packed, I gave careful consideration to every box and binder of curriculum that I had collected or created over the course of my career, thinking of ways I might use those materials in my teaching classes someday.

My assumptions eroded with the very first days of my work with the Curriculum and Instruction sequence. My notion of sharing binders and boxes fell far short of helping teachers understand the thinking behind that planning. I became keenly aware that there were many facets of teaching practice that were difficult to render in ways that could help novices see their complexity; I would need to learn how to make those methods visible.

Nervous and feeling unprepared, I reflected on my own teacher-education experience. I conjured up mental snapshots of my own methods class, which had played a central role in my preparation as a teacher. We had staged scenes from Shakespeare and danced the masque ball of the Capulets as we talked about the role of drama in English classrooms. We read *The House on Mango Street* and celebrated the opportunities such provocative texts held for young readers. We plucked themes from books and forged lessons into units we were sure were stronger than those we suffered as students ourselves. And our instructor, a powerful, seasoned teacher who oozed English and a love for learning, brought us boxes and binders of her own colorful materials, each crammed with activities that made us drool even as we wondered if we would ever be the makers of such binders ourselves.

I then remembered that when I found myself in the confines of my own classroom the following year, I discovered that I had not yet developed an understanding of the thinking that was behind those marvelous materials. Binders and boxes were products of pedagogical thinking I needed to practice before I could produce such lessons. I began to realize that my assumptions about what it would take to teach teachers might have sprung from my own apprenticeship of observation as a teacher candidate.

Teaching with Pam, I learned that teaching methods was less about binders and boxes, and more about cultivating instructional thinking. We designed activities that would shift between demonstrating lessons that the student teachers might adapt for their own classrooms and reflecting on how those lessons represented principles for teaching. We invited public scrutiny of our teaching and asked the novices to bring examples of their own teaching to class for similar scrutiny. In order to help teach this class, I needed to develop an understanding of how to plan this sort of lesson and learn ways of making my thinking available for our students. I needed to understand how the complexity of teaching could be the content of the course itself.

Pam invited me to participate in an apprenticeship where she made her own pedagogical thinking available to support and assist my learning as a teacher educator. Through collaborative planning, teaching, and reflecting, Pam made her practice transparent in order to guide my emerging partnership in the Curriculum and Instruction course.

CHRISTA COMPTON

In 1993 I completed the University of Virginia's five-year teacher education program, earning a BA in English and a master's in teaching, after which I returned to my home state of South Carolina to begin my teaching career. I taught English at Richland Northeast High School in Columbia, South Carolina, for nine years, where I worked primarily with tenth and eleventh graders and served as a mentor to beginning teachers. My role as a mentor teacher sparked my interest in teacher education, which intensified after I attained National Board Certification (AYA/ELA) in 2000 and served as the 2001 South Carolina Teacher of the Year. My commitment to teacher recruitment, preparation, and retention eventually led me to begin the PhD program at Stanford. Like Peter, I have supervised student teachers and co-taught the English Methods course in Stanford's teacher education program.

When I crammed my life into a 1993 Dodge Caravan and drove across the country to pursue a PhD at Stanford, there were many challenges of doctoral study that I could not imagine, but I was certain that I wanted to prepare future English teachers. After my nine years in the classroom, I believed that teacher education offered a way to shape the future of the profession. Having mentored many student teachers and first-year teachers, I thought I understood the challenges of learning to teach. I did not, however, realize how hard it would be to learn to teach teachers. I fooled myself into believing that the teaching part of PhD life would be easy. I was a veteran teacher with a record of success with diverse learners and plenty of professional development experience. Surely teaching masters' students would be a breeze.

My assumptions swiftly unraveled. Doing the complex work of teaching is one thing, but teaching someone else how to do it is quite another. There were, of course, certain aspects of teaching that I had grown accustomed to sharing with new teachers over the years—how to design a rubric, how to engage students in the writing process, how to prepare students for Socratic discussion—but even the most deceptively concrete and visible parts of teaching had countless dimensions that were difficult to represent in a form that would help novices learn them.

As I began working with the Curriculum and Instruction sequence, I quickly grew mystified at the myriad of issues with which I was confronted. I had naively believed, for example, that my days of worrying about classroom management were over. Instead, I found that the students in our methods class were just as prone to off-task chatter as my high school students had been. They were sometimes late to class or missed deadlines. I was still hearing stories about breakups with boyfriends and breakdowns of printers. Occasionally I was flabbergasted to witness a student speaking to a classmate in a rude or dismissive way. I had assumed that graduate

students would know how to respond to each other with respect, and for the most part they do. But when such situations arose, my repertoire for giving feedback to teenagers did not neatly transfer to my work with adult teacher candidates.

Ultimately, my uncertainty in addressing these issues had something to do with my tentative sense of authority. The professor who mentored me in my own teacher education program had once asked me, "What is the source of your authority with kids?" I am now considering that question again as I occupy a curiously hybrid role between former high school teacher and future teacher educator. While the teacher candidates respect my recent immersion in practice, they know (as do I) that I am not yet a professor.

My anxiety about this in-between role was exacerbated by having to acquire new language for familiar concepts. I missed the confidence I had once felt about teaching literature or grammar because I did not yet have the same secure grasp on the concepts I was now teaching. For example, though I had consistently applied the principles of scaffolding as a high school teacher, I had never used that language to describe what I was doing. Now, scaffolding is a core element of everything we do in the methods class, so I have developed a more conceptual vocabulary with which to discuss teaching. This approach did not signal an abandonment of the practical; rather, Pam has helped me understand how to help novices develop what she frames as "principled practice." I have seen that learning the mechanics of a lesson plan is not the same as learning how to think about the principles that undergird its design. The principles are far more transferable to future planning than clever formulas or helpful hints would be.

In addressing issues of classroom management, I have had to learn how to reframe them in terms of professionalism. I want the teacher candidates to understand that their interactions have powerful implications for their professional identities. When principals hire graduates of our program, they want to know that these freshly minted teachers are not only able to work with students successfully, but that they can also cultivate productive relationships with colleagues, parents, and community members. New teachers may be able to design brilliant lesson plans, but they won't last long if they alienate their colleagues or ignore important deadlines. In this sense, my authority emerges within the context of professional socialization. I represent the profession that the candidates aspire to enter and understand its norms and demands. My job is therefore not simply to pressure them to conform to the rules of our particular classroom setting; instead, I must encourage them to act in ways that will earn them respect and credibility in the field. At times this responsibility feels daunting.

In some ways I am a new teacher again, with much to learn about the pedagogy of teacher education, and so I feel the anxiety that inevitably comes with acquiring a new kind of practice. However, because of Pam's careful mentoring during my two

years as a co-instructor of the methods sequence, I now have much greater confidence and competence in this role. As we have discussed the challenges presented by our students, I have had access to her wisdom about how to analyze each situation. I have witnessed how an accomplished teacher educator responds to classroom dilemmas, and I find myself increasingly able to craft my own responses to these perplexing moments. I still have a long way to go, but I am now better equipped to negotiate this landscape in which everything is both familiar and strange.

One of the most critical transitions in the trajectory of my development came in the winter quarter, when Pam turned over responsibility for the course to a fellow doctoral student and me. I joked that it was like my independent student teaching, that pivotal moment when the cooperating teacher steps out of the room and lets you lead the class yourself. Pam's willingness to share the mantle of her authority in the previous quarters made this transition much smoother than it might otherwise have been. I was not suddenly brimming with confidence, but collaborating with a peer to teach the course on our own was a necessary step toward developing an appropriate sense of authority in a role I wanted to perform well. Though Pam was no longer physically present in our planning sessions and class meetings, we often invoked her. How would Pam approach this lesson? How would she respond to this situation? What are our most important goals, and how should they shape our decisions? We were beginning to internalize her pedagogical thinking on the way to developing our own more fully.

I am now completing year two of this apprenticeship, and I am amazed at how different it feels the second time around. Because I have already followed one cohort of students through the entire methods sequence, with this year's group I can more accurately anticipate where they will have difficulties. I can sort out predictable challenges from unusual ones, and I am better able to prioritize my feedback so that it focuses on the most important areas for growth rather than being too narrow or too overwhelming. As graduates of the program send us stories from their first years of teaching, I have begun to see the powerful connections between the preparation we are providing and their ability to make a difference for their own students. That part remains the greatest joy of teaching—watching students succeed on their own.

MAKING THE PRACTICE OF TEACHER EDUCATION VISIBLE

Teaching is often viewed as a private practice; teachers plan and assess on their own and frequently teach behind closed doors. Even teaching arrangements constructed in terms of “teams” can maintain aspects of privacy, where portions of lessons are planned separately by individual members of a team and then enacted as discrete

parts of a whole. Teacher education is no different in this respect, and due to its low status within higher education, the norms of privacy may be even greater.

Co-teaching disrupts the notion of teaching as the work of an individual. Part of the power of co-teaching may lie in the need to make many facets of the experienced teacher educator's practice transparent to the newcomers. In order to co-teach in any meaningful sense, both instructors need to have a good sense of the purposes of the class, the design of the overall course, and how individual lessons fit into the larger design. Teaching teachers to teach is a multifaceted practice; it involves rigorous planning, attending to the needs and understandings of students, and a deliberate positioning of the teaching-self as an example within a field of professional expectations and constraints. It has a special complexity, however, in that the invitation to learn is extended on several planes at once. First, a goal of teaching methods is to assist new teachers in revisiting their knowledge of content through a pedagogical lens that asks how that content might be taught. A second teaching objective, then, is to focus on the content itself in order to provide the novice teachers with opportunities to consider the breadth of the content they will teach and the way this relates to disciplinary knowing. Finally, as teachers focus on methods of instruction, they are invited to focus on the methods through which they are learning the methods themselves.

Our use of the term "transparency" owes a debt to Judith Warren Little's investigation of teacher learning communities and representations of practice (918). As she considers how representations of practice can afford opportunities for others to learn about teaching, she asks how facets of practice are made available for consideration through conversation and the sharing of materials. She defines transparency as the "degree of specificity, completeness, depth and nuance of practice apparent in the talk and the associated artifacts" (920). In the context of our proposed model for preparing teacher educators, transparency is useful in framing both the objective and the method of Pam's teaching. Pam made her pedagogical thinking available so that Peter and Christa might learn how to enact that sort of thinking themselves, as well as practice that sort of transparency in their work as teacher educators.

Experienced teachers bring many strengths to an English methods class, including recent immersion in secondary classrooms and a wealth of examples from their teaching: samples of student work, videotapes, unit plans, and lesson ideas, among others. But one of the core dilemmas in becoming a teacher educator involves learning how to move beyond "show and tell" to create ways for novice teachers to understand the complex—and often invisible—aspects of teaching. We do not suggest that the model described in this chapter is the only way to prepare teacher educators, but we offer it as one way to support the transition from secondary teacher to teacher educator. Our hope is that preparation for the role of teacher educator becomes an integral part of doctoral study in English education.

Notes

1. Not only does it provide independent practice for the doctoral students, it solves a structural problem in our program. Because the students have the same co-instructor for all three quarters, and because the co-instructor has seen the full sequence unfold, this transition has gone incredibly smoothly.

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CHAPTER 9

Living in the Liminal Spaces

LESSONS LEARNED AS SUPERVISORS OF ENGLISH STUDENT TEACHERS



Melanie Shoffner, Kimberly B. Pyne

We don't just become someone overnight and forever. Making and living our identities involves action and process, occurs in real time and depends on our connections with others, on what we do and say, and how we feel about it [...] And, although our different positions in the world result in our having conflicting identities, we tolerate, integrate, and balance these different selves because we could not live otherwise.

—Jane Danielewicz
*Teaching Selves: Identity,
Pedagogy, and Teacher Education*

Standing in the hallway with Hannah one afternoon, we commiserated with her story of a student teacher unable to manage a classroom of energetic ninth graders. This was her first semester working with student teachers, her entry into the juggling act that is supervision: supporting student teachers, working with cooperating teachers, serving as an intermediary between high school and university, meeting deadlines, filling out paperwork—all done around the other demands of graduate-student life. We offered what tips we could and parted ways, feeling rather knowledgeable that afternoon. After three years in the field as supervisors, we had advice to give and stories to share; we could confidently assure our colleague that supervising was worth the hard work. We walked away, reveling in a sense of accomplishment. We had gotten somewhere, learned something—in fact, become rather good at this complex and rewarding work.

Reality returned the following day over a hurried lunch of Caesar salads and an all-too-familiar conversation, sharing stories of our student teachers in search of support and advice about our own supervisory situations. One of Melanie's student teachers was struggling to engage her remedial students with the novel

To Kill a Mockingbird. Following her cooperating teacher's direction, daily lessons consisted of students' reading silently, reading aloud, and answering summative questions from the board. The students' inattention and continuous chatter were creating instructional and management issues, and the student teacher was at a loss to stop the threatened slide into chaos. The cooperating teacher saw the students' behavior as a conscious effort to test the student teacher and, as such, she advocated more structure to the class: more worksheets, more handouts, more note-taking. Melanie saw the behavior as a natural outgrowth of their boredom with the existing structure of the class; more of the same would only aggravate the situation further. She encouraged the student teacher to introduce instructional variety into the daily lessons, to bring in outside materials that connected the novel to their present world, to question her assumptions about the students' abilities—but Melanie was also conscious of going against the cooperating teacher's advice. How could she balance the expectations of the cooperating teacher with her own expectations of success for the student teacher?

Kim reciprocated with a difficult situation of her own—a student teacher who no longer wished to teach, despite being a teaching fellowship recipient slated for four mandatory years in the classroom. The young woman had dreaded going to her placement school since the second week of classes, her disengagement evident in her apathetic planning, late arrivals, and general stumbling through raucous classes, all the while ignoring the assistance offered by her increasingly irate cooperating teacher. Pressed by the teacher to punish the girl and recognizing the ominous signs of failure, Kim sought an effective balance between supportive counselor and demanding authority—between inspiration and “tough love”—looking for ways to galvanize this student teacher. Kim searched for a way in, her necessarily limited time in the classroom increasing the challenge of how she saw and understood events. Phone calls, scheduled interactions over lesson plans, and inordinate contact hours with the cooperating teacher ensued. Confounding everything was the hidden element of the student teacher's serious and untreated clinical depression, burying her in indifference to her situation. Many weeks into student teaching, the young woman tentatively confessed her problem, too late to salvage most of the experience. Tapping the young teacher's sense of rapport with a few troubled students gave her a reason to consider change, but failed to alter the underlying medical issues. Kim was frustrated. How could she see enough of the classroom and each student teacher's personal situation to offer timely advice, not only about pedagogical choices but about the lived experience of being a teacher?

Collaboratively debating our responses to situations such as these described above led us to this chapter. Despite years of experience inside English and education classrooms as teachers and supervisors, we regularly rediscovered during our graduate career that we remained inherently unpolished as university

supervisors. Even as certain elements became familiar, the act of capitalizing on “what worked” remained highly situated. There was no static set of skills to be memorized, methods to be enacted, or dispositions to maintain. Although supervisors may focus on specific learning needs for each individual student teacher, supervision is highly reactive, capitalizing on the “teachable moments” that arise in each observation, conference, or casual conversation. Each supervisory situation is different, comprised of different personalities, different choices, and different skills, interacting in ways that are subjective, personal, and affective as much as cognitive. How could we work jointly with cooperating teachers? How should we support student teachers during the trial-and-error of the practicum? And, particularly as graduate students learning to supervise, how could we balance the many obligations of supervision with the demands of our own graduate study to the benefit of all?

Much like classroom practice itself, the supervisory experience is contextualized and constantly changing despite the presence of an overarching structure and intent. With the day-to-day logistics of scheduling and deadlines comes the need to constantly reframe and reinterpret our present experiences as emerging teacher educators and our past lives as English teachers.

We make meaning of our experiences, past and present, by turning to stories, reconfiguring interpretations of the past as we develop a sense of agency for the future (Connelly and Clandinin 12). Through such stories—experienced, considered, and written during our time as graduate students at a large public southeastern university—we attempt to make sense of the larger questions of supervision and, in doing so, share the story of our change from English teachers to English teacher educators. Our narratives, critically examined, reveal a multiplicity of contradictions, conflicts, motivations, and beliefs that highlight some of the significant struggles of learning to supervise. Our explanations and experiences may not offer a solution to the difficulties of supervision but our hope is that these stories resonate with others engaged in similar work, providing a point from which to move forward into the complexity of supervision.

MOVING TOWARD THE FUTURE: FROM THE CLASSROOM TO THE GRADUATE SCHOOL

We entered our PhD program in education at the same time, two former English teachers making the move to teacher education. As the only two “English people” in our cohort, we soon found ourselves in steady conversation, relating the educational theories and concepts we were learning in graduate school to our experiences in the English classroom. We discovered similar backgrounds—both raised in rural North Carolina—and similar educational questions—Why were

our remedial classes filled with black and brown faces while our honors classes reflected our own white faces?

Despite our quick kinship, our differences were also pronounced. As a teacher, Kim had taught continuously in a middle-class city school in North Carolina; Melanie had moved from a lower-middle-class rural school in North Carolina to an upper-class suburban school in Arizona. Melanie's classroom experiences centered on British literature and debate, while Kim focused on American literature and her journalism program. As graduate students early in our academic careers, we were naturally drawn toward teacher education but Melanie focused on issues of reflective practice and teacher development, while Kim concentrated on the impact of multiculturalism, power, and teacher identity.

As we began our first experience with supervision, we quickly learned to rely on each other for guidance and support. With little instruction on how to supervise and no clear introduction to the issues involved, we found ourselves instinctively (and necessarily) working from both our former classroom experiences and the ideological shifts that grew out of our emerging understanding. Initially, we welcomed the lack of interference—we were teachers, after all, returning to the familiar world of the high school English classroom. Our own student-teaching experiences were not so far removed from our memories. We had been supervised frequently, as student teachers and again as practicing teachers. Kim had even served as a cooperating teacher, mentoring new English teachers in her department. Most importantly, we knew how to teach; we believed ourselves qualified to judge good teaching; and we looked forward to a job that would fit comfortably and thematically into our lives as graduate students.

“ONE OF THEM”: GAINING ENTRY

Upon entering the classroom for introductions with her first cooperating teacher, Melanie was met with a firm handshake and a quick list of questions: How long had she taught? Where? What classes? Why had she left the classroom? Why was she in the university? Evidently accepting her credentials, the cooperating teacher smiled and motioned to a desk to discuss the student teacher's performance so far. Subsequent initial meetings with cooperating teachers followed a similar agenda. Although pleasant, each cooperating teacher wanted solid evidence that Melanie belonged in an English classroom.

Kim faced no less of a challenge when her initial supervising duties carried her across three counties and back to the system where she had previously worked. Suddenly she faced former colleagues not as a fellow teacher but as a representative of the university. Some remembered her as an English teacher but suddenly behaved as if she possessed some deeper expertise alongside this

new position. During postobservation conferences, one teacher regularly turned the conversation away from the student teacher and toward her own classroom struggles, asking for approval and seeking answers to long-standing problems. Other cooperating teachers, however, showed a marked unwillingness to expose their own practices to the expected critique of someone who had moved beyond the classroom and into the PhD. Both insider and outsider in all-too-familiar classrooms, Kim was left to dance between dual identities: colleague and authority, striving practitioner and supposed expert.

Both of us were a bit shaken by such induction experiences. Surely we didn't need to prove ourselves; we were teachers, just like them! We were colleagues and friends, engaged in the same work toward the same goals. We should be able to work together naturally, pieces of the same whole. Only it seemed that upon leaving our classrooms and returning to the university, we had somehow left our old identities as English teachers behind. We were no longer "one of us" but "one of them," in some way disconnected and alien. Such an identity shift asked us to leave behind a core piece of who we were, of how we defined ourselves to the world and within the confines of our own minds. Although at the time we could not name it so clearly, we had long invested in our English teacher identities and were not ready to relinquish them for the "borderland discourse" of being supervisors (Alsop 5).

Graduate school life certainly encouraged feeling like a "them," much different than before and less comfortably integrated in ourselves and our changing, broadening ideas. Although we reentered the university to immerse ourselves in issues of education, we had to reframe our understanding of what those issues were. Coming from a classroom, we had been vested in issues of instruction, inclusion, and achievement. Coming from an English classroom, we had been focused upon issues of literacy, the functional uses of language, and various modes of writing instructions. Suddenly, those issues seemed to be of peripheral importance and the issues we had pushed to the edge before—from lack of time, lack of energy, lack of awareness—rose to the forefront, issues such as culturally relevant pedagogy, social construction of the teacher identity, and White privilege. Where once we had pushed such conversations away as not "practical" to our daily teaching, now we eagerly joined in on these more "theoretical" discussions. We traded our *English Journal* for the *American Educational Research Journal*; we exchanged piles of ungraded papers for equally large piles of unread articles; we left off writing lesson plans and class handouts on the rhyme scheme of the Shakespearean sonnet to write research proposals and conference papers on the theoretical underpinnings of reflective practice. We left Faulkner, Dickinson, and Shelley on the bookshelves, untouched for the first time in years, drowning ourselves instead in Foucault, Dewey, and Sleeter. We had entered the university to become a "they," looking ahead to futures as English teacher educators—but we hadn't expected to be quite

so unrecognized as an “us” among those we still considered equals in practice. If identity required us to know and be known, we were no longer identified as English teachers by those whom we believed could most easily recognize our legitimacy (Danielewicz 49).

