Transformative Programs, Transformed Practice: Multiliteracies and the Work of the Composition Program

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ABSTRACT

In 1996, the New London Group made a call to transform the intellectual labor of education: to value texts that combine multiple modes and the multiliteracies that produce those texts. However, we currently have few models of entire composition programs that have revised their curricula to enact a pedagogy of multiliteracies and help students achieve transformed practice. In this article, I offer a model of such a program. I explore the processes by which the program's curriculum was revised and outline the new curriculum, which now requires that students exhibit three practices: 1) design, which gives students the theoretical knowledge to create multimodal texts; 2) material-rhetorical flexibility, which puts that knowledge into practice; and 3) the circulation of texts intended to effect change beyond the classroom. Scholars have discussed these practices separately, but this program presents a model of all three synthesized in one curriculum.

> Against this changing communicational landscape, which can be typified by diversity and plurality, the dominant view of literacy as a universal, autonomous, and monolithic entity is at best dated and in need of reconsideration. (Jewitt, 2008, p. 244)

> Our study suggests that students not only find multimodal projects to be engaging, meaningful, and relevant, but also that multimodal composition helps students have a stronger understanding of composition as a whole. (Kirchoff & Cook, 2016, p. 42)

In 1996, the New London Group (NLG) made a call to transform the intellectual labor of education, asking teachers to value texts that combine image, color, sound, gesture, and writing and the multiliteracies that produce those texts. These new programs and curricula would prepare students to be global citizens in a digital world by expanding students' meaning-making repertoires. In these programs, students would move in the direction of "transformed practice," which "engages students in the real world, the world

of social action in which they live and have to communicate in the contact zone of cultural differences" (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000, p. 237). Several scholars in Rhetoric and Composition and Literacy Studies have detailed how they have changed the work of their individual classrooms to engage students in the real world (Alexander, 2013; Ericsson et al., 2016; Lombardi, 2018; Seglem & Garcia, 2018; Shipka, 2011; Warren-Riley & Hurley, 2017). However, we currently have few models of entire composition programs that enact a pedagogy of multiliteracies and help students achieve transformed practice.[i] If we are to prepare students to participate in our global-digital world, then we must revise our programs to invite the work of transformed practice.

In this article, I offer a model of a composition program that has undergone such revisions. To detail this model, I draw on two data points: an interview with the director of the program and programmatic documents (e.g., outcomes statements, program guides, and course syllabi). In so doing, I offer insights and practices from the program that can be applied to other contexts and programs.

I begin with a contextualizing description of the program and the processes it underwent to revise its curriculum before detailing the revised curriculum. The program now requires students to research an issue that affects their communities, to create various multimodal texts (e.g., an advocacy website or a documentary PSA), and then to share those texts with their communities. This sequence of assignments reveals key elements integral to changing the work of the composition program to transformed practice. These elements that have been outlined separately in scholarship but synthesized by this program. They include: 1) design, which gives students the theoretical knowledge necessary to create multimodal texts; 2) material-rhetorical flexibility, which puts that knowledge into practice by allowing students to make informed choices among modes and

media; and 3) circulation, which allows students to share the texts they make in spaces beyond the classroom. By integrating these three practices within one curriculum, this program moves students toward transformed practice. In so doing, it assists students in cultivating the rhetorical skills necessary to effect change within their own communities.

Other programs might include these elements should they wish to update their curricula to foster transformative practice. Such work is absolutely necessary, I believe, because it cultivates in the students a flexible literacy sensibility that can be used to communicate within and across various contexts. In updating the literacy work of the composition program in this way, we position ourselves as educators to make meaningful interventions in the literacy practices and work of the 21st century.

