



2012

Opening Editorial: The Next Step in a Disciplinary Journey

Jonathan Bush
Western Michigan University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/wte>



Part of the Curriculum and Instruction Commons, Rhetoric and Composition Commons, and the Secondary Education and Teaching Commons

Recommended Citation

Bush, Jonathan (2012) "Opening Editorial: The Next Step in a Disciplinary Journey," *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education*: Vol. 1 : Iss. 1 , Article 2.

Available at: <https://scholarworks.wmich.edu/wte/vol1/iss1/2>

This Article is brought to you for free and open access by the English at ScholarWorks at WMU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education by an authorized editor of ScholarWorks at WMU. For more information, please contact wmu-scholarworks@wmich.edu.





Opening Editorial: *The Next Step in a Disciplinary Journey*

Jonathan Bush, Co-Editor

With this issue, we embark on an audacious adventure – the development of a journal dedicated to the discussion, advancement, and research of the teaching and support of writing teachers. This area of interest, which we term “writing teacher education,” encompasses all work that engages the development, support, training, and education of future, new, and experienced teachers of writing. Traditionally, conversations in this area have included those who have experience and background in both composition studies and English education. Typical attendees for forums in writing teacher education have included instructors of writing methods and theory courses, National Writing Project site directors, first-year and advanced writing program directors and mentors, writing across-the-curriculum and writing-in-the-discipline coordinators, and teacher-leaders and mentors for new and current elementary, middle-school, and high school writing teachers.

This community of educators has evolved over the years to include annual meetings at both the Conference on College Composition (the Special Interest Group “English Education/Composition Connections”) and at the Conference on English Education (the CEE Commission on Writing Teacher Education), regular sessions and presentations at NCTE, CEE, and CCCC, a NCTE sponsored post-conference workshop, contributions to several academic books, and articles in *College Composition and Communication*, *Pedagogy*, *English Education*, *English Journal*, and *The Writing Instructor*, among other journals. A rich and vibrant discussion has developed – connections have developed in colleagues connected by common concerns and interests, research has been done, conversations have led to teaching and professional collaborations across institutions and professional boundaries.

What has been missing, though, has been a defined, rigorous academic outlet for scholarship on topics in this area. That is not to say that those of us in writing teacher education haven’t been publishing. It’s just that we haven’t had a venue of our own. All other generally appropriate publication outlets tend to require a different angle -- a slight (or not-so-slight) tweak or change in order to make it fit that venue’s mission – a focus towards composition studies, teacher education, writing project work, writing program administration, and others. Over the years, many of us have wondered how much valuable research on writing teacher education has been rejected, or lost, or redefined in attempts to meet the needs of various publication outlets in composition, rhetoric, or education studies. We have also wondered how much scholarship in writing teacher education has not even been attempted – or abandoned early on – because of authors’ inability to see a peer-reviewed outlet for the work down the road. We – my co-editor Erinn Bentley, our editorial board, and the entire community of writing teacher education -- hope to address this issue with *Teaching/Writing: The Journal of Writing Teacher Education* by providing an intentional outlet for such work. We want to enhance the scholarship and research in writing teacher education and take the next step in the identification of this area as a rich place for scholarly discourse.

The journal, initially which will be published each January, but we hope will eventually become bi-annual, will include peer-reviewed articles on all aspects of writing teacher education – and we hope that our contributors will help us expand our own ideas of what encompasses this realm. We will also include several columns

on specific issues and at least one roundtable review of key texts and ideas as they apply to writing teacher education. The title of the journal -- *Teaching/Writing* – is intentional. We see the journal as being at the intersection of English education and composition studies. This isn’t just a two-way connection; rather, we see it as a nexus of many ideas -- bringing in all the theoretical and practical spokes of each of those fields. We hope that writers will find connections with literacy, literature, culture, theory, and all elements that make these fields so innovative and exciting. We hope that, through this journal, we uncover new perspectives and assist others in new ways of thinking. In short – bring it on; we’re interested in it.

For this inaugural issue, we asked several sets of key people in writing teacher education to share with us -- and our future readers -- their vision for the journal. Our opening article comes from Robert and Michelle Tremmel. Bob has been an important and inspirational figure in writing teacher education for many years, and Michelle is an experienced and skilled practitioner of writing teacher education. Together, they provide us with their view of the field, its challenges, and the opportunities ahead.

Our second piece comes from Kia Jane Richmond and M. Kilian McCurrie. Both Kia and Kilian are important leaders in writing teacher education. Together, citing the scholarship and discussion of the past and the societal trends that surround writing teacher education, they lay out some directions and ideas for future versions of the journal. The third piece in this opening collection is written together by Elizabeth Brockman and Ken Lindblom, Elizabeth, along with Mark Letcher, is the current chair of the CCCC

SIG: English Education/Composition Connections. Ken is the editor of *English Journal*. Both spend much of their professional lives in both composition studies and English education communities. Discussing the SIG, the English studies journal *Pedagogy*, and *English Journal*, Elizabeth and Ken map out the role, audience, and place of this journal as they see it advancing not only writing teacher education, but English studies as well. The fourth piece is written by Kirk Branch and Lisa Eckert, both of Montana State University. Kirk and Lisa write about their professional relationships and how, as a team, they cross English education and composition boundaries as they work together to educate writing teachers, both in their undergraduate and graduate programs and as co-directors of a National Writing Project site. Our final piece is written by Kristen Hawley Turner. Kristen is the current co-chair of the CEE Commission on Writing Teacher Education and a regular contributor to writing teacher education conversations. Kristen tells her own story and how the National Writing Project and other experiences helped her transition from teacher to teacher educator.

I offer my thanks to all those that helped launch this project: co-editor Erinn Bentley; Elizabeth Brockman and Mark Letcher, co-chairs of the CCCC SIG and Kristen Hawley Turner, co-chair of the CEE Commission; the other members of our editorial board: Douglas Baker, Patricia Dunn, Kilian McCurrie, Kia Jane Richmond, Leah Zuidema, the colleagues who have written for this initial issue, and the scholars and teachers in writing teacher education whose work inspired the journal, I also thank Anne Whitney and Mike Sherry, who along with Leah Zuidema, gave me excellent advice through the development of this idea.

Together, we look forward to this project and seeing where it takes us – rhetorically, pedagogically, theoretically. We hope we provide an outlet for exciting scholarship that advances not only the teaching and support of new teachers, but also gives us new ways to think, research, and conceive of the act of teaching, writing, and the intersections within. I encourage readers to consider this journal as an outlet for their work – practical, theoretical, and research-based. We might have a few challenges and growing pains along the way, but we look forward to the future, and what it might bring for *T/W* and for writing teacher education.

Over the years, many of us have wondered how much valuable research on writing teacher education has been rejected, or lost, or redefined in attempts to meet the needs of various publication outlets in composition, rhetoric, or education studies.