Recognized not as teachers but as supervisors, we moved into an untried relationship, most of the time an agreeable one, at times an oppositional one. Most of the cooperating teachers welcomed Melanie’s presence in their classrooms. Having established herself as an experienced teacher, they often pulled her aside to share a student teacher’s success or slipped her a note documenting an area of concern. Others were pleasant but indifferent; they viewed Melanie’s involvement as separate from their own interactions with the student teacher and left her to serve as a counterpoint to their own points of view. A few were difficult. They saw Melanie’s supervision as a critique of their own teaching, refusing to sign observation forms if any commentary could be construed as a negative evaluation of their classrooms. Some openly questioned the role of the supervisor, maintaining that student teachers should pay more attention to the “real” classroom than the theories of the university.

Having served as a cooperating teacher herself, Kim worked explicitly to bridge that gap between university and high school classroom with her cooperating teachers, consciously trying to create a collegial community where both she and the teacher could work as a unified and supportive team. Beginning with brief meetings even before the student teachers officially began, she attempted to establish a foundation of shared expertise, an acknowledgement of the “wisdom of practice” on all fronts, and herself as an advocate for both student teacher and cooperating teacher (Ladson-Billings 154). While many cooperating teachers welcomed this collaboration, others preferred to either bow to her wishes or override her efforts with fixed notions of appropriate teaching styles and acceptable classroom behaviors. Such attitudes failed to forge the strong, cooperative network Kim envisioned and seemed to stand in the way of assisting the student teachers, particularly those few who found themselves floundering. This fine distinction between teaching and supervising further disrupted the sense we both had of our own identity as both teacher and emerging teacher educator.

Gaining acceptance in the classroom and building respectful relationships were only the initial hurdles of working with cooperating teachers, however. Although the majority of interactions were both pleasant and meaningful, we often faced situations that challenged us as supervisors and as teachers. On numerous occasions, we found ourselves disagreeing with a cooperating teacher’s style of instruction—we encouraged small groups for student discussion over a teacher-led lecture for certain material. We opposed particular pieces of advice to student teachers—we advocated one-on-one discussions with difficult students instead

of immediately assigning detention. We drew a different defining line between controlled chaos and outright mismanagement, between professional warmth and over-relaxed friendliness, between the value of drawing from the cooperating teacher's lesson plans and the need to prepare new, well-researched materials. These differences of pedagogy and teaching style became grounds for conflicting advice and occasional animosity.

Although these conflicts were often uncomfortable, over time we discovered that they could also be generative. New knowledge was created in the "critical dialogue" between supervisor, cooperating teacher, and student teacher; the multiple perspectives presented in our conferences supported critical thinking and reflective change (Friere 115). In fact, some of the most educative moments arose from the messiness of the collaborations with equally powerful claims competing with each other and everyone having the opportunity to explore multilayered, even contradictory rationales.

No longer seeking a consensus, we found it useful to instead explore the differences, looking at the pros and cons of teaching styles and encouraging student teachers to make decisions based on these reflections. Rather than demanding more wait time, for example, we talked through the ramifications of brisk pacing, the possible experiences of students struggling with the English language, and both the pressure and the invitation of silence. Rather than insisting on regular lecture, we imagined the potential outcomes of both lecture and less traditional methods such as literature circles or Paideia seminars. Recognizing and using differences in teaching styles provided more fodder for decision making and grist for reflection for all involved. It worked in favor of student teachers creating and taking ownership of a personal instructional style, effective for them and for their students. It also reduced the temptation to escalate ideological conflicts between cooperating teachers and supervisors, a situation that left our student teachers torn between two masters, adrift without any way to choose wisely between them.

We learned valuable lessons from our induction back into the world of practicing teachers. We carried the onus of making overtures to the cooperating teachers and setting the tone of the interactions. Teachers' expertise with and knowledge of their students, their classroom dynamics, and their school culture were crucial to the success of the student teachers in their classrooms. We needed to blend the "wisdom of practice" with the wisdom of theory, encouraging our student teachers to use reflection to critically analyze the information from both cooperating teacher and supervisor to create a personal teaching style. As we worked to establish ourselves as fellow educators with different perspectives, "one of them" became not so much "one of the university" but "one of our own small community."

McCann, Johannessen, and Ricca recognize that the challenge of defining a teacher persona is a significant one for preservice teachers. As new supervisors

and emerging teacher educators, we too found that identity issues came to the forefront—quietly, in emotional and intellectual responses, framed by the stories we told each other over lunch. Stories gave us access to what Alsup describes as a “borderland” identity:

Borderland discourse, as a transformative type of teacher identity discourse, reflects a view of teacher identity that is holistic—inclusive of the intellectual, corporeal, and the affective aspects of human selfhood. Within borderland discourse there is evidence of contact between disparate personal and professional subjectivities, which can lead to the eventual integration of these multiple subject positions. (6)

Over time, we learned to value the borderland. The negotiation of the selves we claimed—English teacher, university supervisor, graduate student, teacher educator—provided generative and rich possibilities for an inclusive identity, one that continues to support a realistic and complex sense of who we are and how we have shaped our professional lives.

“THE BIG PICTURE”: THEORY AND PRACTICE IN THE REAL WORLD

As graduate students, we found ourselves increasingly sensitized to issues affecting the larger picture of schooling, such as the history of the long-standing achievement gap (Ferguson), the impact of valuing one standard English (Purcell-Gates), the problematical nature of tracking (Oakes), and the effect of instruction stemming from the “culture of power” (Delpit). As we guided student teachers in developing curriculum materials or chatted about events involving student resistance and failure in their classes, our willingness to tackle these issues and enact new pedagogies was met with a common resistance. University theory does not easily transfer into classroom practices (Korthagen and Kessels 5). For many student teachers, as well as cooperating teachers, such “big picture” notions existed beyond the day-to-day rigors of maintaining a functional classroom. They were the venue of the researcher and the professor, part of the world of education but unnecessary to the individual teacher—particularly one just starting out in the profession.

One student teacher spoke extensively with Kim during her first observational weeks about how Latino/a students were treated in the classroom. Angry and confused, she reported that her cooperating teacher (for all her remarkable points) “always” seemed to ignore these students, refused to allow them to speak Spanish even privately amongst each other, and had no Latino/a representation in the curriculum. Within a month, however, the student teacher was embroiled in learning the novels

she had been mandated to teach and struggling to drag the class quickly through preexisting worksheets. She rarely called on the nonnative English speakers to assess their understanding, having come to understand that being a teacher meant covering material, loving unique books, and perhaps discussing social issues with more vocal classes. Seeing this as both a reaction to the “real world” of her placement and a slide into mediocrity, Kim was obligated to help her regain a sense of genuine concern for the abandoned students she once saw so clearly, an effort that became the focus of the semester and which met with only limited success.

Lortie established that student teachers tend to neglect the foundational ideas of the university in favor of the accepted modes of interaction already established in their cooperating teachers’ classrooms (56). Student teachers are inclined to fall back on the familiar lessons absorbed during their “apprenticeship of observation” as a high school student, dismissing the new lessons learned during their comparatively short-lived time in the university classroom (71). Even if student teachers incorporate recently learned ideas, their brief forays into new methods often result in havoc with students who have been trained to expect certain structures and attitudes. These expectations become “cultural myths” about teaching, defining success in the profession and dictating levels of comfort with classroom interactions (Britzman 6). In doing so, “they banish from consideration the isolation of teachers, the dependency and vulnerability teaching accrues, and the problems of knowledge teachers are supposed to possess,” providing instead a defense mechanism for accepting the status quo (Britzman 6).

Feiman-Nemser and Buchmann argue that familiarity and tradition provide student teachers with a sense of competence. However, when familiar motions achieve familiar results, even if this includes student failure, student teachers begin to feel as if they can claim an identity as teachers. This is compounded when cooperating teachers or supervisors reward functionality in the classroom rather than pushing young teachers toward a more critical examination of their choices and results. Because student teaching is frequently seen as a time for young teachers to concentrate on survival, functionality becomes acceptable and possibly entrenched as good practice. Student teachers learn to value “what works” in general rather than exploring “what could be.” As supervisors, we saw the conflict between practice and potential. As supervisors, though, we were limited in our contact hours, doing our best to visit once a week due to our own time constraints. Our weekly conferences, cut out of planning periods or held at the end of the day, paled in comparison to the influence of daily experiences. If the cooperating teacher did not challenge them to consider more progressive ideas and shatter harmful assumptions, the lure of the status quo was often too powerful to overcome.

Occasionally, the disagreement between the enactment of theory in practice created uncomfortable situations for all concerned. At times, we found ourselves

serving as mediators between cooperating teachers and student teachers; in just one semester, Melanie ran interference in two different situations. In one classroom, the student teacher wanted to create student-centered lessons over the protestations of her cooperating teacher, a twenty-year veteran who was committed to a teacher-centered classroom. The student teacher favored a historical and social understanding of *The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* through group work and outside projects; the cooperating teacher expected a textual analysis of Twain's language. In a classroom down the hall, another cooperating teacher expected her student teacher to use challenging instructional strategies with a class of standard students, while the student teacher preferred teacher-centered, structured strategies. The student teacher asked comprehension questions in conjunction with guided note-taking activities; the cooperating teacher wanted analytical questions, activities requiring synthesis, and raised expectations. As the student teachers expressed their frustrations with their mentors and their students, the cooperating teachers lamented their disappointments with their protégés, leaving Melanie desperately seeking a balance of responsibility toward both parties and guidance in a difficult situation.

As supervisors who valued the "big picture," we also recognized its limits. One of the weaknesses of much educational theory is that it explains only particular aspects, never the world in its infinite detail and complexity. As one particular tool to gain understanding, it cannot fully account for specific contexts, interactions, or rich human experiences. As observers in the high school classroom, we could not help but realize that that we rarely knew the complete story of those classrooms, despite our professed grasp on theoretical models and educational issues. Because things are not always as they seem, communication becomes crucial in fostering an open dialogue that allows supervisors, as well as teachers and student teachers, to offer individual perspectives based on experiences and understandings. We must appreciate the need for clarity of expectations and concerns while discussing both short-term solutions and long-term goals, articulating possibly useful ideas against classroom needs and capitalizing on the relationships established between members of each supervisory team.

THE "IEP" APPROACH: ONE STUDENT TEACHER AT A TIME

If supervision is grounded in working relationships, that between student teacher and supervisor is just as varied as that between cooperating teacher and supervisor. Working one-on-one with student teachers as they struggled to define themselves as teachers was an exacting task. We dealt with the tears of student teachers after a long day of seemingly horrific events, answered our phones on Saturday

afternoons to hear the strained voice of a student teacher asking for advice, and opened our email accounts to find a dozen questions awaiting us about licensure and teaching strategies. Throughout each supervision period, we commiserated, cajoled, critiqued, and enforced. The relationship developed between teacher-to-be and teacher-that-was continued to be perhaps the most satisfying aspect of serving as a supervisor, but also the most demanding.

Student teachers are never a faceless group of would-be teachers but individual personalities, with individual strengths and weaknesses, needing different approaches, different suggestions, even different tones of voice. As university supervisors, we responded to the needs of the student teacher, in general, as well as the needs of the individual, in particular. Struggling to become competent teachers, our charges were engaged not simply in learning how to teach but how to become a teacher. As Danielewicz reminds us, “what makes someone a good teacher is not methodology, or even ideology. It requires engagement with identity, the ways individuals conceive of themselves so that teaching is a state of being, not merely ways of acting or behaving” (3). In many ways, our student teachers were engaged in the same act of identity development that we ourselves were.

Of course, we could not solve all situations, much less prepare for them. How could we prepare for a cooperating teacher who takes a two-month leave of absence or a group of teachers gossiping negatively about a student teacher in the teachers’ lounge? How could we expect the plethora of student traumas our student teachers would face, from the death of a parent to the repercussions of an adolescent eating disorder to the severe autistic diagnosis of a student? Often, we found ourselves responding with “if it were me, here’s what I might try to do,” but we were not trained to answer all situations. Instead, we listened to the individual voices, hearing the nuances and noticing the inflections, and served as a site of reflective dialogue, a sounding board, a sympathetic encourager.

Sometimes, we did hold the answers and had to rein in a strong temptation to simply fix the problems, solve the woes, and make it all better. Part of becoming a teacher is learning to recognize and believe in your own agency (Rogers and Babinski 64). While student teachers often look to supervisors for solutions, hoping for the magic pill or the quick fix, they gain more through supported trial-and-error in many situations. We found that sometimes “here’s what I might do” translated, in the ears of our student teachers, into “here is what you must do.” Over time, it became more important to ask questions, make multiple suggestions, or simply listen as the student teachers talked their way into possibilities. We relied on many of our classroom teacher strategies: asking questions that defied easy answers, waiting in silence until someone spoke, listening long enough so they solved own problems. In order to support their growth as agentic, confident, and reflective teachers, we encouraged them to deal with tough situations and face the hard questions head-on.

We even let them fail, occasionally, however much we wanted to see them succeed. Ferreting out the reasons a particular lesson dissolved into chaos became an exercise in understanding the dynamics of a classroom. The first time one student teacher attempted a seminar with her classes, she discovered that great variability exists within a single lesson plan. One class engaged in a high-level, intense discussion. One class fell silent, refusing to participate. And one class, the one that Kim arrived to observe, went wild, refusing to stay even remotely close to the assigned topics, bouncing in their seats and cracking jokes, unable to be lured or threatened into reasonable conversation. By the time the class concluded, the student teacher was short-tempered, upset, and disheartened, torn between the glimmer of first period success and the devastation of third period failure. The resulting postconference ignored the requisite checklist of teacher behaviors itself in favor of exploring the differences between classes, potential reasons for and interpretations of behavioral problems, and possibilities for trying again with more or less structure.

Without any hesitancy, we can assert that supervision was as thought-provoking as any theoretical essay. As we observed the experiences of our student teachers, we were pushed to interpret our past experiences in the classroom. It caused us to reflect, while we encouraged our student teachers to do the same. It challenged us to redefine reflection. Far from the formal writings most often found in college classrooms, reflection took on the guise of involved conversations, regular emails, and quick chats in the hallway. Kim met with student teachers spread across distant schools in an online synchronous forum, allowing them to support each other through typed conversations about classroom fights, system-mandated vocabulary lessons, or the hopelessness of students pegged as future dropouts. Melanie organized monthly group dinners for her student teachers, serving lasagna while her teachers-in-training discussed how to reach disengaged students or when they might feel like “real” teachers. Creating the space for student teachers to support each other added to their problem-solving abilities and their sense of teacher agency. “I processed things differently when I was able to be a resource for others,” one student teacher remarked during an end-of-semester interview. “I felt more like a teacher, somehow.” We agree. As supervisors, we too became constant resources and, in turn, found ourselves feeling more connected as teachers.

THE JOYS OF MULTITASKING: GRADUATE-STUDENT LIFE AND SUPERVISION

Supervision is a mixture of classroom observation, deconstruction, and renegotiation. It is also a collection of everyday tasks requiring both physical and mental energy.

Mileage

We invested hours on the road to reach our high schools. In the first year of supervision, Melanie split her observations between three different high schools, roughly thirty minutes apart. In her second year, Kim supervised for two universities, traveling between five schools in four different counties, driving over an hour to reach one far-flung school. Mileage reimbursement checks were a welcome and much-needed addition at the very end of a semester or during the summer months. More important than the money, however, was the time lost to travel each week, a problematic sacrifice for a busy graduate student.

Paperwork

With supervision came paper, usually in triplicate. We filled out observation forms with each classroom visit (forms that often seemed woefully inadequate to capture the complex reality of the interactions before us). We evaluated at mid-semester, as well as the end of the year, with the aid of university-required documents. Some were simple and straightforward, asking for brief narratives or short notations about competence in the classroom; others were several pages in length, requiring detailed reflection and delineation of a student teacher's strengths and weaknesses in many specific areas. We checked off competencies. We signed state requests for certification. We filled out numerous applications for employment, checking the appropriate boxes and indicating the suitable proficiency.

The Job Search

We didn't begrudge writing recommendations but few student teachers realized the time involved in such writing when avoiding templates and form letters in favor of true accounts that might encourage potential employers or graduate schools to look twice. Multiply several student teachers times numerous recommendation letters and we found ourselves spending hours in front of the computer printing out words of praise on university letterhead. In one semester, Melanie wrote or revised fifteen letters for one student teacher alone. We also became critical advisers of each student's job search, expected to speak wisely on choices of grade level, location, and school. Our student teachers were certain we possessed answers for any number of difficult questions: whether to accept a job far from home with no guarantee of a personal classroom; how to choose between an urban school or a rural school and the attendant problems of either; what differences existed for a teacher in a private school.

Organization

Keeping track of the number of classroom visits (some formal, some informal; some preventative and some in answer to emergency calls) and the requirements of paperwork were another piece of the organizational puzzle of supervising. More difficult was the inclusion of quality supervision into the other demands of graduate-student life. As English teachers, we were masters of multitasking—handling clubs, newspapers, committees, and taskforces as well as teaching five classes a day and climbing the ever-mounting pile of essays, articles, and assignments handed in by our more than one hundred twenty students. Such skills served us well in our new guise. While supervising in our first two years, we carried full course loads and second jobs due to the nature of funding for supervisors. We balanced writing our supervisory notes with our research papers, book reviews and course reflections. Melanie served as president of a graduate student association; Kim taught an undergraduate class and advised a scholarship program. Even as our own coursework faded from the picture by our third year, we still incorporated supervision into preparing for comprehensive exams, writing dissertation proposals, conducting field research for various projects and grants, serving as consultants for programs within the school, and attempting to maintain somewhat sane relationships with friends and family. While one of the more consuming endeavors of our graduate student careers, supervising also existed as one piece of a larger chaos.

LIMINAL SPACES: THE REEDUCATION OF THE ENGLISH TEACHER

Whatever knowledge we were able to impart to our student teachers was more than repaid by the lessons we learned as supervisors. Each situation was different and every context brought with it a unique perspective, but the universality of supervision remained in the growth from student teacher to teacher, as well as from teacher to teacher educator.

Both of us frequently mourned the loss of our English classrooms, the increasing sense of disconnect from practice as we worked in more general teacher education. Supervision gave us a unique connection to classrooms that we otherwise lacked. It opened a window through which we could see, touch, impact, and learn from a variety of experienced professionals and professionals-to-be. Rarely did we, as teachers, find the time to sit in our colleagues' classrooms to discuss methods or contemporary issues in a contextualized and focused fashion. Supervision provided such an opportunity.

Supervisors live within liminal spaces—those places betwixt and between where potential abounds. They exist between functionality and possibility,

between established practice and foundational theory, between “us” and “them,” and even between those harried moments that make up graduate-student life itself. Legitimacy as supervisors has never been inherent in the role but develops over time and through reflective relationships, evolving moment by moment into something new and intriguing even beneath the recognizable trappings. Each classroom educates again in the ways and worlds of English teachers and high schools, proving to be an enlightening, challenging, and uniquely rewarding experience.

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Comprehending the Field



CHAPTER 10

Historical Development of the PhD in English Education



Jason Wirtz

THE CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH EDUCATION

A number of factors such as cold war competition, the resulting growing emphasis on basic education in K–12, and what were called “Basic Issues” in the discipline of English studies, resulted in the Allerton Park Conference on Research in the Teaching of English sponsored by the University of Illinois in December of 1962. This was the first Association of Department of English (ADE) conference made up of eighty chairmen and administrators from college and university English Departments around the country. At this conference, preparing future teachers of English was seen as a central mission for English Departments. We can hear this sentiment in the opening remarks of this 1962 conference given by Robert W. Rogers, former English Department head and subsequent dean of the College of Arts and Sciences at the University of Illinois:

Collectively we represent large resources of learning, prestige, and wealth [...] What we do here, or fail to do, will be widely noticed [...] If we declare that the most prestigious members of English departments should work in programs specifically designed for teachers, we must be prepared to “encourage” our own luminaries to do so. If we declare for a Ph.D. in the teaching of English, we must return to our own campuses and get the slow-moving curricula machinery going. If we assert that notable contributions to the work of training teachers make for valid claims to promotion, we must practice this precept in our own departments. (Shugrue 39)

A significant result of this conference was the separating out of English education from the broader field of English studies. John Simmons, professor emeritus of English education at Florida State University, remembers his mentor, Dwight Burton, coming off the plane from Illinois filled with excitement because he, along

with Jim Squire and Nick Hook, had been entrusted with the initial development of this new English education field.