Defining Transformed Practice

Before moving into the description of the program, I want to briefly highlight what transformed practice is, what it asks of students, and why I see this concept as transformative to composition programs. Nicola Yelland, Bill Cope, and Mary Kalantzis (2008) define transformed practice simply as an act of "transfer in meaning-making practice that puts knowledge to work in new contexts or cultural sites" (p. 202). Carol Westby (2010) puts it another way, writing that in transformed practice "students are redesigning by taking a meaning out of one context and adapting it in such a way that it works well somewhere else" (p. 68). It is, essentially, a communicative practice of adaptation and circulation that helps students cultivate a metalanguage that they can use to theorize and thus adapt their composing processes to various situations. In this way, transformed practice anticipates and responds to globalization and technological advancement. In short, Cope and Kalantzis (2009) write that this pedagogy "is not about

skills and competence; it is aimed at creating a kind of person, an active designer of meaning, with a sensibility open to differences, change and innovation" (p. 175). That kind of person would be able to cross contexts, taking texts made for one purpose or audience and adapting them for a different set of circumstances.

This work is radically different than what currently takes place in many composition programs, which still focus on cultivating writing skills in and for the academy. Rather than writing traditional research papers, students in programs that work toward transformed practice are cultivating adaptive, flexible, transferable, and transformative ways of making meaning. Composition programs that embrace this work do more than teach students to participate in the academy; they help cultivate communicators that can participate in multiple contexts. With this in mind, I offer the following program profile, from which we can glean insights and practices that can be extrapolated to other contexts. Specifically, this includes programmatic structures, like collaborative conversations about program goals and curricular revision, and programmatic content, making design, material-rhetorical flexibility, and circulation vital parts of the composing practices students utilize in the program.

An Example Program

This program reveals three significant insights I will explore in the remainder of this article:
1. It is possible to craft entire programs that focus on cultivating transformed practice rather than relying on individual instructors to adopt this curriculum;
2. That process is more likely to be successful and sustainable if it is collaboratively undertaken; and
3. These revisions emerge from a program's commitment to a capacious understanding of rhetoric as making and sharing meaning

with the full available means of communication.

In this way, the program expands the kinds of texts that students can create rather than focusing on alphabetic writing skills only. To gain insight into the ways in which this program achieved these curricular revisions, I interviewed the director of this composition program. In the interview and programmatic data that I share here, I will keep the identity of the director and the program confidential in accordance with IRB protocol. The program is situated within a public research institution in the Southwest that has a student population around 23,000. The university identifies as a Hispanic-serving institution: a majority of its student population is Mexican-American. It also has a large population of first-time, first-generation students. While the program exists within a stand-alone professional writing department, it relies upon instructors from multiple programs—Creative Writing, Literature, and Writing Studies—and at various ranks. With this instructional diversity, the director emphasizes that there is consistency across sections in the delivery of the curriculum to students, stating "we like to say it's harmonized, not standardized." This programmatic, demographic information reveals that the program is not unlike other composition programs in terms of instructor and student population. However, this curriculum defines the content of the program as transformed practice rather than alphabetic writing skills.

This curriculum is the result of curricular revisions that took place in the 2008-2009 academic year. As a result of those revisions, the program now more fully commits itself to a capacious understanding of rhetoric and to multiliteracies, because those concepts allow and invite students to perform advocacy. The previous curriculum focused on argumentation. According to Emily Isaacs (2018), this is a fairly common focus for composition programs: 62% of schools analyzed in her study of over 100 four-year

institutions indicated that this was the focus of their composition curriculum (p. 117). In Isaacs's study, however, there is a difference between programs that emphasize instruction in argument and programs that emphasize instruction in rhetoric. Programs that emphasize rhetoric, she argues, treat writing as rhetorical, meaning "that it requires an awareness that individuals make choices…that writing is always situationally dependent" (p. 121). In these kinds of programs, students utilize their knowledge of writerly choices to make decisions that would make their own writing more effective. However, this program utilizes an even more capacious orientation. In the description of rhetorical instruction from Isaacs's study above, alphabetic writing is required; it is the only medium in which students in these programs may work. Within the composition program that is the focus of this article, though, alphabetic writing is one of many different kinds of semiotic resources that students utilize. The version of rhetoric adopted by this program requires that students be multiliterate.