It is no surprise then, that in the spring of 1963, Dwight Burton, who at Florida State ran one of the nation's best teacher preparatory programs at the time, organized a meeting of a couple hundred English educators to be held at Indiana University in order to discuss professional matters which necessarily included PhD programs. Later that year a smaller group met in Champaign to draw up a constitution for a permanent Conference on English Education (CEE) within the larger National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE). The first three chairmen of the CEE were Dwight Burton, Nick Hook, and William Evans (Hook 210–11).

This chapter contends that a need for doctoral programs in English education led to the formation of the CEE which resulted in a number of legitimizing factors for English education as a field. The CEE was a movement from the “one at a time player,” people working in isolation, toward the creation of a discipline (Stock). Out of the formation of the CEE came the journal, *English Education*, as the central publication of this new field. Primary articles written by Burton in both the newsletter (predating the journal) and the first year of the journal are about the formation and standardization of PhD programs in English education.

ENGLISH EDUCATION BEFORE THE CONFERENCE ON ENGLISH EDUCATION

It is important to understand the formation of the CEE as a culminating event. Educators had been gradually trying to establish English education as a discipline for a number of years. For example, Dorothy V. Smith (President of the NCTE, 1936) at Minnesota, who produced several noteworthy doctoral students (Dwight Burton included), had been arguing all along for the integration of English and education. And Louise Rosenblatt, mentor to several influential English educators, arrives at New York University in 1948 where she teaches the first doctoral-level course in English education at that university (Mayher).

While the doctoral degree in English education, per se, may not have been visible, work that generally constitutes English education was taking place. Certainly there is evidence of doctoral degrees being granted in response to work being done in English education before the CEE is formed in March of 1963. An extensive search in the dissertation abstracts database using language arts key words yields the following dissertations which predate the formation of the CEE (figure 1). This search was limited to earlier work being done in the “field” and is not to imply an absence of work from 1933–1962. Note also the schools where these doctoral degrees were being granted, as these are some of the places where the English education doctoral degree can claim roots.

Dissertation Title	Author	School & Degree Year	
A Resume of the Researchers and Experiments Bearing on the History of Pedagogy of Writing	Thompson, Mary	New York University PEDD	1909
An Experimental Study in Grouping by Similarity as a Factor in the Teaching of Spelling	Wagner, Charles	University of Pennsylvania PhD	1912
Standards in Written Composition; An Experimental Study in District Two of the Philadelphia Public School System	Berman, Samuel	Temple University PhD	1924
The Equipment in Written English Pupils have on Entering the Junior High School	Driggs, Roscoe	New York University PhD	1926
Literature for Grades Seven, Eight, and Nine: A Study of Prevailing Materials and Methods with Suggestions for Their Revision	Stroh, Margaret	Columbia University PhD	1927
The Relationship of Certain Factors to the Content of the Curriculum in Literature in the Secondary School	Kefauver, Grayson	University of Minnesota PhD	1928
A Study of Progress in Sentence Building in Written Composition from the Third-Grade to the Ninth-Grade	Rosenkrans, Lillian	New York University PhD	1929
A Program for the Supervision of Written Composition	Perkins, Niles	University of Pittsburgh PhD	1929
Generalization in Spelling; a Study of Various Bases of Generalization in Teaching Spelling	Sartorius, Craig	Columbia University PhD	1931
A Training Procedure for Teachers of English, Based Upon Analyses of Objectives, Outcomes, and Activities	Alvey, Edwards, Jr.	University of Virginia PhD	1931
Critical Points in the Construction of a Teacher-Training Curriculum	Hagerty, Clare	University of California-Berkeley EdD	1932
Ability of Prospective Teachers in Interpretation of Poetry and in Teaching Interpretation of Poetry	Wagner, Elizabeth	New York University PhD	1932
The Reading Circle Movement of the Training of Teachers	Johnson, Butler	Yale University PhD	1933

Figure 1. A sample of early English education related degrees granted by universities.

TRACING THE DISCUSSION OF STANDARDS FOR THE DOCTORAL DEGREE IN ENGLISH EDUCATION

The late 1960s was a time of “great educational upheaval” that brought with it a national wave of reevaluation in which everything stood to be questioned and restructured under new paradigms (Shuman). Universities were growing rapidly and the justification of research, including “Back to Basics” approaches grounded in behaviorist theory, were being tied to funding and the subsequent development of programs. And yet English education is not a natural fit with any research model that reduces the learning of English to isolated and constituent parts. English studies has long been a diverse and interrelated field including linguistics, composition, rhetoric, reading theory, literary studies, etc. As we trace the chronological development of the English education doctoral degree during this time period, we are privy to a unique struggle for a field coming to terms with an understanding of itself. Without a consensus as to the nature of the field, how does one work with these behaviorist objectives—creating a place for realistic preparation—without being reductive on the one hand or sending doctoral students down fruitless paths on the other? And how does one develop a plan for theoretically informed and realistically prepared future doctoral programs while balancing the tensions between scientific and humanist approaches? Other than the notion of realistic preparation, initial discussions addressed requirements to enter doctoral programs, the distribution of work, the emphasis on teaching, and the framework of the dissertation.

One of the first tasks of the CEE committee, in order to establish stability in this “new” field, was to define English education and develop standards for its doctoral programs. An initial step was to see who was already involved in the field. With this in mind, as well as the notion of “unfilled positions in teacher education in English and in supervision in English calling for doctoral training,” Dwight Burton conducts a survey of the existing field and reports his findings in his article “Report of a Preliminary Survey on Doctoral Preparation in English Education.” Figure 2 displays the results of this survey.

Appointments and Education

Study of 57 Respondents
Conducted by Dwight Burton, 1968

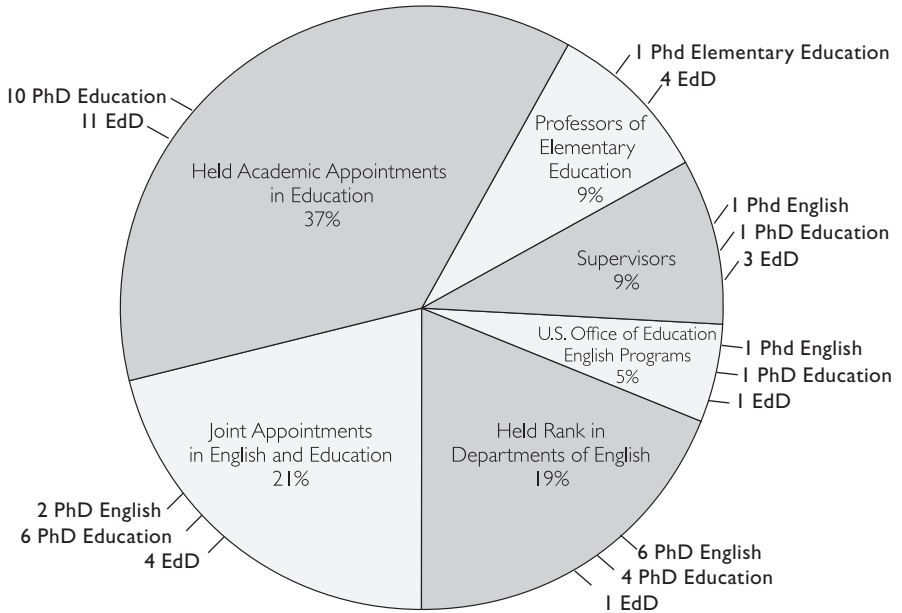


Figure 2. Pie chart representing Dwight Burton's 1968 study of English educators working in the field.

On May seventeenth and eighteenth of 1968, the ADE (Association of Departments of English), the MLA (Modern Language Association) and the NCTE met in Fort Lauderdale, Florida, to determine what recommendations might be made for doctoral programs in English education. The subsequent CEE newsletter, written by Oscar Haugh, appears in February of 1969; this CEE newsletter was the precursor to the journal of *English Education* with Haugh serving as the journal's first editor. This newsletter provides the first definition of English education and puts forth the first set of standards for doctoral programs within the field. The stated definition of English education, published in this newsletter, is as follows:

The field of English Education is defined as that specialty within the broad area of English designed for individuals giving leadership to the teaching of English at the elementary and/or secondary school level and for individuals who will be engaged

in the preparation of teachers for those levels. This field includes also those responsible for the continuing education of elementary and secondary school teachers of English. A program in English education should prepare the student for a variety of careers depending upon his interests and capabilities. This preparation is designed for those who will become supervisors of English programs in the elementary and secondary schools, college teachers of English methods courses and supervisors of student teachers, and those engaged in research in English Education as well as those directing graduate students engaged in research in English Education. (3)

This same newsletter outlines the content of work that doctoral programs in English education should have. The guidelines contain two main categories: "Background for Admission into the Program" and "General Requirements and Distribution of Work." As to the former, the newsletter reads:

All prospective teachers should be aware of the influence of anthropological, sociological, political, and economic forces upon them not only as educators working in a particular community, but as citizens. All teachers, but particularly those teaching English, should be especially aware of the problems of communication experienced by minorities with varying cultural backgrounds. (Haugh 4)

Additionally, incoming doctoral students should have fourth-year knowledge of a foreign language and at least two years teaching experience at the elementary or secondary levels. As for distribution of work, this newsletter recommends that English (literature, children's literature, rhetoric—oral and written provinces, and linguistics) comprise 50 percent of the coursework with English education making up 25 percent and practicum experiences and dissertation comprising the remaining 25 percent of hourly distribution (Haugh 4).

One month later, in March of 1969, *English Education* "is born," providing "the journal that becomes the official organ of the Conference on English Education" (Haugh 175). The founding of *English Education* is essential to the field because, as Patti Stock (NCTE president, 2004) contends, "You simply can't have a field without peer review and a place to share work." The discussion surrounding the standardization of English education doctoral programs is of primary concern in the first publications of this new journal and the conversation continues to permeate the journal throughout its first two decades.

In the very first year of *English Education* Dwight Burton summarizes some of his previous work in an article titled, "The English Education Doctorate: Some

Further Reflections.” This article is a recapitulation of the standards developed by the 1969 Fort Lauderdale conference. The one change worth noting here is his approach to the English education doctoral dissertation. His first alternative to the traditional dissertation is “three article-length research papers [...] of publishable quality” (Burton 137). Burton’s second alternative is a “term of supervised experimental teaching” which would be observed by a committee and result in a written report by the candidate to the committee as well as an oral examination by the candidate based on the teaching and report (137).

In the fall of 1970, Edward Ducharme publishes, “The English Education Doctorate: ‘More’ Further Reflections.” This is an article written in reaction to Burton. Ducharme claims, “the admissions requirements are standard: a BA or an MA in an appropriate area and two years teaching experience” (42–43). What Ducharme adds is that he would like to see this “kind of teaching be made specific, and that this teaching be subjected to some kind of evaluation prior to one’s being accepted as even a possible doctoral candidate” (42). Ducharme also calls for a heavier concentration on research in teaching.

Baird Shuman, another major player in this discussion surrounding the development of doctoral programs, enters the conversation in the winter of 1972 with, “The English Education Doctorate in the Decade Ahead.” Shuman argues for a more vocationally appropriate training than is currently being offered. He cites several new occupations available to the holder of a PhD in English education such as curriculum planners, heads of English Departments, textbook publishers, and administrators of programs concerned with teaching the basic skills of communication. Shuman argues that English education doctoral programs are all too often “insufficiently related to what its recipient will probably be doing during [his/her] professional life” (78). The changes Shuman suggests, guided by his notion of “realistic preparation” include a proposal that the “doctoral program contain a full time teaching component for which the student would be remunerated” (79). In this case, the doctoral student would be immediately involved with the schools as well as be able to work off a year of residence and be self-supporting while doing so. In terms of coursework and independent study, Shuman maintains that the English education doctorate should be “tailor-made” to meet the needs of each student (85).¹

Baird Shuman reenters the conversation in 1977 with, “Doctoral Degrees and English Education.” When dealing specifically with the “Components of an English Education Program,” Shuman makes the assertion that “for the English educator, breadth is more important than depth” with regard to literature (219). Shuman points to the “usual disbalance” that one finds (favoring literature over writing) in the preparation of those teaching English and recommends a program design which incorporates work in composition, “specifically in advanced expository writing, creative writing, and journalism” and work in a language, “some course

work in history of the language, in present-day English, in dialectology, and in semantics" (220). Furthermore, Shuman argues that:

people working in today's schools need to know something about race and culture, something about deviant social behavior, something about social work, something about recent psychological theory, and something about many other areas of study carried on by a broad range of departments within a university. (221)

Toward this aim, Shuman believes that doctoral candidates in English education should have available to them one course each semester from another discipline (221). Shuman concludes his article with a quick examination of the graduates of his doctoral program at Duke University over an eleven-year period. The results are that "sixteen of twenty-one people receiving the doctorate are now in college teaching or have been since the degree was awarded" (224). This evidence, Shuman notes, is reason for expanding the field and making subsequent changes within English education doctoral programs to make them responsible to a more dynamic field.

In 1982, a period marked by a dramatically low demand for new teachers, Dwight Burton in his article, "Prospects for Graduate Programs in English Education," argues that there will not be an increase in graduate enrollment in English education, that the master's in English education is no longer viable, that professors of English education should use their free time (since there aren't as many PhD applicants) conducting research in the field, and that there are no major changes needed in English education doctoral programs as constituted (144–146). Burton concludes:

The finest achievement in the field has been the development of truly relevant doctoral programs [...and...] what we need at the doctoral level in English Education is conservation rather than innovation, conservation in the quality and nature of distinguished programs. Our knowledge in the field, of course, has broadened and deepened over the years especially concerning such matters as the composing process and teaching writing and response to literature. But basically, I believe, the well-prepared doctoral candidate of 1964 is still the well-prepared candidate today. (148)

DIVERSITY VS. DISSIPATION

A 1990 survey completed by R.C. O'Donnell investigating the structure of doctoral programs in English education concluded with this statement:

If the identity of English Education as an academic discipline depends on the uniformity of content of doctoral degree programs in the field, its status can only be described as tenuous at best. On the other hand, if it is true that there is strength in diversity, few scholarly or professional fields can claim to be as strong. (22)

In less than ten years we've moved from Burton's claim of "truly relevant doctoral programs" to "tenuous at best." I would argue that the dispersion of attention to other fields had left English education without its strong advocates and institutional support, and that without this support it was in danger of losing its role, losing the CEE, and, perhaps most importantly, losing its relationship with public schools. This dispersion of the field—a lack of unity in both content and design—was reflected in English education being recast in doctoral programs around the country as "English and Education" housed within both the English *and* Education Departments (University of Michigan), or "Critical Studies in Literacy and Pedagogy" housed within the Rhetoric and Composition Department (Michigan State University), or "Curriculum and Instruction" housed within the Education Department (University of Wisconsin–Madison), or "Language, Literacy and Culture" housed within the Education Department (University of California–Berkeley), or "Curriculum and Teaching" in the Department of Curriculum and Teaching (Teachers College), and the list goes on. Dwight Burton, a founder of the field of English education, knew that the field stood on the shoulders of its PhD programs and subsequent doctoral students. Without a uniform understanding of doctoral program expectations, the field had become "tenuous at best."

However, constructing its studies as an autonomous field of inquiry is neither possible nor desirable for English education. To borrow a strategy from Louise Wetherbee Phelps, a composition scholar partly responsible for the quick rise of composition studies (a field that English education can look to as a model for increasing institutional capital), English education requires an "ecological" strategy in order to encompass both the structure of the field and its interdependence with complementary fields (3). This ecological strategy—drawing on the diversity in the field presently as a strength—will be ineffective, however, if English education can not draw from an existing uniform institutional and theoretical direction. In other words, the argument is that English education may have grown so diverse as to lose its central hub which would result in the absorption of English education—as an academic field of study and research—by other disciplines. And what is the central hub of English education?—the Conference on English Education and its journal, *English Education*.

At the twentieth anniversary of the CEE there was a proposal to disband the conference on economic grounds. When the room was polled to see who were charter members of the NCTE most everyone in the room raised their hand. This

illustrates the point that English educators, while oftentimes seemingly invisible, are the very backbone of such organizations as the NCTE; in fact, English educators have been past presidents of the NCTE more than any other constituent group. The National Writing Project, writing centers around the country, composition and rhetoric, young adult literature, whole language pedagogy, grammar in context, reading theory—these are movements that owe a great deal to English educators.

This notion of English education as “in its curriculum, breadth, and openness of research being the embodiment of interdisciplinary study” comes with its identity problems (Simmons). How does one offer a definition of a field that is constantly shifting, exploring new territory, and claiming the fringe of itself as oftentimes the most exciting and productive parts? This is all the more reason why the CEE and the journal of *English Education* are so valuable—as mitigating forces against dissipation, as places where competing ends of the spectrum can debate and create new knowledge under the umbrella of English education.

Thankfully, we can see current evidence of the field reevaluating itself as to draw strength from its interdisciplinary nature while claiming a strong identity for itself. The 2005 CEE Leadership and Policy Summit held in Atlanta rehashed a great deal of what has been of concern to English educators since 1965 and responds to these concerns in a contemporary and rhetorically savvy fashion.

One of the primary moves that the Leadership and Policy Summit made was to claim as English education’s focus the preparation and ongoing professional support of K–16 English teachers. This link to elementary, secondary, and college/university teaching provides English education with its primary identity as stated here in part of the revised definition of English education in the *CEE Policy and Summit Summary Report*:

Central to the task of English educators is the preparation and support of teachers who, in turn, prepare learners to be creative, literate individuals; contributors to the cultural, social, and economic health of their communities; and fully participating and critically aware citizens of our democracy in a complex, diverse, and increasingly globalized world.

The framers of this new definition, however, are quick to extend the scope of English education as to include “the teaching and learning of English, broadly and inclusively defined” as well as “systematic inquiry into the teaching and learning of English” (*CEE Policy and Summit Summary Report*). As a means to this end, English education is cast as an interdisciplinary field which draws upon several fields of inquiry such as “education, literary studies, linguistics, composition studies, philosophy, psychology, anthropology, and sociology” (“What is English Education?”). The question of, What is English education? is not easily answered

when the field is seen as drawing on so many contiguous fields. To complicate further, this perennial problem of dissipation comes to the fore once again when the summit discusses the task of “Nurturing and Growing the Membership of CEE”: “But, by being so open and responsive, CEE has also diluted its role to the point where its distinctive contribution may have been lost.” As the policy leaders write in response to this issue:

CEE needs to envision its service audience as members of an ever-expanding set of concentric circles. Within the inner circle reside those originally targeted as CEE members—professors of English Education. But connected to and surrounding this core are the other groups described above, whose work and mission are closely related to the core membership. As CEE determines in what ways its target membership can best be served, it should also consider how the services it offers will benefit and be of interest to a broader group of educators. (“Nurturing and Growing the Membership of CEE”)

This type of reevaluation and reexamination of what we are, what kind of knowledge we make, and whom we serve is the action that most invigorates the CEE, the journal of *English Education*, and English educators writ large. While English educators can claim a type of independence and autonomy from other fields through our claim to K–16 teacher preparation and support, there is a pressing need to accept and build upon the rhetorical temperament of our own discipline which is characterized by its ability to see across disciplines in order to make useful connections and contributions to not only English education but to its numerous associated fields as well.

Early leaders in the field and contributors to the journal of *English Education* such as Dwight Burton, Oscar Haugh, and Baird Shuman understood how important the inclusion of doctoral students, and the unity across doctoral programs housing these students, is to the stability and ongoing growth and development of English education as a field. While taking the time to commend the work that has arrived out of the CEE Leadership and Policy Summit, if we are to learn from the concerns of leaders past most directly, then more attention needs to be paid to doctoral students and their programs. Certainly doctoral students are at the nexus of teaching and research, with the majority of students having recently made the transition from a teaching emphasis to a research emphasis grounded in their recent teaching experiences. Who better to invigorate the field with work across disciplines than our current doctoral students who are positioned in various departments across the country? And let us not forget that the newly minted English education doctoral student is certainly not the uninitiated doctoral

student that most departments at the university level have to contend with—these are professionals within the field by our own admission standards of three years minimum teaching experience at the K–12 level. If the CEE and the journal of *English Education* could work to purposefully create a place for these current and future leaders of the field to congregate and share work then perhaps we would see an immediate strengthening and expanding of the field.

Lastly, I would like to make a note here of the importance, relevance, and benefits of creating histories in English education as it relates to the former point of maintaining a landscape of a field that, by nature, is interdisciplinary. J.N. Hook (cofounder of the CEE), in his personal view of the NCTE's first sixty-seven years, *A Long Way Together*, writes in the preface about the benefits of historical perspective:

If as a young teacher I had possessed more historical perspective, I might have been a more intelligent consumer of what I read in NCTE articles and books and what I heard at its conventions. I might in fact have been a better teacher, for I might then have more easily differentiated the genuinely new from the rehash, the tried from the trite, the educationally lasting from the faddish. And if I had possessed such perspective when I became a writer and speaker on professional subjects and an officer of the Council itself, I might have avoided some asinine statements and mistaken judgments. (xvii)

In a field of shifting identities, we must be that much more aware and conscientious of our history if we are to avoid the rehashed and the faddish in an effort to work toward a cohesive, progressive and, yes, interdisciplinary field.

Notes

1. See Edward Fagan's article, "Doctorate in English Education—Who Needs It?" for a similar case arguing that the English education doctoral degree does not prepare its candidates for the type of work they will find in the job force.

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CHAPTER II

Establishing the Field

RECOGNITION, INTERDISCIPLINARITY, AND FREEDOM IN ENGLISH EDUCATION DOCTORAL STUDIES



Anne Ruggles Gere

I am interested in your program. Can you please tell me how it ranks in comparison with other Ph.D. programs in English education?

—Prospective Student

Name the top ten PhD programs for English educators. Okay, try for the top three. Actually, there are no rankings for PhD programs in our field. When *U.S. News & World Report* publishes its annual ranking of graduate programs or when the National Research Council (NRC) conducts evaluations of graduate training in various fields, English education is not among them. Ours is an area of graduate education that flies below the radar of systematic national review. Unlike our colleagues in, say, psychology and education or gender and literature, we have no large-scale measures of the relative success of our PhD programs.

In some ways this may be an advantage. After all, we know that directors of graduate programs can manipulate statistics to raise the rankings of their programs. A few adjustments in admissions processes or representation of yield can gain a given program an uptick in the rankings. Furthermore, national rankings are often tied to the overall prestige of a given institution rather than the quality of an individual program, and in some cases this can lead to mythical results. Several years ago, for example, Princeton, which has no business school, was highly ranked in business. And, we are spared the hours and hours that it takes to collect the data required by national reviews.

There are, of course, liabilities attached to the absence of national rankings for graduate programs in English education. Even very fine programs that produce leaders in the field lack the prestige that comes with a high national ranking. When we ask deans and provosts for resources, we cannot refer to a number three or

number seven ranking as our colleagues in other fields often do. For prospective graduate students, the lack of national rankings makes it more difficult to find graduate programs in English education and to know how to make informed choices among the ones they do locate. Similarly, our programs are less visible to one another, and we often have scant information about what it means to do graduate work in English education. Ostriker and Kuh note:

In any assessment of doctoral programs, a key question is: Which programs should be included? The task of constructing taxonomy of programs is to provide a framework for the analysis of research-doctorate programs as they exist today, with an eye to the future. A secondary question is: Which programs should be grouped together across universities for purposes of comparison and what names should be given to these aggregations? (19)

Rhetoric and composition fields worked on this problem for several years, and under the leadership of Professor Louise Phelps, this consortium undertook the project of getting rhetoric and composition listed on the National Research Council's list of "emerging fields." In the spring of 2007, "Rhetoric and Composition" appeared on the NRC list for the first time. This gave faculty and administrators an opportunity to rank graduate programs and to begin to make the field more visible. Since the NRC does not rank programs in education, a visibility project with the NRC is not an option for English education, but the initiative of rhetoric and composition suggests the need for graduate programs in English education to develop their own consortium and work collaboratively to heighten awareness of the field both within and beyond the academy. Ultimately we should get English education listed in the Classification of Instructional Programs (CIP), the primary source for the Integrated Postsecondary Education Data System (IPEDS). The lists of fields generated by the IPEDS are used by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES).

Absent this kind of initiative, PhD programs in English education will remain relatively invisible, prospective students will have difficulty locating and comparing programs, and the material benefits of ranking systems will continue to elude us. The University of Michigan JPEE Web site suggests:

If you have prior teaching experience and aspire to be a professor of English or a professor of education specializing in English education or rhetoric and composition or literacy, you may wish to consider the Joint Ph.D. Program in English and Education (JPEE). ("Joint Program in English and Education (JPEE) Graduate Program at the University of Michigan School of Education")

This edited volume on doctoral degrees in English education is, of course, one way to move forward a visibility project in English education, and as a contributor my goal is to describe one model for a PhD that it might be considered alongside other variations. The University of Michigan program is an example of a well-established doctoral program in English education where students have significant support and freedom to define their studies and research interests. I do not assume that other institutions will want to emulate this program exactly because the shape of graduate education is determined in large measure by local context, faculty, and history. However, by detailing how this program evolved and how it operates, I hope to foster greater communication among graduate programs in English education.

The Joint PhD in English and education (JPEE) at the University of Michigan has a long history dating back to the 1930s when Warner Rice chaired the Department of English. Some of my senior colleagues who served under Rice still tremble slightly at the mention of his name. He combined an authoritarian style with a keen interest in how English was taught in secondary schools, and he encouraged both the development of a process for certifying Michigan high schools and a program in English and education for those interested in university-school relations. The doctoral degree in English took various forms over the next thirty years, and with the arrival of Stephen Dunning in the late 1960s, the JPEE took its present form as a program of the Rackham Graduate School at the University of Michigan. Rather than belonging to either the Department of English or the School of Education, the JPEE is one of approximately thirty joint-degree programs administered by Rackham. Part of the local context includes a significant university commitment to interdisciplinarity, so joint programs like JPEE are not regarded as unusual, and university resources are available to sustain them. In the case of the JPEE, Rackham helps to fund the program and students receive a Rackham degree. Rackham funding includes some summer support for students as well as several fellowships for program students. In addition, both the Department of English and the School of Education provide support; English offers teaching assistantships and education (with help from Rackham) supports a program assistant. In addition, program students compete successfully for university-wide fellowships and teaching awards.

The program typically accepts five to six students each year from a pool of thirty-five to forty. Criteria for admission include teaching experience, an MA in either English or education, some expertise with a foreign language, a writing sample that demonstrates a student's ability to function in an intellectually competitive environment, and a statement of purpose that shows a "fit" between the program and a student's background and interests. Each student accepted is guaranteed five years of funding, through a graduate student teaching position and/or fellowships. Teaching assignments include first-year composition, advanced writing courses,

and English methods; I mention this because the material conditions of graduate education make a great difference, especially in a field like English education where students are usually former secondary school teachers and make large financial sacrifices to attend graduate school. Students who hold full-time jobs or have only three or four years of support are less likely to finish dissertations than those who can count upon five years of funding. One of my biggest projects during my tenure with the program has been to increase the number of fellowships available to program students so that anyone who is making good progress toward the degree can expect to receive at least one semester of funding for full-time study without any teaching responsibilities. A Program Committee comprised of faculty from both the Department of English and the School of Education, makes decisions about admissions, fellowships, and program policy.

Students design their own program of study, electing courses and designing exam reading lists in their areas of interest. Students consult regularly about their program of study with the Program Co-Chairs. A “specialization” should be considered early in the student’s program of work. It has proved useful to students to reach general ideas about specialization before the end of the first year of study. Such general notions, however tentative, are useful in planning course selections and in laying the groundwork for the dissertation. (“Joint Program in English and Education (JPEE): Program FAQ”)

The JPEE does not require any specific courses, but each student must take four to six courses in both English and education. Frequently “English” is construed to include women’s studies or classics or American culture and “education” can include sociology or anthropology or law. A strong advising system, which includes regular consultation with students who are deciding on courses, a well-developed network of referrals from other students, and annual required meetings with program chairs, insure that students are not left to flounder as they make their way through the curriculum.

In the mid-1990s, the Program Committee restructured the examination system to include three major pieces, plus the foreign language requirement. Ideally, students take and pass the foreign language exam in the fall of the first year, but some students need to retake the exam or substitute coursework for the exam. The rationale for this requirement is at least twofold. Given the increasing linguistic diversity of students at all levels of education, ability to communicate in a language other than English serves program students well. In addition, demonstrated ability in a foreign language makes program students recognizable to English Departments, where many English education and/or rhetoric and composition

positions are housed. JPEE students take the same language exam as students in the English Department's language and literature program.

The first JPEE-specific exam, titled *Special Topic*, asks students to identify an area of potential dissertation interest, develop a reading list, and, with the assistance of two faculty members, write a forty- to fifty-page exam that demonstrates mastery of an area of the field and simultaneously makes an intervention in that area. Recent exams fulfilling this requirement include: a reconsideration of critical pedagogy in the composition classroom and strategies for untangling its political and intellectual components; consideration of models for teaching Native American literature in secondary school and a plan for teaching *Wynema*; an examination of the evolution of Alternative Dispute Resolution and a proposal for using it in teaching argument in writing classes; and a discussion of research on adolescent literacy and a case study of a troubled adolescent reader who found solace in young adult literature.

As these examples suggest, program students work on a wide variety of topics, and in the most general terms, their work falls into the two areas of rhetoric and composition and English education. Let me make a brief detour from describing the structure of the program to explain this connection. In many institutions English education and composition and rhetoric are separate, but the history of composition, beginning with Braddock's 1963 *Research in Written Composition*, shows that the evolution of composition studies from the 1970s forward is influenced by English education. Founding figures in composition and rhetoric like Janet Emig and Richard Braddock were English educators, and they employed methodologies drawn from our field. The tradition continued with leaders like Charles Cooper and Lee Odell (JPEE alum) who were also trained as English educators. Rhetoric and composition is, after all, a field that developed out of questions generated by teachers, and it retains a wide band of pedagogical interest.

Although most program students would describe themselves as either focusing on teacher education or rhetoric and composition, they would also describe themselves as drawing heavily on the other area. For example, a student who received an award as a composition instructor, who served as a mentor to beginning graduate student composition instructors, and who is writing a dissertation about the rhetoric of nineteenth-century women who helped establish colleges for women, draws upon her own experience as a high school teacher when she teaches the English methods course and supervises student teachers. Indeed a number of program graduates have taken positions that enable them to work in both English education and composition and rhetoric. According to the University of Michigan JPEE Web site:

Students take three major qualifying examinations:

- *Special Topic* exam, which focuses on an area of interest for the student

- ✦ Theorization of Learning exam, which requires reflection on graduate school learning
- ✦ Prospectus for the dissertation constitutes the third examination to make timely progress toward the degree, students should complete all examinations and meet the foreign language requirement by the beginning of Winter Term of the third year. Students who do not adhere to this schedule are not eligible for some fellowships.

("Joint Program in English and Education (JPEE): Program FAQ")

To return, then, to narrating the sequence of examinations required of program students, the second exam has the awkward title "Theorization of Learning." The Program Committee struggled a long time with this title and failed to come up with anything that could be both descriptive and sonorous. Basically, this exam gives students an opportunity to reflect on their intellectual journey. For many students this means considering the graduate courses they have elected. Since it is rare for any two program students to take the same set of courses, and since interdisciplinarity is highly prized within the university, the opportunity to think carefully about coursework's effects is useful for many students. The exam is not limited to graduate courses, however, and a number of students use this occasion to explore long-term interests or questions. Although there is an autobiographical dimension to this exam, it is not merely an accounting of the student's intellectual life. This exam requires students to focus on issues that have become compelling for them, to make an argument drawing upon evidence from their own lives. This argument is important because it typically becomes the springboard into the prospectus for the dissertation. When the Theorization of Learning exam works well, it concludes where the prospectus will begin.

Ideally, students write the Special Topic exam during the summer after the first year in the program and complete the Theorization of Learning exam by the end of the second summer. This means that they will write and defend the prospectus during the third year, which makes it possible for them to finish comfortably within five years. During their graduate school tenure, most students serve on at least one committee. Both the School of Education and the Department of English welcome student members on most committees, and Rackham also invites student participation on committees. Students report that these experiences give them insight into academic life and prepare them for taking up service responsibilities when they become faculty members.

The first semester in JPEE can come as a large shock—whether you are coming directly from a MA/MFA program or returning after a hiatus. Because the program straddles the humanities and social sciences, we are asked to work within the different disciplines, and therefore, discourses. Learning the conventions (both oral and written) of each not only takes time but can be stressful. (“JPEE Student Web site”)

Serving on committees helps students see another dimension of the two cultures—humanities and social science—that constitute the program. As they move between classes in the two areas, students frequently comment on the differences they encounter. A discussion of, say, literacy, will feature names like James Gee and Shirley Brice Heath in the School of Education, but in the Department of English names like Deborah Brandt and Catherine Prendergast would be much more likely. A term like *methodology* means the procedures for gathering and analyzing empirical data in most education classes, while in English it refers to one’s theoretical framework. JPEE students also come to understand the different standards for evaluation in the two areas. Junior faculty in English are told they must publish a book to be considered seriously for tenure, while their peers in education are told to publish a series of articles and leave books for senior faculty.

Mentoring is strongly focused on professionalization. [The co-chairs] talk early about jobs and field preparation (English or Education) and where students’ interests will fit into the job market. [Co-chairs] work with students to prepare proposals for conferences and to publish; [they] also publish with students. Students are encouraged to be involved in [faculty] outreach projects, in literacy initiatives, in public education, and in making education accessible and effective. [Co-chairs] help students with job application materials and [their] students participate in the English Department’s mock interviews. Students are mentored well beyond the first job; [co-chairs] continue to advise [their] students up to tenure. (Gere and Rex 1)

One of the advantages of a relatively small graduate program is the individual attention that it makes possible. The JPEE has grown in recent years, accepting five to six students annually rather than three to four, so that the total program population hovers around thirty, up from the mid-twenties a few years ago. Still, however, Lesley Rex (cochair) and I are able to stay current with each student. Part of this is facilitated by the fact that the JPEE has a weekly brown-bag lunch meeting on Wednesdays. Coordinated by students and attended by cochairs, this weekly meeting enables us to stay connected with students. The speakers that student

coordinators invite, the topics they choose to discuss, and the opportunity for quick conversations before and after all help us cochairs stay attuned to students. The combination of “Chalk and Cheese” with the more formal mentoring associated with annual meetings, conversations about course selection, and monitoring and/or responding to exams keep lines of communication open.

Writing groups are a great way to get feedback on your work, see what your peers are working on, and get in the practice of regularly reading and responding to work—a large part of an academic’s work life. Look for emails with opportunities to get involved. (“JPEE Student Web site”)

In addition to their official academic and committee roles, students who enter the program become members of a lively and welcoming community. Each incoming student has an advanced student mentor who offers advice on everything from creating a syllabus for the first-year writing course to finding an apartment. In addition to “Chalk and Cheese,” students coordinate a variety of social events where they can share ideas, ask questions, and get to know one another. Students also support one another intellectually, creating writing groups, sharing drafts and exams and dissertations, and suggesting readings to one another. The social and intellectual connections created in the JPEE help to sustain our graduates as they move forward with their own careers, and many alumni report that members of their cohort remain close friends and colleagues years after they have taken their degrees.

It is important for our profession, and for public school English instruction in the country, that we do better at recognizing and supporting graduate studies in English education. The interdisciplinary nature of our field ought to foster the wider vision and freer exploration of our students. My hope is that as we work together to make the field of English education more visible and vital we will better provide social and intellectual support for all the graduates of all the PhD programs in English education.

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Evolving and Extending Responsibilities



CHAPTER 12

Reconfiguring English Education Doctoral Programs as “Third Spaces”

Marilyn Wilson, Julie Lindquist

ENGLISH EDUCATION IN A DEPARTMENT OF ENGLISH

2002

Mostly silence in the building housing the Department of English. Marilyn and her English education colleagues wonder: Do literature faculty talk to one another in their offices or in the quiet hallways? English education faculty often doesn't hear from their literature counterparts unless it's to receive complaints about “those English education students” in their classes.¹

They leave the chair's office, demoralized, having once again found themselves unable to persuade the department head of the need for an English education position. Again they say to themselves, “Maybe next year.” They cannot imagine why it should be so difficult to convince the chair to replace English ed. faculty to teach courses their students need. They do not understand why these needs would go unmet, again, in favor of positions in renaissance literature or postcolonial theory. They are mystified, too, as to why, on other occasions, they have to fight so hard for every teaching assistantship for their students.

Four years ago the English education program was housed in the Department of English, as many around the country are. Others are typically found in Colleges of Education, such as the one recently developed at MSU with a focus on curriculum. The English education program in English at MSU provided coursework in composition theory, language, literacy and pedagogy, within a departmental structure steeped in the traditions of English literary studies. To contextualize our role in this department, English faculty were heavily focused

on literary, scholarship and theory, and they often dismissed English education and the pedagogy-related courses as tangential to the mission of the department. In the same vein, the department had recently rejected an opportunity to take on the responsibility for first-year writing, feeling that it, too, was tangential to their mission. Over the years, English education remained understaffed, and its graduate students felt marginalized by what they felt was a lack of respect for their areas of interest. There was also a chronic lack of teaching fellowships for students in English education, despite their strong academic backgrounds and extensive teaching experience.

2003

The spring breezes on the beautiful MSU campus feel particularly refreshing this year. Marilyn and her English education colleagues are jubilant: the College of Arts and Letters is developing a new doctoral program in rhetoric and writing! They begin to whisper of realignment: Do they dare realign themselves within another unit, outside of English? What could such a move mean for them? Re-imagining their struggle for legitimacy, they wonder: Could they really switch their allegiances and move their tenure homes without creating animosity and resentment? Should they? A scene of a new kind of working life presents itself: they greet their colleagues in the hallway, eager for the conversation instead of being reflexively defensive. These conversations are different, as they no longer proceed from the assumption that pedagogy itself is a practice, or an idea, that needs defending. That these colleagues know that literacy is not something to be lamented as that which our students regrettably lack, but rather, that it's a provocative, critical human problem of learning, power, and agency.

Such was the scene of possibility the English education faculty imagined when the university developed a new doctoral program in rhetoric and writing, housed in the College of Arts and Letters. They saw an opportunity to align themselves with colleagues and programs more compatible with their interests and supportive of their goals. Although they foresaw contentious and complicated negotiations, they were convinced it would be worth the struggle. And their move out of the department would not be the first one: another program, originally in English, had recently realigned itself with another department for many of the same reasons.

Marilyn and her colleagues enter the meeting room for their conversation with the chair, armed with a strong rationale and commitments from WRAC (Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures) that they would be warmly welcomed. Surely the chair would see the wisdom of such a move and would not be unhappy to see them go, given the department's lukewarm support for English education. As they make their proposal, however, they are confronted by surprisingly strong

resistance—implications of disloyalty to a department that “served them well,” implicit questions of who would want to have their tenure home in a department focused on first-year writing, and why they would want to align themselves with rhetoric and writing programs that have historically lacked prestige. They move forward with their request for a “transfer,” nonetheless, willing to risk the resistance and endure the complications they know lie ahead.

WORKING TOWARD “THIRD SPACE” IN ENGLISH STUDIES

2004

Their first Rhetoric and Writing/Critical Studies in Literacy and Pedagogy gathering happens to be a Halloween party. The four faculty members who've made this move go in costume, dressed as cowgirls, complete with cowgirl hats, bandanas, and a song. They belt out “Home on the WRAC” to great applause and laughter, feeling at home, welcomed, wanted.

The transfer out of English to align themselves with rhetoric and writing—renaming the program as “Critical Studies in Literacy and Pedagogy” (CSLP)—was a long and contentious one, but it was perhaps the single most important decision they could have made for their program.

Elizabeth Moje et al., argue that “hybridity theory [which] posits that people in any given community draw on multiple resources or funds to make sense of the world,” can also apply to “the integration of competing knowledges and Discourses” (42). As they suggest, third space, a form of hybridity theory, can be viewed as a space wherein various dominant and nondominant knowledges and discourses can be challenged and where new knowledges and discourses are generated (44). In many ways, the English education move into rhetoric and writing required an integration of various knowledges and discourses, even if they were not competing ones. Faculty was required, throughout these long months of negotiation, to forge new understandings of the discipline of composition, language, and literacy teaching, and to come to understand their relationships to one another in new ways. They were, in essence, creating a third space for the program—neither in English nor in education but in rhetoric and writing.

In *Refiguring the Ph.D. in English Studies*, Stephen North calls for a fusion curriculum in which faculty and graduate students reconceptualize English studies by negotiating the nature of the discipline in light of current interests and epistemologies. He advocates the fusion of seemingly disparate areas of

study that will move English Departments beyond the traditional literature/theory-based curriculum to ones that reinvent the field of English studies—seeing different emphases within a department not as structural but as disciplinary. The re-visioning, he says, will be substantive only if English studies “reinvents itself in a form that ends [...] internal discounting” and the marginalization of some areas that has naturally ensued (237). English education’s own history within the Department of English at Michigan State University, however, suggested that the kind of intradisciplinary re-visioning North articulates would not likely happen.