In a discussion of the curriculum, the director described the program as presenting "an approach to communication that helps students determine the most effective strategies, arrangements, and media to use in different rhetorical contexts. It teaches students a systematic approach for analyzing situations." She went on to say that students use these multiliterate ways of communicating to research, think through, and write about an issue "within their community. They [students] conduct research, but it is more personalized, building upon their own knowledge." This personalized research is one of the central goals of the curriculum: students cultivate the rhetorical knowledge necessary to make effective communicative choices in various media to deliver a workable solution to the community issue they choose to address. Thus, the program emphasizes the importance of engaging with and influencing situations beyond the academy through a rhetoric-based curriculum that embraces multiliteracies.

The process of curricular revision began with a conversation about what the values of the program should be. That conversation included multiple voices: the director, the associate director, graduate teaching assistants, and full-time lecturers. According to the director, the group noticed the changes in literacy practices taking place outside the academy. She articulated that the program decided to focus on "digital literacy, because we felt like that's the environment that our students are in and that they will continue to be living in and working in." In the NLG's pedagogy of multiliteracies, this is the first step in moving students toward transformed practice, what they term "situated practice," a way of helping students increase their communicative abilities by validating and embracing the composing practices they already utilize (Cope & Kalantzis, 2000; New London Group, 1996). In theorizing their current practices, students begin to understand their composing choices and develop a framework for cross-contextual practices. The director felt that building upon the digital multiliteracies that students already possessed would give the students who move(d) through the program an "edge." She described this edge as "having a better sense of how to adapt and how to deliver messages to various audiences, how to meet different rhetorical situations." These revisions, then, crafted a program focused on literacy and meaning-making in general rather than skills limited to alphabetic writing. Crossing contexts and cultures, making and sharing meaning and knowledge with a variety of audiences—these are the building blocks of transformed practice even if the program does not use the term to describe its curriculum.

There are two reasons this process is noteworthy. First, this is an example collaborative programmatic leadership, which Jeanne Gunner (2002) claims "emphasizes community, shared responsibility, and open exchange of information, ideas, and criticism"

(p. 254). From the beginning of the process, because of this collaborative leadership, there was buy-in to the process of curricular change from contingent faculty. In those conversations, the director realized that these instructors were eager to deliver a pedagogy more relevant to students. This is where the multiliterate approach to advocacy curriculum began to emerge. The director made use of this buy-in and invited those instructors to introduce the new curriculum to other instructors in professional development meetings.

This is the second noteworthy part of this process: using this distributed model of authority helped counter any resistance to the new curriculum. The director suggested this might be a good practice for other programs who might want to make these changes. She stated that it is important to find the instructors in the program "who are trusted, who are liked, who are engaging" and give them the opportunity to lead professional development, especially in times of curricular change. Scholarship regarding instructor resistance supports this theory. Sally Barr Ebest (2005), for example, writes that instructors within composition programs resist certain kinds of curricular content when that content "contradict[s] their personal constructs and threaten[s] their self-efficacy" (p. 65). By seeking input on the curricular changes from the instructional team and allowing them to introduce the new curriculum, the director validated the expertise and authority of the program's instructors. In this way, the director ensured the sustainability and success of the curricular revisions.

This distributed model of authority might be taken up by other composition programs who wish to make a similar programmatic shift. I argue this is especially necessary for programs that are considering taking up multiliteracies and the work of transformed practice, because instructors can be particularly resistant to this kind of curriculum. The reasons for this resistance vary: some instructors might feel that the inclusion of multiliteracies challenges the scholarly integrity of their classrooms (Moerschell, 2009); others might be anxious about or fear changes to their pedagogies (Oreg, 2006); and still others might feel that they lack the technological expertise to teach such a curriculum (Berg and Muilenburg, 2001). In this program, the desire for a curriculum that engages multiliteracies and moves students toward transformed practice came from the majority of instructors. That collaboration helped to overcome or work around the typical sources of resistance.