Instead of fusion within English, then, English education faculty began to envision a new form of integration in which rhetoric, writing, and English education would be fused through common disciplinary interests and goals for doctoral education. The desire to move to WRAC was fueled not only by a sense of second-class citizenship in English, but also by the conviction that the traditional tripartite focus on literature, writing, and language no longer captures the current nature of teaching English, composition, or language studies at either the secondary or college level. Doctoral programs in English education must reflect a new reality that acknowledges the epistemological frameworks that inform those methodologies and pedagogies. The curriculum must help students construct their frames of knowledge that see literacy as critical literacy, that address the issues of the politics of language and literacy, and that provide experiences in the teaching of writing, reading, and language through various technologies, in a range of communities, and across linguistically and culturally diverse contexts.

One of those goals is educating PhDs in pedagogy that will prepare them for the kinds of teaching opportunities in which they will find themselves in their own faculty positions. North quite legitimately claims that Departments of English are often unable to provide the quality of pedagogical mentoring and experiences graduate students need. Ironically, English education and composition faculty housed in Departments of English—the very people capable of providing this pedagogical expertise—have been historically marginalized in many institutions for their work in pedagogy. This irony hasn’t been lost on those whose expertise is in the pedagogies of composition, literary theory, and language studies.

ENGLISH EDUCATION HITS THE ROAD

2004

Marilyn, as the director of English education in English, ponders a “transfer of power” with mixed emotions: long years of service as director, successfully holding the program together during difficult times, often leading the advocacy for legitimacy in the

department, and finally for making the move. How easy will stepping out of this role be? The person who accepts the responsibility will need to have a sense of possibility, a commitment to new alliances, and a broad vision of what the pedagogical and epistemological affordances might be. When Julie Lindquist, a new associate professor in rhetoric and writing with experience mentoring teaching assistants and working on cross-college initiatives to improve teacher education in the College of Education, steps forward as the likely director, Marilyn relaxes, knowing that, in addition to her other qualifications, Julie's scholarship in language and literacy will make this "third space" a healthy environment for the program.

Change doesn't come easy to academic institutions, especially institutions the size of Michigan State University. More often than not, faculty responses to change are motivated by their fears of tumbling into the cracks created by institutional tectonics. The business of initiating major program changes within institutions isn't for the squeamish. We have found, however, that the rewards of doing so can be enormous: new alliances, new conversations, new configurations become possible. For us at MSU, moving the English education program from the Department of English into alignment with the college-level rhetoric and writing program invited us—forced us—to confront hard questions about just what an English education program ought to be and where it would best be able to realize its goals.

One thing that became immediately clear to us was that whatever English education was in English, it would be something else in rhetoric and writing, a discipline with different potentials and priorities and affordances. The new disciplinary landscape on which we now found ourselves made it possible to imagine a program that pushes up against the boundaries of "English" in four major ways. As we designed it, the new program included a focus on technology and digital literacy; it reconceived *text* to include digital and visual productions; it emphasized production as well as consumption of texts; and it treated *literacy* as a subject for critical inquiry. According to the language in our graduate handbook, the program

prepares literacy educators who draw on critical theories and critical understanding of language, literacy, and discourse to shape pedagogies of multiliteracies; who develop curricular practices that support students' ability to read and write multiple texts; who understand and use multiple rhetorics—print, digital and visual—in order to engage students in critical consumption as well as in critical production and design; and who undertake qualitative research in school, university, and community settings. ("Academic Programs")

The goal of the program, as we imagined it in relation to its new disciplinary home, was to prepare graduate students for faculty positions in English education, in composition studies, and in literacy programs within Departments of English, Departments of Rhetoric and Writing, and Departments of Education.

COURSEWORK AND CONCENTRATIONS

English education is renamed "Critical Studies in Literacy and Pedagogy" (CSLP) and requires students to take courses ranging from rhetoric/composition to courses in digital rhetoric or Web authoring; from courses in reading and critical literacy to seminars in language, literacy, and pedagogy. They can elect coursework in literary studies, cultural rhetorics, technology, and more traditional English education courses. This program of study encourages students to develop and maintain strong interdisciplinary ties with other programs—teacher education, communication arts, Department of English, linguistics, and language learning and teaching programs—an experience that is enhanced by the requirement for a concentration within the program that enables interesting intellectual concentrations such as community literacies, language minority students and language/literacy education, and cultural rhetorics. These areas enable students to develop expertise in areas that demand interdisciplinary work and that establish lines of communication among disciplines that will prepare them for professional work in other institutions.

The Extracurriculum of Graduate Education

As pleased as we have been with the exciting new intellectual possibilities of CSLP within rhetoric and writing, we have always recognized that the value of a doctoral degree isn't defined by coursework or concentrations alone. We know that our responsibilities as English educators also include scaffolding our students' developing professionalism through a variety of experiences outside of regular coursework. In our program we begin this process with a required research colloquium—a professional-development seminar focused on enhancing research skills, designing research projects, and preparing publications and conference presentations. The colloquium, run as a workshop, is required in the first semester after a student enters the program. It acquaints students with the procedures and protocols for developing their professional profiles, opens professional opportunities for students to hone their work for publications and presentations, and has as one of its assumptions that graduate students should develop—and will need support in developing—a publication record before completing their PhDs.

In addition to the support given students in this research colloquium, there are opportunities for extracurricular community-building. One of the advantages

of our alignment with rhetoric and writing (with its own cohort of PhD students specializing in courses of study related to literacy and pedagogy) is that we now have a critical mass of doctoral students for academic affiliation and community-building. In this environment, there are many possibilities for creating communal experiences for students and for offering support for students preparing for the job market.

Teaching Assistantship Support in a Variety of Venues

It is, of course, vitally important that graduate students be well-funded. As a matter of principle—we believe that classes of students in which some areas are supported and others are not interferes with the experience of community we want to foster among students and we admit only the number of graduate students who can be supported through assistantships or fellowships. We are fortunate at MSU to have fellowship monies from the graduate school for top candidates and teaching assistantships in sufficient quantity to guarantee a strong cadre of doctoral students, most of whom start out their first two years teaching in the first-year writing program. Our goal is to provide doctoral students with different kinds of pedagogical experiences over their four years of guaranteed funding: teaching first-year writing, serving as consultants in the Writing Center, teaching English education courses to undergraduate preservice English teachers (composition for teachers; reading theory and instruction; literature for young adults; English language studies), or serving as research assistants in various capacities within the program or the university.

Graduate Student Colloquia

Each semester a group of CSLP doctoral students present works-in-progress to all graduate students in the program. The colloquium provides a venue for rehearsing conference presentations or for thinking through research issues/questions. It also allows the other graduate students in attendance to imagine their own research agendas as they begin to formulate research trajectories. These opportunities serve as models, idea-generators, and feedback opportunities within a community of learners vital for a robust program.

Annual Portfolios

Faculty in rhetoric and writing hold the philosophy that ongoing formative assessment is important for students' intellectual/professional growth and steady progress toward degree. As part of the annual progress report, we ask students

to represent their work—both academic coursework and professional activities such as research proposals, conference presentations, and submitted articles—by selecting certain pieces to include in a portfolio and writing a reflective essay about how those works represent their developing professionalism. The idea is that students are encouraged to reflect on ways of representing themselves as developing professionals and to set professional goals in close consultation with faculty.

Mentoring Opportunities

Faculty in the rhetoric and writing program share the conviction that the goals of community-building are best served when there is frequent and meaningful conversation between class cohorts in the larger cohort of graduate students. Each new graduate student in rhetoric in writing, can, therefore, expect to receive mentoring from a more experienced student assigned to her for the first year. This is an experience that serves two purposes: it provides relationship-building and ways of making students feel at home in the program, and it gives more experienced graduate students a chance to build their mentoring skills as they prepare to become faculty members themselves.

TA Support

Because pedagogy and program administration are central disciplinary and professional concerns of rhetoric and writing, faculty in that program have created a solid support infrastructure for TAs teaching first-year writing in the Department of Writing, Rhetoric, and American Cultures. First, a course in Composition Pedagogies is a core requirement for all students in rhetoric and writing; all new TAs are required to take the course in the first semester in which they will be teaching first-year writing. Additionally, there are also weekly TA meetings in which students discuss day-to-day issues of instruction, more theory-based and research-based issues related to teaching composition, or topics of particular interest to graduate students who want further information on an issue related to teaching (advanced graduate students lead many of these sessions, especially in the spring semester). In these meetings, students discuss things like the use of Web design as a rhetorical construct in writing classes, issues of instruction for English language learners, ways of enhancing the benefits of peer response, etc. There are also ongoing “brown-bags” at which TAs and faculty are invited to lead discussion on a pedagogical issue of interest to the larger community of writing teachers. Finally, a faculty mentor observes TAs’ classes and meets regularly with TAs to help them reflect on and develop teaching practices.

Committee Participation

All students in the rhetoric and writing program are strongly encouraged to volunteer to serve as student representatives on standing committees in the program, the college, or the university as a way of coming to understand university guiding principles, administrative issues, and programmatic development. Committee work serves as a reminder that students as well as faculty have a voice in issues of policy and curriculum development, and it provides opportunities of commitment to working at a variety of levels to insure programmatic excellence.

Recruitment

Graduate students play a significant role in the recruitment of strong applicants to the program. Once a community has been established, it is important to ask graduate students to take recruits out to lunch or dinner (the program provides funds for this), to meet with them informally in order to answer questions and give them campus tours. These recruitment opportunities also give current graduate students a sense of the process and their own participation in it.

Political Activism Through Professional Organizations

For students preparing to become English educators (or composition professionals), becoming a professional means involvement in professional organizations like the CCCC, NCTE, and CEE, where they may likely help move the profession in new, interdisciplinary, and sometimes political directions. Involvement in the profession at this level—by attending meetings and serving on committees—can change the profession more quickly than merely by working at the local level in their own institutions. The CEE, for example, is composed of faculty and graduate students whose goals are influencing the profession at large, particularly at a time when institutions are increasingly at the mercy of political mandates that negatively impact the education of K–12 students. No Child Left Behind legislation, English Only laws, and policies resulting in inequitable distribution of resources can often be addressed more forcefully with the financial and educational support of a professional organization. The CCCC, NCTE, and CEE have the potential to wield power when the membership is politically active, and we want to encourage our doctoral students in political activism as a way of strengthening the profession.

Service Opportunities

Strong English education doctoral programs provide opportunities for graduate students to serve their communities through activities such as organizing book drives, helping support libraries in underfunded schools and community programs, and developing writing and publishing opportunities for K–12 students and adults within the community.

These are some examples of the kinds of program experiences, extracurricular opportunities, and professional activities that can rejuvenate and invigorate existing English education doctoral programs,² but they have the potential to do much more. They can, as they did in our case, help us reconceptualize the notion of English education for the twenty-first century. Our program is relatively new in its reconfigured state, but already we're seeing doctoral students who are developing impressive research agendas, and who are changing the culture of English education on our campus to make it academically stronger and more politically active in the profession.

We would be remiss, however, if we rendered this as only a narrative of happy transformation without mentioning some of (what we have discovered to be) the complications of English education's move out of English and into rhetoric and writing.

Despite the overwhelmingly positive effects of the move, there have in fact been some transitional pains and quotidian difficulties—things that emerged later, after the program had settled into its new home.

Caveats and Epilogue

2004

Julie is enjoying a frosty beer with a colleague in rhetoric and writing. The beer is welcome, as it comes as the end of a long day of meetings convened for the purpose of discussing revisions to the first-year writing program. They are debriefing the more dramatic moments of a meeting with faculty in the College of Arts and Letters and affirming each other's shock and dismay at the views on writing instruction voiced by faculty in English. They express their relief at no longer having to work in English departments where such views often prevail. But as the conversation continues, Julie begins to think that their reasons for wanting to work in a program apart from English aren't quite the same, after all: the colleague is mostly glad to be in place in which literature—narrative—is no longer the real focus of inquiry, while Julie—for whom narrative is a central concern—just wanted to be in a place where pedagogy mattered more. She is struck by the implications of this revelation.

2005

As chair of a search committee for a new assistant professor in CSLP, Julie makes yet another nervous trip to the file cabinet to see what new applications have come in. In perusing the applications from highly qualified specialists all over the disciplinary and professional map—K–12 specialists, technical writers, writing program administrators, digital literacy specialists—she wonders how she will find a single person who can do all the things the job demands: teach English education courses, contribute to the graduate programs, teach first-year writing, help to mentor first-year writing teachers, teach in the professional writing program, develop new courses in teaching with technology. She imagines that, in reviewing the files, some hard decisions will have to be made.

While CSLP found a welcome place within rhetoric and writing, the new program exerted its own pressures. It has become clear now, after CSLP has been in operation for three years in its new home, that legacies of the “hidden injuries of English” continue to vex the mission and practice of English education. We have sometimes felt, for example, the presence of a new kind of class structure predicated in part on English education’s primary commitment to teaching as the subject of intellectual inquiry, and in part its commitment to teaching in secondary classrooms as the focus of its professional activity. There have been moments when—Julie’s conversation with her fellow English-defector colleague among them—it has become clear that, with the freedom the rhetoric and writing program has felt to define its own research mission, it has pulled away from a primary identification as a pedagogical discipline (historically an oppositional identity set against literature-defined English Departments’ default antipedagogy stance). But even if the rhetoric and writing program at MSU doesn’t identify with pedagogy first and exclusively, it nonetheless claims it as a site of professional practice—and this means that “pedagogy” in this context includes, by default, postsecondary teaching. It also means that, in a program where “teaching” means “college” and “rhetoric,” there is relatively little attention to narrative or literature/poetics as a pedagogical issue. Nevertheless, CSLP within this structure continues working to define its rightful place, with its own claims and sites of study and research, and is making good progress in doing so.

Despite the transitional pain and the complexities that still exist, the scenarios we have outlined here demonstrate the potential for intellectual and professional rebirth of English education programs. North’s call for Departments of English Studies to reevaluate their roles in the education and preparation of doctoral students can help us all to imagine more vital ways to prepare our doctoral students, including our teacher educators. Having created a third space for our program that afforded a reshaping and re-visioning we could never have imagined in our former home, we know, despite the difficulties, what an important undertaking that was for faculty, for students, for the program itself, and ultimately for the profession at large.

Notes

1. Ironically, a detailed study of the overall GPAs of English education majors, completed for MSU's TEAC review, reveals higher GPAs for them than for the other students majoring in English.
2. While this description of the program focuses on the English education program specifically, many of these policies and recommendations were crafted for both the CSLP and rhetoric and writing tracks within the program.

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CHAPTER 13

New Technologies and Doctoral Study in English Education



Robert Rozema, Ewa McGrail

“The well-prepared doctoral student of 1964,” wrote Dwight Burton in a forward-looking *English Education* article in 1982, “is still the well-prepared candidate of today” (147). Over two decades later, it would no doubt be difficult to make a similar argument. The well-prepared English education doctoral candidate of today must master a body of knowledge and a range of skills that did not exist when Burton speculated on the future of the profession in 1982. In that year, the year that *Time* magazine named the personal computer Machine of the Year, the recently marketed IBM PC came equipped with a 16-kilobyte memory, a floppy disk drive, a monochrome monitor, and was priced at nearly sixteen hundred dollars—approximately four thousand dollars today. At a fraction of the cost, computers available today have thousands of times more memory and processing power, and they continue to grow more powerful and less expensive. In 1982, the Internet existed in embryonic form, but it would be seven years before Tim Berners-Lee invented the World Wide Web, the software platform that makes it easy for anyone to gather and publish information online. Information technology was in its infancy in 1982, and Dwight Burton would have been farsighted indeed to include technology as a key part of his vision for English education doctoral programs.

But today, as Leu and Zawilinski et al. argue, technological changes in our society are profoundly affecting the nature of literacy and literacy practices (in press). Indeed, technology has begun to transform the very concepts of language, text, and literacy (Labbo and Reinking; Leu and Kinzer et al.). More and more people use word processing, desktop publishing, email, blogs, wikis, and social networking utilities to communicate, to read, and to write—at home and at work. According to the 2007 “Pew Internet and American Life Project, Social Networking Websites and Teens,” fully 71 percent of American adults use the Internet regularly in any location. About twelve million youth (ages 12–17) are reported to have been content creators on personal or school blogs and Web pages; to have created and shared original content such as artwork, photos, stories, or videos online; or to

have remixed content found online into a new creation. Additionally, 55 percent of all online teens have used social networking sites to create profiles and build personal networks that connected them to other users.

These technological developments and their accompanying social practices have implications for literacy instruction, teacher education, and English education doctoral programs. Within the English language arts, technology integration is gaining momentum, evidenced by the scholarship, research, and practice at the K–12 and undergraduate levels, yet with few exceptions, doctoral programs in English education lack organized and systematic approaches toward technology integration. What we propose here, then, is a systematic—if skeletal—approach for the integration of technology into English education doctoral programs. We believe that such an approach must address the changes that technology has created in the content of our discipline and in the way research is conducted in our field

CONTENT KNOWLEDGE: NEW TEXTS, NEW READERS, AND NEW WRITERS

Any English or language arts teacher who has observed students surfing the Web, writing instant messages, or creating multimedia original content or remixes of others' work recognizes that digital technology alters conventional understandings of text, reading, and writing. These changes, of course, have important implications for English language arts instruction. Consequently, we believe that English education graduate students and programs should investigate technology as part of their acquisition of content knowledge in the English language arts.

To begin, technology is changing what has long been at the heart of English language arts instruction: the study of texts. As Jerome McGann and Espen Aarseth argue, digital texts challenge ideas about what texts are and how they work, both imitating and simultaneously expanding existing print forms. Digital texts are multilinear, linking to a multitude of other texts; dynamic, changing content in real time; indeterminate, with no definite beginning or end; and multimodal, incorporating visual, auditory, and other nonverbal elements. Translating print texts into digital format also alters the ways in which texts mean and the ways in which they are accessed. As publicly accessible online archives make more and more texts available—from fiction to nonfiction, from classic to contemporary, from the academic to the mainstream—the teaching of literature and texts will also evolve. Online archives can resituate canonical works within rich multimedia contexts, expand the boundaries of reading through links to biographical, historical, and other connective texts, and widen the canon to include marginalized writers and underrepresented genres. The digital medium has also generated new genres, such as wikis, blogs, podcasts, videocasts, social networking sites, and multiuser environments.

With these new texts come new roles for readers. As George Landow and Kress and Van Leeuwen have contended, digital texts present the reader with rich semiotic and semantic possibilities through multimodal content, allow the reader to follow nonlinear pathways, and encourage the reader to annotate and re-center the text. Through these interactive processes, readers of digital texts become more “writerly” readers, collaborating with authors to co-create the text. In reading digital texts, readers must use a wide range of new literacy skills to formulate meaning. As Bruce notes, “new technologies continually change literacies and evolving literacies transform technologies,” as these technologies “participate in a transaction with the other technologies, texts, artifacts, physical spaces, and procedures” within any literacy setting (303).

In this view, readers of digital texts must know how to locate, evaluate, synthesize, cite, and use information judiciously. Increasingly, this information is taking on multimodal forms that incorporate images, video, sound, and other nontextual elements. Such texts require readers to recognize, evaluate, and create meaning within variant modes of representation (Leu and Zawilinski et al. in press). And like print media, the new media reinforce the values and ideologies embedded in language and society. Readers must recognize and critically evaluate these values and ideologies, not only in computer-mediated texts, but also multimodal texts including film, television, music, and other popular media.

English education doctoral programs should also examine the impact of new communication technologies on composition. New digital tools are influencing the relationship between the writer and audience, the author and the reader. As Grabill and Hicks and other scholars (e.g., Porter) have observed, new channels for communication and publishing such as email, listserves, chat rooms, newsletter groups, and more recently, blogs, wikis, and virtual community spaces (Leu and Zawilinski et al. in press) have brought composing and publishing closer together than ever, rendering exchanges of ideas between author and reader faster, more frequent, and more elaborate as written communication becomes an expected part of daily interaction. To address these changes, English education graduate coursework should focus on the relationships between new technologies and composing, as well as on their influence on social understandings and the practices of writing. The new genre of the Weblog, for example, might be examined as a means of enhancing and limiting writing, as truncated entries demand more strategic thinking, planning, and presenting of information (Deysher).

Additionally, new technologies allow a wide range of texts—including audio, image, and video—to be produced, revised, and reproduced through the work of other authors, distributors, and discussion moderators. These new writing practices involve “distributed cognition, collaborative practice, and communities of practice” among authors, readers, and publishers, implying that knowledge

and composing processes are no longer the product of an individual, but of “a *collective* assemblage involving many minds and machines” (Lankshear and Knobel 165–167). As composing and knowing become more collaborative, interactive, multimodal, multiformatted, and electronically distributed, doctoral programs should engage their students and faculty in considering the implications of these changes for literacy development, the English language arts curriculum, and instruction at all levels.

TEACHER EDUCATORS AND RESEARCHERS

As doctoral students begin to take on responsibilities as teacher educators, they should also have opportunities to develop and teach technology-based lessons to their peers and to their students. At Western Michigan University, doctoral students teach undergraduate English education courses in a wireless laboratory equipped with student laptops, desktop computers, high-resolution scanners, an overhead data projector, and a SMART Board. At Georgia State University, doctoral students have opportunities to teach graduates in similar classrooms. In these technology-enriched environments, graduate instructors and doctoral faculty have integrated and modeled various technology applications: undergraduates and graduates have learned to use literary MOOs for role-playing activities; wikis as collaborative writing spaces; Weblogs as reading journals; podcasts and videocasts as previews or works-in-progress series; electronic portfolios as alternative assessment devices; digital video and image capture as means for developing multigenre literary units, as well as classroom Web sites/Weblogs and Web page/Weblog design as powerful teaching and publication tools. Integrating these new technologies also challenges doctoral students to devise appropriate means of assessment, as they model technology-based learning and assignments. Technology can also encourage reflective teaching. Using Weblogs or an asynchronous discussion, doctoral students might monitor their own progress in facilitating the technology-based learning of their students.

The final stage of doctoral study involves research, frequently in English language arts classrooms at the primary, secondary, or collegiate levels. Within these educational contexts, technology is both a tool and a subject of research. Sade-Beck, for example, examined the methodological issues resulting from the use of technology-based qualitative research methodologies, such as online observations, interviews, and content analysis of supporting materials. Other studies explore the ethical issues in online research, ranging from privacy and human subject protection (Berry; Walther) to strategies for ethical conduct of research. These strategies include the use of digital video and online bulletin boards (Haga and Kaneda), the online interview (Bampton and Cowton), or observation of online

communities (King). Still other studies examine technology's impact on academic research paradigms (Berkowitz; Dahlberg). In this vein, Denzin suggests that online qualitative research relies on *hybridity*, or the "movement back and forth between real and virtual sites, research about the Internet as well as Internet research. There also is movement back and forth between online environments, traditional social research methods, and research sites" (2). Certainly, these studies expand our notions of the research process. These new opportunities and techniques require, as Anderson and Kanuka observed, "creativity and an ability to manipulate the world in different ways" (5).

To facilitate the process of data collection, classification, analysis, theory building, and data storing, doctoral students in English education programs should learn software that can assist them in this complex and multilayered process. The qualitative analysis software NUD*IST (Non-numerical Unstructured Data Indexing, Searching, and Theorizing), for example, can be very helpful in coding data into larger and conceptually organized units of analysis. Real-time video and audio-digital capture software can be very helpful too in documenting and analyzing student online reading or writing behaviors on the screen and in recording verbal think-aloud data about these behaviors. (For an illustrative description of the methods used for conducting think-aloud verbal protocols, using, for example, Camtasia (software) recordings of online screen reading and transcripts of students' thinking aloud, see the paper by Leu and Reinking et al.)

Working with this and similar software can be time-consuming, however, doctoral programs must support students in their efforts. At the same time, doctoral students should realize the limitations of such software. As Taft warns, data analysis software can facilitate data management and interpretation processes, but it cannot critically examine categories of data and reach decisions about their meaning and relevance (379).

To disseminate their research results, doctoral students should be invited to pursue new online publishing opportunities. Publication venues should not be limited to traditional paper-based channels, but include scholarly Web sites, email listserves, peer-reviewed online journals, or even virtual conferencing (Anderson and Kanuka 3). These new technologies, as Anderson and Kanuka have observed, can reduce the time for publication, break physical barriers, and distribute information to a global audience. Additionally, many alternative venues encourage interaction between reviewers, authors, and the audience, allowing doctoral students to introduce themselves to the scholarly community within the USA and across the world.

Finally, as doctoral students enter the job market they should know that having their own professional online presence is an important self-marketing tool. Online course syllabi, developed Web-based teaching tools, research summaries, critiques

of digital data collection and analysis tools, and other resources are important additions to their vitae and demonstrate desirable skills of Web publishing and up-to-date technology-enhanced teaching and research.

MOVING FORWARD

We have quickly sketched the intertwining of English language arts and technology, specifically in the areas of content, pedagogy, and research. We have argued that digital technology has shifted the way we conceptualize text, expanded the act of reading, changed the process of composition, engendered new literacies for navigating the information medium, and created new ways of learning, doing research, and teaching. In short, nearly everything we do as English educators intersects on some level with the technology that immerses us. Technology can no longer be devised as *only* a research, teaching, or productivity tool; within the English language arts framework, it must be considered in broad sociocultural terms, inseparable from our daily literate and scholarly existence.

As the digital divide between affluent and poor schools, high-income and low-income homes, and White and non-White families continues to diminish, technological expertise, or the ability to use available technology resources effectively, is becoming critically important. Our K–12 schools and undergraduate institutions have recognized the value of expertise for students and teachers alike, crafting and implementing local, state, and national technology standards that have begun to define technological literacy in broad, interdisciplinary ways (International Society for Technology in Education).

Doctoral English education programs prepare their graduates to be agents of change in their future institutions. Doctoral students need ample opportunities to consider the implications for content, instruction, and research in their field created by the new technologies. As teacher educators, doctoral graduates must be prepared to model meaningful technology integration within the content and pedagogy of English language arts; as researchers, they must be equipped to see technology as a powerful tool and worthy subject; and as scholars, they should be invited to approach technology in its own right, examining it with the theoretical lenses and critical tools that are available to them. Ideally, English education doctoral programs will emphasize the content and pedagogical approaches this chapter has described, though we realize that our recommendations, like those made by Dwight Burton over two decades ago, are subject to change. As new technologies and new digital literacies emerge, our best policy is to maintain the high standards that Burton set forth for our profession, while widening our discipline to include those technologies that will continue to shape our teaching and our research.

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Entering the Job Market and Professoriate



CHAPTER 14

My Buddy and Me: Lessons Learned from Shadowing a Fellow Doctoral Student



Darren Crovitz

“Are you going to the NCTE conference?”

I’d been loitering in the resource room, half eavesdropping on a conversation between Aaron Levy, a fellow PhD student, and Lynn Nelson, one of the three professors in the Arizona State University English education program. But now Lynn had turned to me, and the question caught me offguard.

“Um. I wasn’t planning on it,” I said. I was vaguely aware that the annual NCTE convention was approaching in a few weeks, and that Aaron, who was now on the job market, would be attending in order to interview. But the event was simply not on my academic radar. I had enough to worry about at the time: I was taking three classes and teaching two, supervising seven student teachers, and worrying about portfolio papers, article ideas, and a foggy dissertation focus.

“Might be a good experience,” Lynn suggested. I shrugged and played noncommittal. The thought of burning a whole weekend or more during the heart of the fall semester—a weekend that might be better spent grading papers or getting some writing done—didn’t sit too well, nor did dropping the significant coin necessary to go to wherever this thing was being held....

“Where’s the conference?” I asked.

“San Francisco,” said Aaron. “We should go together.”

“Yeah, well.” What was the point? I wouldn’t be on the job market myself for at least another year. “We’ll see,” I mumbled, meaning *not likely*.

“Gimme a call,” he said. “We’ll talk about it.”

Mentoring in graduate programs is most often considered in terms of student-faculty relationships. In these conventional arrangements, graduate students are typically assigned an official faculty adviser who serves as a sort of multipurpose resource and guide on matters relating to course expectations, program requirements, professional opportunities, and career preparation. The mentor helps to socialize the student into the field by providing both sponsorship and safety, while also serving as a role model, assessor, and counselor (Welch 5–6). In contrast to this traditional form of guidance, however, is the concept of “peer mentoring”—graduate students mentoring one another. As a doctoral student in an English education program, I had the chance to be both a peer mentor and a “mentee.” The experience proved valuable in a number of ways, particularly given the needs of our field and our expectations as emerging professionals.

I’ve known Aaron Levy since I started the doctoral program in English education at ASU in the fall of 2002. Coming in, I’d been lucky enough to land a teaching assistantship through the English Department, which meant attending a three-week summer training session in the teaching of composition. Aaron was one of the other twenty-five new TAs also in the course, an English education student like me, about a year or so ahead in his studies.

As is probably the case at many other schools, our training class turned out to be a great means of socialization into the English Department as a whole; our class took the shape of an informal cohort as we each began our ASU graduate student careers. Most of my new friends and colleagues, however, were enrolled in literature or rhetoric and composition or linguistics programs. By comparison, the English education graduate program at ASU is small; that fall, it consisted of three professors—Alleen Nilsen, Lynn Nelson, and Jim Blasingame—and, counting Aaron and me, only three active graduate students. Although I met each English ed. professor individually in those first few weeks, the program didn’t have a formal gathering or social event to introduce new and continuing students. The small number of students in the program would probably have made such an event seem like overkill; I’d already met Aaron, after all, and would soon meet the remaining graduate student in one of my first classes.

I quickly fell into a rhythm of teaching and studying within the program. That first year, I had a class with Dr. Nilsen and an internship with Dr. Blasingame and got to know both of them fairly well. Similarly, Lynn Nelson was my adviser at the time, and we had occasional conversations. But even though I’d met both of the other grad students, little more than sporadic socializing took place between us. Six months into my doctoral program, I knew little about professional expectations beyond my course and program requirements, and even less about the interests of

other doctoral students. I should say now that I don't necessarily fault the English education program for this—after all, I certainly could have taken the initiative, sought out my professors and colleagues with questions, and thus worked to create more of a sense of community. But wrapped up in the daily grind of teaching and schoolwork, I wasn't even sure I *had* questions. It would take at least three years for me to earn a PhD, I reasoned, so I'd have plenty of time in the next couple of years to think about getting a job. At that point, I figured, I'd start asking some questions.

Things began to change in the spring of 2003. Our once-a-week TA seminar had continued into the new semester, and during one class, Aaron and I got involved in a spontaneous on-the-side discussion about formulaic approaches to writing instruction. Dr. Jeanne Dugan, one of our instructors, had started the conversation by mentioning the poor quality of high school writing assignments that her daughter was faced with. The three of us huddled in the back of the classroom, wondering about how we might work this experience into a possible article. I didn't know it at the time, but this discussion was my initiation into collaborative graduate research, serious professional development, and a long-term friendship.

Aaron and I slowly became closer friends as we found out we had a lot of interests in common, professional and otherwise. I met his wife, Jeannie, and during that summer, my fiancée Jessi and I spent evenings at their home relaxing and talking late into the night. Aaron and I continued to hash out our suspicions about formulaic writing approaches, and how this might translate into some kind of article or research project, and at one point we began drafting sections of a coauthored essay. These conversations led me, for the first time, to begin thinking and talking about our English education program from a different perspective. Aaron was about to begin looking for a job, and I too began questioning what I might do to make myself more fully prepared as a professional beyond simply completing a program of study. By the beginning of the fall semester, we weren't simply two people in the same program nodding at each other in the hallway, but colleagues and friends working and learning together: a team, in short.

As summer edged into fall and Aaron began more intense preparations for the job search, this sense of teamwork grew. Each fall semester, ASU English professor Duane Roen offers a series of professional development seminars focused on preparing graduate students for the job market. These workshops cover topics such as developing CVs, application letters, and teaching portfolios, and later sessions provide advice about interviewing and what to expect during campus visits. Aaron made it a point to attend these workshops. I decided to tag along, and in doing so, suddenly found myself in an interesting situation. With Duane repeatedly stressing the importance of preparing for eventual employment as early as possible in one's graduate student career, and Aaron now scrambling to make sure all his materials were prepared and complete, I stood to benefit in a couple of ways. I could get a

year-long start on my own future job packet, while getting firsthand insight into the challenges Aaron faced as he struggled to submit applications before deadlines, put together conference presentations, or deal with the enormity of writing a dissertation. This was an opportunity. Since I was now a close friend, I was privy to all the gritty details, and I stood to gain a lot from listening and watching.

In retrospect, this realization seems rather pedestrian and obvious. And yet, when one is buried in the day-to-day demands of being a teacher and a graduate student, the long view is not always so clear. When you're toiling through a valley, the mountains that surround you tend to dominate and define the horizon. It's easy to forget that there are people already up there on that ridgeline who might be able to yodel down word of a larger world. And so it was when Lynn's question arose.

"Are you going to the NCTE conference?"

I talked it over later with Aaron, but I remained reluctant. Even after Lynn arranged for both of us to attend as official representatives of the Greater Phoenix Area Writing Project (which he directed) and so make department reimbursement of our travel expenses a possibility, I would only agree begrudgingly. My own valley fields needed harvesting, I grumbled, and never mind what was beyond the mountains. But I ended up with Aaron on an early morning flight from Phoenix to San Francisco. Looking back, maybe it was that actual movement out of Arizona's "Valley of the Sun" that stirred me to see things differently.

Simply taking part in the NCTE conference as an attendee was enough to wake me up to a larger perspective. This was the largest conference I'd ever attended by far, and I was suddenly invigorated in the presence of so many creative and engaged professionals. I came out of several presentations full of new ideas, and found particular events, including the "Meet the Editors" roundtable session, indispensable. But beyond the conference itself was the education I gained from accompanying Aaron as he met potential employers, prepared for interviews, and analyzed the experience in detail with me afterwards.

How often do we really get the chance to shadow those who walk before us through trying situations, and then slowly pick their brains for hints and advice? As we sipped coffee between sessions, Aaron's job search gauntlet became my own private graduate class. Call it *Methods of Marketing Yourself*, or *Principles of Professional Preparation*. Even Duane Roen's insightful seminars couldn't match the value of this information. Dr. Roen's sessions were aimed at a general audience of doctoral candidates in English, but Aaron was giving me the straight dope from the front lines of English education employment, and it was gold. I knew what kinds of programs and positions were out there and how they were different, who was doing the interviewing and what questions they were asking, what professional experiences were expected and which were most prized, what schools had their act

together and which didn't. By the time we made it to a panel presentation entitled "Doctoral Degrees in English/Education: The Preparation and Hiring of English Teacher Educators" on Sunday afternoon, we both had already sensed what Allen Webb would point out: employment in this field was a seller's market, and it favored the well-prepared candidate.

Returning from the NCTE conference, I found myself newly attuned to professional matters within our discipline, and even more aware of what I might learn from Aaron. Jeannie Levy had created an Excel file of the forty-odd positions Aaron had applied to (detailing the minimum requirements, application materials, and deadline for each) and we often discussed the merits of the programs and positions. By the time Aaron began making campus visits and arranging MLA interviews in December of 2003, our process of information sharing seemed like second nature: Aaron would return from a trip and immediately the debriefing would begin. By the new year, I was already beginning to assemble my own job search materials and making a plan for the coming fall.

Our close relationship didn't end after Aaron accepted a position in January of 2004 at Kennesaw State University in Georgia. If anything, the benefits of our friendship became even more apparent as Aaron threw himself into the final stages of his dissertation. Once again, I had the opportunity to get day-to-day advice from him, everything from organizing such a project to handling submission deadlines and dealing with committee members. In the meantime, we presented together at a local conference, focusing on our mutual interest in writing pedagogy and assessment. Our experience at the NCTE conference had inspired us to craft our own session proposals for the following year's convention, and we began discussing several projects we might collaborate on in the future.

I don't want to give the impression in the preceding narrative that our working relationship was simply one-sided, with me taking opportunistic advantage of Aaron's travails. Yes, I had much to gain by learning from him, but I'm fairly sure my support, participation, and insight helped him as well. As friends, it obviously makes a difference that we enjoy each other's company and look to help each other out however we can. After Aaron graduated in May of 2004, I helped his family with the move to Georgia, flying out with them and lending a hand with a few of the thousand tasks that moving into a new home demands. In the process, I became familiar with the area around Marietta, Georgia, and got to meet some of Aaron's new colleagues at Kennesaw State. All of which is to say that friendship, and by extension collegueship, is mutually supportive. And although you don't need to help someone move—which as Jerry Seinfeld has noted is a big step in any friendship—it doesn't hurt.

Back in Tempe that summer, I had time to contemplate the events of the past year. No doubt I'd benefited from what I'd witnessed and experienced: I already

had many of my own job materials in place, and I'd begun work early on the literature review and methodology chapters of my own dissertation. I was ahead of the game—or at least on schedule—thanks to what I'd learned from Aaron's tribulations. I could approach the fall confident in my knowledge of professional expectations, earn a position, complete my dissertation, and with my graduate work finished, move on to new challenges. On top of this, the information flow from Aaron hadn't slowed at all: I was now getting the inside scoop as he adapted to his new position as an assistant professor.

But as I thought about it further, I realized that my work with Aaron had fundamentally changed how I viewed the ASU English education program and my role within it. I now felt that I owed the same opportunities to others that had been granted to me, that I should mentor others as I'd been mentored. It had only been serendipity that Aaron and I had been in the same TA class; otherwise, we may never have become close friends, and I'd have been left to muddle my way through far-reaching professional development decisions without the kind of peer assistance I'd been fortunate enough to find. I couldn't in good faith leave newer English education doctoral students to their own ends. I possessed valuable knowledge and experience, and it would be a waste for every incoming graduate student in the program to have to relearn this material from scratch. I had an obligation to help others.

By the summer of 2004 the English education doctoral program at ASU had enrolled another seven or eight students, and I was determined to help these people get their professional feet wet, and open up better lines of communication between all of us as graduate students. I'd had a class with one of the new students, David Pegram, and once I found out we shared an interest in using film to teach writing, we began discussing potential conference presentations. This collaboration eventually led to a co-facilitated session at the 2004 Arizona English Teachers Association conference that fall. I've taken the same approach with another new student, Bryan Gillis; we presented together at the Southwest Graduate English Symposium in April of 2005. The point here is not that I suddenly became some magical catalytic force in the program (other senior doctoral students such as Wendy Kelleher were collaborating with newer students as well) but that more experienced graduate students need to see themselves as mentors for those students who are just entering the program. I know from personal experience that the subtleties of professional development aren't always apparent to rookie grad students, and those further along in the program can be invaluable resources.

Another change I hoped to implement in my final year in the program was simply a series of informal meetings for students. I wanted to help encourage a sense of community ownership of the program by arranging several evening potlucks, casual occasions where we could share our experiences as graduate students, talk

shop, and get to know each other a little better. The English education program has both part-time and full-time doctoral students—students with fellowships and assistantships, and some without—but even with less than ten of us in the program, I’d yet to see everyone in the same room (or even met everyone, for that matter).

These kinds of informal meetings, arranged by doctoral students for doctoral students (with invitations extended to faculty), have been a good way to generate a communal identity for the program and ensure the continuation of an institutional memory. Granted, this kind of interaction may be the norm at other schools. But if it isn’t, it’s up to doctoral students themselves to create the kind of climate that best serves their needs. “Networking” is often spoken of as an activity to do on special occasions, when meeting new people at some conference or event. But I would argue that networking at its most basic starts right now, right here in our own programs. We can create our own web of relationships by contributing to one another’s professional development, and so help define program identity and clarify expectations for those to come.

Along these same lines, I also started an official English education doctoral student listserv at ASU. Our own listserv gives us a convenient way to distribute information about upcoming professional opportunities, calls for papers, social events, and any other relevant news. I also used it to make recommendations about particular experiences, doing my best to let newer students know, for example, what journals they might be interested in subscribing to; what organizations they might consider joining; and what local, state, and national conferences they may want to attend or submit proposals to, and when. The listserv became a great place for us to ask questions, propose research, seek advice, or simply start conversations that might not happen otherwise. Its success has naturally led to another idea: a kind of interactive, continually evolving online guide for new ASU English education doctoral students. This would be a repository for graduate student information and insight—a place for all of the folkloric program knowledge we’ve generated, and will continue to generate—that can help socialize new students well into the future.

In their article “Improving Doctoral Student Retention,” Shelly Dorn and Rosemary Papalewis found that these kinds of peer-mentoring networks are a factor in improving doctoral student persistence rates. They explain that “strong peer mentoring emphasis is considered an essential aspect of the preparation for the role of professional scholar,” and maintain that a cohort system in which doctoral student mentor one another can promote greater commitment to goals, higher levels of motivation, consistent progress toward degrees, and a sense of caring, cooperation, and collaboration within a program (2–4). These are the same rewards I believe we’ve helped promote in our own program.

I haven’t dwelt much in this discussion on the role of professor mentorship and guidance. This should not be seen as an indirect criticism of the ASU English

education faculty; far from it. Dr.s Nilsen, Nelson, and Blasingame are and continue to be essential resources for all the students in the program. Each has provided me with vital assistance at different times and in different ways, and certainly doctoral students everywhere should seek out faculty adviser feedback on the full range of professional development concerns. Much of what I've learned from fellow students has been reinforced or been given greater context in conversations with my professors. My point here, however, is that we do ourselves a disservice relying solely on our professors for guidance, particularly when other convenient and useful sources exist in the form of fellow students. Just as importantly, a good deal of what our professors prepare us to do directly and indirectly *is to be mentors ourselves*. Considering that almost all of us will continue with positions that involve mentoring others, there's no reason this interaction shouldn't begin during our graduate careers.