These revisions are instantiated within programmatic documents, specifically the outcomes that guide the new curriculum and assignments that animate it. By the end of the program, students are expected to:

- understand discourse communities and genres;
- address specific rhetorical situations;
- develop technological literacies as they relate to composing processes;
- learn different methods for conducting research; and
- develop a composing process that is appropriate for the composing task.

These outcomes are careful not to prescribe alphabetic writing as the sole means of communication for the program. Instead, they focus on rhetorical awareness and the composing process.

The assignments that emerge from these outcomes help students cultivate these skills and achieve transformed practice. The harmonized curriculum requires that all students within the program complete the following:

- a report outlining a problem or issue specific to a certain community;
- a map outlining a conversation taking place within a discourse community;

- an annotated bibliography;
- a video sharing this research; and
- a website designed for advocacy purposes.

These assignments perform two important functions. First, in completing the assignments, students demonstrate multiliteracies and proficiency in multiple forms of communication beyond alphabetic writing. Second, the culmination of these assignments, the advocacy-based website, is intended to exist beyond the boundaries of the classroom, to circulate within and therefore affect the communities the students choose. Not only is this transformed practice—taking a text and adapting it for a different audience or context—it also positions advocacy as an integral part of the program's curriculum.

There are three salient points from this information about the program's context and curricular history that relate to transformed practice. The first point is the program's commitment to rhetoric. While this is not necessarily unique, the capacious version of rhetoric to which the program subscribes provides a fundamentally different foundation than other programs that might focus on correctness, style, or craft within alphabetic writing. Second, the ultimate goal of the program is for students to use their rhetorical knowledge to contribute to the solution of a problem affecting the communities to which they belong. This structure allows, invites, and requires students to cross the boundary between the academic and the personal. In this framework, the composition program is positioned well to make change in communities in and out of the classroom. Third, students make those community contributions through texts composed with multiliteracies, because those texts permit students to both speak to people who are outside of the academy. All three points overlap with the work that transformed practice aims to promote.

However, these curricular structures are but one part of the process. I argue that this program helps ensure that students achieve transformed practice because these structures ask students to exhibit three text-making practices: design, materially-rhetorical flexibility, and circulation. These three practices, I contend, present a workable set of curricular initiatives for other programs to think with should they wish to update the work of their composition programs as well. In the following section, I will detail and explain how students are encouraged to exhibit each of these.

Design

Design builds on the program's attention to rhetoric and moves students toward transformed practice by expanding students' knowledge of the available means of persuasion. Gunther Kress (2010) defines design succinctly as "the process of translating the rhetor's [meaning-maker's] politically oriented assessment of the environment of communication into semiotically oriented material" (p. 132). It is thus the materially-inflected process of realizing rhetorical interests/goals. The benefit of this process, per Mary P. Sheridan and Jennifer Rowsell (2010), is that it allows "students, and teachers for that matter, to develop a language and heuristic" for composing texts that are composed with more than just words on the page (p. 107). Design provides students with foundational, theoretical knowledge that will allow them to think through the process of crossing the boundary between the academy and their communities thus demonstrating transformed practice.

Design, as a curricular pillar, is a part of the NLG's pedagogy of multiliteracies, which includes Available Designs, Design, and Redesigned (Cope & Kalantzis, 2009). In this framework, texts—the things that meaning-makers create—are piecemeal assemblages put together in a process that is inflected by the

intersection of modal possibility and student interest. First, Available Designs are "found and findable resources for meaning making: culture, context and purpose-specific patterns and conventions of meaning making" (p. 176). Second, Design, as a metalanguage or vocabulary, helps students conceptualize the differences within those Available Designs as a part of the composing process. Finally, the Redesigned includes "the traces of transformation that are left in the social world...new resources for meaning in the open and dynamic play of subjectivities and meanings" (p. 12). Thus, the metalanguage of design gives students a way to make textual interventions in their lifeworlds by helping them theorize the composing process.