I hope I've been able to contribute to an atmosphere of collaboration, community, and cohesion among the doctoral students in my program. From a purely practical perspective, English education doctoral students have everything to gain and very little to lose in helping each other in such ways. We are all fortunate enough to be learning, studying, and working in a field awash in employment opportunities, at least for the foreseeable future. Even more so, the very assumptions of the field that we hold as fundamental—the values of active collaboration and inquiry, student-centered learning, and social construction of meaning, to name a few—demand that we extend these philosophies and practices to our own experiences as graduate learners and teachers.

In December of 2004, I accepted an offer for an assistant professor position at Kennesaw State University, in the same department Aaron was hired in the previous year. I'm tempted to force an analogy at this point, to make the suggestion that working closely with colleagues can result in a kind of cyclic, symbiotic harmony. The fact that Aaron and I now work together as colleagues once more—along with Katie Mason, another graduate from the Arizona State English education program who came to Kennesaw State in 2006—certainly makes for a neat conclusion to this narrative. But in reality, our collaboration would have continued no matter where I was hired. I like to think the same will be true of my friendships with David and Bryan and Wendy, as well as my relationships with the other doctoral students in my program: that we'll continue to mentor and learn from one another as we move forward, wherever we may be.

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CHAPTER 15

English Departments and the English Education Job Market



Allen Webb

During the last decade as the English Department in which I work has attempted to hire specialists in English education we have found it difficult to find qualified candidates. At the same time, we prepared doctoral students in this specialization who have done exceedingly well on the market. Doctoral students specializing in English education were recruited for tenure-line positions even before they were sending out application letters. These observations led me, in the fall of 2002, to investigate more carefully the job market for professors in English education. I followed up that survey with second, more focused survey five years later, in the fall of 2007. With the help of David Laurence at the Modern Language Association (MLA—professional organization for professors of English and Foreign Languages) headquarters, I obtained a list of all the universities in the previous year (2001–2002 and 2006–2007) that had advertised for a position in English education. To English Department chairs at these institutions I sent an informal survey to which I received a high percentage of responses ('01–'02 74 percent, '06–'07 83 percent). The results of these surveys, though not exactly scientific, are certainly intriguing and show a similar pattern. According to the reports I received in '01–'02, 52 percent of the searches for English education professors were cancelled because no qualified candidates were available. In '06–'07 the number was 37 percent. Based on these surveys, in this chapter I will describe the job market for doctoral students in English education and I will make a case that there is a serious and continuing shortage of new professors of English education.

It is my nonscientific hunch that about half of the professors hired in English education are hired in English Departments and half in departments or Colleges of Education. This hunch is based on many years monitoring the English education job market, as well as several audience surveys I conducted at relevant NCTE and CEE conference presentations. Yet, I am also convinced that English Departments prepare fewer new English education PhDs than their counterparts in education.

Statistics from the MLA October job list do indicate that English education positions have been an important component of English Department hiring. As represented by Laurence's article on the October MLA list over a five year period, English education consistently has more positions than linguistics, about the same number as technical writing, and somewhat fewer than creative writing. There are likely more English education positions than many specific literary subspecialties not separately counted on the October list, such as medieval studies or nineteenth-century British prose. For every ten American literature positions there have been 4.3 positions in English education.

The survey I conducted provides information about English education positions in Departments of English that is consistent with common sense, specifically that the majority of English education professors work at medium-size state universities with significant teacher-training missions. Drawing on the broader 2001–2002 data, 14 percent of the English education positions were at research universities, 17 percent at liberal arts colleges, and 69 percent at comprehensive universities. Half of the positions were in institutions with ten to twenty thousand students, 32 percent in institutions with between five and ten thousand students, and 15 percent at universities with more than twenty thousand students. These statistics underscore one of the crucial issues in this specialty in English Departments: whereas the majority of PhDs in English are granted at research universities, research universities are the least likely to have faculty and positions in English education.¹

The English Departments responding to the surveys had a major responsibility for preparing secondary English teachers. Again, drawing on the '01–'02 data, fully 97 percent of the departments seeking English education faculty indicate that their students planning to teach in secondary schools were English majors (not education majors). Fifty-eight percent of the departments responding indicate that half or more of their English majors anticipate careers as public school teachers, and 83 percent indicate that a third or more have this ambition. While these departments have significant numbers of majors planning to become teachers, it is also apparent that job candidates in English education intending to teach in English Departments should be prepared to teach other English Department courses beyond those specifically in English education. Only a quarter of the positions responding to the survey (24 percent) indicated that the entire assignment was in English education. Half of the responding positions indicated that English education was only 50 percent of the assignment and another quarter (24 percent) that it was 75 percent of the assignment. This should not discourage PhDs from education programs from applying to English Departments. English education faculty in English Departments frequently teach courses in related fields including language acquisition and the teaching of grammar, in adolescent or children's literature, or in other literature or composition courses.

The English education positions in the survey were well advertised, yet they received few applications. In addition to the MLA list, 55 percent of the universities also advertised in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, 25 percent used direct mailings, and additional methods, including the NCTE Web site, other Web postings, NCTE and WPA listserves, advertising in local newspapers as well as other local and regional publications, flyers at conferences, and direct recruitment efforts. Regarding the number of applicants, I asked two questions, “How many applications did you receive for your advertised position?” and “How many of these applications met the minimum qualifications for the position?” In 2001–2002, 24 percent of the institutions received twenty to thirty applications, 34 percent received between ten and twenty applications, 21 percent received between five and ten applications, and 17 percent received fewer than five applications. In 2006–2007 the median number of applications received was nine. Given a ’01–’02 baseline mean of ninety-nine applications per position and a search failure rate due to lack of suitable candidates in only 4 percent of searches, the number of applicants to English education positions is dramatically fewer than applicants to other English Department specializations (Broughton and Conlogue). The shortage of English education applications may be even more dire than responses to this first question suggest. When chairs are asked to indicate the number of applications they receive that meet the minimum qualifications the result is astounding. Forty-five percent of the institutions surveyed indicated that they received fewer than five qualified applications, 34 percent indicated that they received five to ten, and 21 percent indicated that they received ten to twenty. In 2006–2007 the median number of applications meeting the minimum requirements was four. As I mentioned, my department has conducted several English education searches in the last few years and we certainly had the experience of receiving applications for English education positions from people with English PhDs with little or no coursework, research, background, or preparation in English education. It is pretty obvious that highly educated people unable to find positions in their own fields are applying broadly to positions for which they are not really qualified in the hope of finding employment.

Given the small number of applicants, universities have had a difficult time filling English education positions. Fully 90 percent (’01–’02) and 93 percent (’06–’07) of the institutions responding to this survey indicate that that it is “more difficult” to find and hire qualified applicants in English education than in other areas. As I mentioned above, many positions simply go unfilled (’01–’02 52 percent, ’06–’07 37 percent). A majority of the departments had searched for the same position in the previous year, 52 percent in ’01–’02, and 56 percent in ’06–’07. Most departments were determined to make their hire in English education. In ’01–’02 87 percent planned to seek for the position in the following year (13

percent had given up?) and in '06-'07 100 percent of the departments indicated that they planned to search again.

English Departments seeking English education faculty are obviously experiencing frustration. In 2001–2002 survey one department chair wrote, “Original searches [one for secondary/middle and one for elementary] ran three years without being filled. The positions were stepped down from Ph.D. required to non-tenure track MA’s for both positions.” Another wrote, “My feeling, based on our experience, is that if you require too much—certification, 3–5 years public school teaching experience, doctorate in the area, you are not likely to get anybody.”

For some reason in 2006–2007 I received many more written comments back from chairs. I share a number of these as they not only confirm the 2001–2002 data, but they also raise some interesting issues.

An absolutely dismal pool. Very distressing. We have a critical need, a reputable program, advertised widely, and were offering a highly professional tenured or tenure-track role with support for research and had virtually no response.

We had a failed search for the same position the previous year. That time we had eighteen applications but the first half-dozen or so that we had contacted had already accepted other offers or decided that the pay in our state was too low.

Much more difficult to find such a person, partly because of few qualified applicants and also a clear sense of how best to advertise for such people; this was our third time doing this search [...]. Sometimes people think that because they’ve done high school teaching that they’re qualified, whereas we wanted someone who’d supervised/mentored other teachers/teacher candidates, much harder to find.

We’ve experienced difficulty making hires in this area and in rhetoric (PhD-level). We’ve experienced no difficulty hiring highly qualified faculty in literary studies.

This is the only position we’ve ever searched for other than African American literature that we haven’t had multiple extremely qualified, even over-qualified, candidates for. It is virtually impossible to keep this position staffed and productive.

Of the small number of applications that we received, only a very few actually had or were about to get degrees in English education. The others had composition/rhetoric or literature preparation along with experience working with other writing projects or teaching high school.

We ended up moving the position to the College of Education, because the salary demands of our top candidate were so high.

The population of candidates who are qualified is small enough, but the pool of those who might easily fit in with an English Department new to English education is very small.

After a failed search last year, and an almost failed search this year, we expanded our pool to include candidates with only master's degrees as long as they had significant high school teaching experience. However, this meant that our successful candidate had to be willing to be hired as an instructor, with the understanding that he'd be promoted to assistant professor as soon as he finishes a PhD—which he'd have to do to gain tenure.

Interestingly, only a quarter of those institutions responding to the '01–'02 survey conducted preliminary interviews for English education candidates at the MLA conference, the standard place for interviews for literary scholars. The majority conducted these interviews by phone (34 percent), on campus (31 percent), or at the NCTE conference (11 percent). Several possible explanations for these numbers occur to me. Because English education candidates have usually had a prior career teaching in the public schools they are likely to be older and more rooted to a particular place. The shortage of candidates for English education positions, especially the paucity of candidates applying nationally, may be forcing institutions to look primarily at candidates living in their local area. It has also been my observation that, increasingly, institutions are interviewing English education candidates at the annual NCTE conferences. This conference is a good place to find English education faculty who are likely to be attending the conference or one of its affiliate groups, such as the CEE. Moreover, and perhaps most importantly, the NCTE annual conference is usually held the weekend before Thanksgiving, more than a month before the MLA conference. (I can relate several stories of strong English education candidates who were hired at or soon after the NCTE conference and were simply no longer on the market by the time of the MLA convention—this despite the MLA guideline that departments not require candidates to make

a final decision on offers for probationary (assistant professor) appointments before January twenty-second.)

Given the important role of English Departments in preparing secondary teachers, the current shortage of English education faculty has serious consequences. English education faculty plays a crucial role connecting studies in English, in literature, composition, and theory, with the public schools. In many institutions, methods courses taught by English education professors are required by state and national accrediting institutions, such as the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). Public school teachers continue to be a significant constituency in graduate programs in many English Departments, and English education faculty has an important part in teacher education at undergraduate and graduate levels.

To address the existing shortage of English education faculty I make the following recommendations:

1. Inform Potential Doctoral Candidates that there is a Need for English Education Professors

English Departments frequently have graduate students with public school teaching experience, yet these students are often unaware that English education is a viable area in which to do graduate work and obtain a university position. It is a difficult decision for a secondary teacher to leave an established and secure career to pursue a doctoral degree and a new career as a professor of English education. As I discuss below, public school teachers are likely to take a significant cut in pay to become English professors. Yet, clearly, graduate students with public school teaching experience are in a better position on the job market than students strictly in literary studies, that is, if they are prepared in English education. This preparation means graduate coursework in pedagogy and English education related fields, perhaps including graduate courses from Departments or Colleges of Education as cognate areas in their English PhDs, and dissertations exploring English education related issues. One survey respondent wrote, "Since these jobs are not being filled, shouldn't we encourage teachers with secondary experience to do a Ph.D. in English Education? That's what I am doing."

Once again, my own experience is not atypical. Even though I had six years of public high school teaching experience before I began my doctorate it was not until I was five years into a graduate program in literature that a senior professor took me aside and explained to me that there was a field called "English education." As soon as the field was explained to me, it was immediately attractive. I could see that it would allow me to bring together my years of public school teaching with my interest and graduate training in literature studies. When I went on the job market

I ended up with interviews and job offers in both literature and English education. I decided to accept a position primarily in English education and I have found a position working with preservice and inservice teachers engaging and satisfying.

2. Expand and Develop Doctoral Programs in English Education

Applicants to English education positions advertised in the MLA job list were expected to have extensive qualifications specifically in English education. In the '01-'02 survey for 50 percent of the positions previous experience teaching in the public schools was considered "very important" and for 32 percent it was considered "required." For 42 percent of the positions coursework specifically in English education was considered "required" and for 41 percent of the positions it was considered "very important." Fifty-two percent of the institutions considered scholarly research and publication in English education to be "very important," 34 percent considered it "somewhat important," and 7 percent considered it "required." A doctoral degree was required in 76 percent of the searches and "very important" in 14 percent. Doctoral degrees in English Departments were clearly preferred. While 21 percent specifically preferred that graduate degrees be in English, another 46 percent of the institutions surveyed preferred that candidates have their graduate degree in "English education" from an English Department. Twenty-nine percent indicated a preference for "English education" from an Education Department and only 4 percent preferred graduate degrees specifically in education. The survey I conducted makes it clear that English education applicants are expected to have graduate coursework, and scholarly research and publications in English education. Maybe it is tautological, but degrees from English Departments are preferred over degrees in education by those advertising on the MLA job list. (Perhaps, if I were looking at jobs advertised in the *Chronicle* for English or literacy education, this result might have been different.) At the same time I strongly urge new PhDs in English education from Education Departments to examine job opportunities in English Departments.

English education professors are usually trained in English Departments, in Departments of Education, or in joint or specialized programs specifically in English education. Some English Departments offer specific graduate courses in literature, language, and composition pedagogy for secondary students. For other English Departments it may not be a great stretch to augment existing courses in rhetoric and composition or literature pedagogy to address secondary teaching, to develop collaboration with Education Departments, and to support students doing graduate work in English education. Obviously these courses are relevant to doctoral students in English education, as is coursework in classroom

and educational research, language acquisition, reading theory, adolescent or children's literature, educational technology, and opportunities to work with and supervise student or intern teachers. An intensive study of literature, rhetoric and composition, and the debates in our profession over issues of canon and inclusion are vital for public school teachers and teacher educators. I have elsewhere argued that a thorough knowledge of literary theory and even cultural studies is important for secondary teachers (*Literature and Lives*).

Classroom and pedagogical research can be recognized as a perfectly valid area for doctoral work and dissertations in English. To illustrate this point, let me describe three dissertations completed in English Departments that I would consider to be written in the field of English education. One was a dissertation examining how the understanding of literature on the part of high school students was affected by giving high school students an introduction to several schools of literary theory. Another dissertation examined the way composition was taught to seniors in a secondary school and then followed this same group of students to the university to see how composition instruction in freshman composition courses compared. A third dissertation explored the writing of high school students using an electronic virtual reality environment to respond to literary works. I suspect that it would not be difficult to imagine dissertations like these written in many or even most English PhD programs. Indeed, many doctoral programs consider teacher education, that is, preparing good teachers, to be part of their mission for all their students. Serious and creative thinking about the discipline of English as an educational enterprise, what its knowledge base should be and what questions should organize instruction, ought to be a feature of graduate education generally construed.

Given the serious shortage of English education PhDs it is hard at present to imagine that some effort by English Departments to expand programs would result in a glut on the market, at least not in the near future. Assuming the demand for English education professors stays within the ranges established we could speculate that, on average, forty to forty-five positions will be advertised on the MLA list. Based on the surveys, it is my impression that the number of new PhDs with specialties or backgrounds in English education entering the market per year is easily less than fifteen and, in terms of those applying nationally, likely less than five. Increasing the number entering the market by thirty or forty graduates per year would match English Department demand, one for one. In the case of English education PhDs there are many opportunities for professional employment beyond teaching in English Departments.

At a time when a small but significant number of traditional PhDs in literary studies are seeking jobs outside of academia, it is interesting that a PhD in English that emphasizes or specializes in English education is especially marketable. MLA job list statistics alone undercount available positions for English education PhDs.

Some English Departments advertise for English education positions only in the *Chronicle of Higher Education*, in part because that is where Departments of Education advertise for English education faculty. Indeed, individuals with public school teaching experience, a PhD in English, graduate coursework, research, and publication in English education are strong candidates for positions in language arts, literacy, and English education jobs in Departments and Colleges of Education as well as in English Departments. Although not common, it is not surprising to find high school English teachers with PhDs. Departments of Education are often more flexible than Departments of English when it comes to matching areas of research to hiring, and at present there is a general shortage of teacher-educator candidates in Colleges of Education. A three-year survey in the late 1990s of four hundred public and private universities with teacher education programs determined that there were less than ten applicants per each job opening in many fields in Colleges and Departments of Education and 30 percent of searches were unsuccessful (Blair 1). A new doctorate in English education is also eminently employable as a curriculum specialist in state Education Departments or school district administration offices, a position, by the way, likely to pay twice the salary of a beginning tenure-track literature professor. Moreover, a PhD in English education is an ideal degree for a public school classroom teacher who seeks to enhance his or her qualifications for teaching at the secondary level. Doctoral students with this ambition are already gainfully employed, likely in a tenured public school position, precisely in the field in which they are seeking their degree. Indeed, the argument is made that secondary teaching is a viable option for literature PhDs (Smith).

Even if English Department graduate programs were prepared to significantly increase the number of new doctorates with an English education specialization, the question would remain, would well-informed teachers with public school experience be willing to enter into these programs?

3. Make English Education Positions More Attractive

The expectations for applicants to English education positions create a salary dilemma, as several respondents to the 2006–2007 survey indicate. English education faculty are expected to have teaching certificates and public school teaching experience, yet they usually begin at the same place on university salary scales as faculty without these qualifications and prior experience. Leaving public school teaching to pursue a PhD in English for most teachers means giving up job security, tenure, and better income. Of course, there are advantages to teaching at a university, such as greater freedom to determine curriculum, a more flexible time schedule, a smaller number of classes to teach. There are also advantages to

secondary teaching, typically closer relationships with students, a stronger sense of mission, fewer years of education to qualify for employment, better job prospects and security, and more flexibility in selecting location. Intellectual challenge and professional growth are available at both levels, though traditionally better supported at the university. Balancing these factors, successful public school teachers usually decide not to pursue college teaching. Those that do often see it, as I did, as a logical continuation of their career. Yet, it is discouraging for experienced professional teachers having earned additional qualifications to start entirely over again at the bottom of the pay scale. Former secondary teachers should not have to take large salary cuts to become English education professors. Public school teaching experience, clearly a key qualification for the position, needs to be respected and compensated for. It should be a given that English education professors begin with some years of salary credit, even as they may need the normal time toward tenure to establish research and publishing.

Moreover, English education professors should not be expected to bear an unusual load of extra responsibilities. English education faculty members often do a variety of additional duties such as advising majors intending to teach, supervising intern teachers, collaborating with Colleges of Education and the public schools, directing programs, writing accreditation reports, etc. Extra duty obligations should be offset by teaching releases and/or additional salary. The professional work of English education faculty members with the Conference on English Education or the National Council of Teachers of English needs to be respected and supported by English Departments in the same way as are literature faculties' involvement in the Modern Language Association.

In forecasting the future of Departments of English, it is clear that one task they will continue to perform is the preparation of significant numbers of majors for positions as public school teachers. Professors trained exclusively in literary scholarship are not normally well-prepared to support the preparation of future public school English teachers. Yet neither the MLA, nor the general public, would like to see this responsibility exclusively taken over by Colleges or Departments of Education. English Departments need English education faculty with their special blend of content and pedagogical knowledge and public school teaching experience.

When I was an undergraduate English major at Swarthmore College several English professors actively discouraged me from becoming a high school teacher. My English Department faculty adviser told me that courses in education were a "waste of time." The professor I had for Romantic Poetry admonished that I would "never really be happy as a public school teacher" because I "would not have stimulating colleagues." Luckily I didn't listen to *everything* my cherished professors said, and,

after graduation I did earn a teaching certificate and taught high school for six years. Looking back on it, those were some of the most exciting and meaningful years of my career, certainly equally or more intellectually stimulating than graduate school. My experience teaching public school combined with an MAT degree in English and education, and an MA and PhD in comparative literature landed me a position in 1992 as a professor of English education, a position I have thoroughly enjoyed. Ten active years in the MLA and twenty-five in the NCTE and its affiliates, have made me keenly aware of the responsibilities of university English Departments to the public schools and our reciprocal dependence on the public schools to provide us with college students prepared and interested in English studies. Public school English teaching is a vital activity, one which should call to our best undergraduate majors. Working with aspiring and practicing teachers is also an intellectually exciting task, one that English professors should be supporting in both our undergraduate and graduate programs.