The program incorporates design by requiring that students create a discourse community map as part of the curriculum. The discourse community map asks students to visually represent the conversations taking place in and about the various discourse communities to which students belong. This map functions as an inventional text; it helps students situate themselves and their projects within a larger, scholarly context. This, in turn, cultivates more nuanced understanding of the research process. Students come to the project with certain "Available Designs." These include the modes of image and text, which have their own epistemological commitments or grammars, their own different ways of making meaning (Jewitt, 2008). While students assemble maps drawing on their own research and readings, they are doing so within these Available Designs. To be effective within those Available Designs, students must cultivate a knowledge of their influences on their composing processes. By combining the visual with the verbal, students make new meanings and help develop a metalanguage and understanding that will allow them to work with these different modes in the future.

Embracing this composing process changes our orientation to the work of the composition program, reinforcing the fact that meaning-making takes place at the intersection of multiple modes, media, and resources. Additionally, this approach and assignment have significant pedagogical implications and benefits for students. Sheridan and Rowsell (2010) suggest that implementing design as part of the composition curriculum makes students more adroit composers by fostering rhetorical dispositions in students. These dispositions are "redesigning available materials…in innovative and responsive ways; being creative, often when working in new participation structures and in ways elders could not have imagined in the past; communicating ideas persuasively to a variety of people; and materializing an idea through multiple modes" (p. 3-4). Thus, in moving the curriculum away from only one mode, the program helps students develop a theoretical understanding of the differences among modes, media, and resources, which they can use to make informed composing choices. These informed composing choices cultivate in students the knowledge necessary to compose in multiple contexts and for multiple audiences. They are a step toward preparing students to achieve transformed practice, but the next practice that students must cultivate is employing material-rhetorical flexibility.

Material-Rhetorical Flexibility
Material-rhetorical flexibility is the second curricular pillar included within this program that moves students toward transformed practice. This flexibility uses the theoretical knowledge cultivated by design and encourages students to develop a broad repertoire of meaning-making possibilities through practice and choice. Specifically, this program requires students to compose with a variety of different materials over the course of the semester, rather than limiting students to alphabetic writing only. According to research in Writing Studies, when students are allowed to make their own choices in the composing process, they develop proficiencies with/in a wider variety of semiotic resources.

According to Jody Shipka (2011), "students who are provided with tasks that do not specify what the final products must be and that ask them to imagine alternative contexts for their work come away from the course with a more expansive, richer repertoire of meaning-making and problem-solving strategies" (p. 101). I call this repertoire of strategies material-rhetorical flexibility because of the ways in which that term emerges from the concepts important to design—the potentialities of materials and their rhetorical effects.

A curriculum that encourages material-rhetorical flexibility asks students, as Anne Wysocki, Cynthia Selfe, Geoffrey Sirc, and Johndan Johnson-Eiola (2004) write, to "consider not only the potentialities of material choices for digital texts but for any text we make" (p. 10). In other programs, students might compose a series of papers, or they might even compose a low-stakes multimodal project at the end of the semester (Whithaus, 2005). In this program, though, students compose traditional writing assignments, like a community problem report and an annotated bibliography, alongside multiple multimodal texts: the discourse community map, a documentary video, a digital portfolio, and an advocacy website, just to name a few. Throughout the semester, students use these various texts to trace their chosen community problems. Each text focuses on addressing that problem: the same research is reshaped and re-contextualized across media and across contexts. In this process, students engage in a kind of dialectic, holding one mode, medium, technology, platform, audience, and/or context up against another to notice the various limitations and affordances of each. By using different means to address similar topics and research, students develop practical skills with a variety of different communicative resources. Including one assignment like this is a fairly common practice in classes that embrace multimodal composition. However, the practice of having students engage in multiple

iterations of this across the semester is a different programmatic approach, one that is extremely beneficial for students, because it increases their rhetorical possibilities.