Notes

1. In 2001–2002, only 6 percent of the universities advertising English education positions offered PhD-level degrees or coursework in English education, whereas 70 percent of these institutions offer master's level degrees or coursework in English education (37 percent in MAs in English and 33 percent in MAT programs). Twenty-four percent of the positions were in institutions that offered no graduate coursework in English education.

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My Two Identities: Negotiating the Challenges of Being “Jointly Appointed”



Janet Alsup

When I was in graduate school, I had only a vague notion of how university faculty appointments in English education would be configured. Frankly, I assumed they would look like the program in which I was doing my graduate work, which was a vibrant, intellectually rich Curriculum and Instruction (C&I) Department in a College of Education. Since I chose a secondary area in rhetoric and composition during my Ph.D. program, I took several courses in the English Department; however, I never felt completely at home there. My feelings of alienation were due to stereotypical and often negative responses to my status by some English professors and graduate students, even though I had been a secondary English teacher for seven years. Whenever I crossed the “quad” heading toward the English Department building, I prepared for snobbery often directed toward education professionals and professors.

Needless to say, when I went on the job market, I was a little surprised to see the wide variety of institutional contexts in which English education jobs were advertised. They were placed in C&I Departments, as I was accustomed to, but they were also in English Departments and existed as “split” appointments between both. When I interviewed for my present job, it was in one of those split situations—two-thirds of a faculty appointment in the English Department in the College of Liberal Arts, and one-third in the C&I Department in the College of Education. I was wary at first, given my graduate school experiences, but happily I found the new English Department at the institution where I accepted employment more respectful of scholarly diversity—and, the education of teachers. However, there are certain struggles (in addition to benefits) unique to being a “joint appointment.” I have experienced both feelings of invisibility and isolation and the intellectual excitement of working with a diverse group of colleagues and students.

My intermittent feelings of isolation can be linked to the physical invisibility

created by my joint status. One's subjectivity is not completely formed by language or discourse, but also by material realities. Therefore, my professional self is formed, in part, through the concrete sites of its existence, which are comprised of two locales: the English Department building and the C&I Department building. My office is in the English Department, and therefore, it is my "home." Since people naturally communicate more often and more deeply with those near them, many of my friends are English Department faculty members. Also, since people tend to know more about the administrative, social, and cultural details of the context in which they interact daily, I am routinely more knowledgeable about the various meetings, speakers, special events, etc. occurring in the English Department, simply because I walk around those halls every day, reading posted signs and banners and chatting with people journeying to and from the copy room. The second place of my employment is the Department of Curriculum and Instruction, approximately a five-minute walk from my English Department office. This may not seem far, but it's far enough to make daily visits unlikely. I find that if I do go there, it's to run an errand, take care of pressing business, or attend a meeting. Therefore, most of my interactions with C&I faculty and staff are for the purpose of completing concrete tasks or satisfying specific professional responsibilities. Any personal interaction or socialization is only a pleasant byproduct or the result of conscious effort.

I view this geographic divide, the physical act of walking across campus, as a concrete symbol of my dual identity. When I am in one department, and one building, I speak its language and engage in activities that it values; when I'm in the other, I switch gears appropriately, and almost unconsciously, interacting in ways appropriate to and valued within the disciplinary context. The physical site of a discipline is inexorably connected to the discourse used to communicate within it—or how the discipline "speaks" itself into being. Where faculty members spend most of their time, and by association the types of people with whom they interact most often, can determine many aspects of professional identity, including conferences attended, the types of publications produced, and preferred teaching strategies.

In addition to the physical duality of my professional life, I have sometimes felt alienated by such discursive differences between my two colleges. According to Jim Gee, Michel Foucault, and Judith Butler, discourse can create (as well as represent) social groups, disciplinary categories, and personal identities. As such, discourse has an important role to play in the creation and expression of an academic discipline, be it English or education. For example, often Colleges of Education are ridiculed for their prevalent use of acronyms, their surplus of meetings, subcommittees, and "task forces," and their tendency to document everything to the point of tedium. However, while these tendencies may be characteristic of the discourse community, they stem from institutional and bureaucratic realities faced by Colleges of Education, which come in the form of state and federal standards for teacher

education and the reliance of many Colleges of Education on external grant funds, often from federal and state educational institutions. English Departments, whose discourse is relatively free of such markers, are generally not held accountable in the same prescriptive way. As a joint appointment, I am particularly aware of this difference and its trickle-down effect on a discipline, a department, and even on an individual faculty member.

In addition to these discursive differences and the related diverse institutional responsibilities of English and Education Departments, varying philosophies and values guide the respective departments and affect the work of the jointly appointed English educator. English Departments, in general, have a very different mission than Education Departments, and this mission most often centers on the teaching of literature. Recently, there have been many books and articles published about the “crisis” in English Departments, particularly concerning literature programs, and their place in the academy and contemporary society (see Elbow; Luke; Scholes). Robert Scholes writes in *The Rise and Fall of English*,

The external changes that bear most directly on the function of English as a field of study have to do with the position of literature itself in American culture. To put it simply, that quasi-religious status once accorded English literature by a class of individuals whose background was mainly privileged and Anglo-Germanic is hardly viable any longer. (19)

He goes on to write that contemporary society does not necessarily desire college graduates who can think critically about texts or who are “well read” in the traditional, liberal arts sense; instead, business leaders and policy makers want graduates (and employees) who exhibit basic grammatical competence and have mastered some sort of practical, vocational skill. Regardless of how you understand or explain the philosophical underpinnings of the English Department culture, and whether or not you agree that it is under attack, it does seem clear that the English Department is increasingly divided between so-called “newer,” more progressive faculty who tend to place more value on multicultural, multigendered, and multiethnic texts of various genres and broader ways of reading and responding to these texts, and “older,” more traditionally educated faculty who retain allegiance to canonical texts and close readings. This so-called split in the English Department may seem like a huge chasm to English professors, but from my perspective as an English educator both the “new” and “old” professor continue to espouse a similar epistemology: students learn and grow by reading and critically responding to *texts*, whatever texts are chosen and whatever version of critical response is preferred. This value on texts can be linked to a progressive ideology seeking to teach students to be critical readers and thinkers in a society with far too many compliant and unengaged citizens.

The philosophy underlying Departments of Curriculum and Instruction is not completely different—education professors and graduate students also seek to engage students in active thinking about their professions, and they agree that many areas of society, particularly certain educational policies and practices, are in desperate need of change. However, one central epistemological difference is that the C&I Department curriculum is not built upon chosen texts and various ways of responding to them. Instead of text-based knowledge, the philosophy of the C&I Department could be understood to rest on *action* and the possible results of effective action—namely, effective teaching. While they certainly read books and consider theories, C&I faculty members emphasize how practice can enact such knowledge. Simplistically, you might say the fundamental philosophical difference between English and C&I Departments can be summarized as the stereotypical theory-practice split. However, while it may be true that some English professors don't see the need to study pedagogy since "anyone can teach if they know their content," and some C&I professors don't understand why it's important to read Shakespeare or Toni Morrison, their philosophical differences are, to some extent, just a matter of emphasis. Both value texts and critical thinking; both value the enactment of theories and ideas in the "real world" to create positive change. However, the English professor is still primarily defined (and self-defined) as the solitary scholar reading and writing, and the education professor is the university counterpart of the public school teacher, often in the "field," guiding students through clinical professional experiences.

So how do these varying philosophical emphases, epistemologies, and professional purposes affect a joint appointment in English education? The English educator may feel the effects most severely when making choices about scholarly production and assessing the value administrators place on various types of work. While in C&I, so-called "service" may be more valued (conducting in-service workshops, for example, in schools) along with articles in peer-reviewed journals that arguably provide more timely reports of research for teachers and administrators, in most English Departments the single authored monograph still reigns supreme and remains the most common requirement for tenure and promotion. I see English educators as border-crossers when it comes to research and publication, as well as teaching and service. We write books *and* articles, facilitate professional development workshops for teachers *and* teach university classes. Sometimes problems result when we are expected to do both in equal measure for promotion and tenure, when our singly appointed colleagues are only expected to fulfill the expectations of one department. In the worst-case scenario, the philosophical split between English and education can lead to concrete differences in how the respective departments value faculty work, which can result in faculty members being forced to defend their scholarship or make decisions about their

research foci based on what a particular department values, rather than simply engaging in the work which seems most important.

As I've argued, the place of faculty members' professional habitation, by determining the discourse community with which they interact, can determine the kind of intellectual discussions they have and affect the scholarly work in which they engage. Faculty members, as members of a discourse community, can also utilize the preferred discourse for the purpose of enacting or encouraging change. In other words, they can use their divided identities and cross-disciplinary knowledge both to improve communication between two diverse communities and lobby for changes in each that may improve the institutional or educational environment. Normally, learning the discourse of one's discipline takes time and practice; however, learning two discourses is paramount to being able to "code switch" in linguistic terms or be, in Gee's terms, "bi-Discoursal" or a proficient user of multiple discourses simultaneously and purposely (e.g., professional/personal, student/teacher, social scientist/humanist) (136). Gee argues that those who are bi-Discoursal are actually better situated to enact change in their disciplines or expand the accepted set of discourses practiced in the community since they are able to communicate in two "languages" and hence within two cultures. Since most of us academics are usually out to improve the system, the ability to be bi-Discoursal can be viewed as a distinct advantage. As a jointly appointed faculty member, I participate in both discourses when appropriate and when I think I might positively affect the workings of a particular department through strategic use of its written, oral, or representational discourse.

One possible way of addressing the feelings of physical and discursive invisibility and related feelings of alienation is through effective mentorship. Faculty mentoring may be especially important at a research university where extensive publishing is required, and when faculty members come to the university only vaguely familiar with the discourse and unwritten rules of publishing. In my case, there were few colleagues in the English Department or in C&I who could provide such mentorship. At the time of my appointment, there were no tenured English education professors in the English Department, and in C&I the focus was primarily on early literacy development. I was in the middle—living on a border between two disciplines, not quite a humanities professor, and not quite a social science professor. I was a unique breed. Granted, the hybrid identity of English education is one reason I find it fascinating; however, without the presence of similar academics doing similar work, the border can be a lonely and challenging place. While working independently may result in a new professor becoming more internally driven and, hence, more professionally productive, there is an emotional cost.

To revisit the positive aspects of being a joint appointment, I value the access it has provided me to many different types of scholars doing complementary work. I am often able to cross scholarly boundaries and participate in interdisciplinary collaborations. These collaborations range from sharing stories of recent research and conference attendance to larger, long-term projects with literature, linguistics, and rhetoric faculty. I have written grant proposals, created collaborative class assignments for undergraduate courses, written coauthored articles, conducted research, and presented on conference panels with colleagues in English (literature, linguistics, and rhetoric) and education (literacy and language, and educational technology). I have had the joy of working with graduate students in both disciplines, as I serve on both English and education master's and doctoral committees.

Perhaps most satisfying of all are my graduate courses, which become rich combinations of students and scholars. Recently, I taught a graduate seminar in teacher identity development, which enrolled students in elementary education, secondary education, English as a second language, and educational technology. Last summer I taught a young adult literature class to students who were practicing secondary teachers earning master's degrees, doctoral students in rhetoric and composition and literary studies, and creative writers earning MFAs. I found this eclectic mix of students and ideas incredibly satisfying, especially as I learned from my students who viewed the class through the lenses of their particular disciplines. We became a varied group of intellectuals with different foci, but with overlapping interests and concerns. As a result, class discussions were amazingly complex and wide-ranging.

High school teachers, I think, often traverse the borders between the priorities of multiple stakeholders, including students, parents, administrators, and lawmakers. Consequently, I came to my university career rather comfortable with life on the margins, and because of the hyphenated position I've chosen during my university career, my identity has remained somewhat fluid and amorphous. However, perhaps this is a good thing, as eclecticism, while sometimes seen as disorganization, is also about wide-ranging intellectual exploration. Joint appointments must learn to navigate the diverse physical and discursive spaces that can lead to personal isolation and professional invisibility in order to fully experience the pleasures and benefits of duality. I believe it is the job of English educators already inhabiting such positions to guide new faculty, and it is the responsibility of university administrators to be aware of the unique challenges faced by joint appointments so that they can clearly communicate requirements for tenure, promotion, and merit raises.

Additionally, professors in joint appointment lines might take additional steps to ensure that they experience a supportive professional community. For example, they could attend English education related conferences, where disciplinary issues are discussed and debated. If their English education program is small, professors

might forget the special circumstances under which they work. Attending conferences and joining organizations and commissions that address professional issues can not only remind English educators that they are not alone, but can also extend their professional community across universities and provide ideas for improving their hybrid situations. For example, the National Council of Teachers of English (NCTE) and related entities such as the Conference on English Education (CEE) are professional organizations with which every English educator should affiliate. The CEE is a professional community of English educators, which meets annually at the NCTE convention to discuss professional issues and concerns. It is defined on the NCTE/CEE Web site as an organization which “serves those NCTE members who are engaged in the preparation, support, and continuing education of teachers of English language arts/literacy” (“Conference on English Education”). In May of 2005, the CEE hosted a Leadership and Policy Summit at Georgia State University to discuss and draft belief statements and policy goals for the CEE and, by association, the wider discipline of English education and the profession of English teaching. Efforts such as this summit are representative of the work of the CEE and exemplify how it can provide an intellectually-rich support network for English educators around the nation, especially as some states are beginning to develop local CEE affiliates. Additionally, the CEE has various commissions within the organization, which are smaller groups of CEE members interested in certain issues. These commissions include the Commission on Gender, Race, and Class in Teacher Education Programs, the Commission on Technology and Teacher Education, the Commission on the Study and Teaching of Adolescent Literature, and the Commission on Writing Teacher Education.

I have been involved with the National Council of Teachers of English since I began teaching high school in 1989, and I am currently a member of both the NCTE and the CEE. These professional affiliations have been priceless at various points in my career, as I’ve learned much about English teaching and being a teacher educator by reading their journals, such as *English Journal* and *English Education*, perusing their Web site resources, and attending their conferences and conventions. I have made many professional connections with other English teachers and English educators as a result of my relationship with NCTE, and, consequently, I have learned much about how others work effectively and happily within their unique institutional contexts. I urge English educators living and working on the border between two disciplines and departments to strive for homeostasis in their daily professional lives, and this balance can be achieved, in part, by reducing feelings of isolation through increased professional collaboration. As a joint appointment, it may be easy to feel divided or split between two worlds, and such an identity fracture may make English educators feel frustrated or misunderstood. Seeking out others with similar challenges and goals can be liberating.

In addition to attending professional conferences and joining organizations, I urge English educators to remember to seek balance whenever possible and productive on a daily basis, when they are at work at their home institutions and within their home departments. Perhaps they can find a coffee shop on campus, a hidden nook or cranny tucked away in one of their buildings, or even a home office that can provide solitude and space for holistic reflection on their professional identities. Returning to homeostasis, if even for a short time each day, can nurture feelings of intellectual excitement, professional satisfaction, and happiness.

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APPENDIX

Identifying, Researching, and Applying to Doctoral Programs in English/Literacy Education



Allen Webb

English education is a recognizable field of doctoral studies primarily concerned with preparing professors, English teacher educators, who train future and practicing public and private school English teachers and who carry out research on the teaching of English. When this book was originally conceived I thought to include a comprehensive list of doctoral programs in English education, thinking that would be a valuable resource both for students interested in doctoral education and for programs wanting to communicate with each other. As I began making such a list I realized that there were difficulties.

First, while there are programs in English and Education Departments called “English education,” there are also programs preparing English teacher educators and fostering research in the teaching of English under many names. In Departments or Colleges of Education there are programs that are explicitly called “English education,” and, depending on the configuration, many others that may have or allow an English education focus or concentration. Possible areas include: “Literacy Studies,” “Language Arts,” “Language and Literacy,” “Curriculum and Instruction,” “Adolescent Literacy,” “Reading,” “Critical Studies,” “Secondary Education,” “Elementary Education,” “Educational Studies,” “Teaching and Learning,” and so on. In English Departments or in joint programs there may be specifically designated “English education” doctoral degrees, but there are also possible concentrations within degrees in English studies, including in rhetoric and composition, linguistics, and literature study that appropriately qualify a person to become a professor and scholar of English education.

Second, there is flux and change that alters the availability and quality of doctoral programs in English education. That change maybe rapid. Programs atrophy and die; new programs are created. Sometimes the presence at an institution of an individual professor or a cluster of professors is enough to make possible an outstanding doctoral program. Then professors retire or move on to administration

and new professors are hired, or not hired. New program directors and department heads are named. I realized that a list of contact persons for doctoral programs in English education would become out-of-date almost as fast as it was created. Even a list of programs would be difficult to keep current in a print publication.

So, instead of attempting a fixed list of doctoral programs in English education in this volume, I provide information on how to identify, research, and apply to doctoral programs in English education.

IDENTIFYING PROGRAMS

There are online resources helpful for identifying doctoral programs in English education. The Peterson's Guide to Graduate Studies maintains an online list of graduate programs in education with a specific focus in "English education" (www.petersons.com). Although a starting point, this list is incomplete and sometimes inaccurate. At the time of publication of this volume the Conference on English Education, the professional organization for professors of English education and an affiliated group of the National Council of Teachers of English plans to develop a Web site that will include pages and resources for graduate students and information about doctoral programs (www.ncte.org/groups/cee).

While university and departmental Web sites are also helpful to finding information about programs, talking with a professor or professors of English education is the best way to learn about doctoral programs in the field. Often a teacher taking a graduate course in a certification, MA, or MAT program is recruited or directed to a doctoral program by one of their professors. This kind of personal connection and mentorship is invaluable, but not always available. Persons interested in graduate study can reach out to English education faculty via email or phone and are likely to find them delighted to discuss doctoral education. The annual meeting of the Conference on English Education, held at the National Council of Teachers of English annual conference, includes a social hour and is an ideal place to meet professors of English education and doctoral students and learn about doctoral programs in English education. Professors of English education can be found as members of the Conference on English Education and its Executive Committee. They are authors of many articles published in the journal *English Education* or *Research in the Teaching of English*. The Conference on English Education has recently established a graduate student organization; members of that organization would be valuable resources as well.

RESEARCHING PROGRAMS

It is wise for persons interested in graduate studies to examine a variety of programs before making the time and financial commitment that a doctoral degree entails. English education faculty can help prospective students identify programs at various institutions that may be relevant to their interests. Ideally, one would look across the country to find programs. However, since doctoral students in English education are typically established professionals with several years of public school teaching experience, it may be more difficult for them to move across the country or even the state. In this situation, extended conversations with faculty in both education and English at universities in the local area may lead to identifying doctoral programs in areas of interest. Be alert, however, to the fact that universities usually will not hire their own graduates. A person earning a PhD typically undertakes a national search for a faculty position.

Questions that a person considering doctoral studies in English education may want to ask include the following:

1. Will this program support my interests? If, for example, a person has a strong interest in composition studies, or in critical pedagogy, is that area available or an emphasis in the program? Is the program geared more toward education or English? Does it allow students some freedom to select coursework and research topics? What topics have recent dissertations in the program addressed? What type and quality of mentoring is available?
2. Is the program well-established? Are there several faculty members who have interests and research agendas in the areas that the student is interested in studying? Is there a community of other doctoral students with like interests? Are faculty and doctoral students involved in professional organizations? Do they win grants? Do the graduates of the program have a good track record of finding employment?
3. Does this program offer teaching or other fellowships? While some doctoral programs can be begun and even completed while a teacher is still working in a public school, most of the time it will be necessary and advisable to leave a teaching position to attend doctoral studies full time. Doctoral studies are expensive and fellowships to teach or participate in research projects are important to defray costs and to provide significant professional experiences. What support do available fellowships provide? What teaching or research opportunities are available as part of the fellowships? How many fellowships are available? How easy is it to qualify for a fellowship?

APPLYING

In addition to carefully examining online information about applying to doctoral programs, it is wise to also talk to graduate directors and faculty members in the specific programs. Sometimes application procedures are complex and not always perfectly aligned with available online information. What materials are needed? Is the GRE required and, if so, in which areas and by what dates? What are readers looking for in essays, letters of recommendation, and other materials? In an ideal situation, a person would visit programs in person, talk with faculty members and doctoral students, and sit in on classes. This allows the potential doctoral student to best match her or his interests to existing programs, and if several programs are involved, to select between them. The process of applying to several programs is an education in itself, providing the future doctoral student with important information about graduate studies and the field of English education.

As this volume documents, doctoral studies are often an identity- and life-changing undertaking. Interests that bring students into doctoral study frequently evolve. Typically students excited about teaching teachers, about becoming a teacher educator, also begin to discover the value and pleasures of collaboration with colleagues, of research, writing, and publication. Reading this volume will be helpful to understanding doctoral education in English education and thus in selecting, researching, and applying to programs.

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