Allowing students to demonstrate their material-rhetorical flexibilities is an approach that other programs might consider taking up should they want to update their curricula to move students in the direction of transformed practice. This has direct benefits for students. According to Shipka (2013), students who participate in these kinds of programs go on to exhibit a "nuanced awareness of the various choices they make throughout the process of accomplish that work and the effect those choices might have on others" (p. 76). If we design our programs and curricula in such a way that students will be able to make more informed composing choices, we help to make them more skilled meaning-makers. Prescribing the materials and methods of composing prescribes the kinds of knowledge students can make; conversely, through choices informed by material-rhetorical awareness and flexibility, students can make their own knowledge. This allows students the opportunity to develop composing strategies that can be used in multiple contexts. However, transformed practice requires the circulation of texts outside of the classroom to fully achieve, which is the third practice embraced by the curriculum of this program.

Circulation

Circulation engages the theoretical knowledge of design and the practical experience of material-rhetorical flexibility. As such, it is the culmination of this curriculum and ensures that students achieve transformed practice. The concept of circulation is not new to the work of composition programs. We have paid attention to the ways in which sharing texts shapes and reflects knowledge-making (Trimbur, 2000) and how texts participate in complex, living ecologies of other texts, technologies, and people (Brooke, 2009; Cooper, 1986). These understandings

can and do have curricular implications. For example, Nicole Mirra, Ernest Morrell, and Danielle Filipiak (2017) argue that considering how texts will exist outside of the classroom invites students to engage in "analyses of the audiences that various tools invite (and exclude) and consideration of the intent behind distribution" (p. 17). In the context of this article, I will define circulation simply as the distribution of texts to audiences beyond those in the classroom. Enacting this definition through curriculum, as this case study program has done, has three implications for composition programs, which other programs might consider if they wish to update their curricula to include transformed practice.

First, circulation foregrounds and reinvigorates student attention to rhetorical concepts that are integral to the composing process. When students compose more than print-based, alphabetic essays, and instead compose assignments that are meant to exist and move beyond the classroom, they consider timing and context more intentionally. They "*anticipate* reproduction and distribution [and] *involve themselves* in processes of reproduction and distribution" (Sheridan, Ridolfo, & Michel, 2012, p. xxvi, emphasis in original). Instead of students writing for the academy, they compose for themselves and for their lived experiences, thereby changing the work of the composition program from alphabetic writing skills to transformed practice. By choosing an issue that is important to them and exploring that issue across texts and time, students work toward the advocacy website. However, they also work toward conceiving of composing in ways that are not tied to the logic of print or to the confines of the classroom, in ways that utilize design and material-rhetorical flexibility. The advocacy website collects and synthesizes student texts and seeks to offer solutions to that community problem. These are rhetorical considerations that the program requires students take up and attend to in

their composing processes, and it does so at the curricular level, not just in individual classrooms. All instructors, all sections, and all students work toward this project, emphasizing the importance of these rhetorical concepts to composing.

Second, circulation as curricular content expands technologies and ways of composing that are not yet familiar to instructors or perhaps are not yet developed. According to David M. Sheridan, Jim Ridolfo, and Anthony J. Michel (2012), composition instructors are not able to "teach everything, especially in an era when new technologies continually make available new options" (p. 26). However, including circulation within the curriculum allows students to compose with the semiotic resources they find the most beneficial to their purposes, even and especially those not yet considered by composition curricula. In the program that is the focus of this article, students create an advocacy website that assembles the various texts they have composed over the semester. The goal of that website is to use those student-composed, student-researched texts to offer a solution to the community problem. The website assignment does not prescribe the technologies or platforms with which students compose. For example, students are not necessarily required to develop proficiency with Wix or Weebly. Some students might use iMovie to create and YouTube to then share their videos, but those technologies might be obsolete in a few years' time. The program only stipulates two requirements: 1) that those texts be shared on the website; and 2) that students utilize their rhetorical knowledge to speak to a public audience. The goal of this program, of a program that includes circulation, then, is not to teach students a particular kind of text or a rigid way of composing texts. Instead, by emphasizing the practice of circulation, the program emphasizes that there are several different ways to make and share meaning. By valuing those different ways, the curriculum is flexible

in ways that extend beyond the lifetime of specific technologies or platforms, ensuring that it continues to be relevant to students.

Third, circulation makes the boundaries between academic and non-academic contexts more porous for students. The advocacy website assignment is designed to be read by an audience of members of the community that the students selected as the focus of their research project, not only the instructor of the course. Within this framework, students move from research to activism. Sarah Warren-Riley and Elise Verzosa Hurey (2017) suggest that "teaching students to view themselves as always already advocates…allows [them] to understand that they have a significant role to play in public rhetorics and…in shaping the discourse of the communities that they engage with" (p. 38). In designing these texts for non-academic audiences, demonstrating material-rhetorical flexibility in the process, students achieve transformed practice. More than that, though, they understand that they can make meaningful contributions to real communities. Moving students toward this understanding is radically different than the work of most traditional composition programs. In this program, students are not just writing essays to demonstrate skills in alphabetic writing. Instead, they are becoming advocates for themselves and their communities by making texts for and sharing those texts with people outside of the classroom by achieving transformed practice.

Conclusion

This program has accomplished the important and necessary endeavor of radically changing the curriculum of the composition program. Rather than giving students training only in the literacy practices of academic writing, this curriculum cultivates multiliteracies, allowing students to use the full available means of persuasion. Thus, the program has moved toward an understanding of composition-as-transformed practice—the making and sharing of meaning and

knowledge in multiple contexts, even and especially those outside of the classroom.

There are two useful takeaways from the examination of this program. First, this kind of curricular transformation cannot be the responsibility of individual instructors or forced upon instructors by the decision of a single program director. This program reveals that the entire program should commit to and be involved in the process of curricular transformation. This insures that instructors feel valued and subsequently do not resist the changes. Second, we can craft programs that require students to demonstrate transformed practice if we change the curriculum to include the practices of design, material-rhetorical flexibility, and circulation. The combination of these three practices gives students the theory and practice necessary to share texts with people in multiple contexts. In a program that has included these practices, students labor to assemble 1) texts made of multiple modes and 2) multiple kinds of texts that then circulate beyond the classroom. The advocacy-based assignments in which this program asks students to engage are but one model. A different program might set students the task of simply communicating with an audience outside of the academy and then allow students to choose the kind(s) of text(s) that they create to achieve that task. Instead of an advocacy website, students might create Wikipedia entries, newsletters, social media accounts, etc. In so doing, students demonstrate their rhetorical flexibilities, making use of their composing knowledge to make contributions to communities outside of the classroom, which is the work of transformed practice.

This work, of course, is not easy. As I mentioned earlier in this article, certain composition instructors might feel that they might lack the resources or the expertise to teach such a curriculum. These same instructors could resist or resent the work of the program or the director who initiated such work. But this work is so very necessary. Alphabetic writing is but one in a long list of

communicative resources that students can engage to achieve their goals. If our programs teach writing and writing only, we limit our students' rhetorical possibilities. Conversely, if we encourage students to use multiliteracies, we give them the tools to effect real change in their technology-mediated lifeworlds. By changing the literacy work of the composition program, by changing the kinds of texts that students create, by changing the audiences for whom they create those texts, we position ourselves well to make our students not only better composers, but more active and engaged citizens in the world.

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Notes

[i] For a few published descriptions of entire programs that have achieved this process, see Adsanatham et al., 2013; Bourelle & Bourelle, 2015; Lynch &Wysocki, 2003.