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Professionalizing the Amateur: Social Media, the "Myth of the Digital Native," and the Graduate Assistant in the Composition Classroom

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Abstract

Currently, higher education is confronting the "myth of the digital native," a term we coined in a previously published article to describe instructors' overestimation of student digital literacy. These expectations, coupled with job market considerations, affect graduate instructors and undergraduate students. Writing program administrators are uniquely placed to intervene productively in this arena in order to create marketable courses, digital portfolios, and to maximize the research experience for both parties. It is argued that proper guidance of such instructors is accomplished by triangulation. The administrative, experiential, pedagogical, and representative significance of social media are integrated via face-to-face meetings and online resources. There are strong pedagogical and practical justifications for incorporating social media into the curriculum of composition courses.

Keywords: Composition Studies, Social Media, Digital Humanities

The influx of contingent labor in higher education has been steadily increasing: according to The Coalition on the Academic Workforce (2012), approximately 75% of all faculty members in the United States were part-time as of 2009, and these numbers have only risen since. The graph in Figure 1 from "Losing Focus: The Annual Report on the Economic Status of the Profession" (2014) vividly demonstrates the ongoing nature of this process, as well as its recent intensification.

The dramatic rise in the "Full-Time Non-faculty Professional" category on the left should not obscure the equally dramatic rise in contingent faculty positions to its right. The Association of Governing Boards of Colleges and Universities (2013) provides a similar graphic representation of the changing nature of our profession that highlights more clearly the widening gulf between tenure-track and non-tenure track positions between 1969 and 2009 (Figure 2).

Whatever the specific numbers may be, the shift towards contingent labor in American universities is overwhelmingly clear. Fewer tenure-track lines are being created and filled, and more and more non-tenure track positions are filling that void.

The rapidly changing reality of our profession has never been more prevalent than in Composition Studies, where we have traditionally relied on contingent labor in the form of graduate assistants and adjuncts more than other disciplines. The reason for this trend is three-fold. First, there are more PhD students attempting to enter the profession than ever before. Although overall graduate enrollment declined in 2008 and 2009 at the height of the Great Recession, it has begun climbing again as of 2011 (Gonzalez, Allum, & Sowell, 2013). Second, although their numbers have been increasing, there are still relatively few graduate programs that specialize in Rhetoric and Composition compared to programs that specialize in English Literature (Enos, 2008). This means that universities do not have a repository of instructors already trained in that particular field (versus on-the-job training, which we will also discuss in this article). Third, due to the demand upon Composition programs to provide courses that prepare undergraduates for authentic modes of discourse that they will encounter in the workplace, the number of undergraduate courses in Composition has risen dramatically, with the field of Business Communication seeing an especially steep spike.

Once relegated to business schools or programs in Communications, departments across the academic arena have now claimed professional writing as their own. One of the most noticeable trends resulting from this state of affairs is the reliance on graduate students, from a variety of disciplines, to teach Business and Technical Writing at the undergraduate level. Furthermore, Business and Technical Writing courses represent an area of growth compared to other areas of the academic job market (Nesheim, 2013). This shift is directly linked to the changing realities of the job market for undergraduate students. These students' own concerns about their future prospects have driven them to supplement their skills by taking Business and Technical Writing courses. Accordingly, since the Great Recession and ever-increasing amounts of student debt—which in 2012 surpassed the total amount of credit card debt owed by Americans—Writing Programs have included more marketable skills as part of their curriculum (Stone, Van Horn, & Zukin, 2012). The combination of steadily rising college enrollment and college costs means that Business and Technical Writing represents a point of intersection between the employment prospects of undergraduates and the graduate students who often serve as their instructors. This renewed focus on marketability has by extension provoked an examination of the status of the graduate assistant, whose job market woes are extensively documented in the Report on the MLA Job Information List (2013).

Since job market considerations affect both undergraduate and graduate student populations, social media skills are one area where we may directly and productively intervene, as they are just as applicable in creating a dynamic and interactive classroom environment as they are in the domain of marketability. Writing Program administrators and graduate directors alike must take advantage of this unique opportunity to prepare graduate students for their future by developing plans to:

(1) maximize experience teaching marketable courses

(2) develop digital teaching portfolios

(3) tailor a professional online presence.

Establishing such plans ahead of time in an organized fashion is key if graduate students are to learn to create and control a professional narrative about themselves by using social media tools.

At Rutgers, The State University of New Jersey, over 11,000 students take at least one Writing Program course in their first year. In addition to our required first-year composition course, we offer a number of courses in Business and Technical Writing. In an average semester, we list approximately sixty sections of sixteen unique courses in professional writing, serving more than 2,000 students per academic year.

According to the Office of Institutional Research and Academic Planning at Rutgers University, only 56.6% of all courses are taught by full-time faculty (2013). And, in the Rutgers Writing Program, where we currently serve as administrators, a considerably higher number of our courses are taught by graduate students serving as teaching assistants. For example, during the fall 2013 semester, 78% of our courses were taught by contingent faculty, 41% of whom were TAs.[1] At Rutgers, English graduate students are required to teach composition as part of their graduate program. However, in the absence of a specialized PhD program in

Composition and Rhetoric, graduate students from all academic areas (or "TA Associates") find themselves teaching writing for consecutive semesters - frequently remaining even after they complete their degrees. It is not uncommon to hear these students decry the fact that they are languishing outside of their chosen area of expertise. It does not help that these students are lumped into the perceived source of contingent labor that many believe to be plaguing the profession by graduate directors and advisers in their own departments. Timing also plays a part here, as TA Associates usually begin teaching for the Writing Program just as they finish their departmental PhD qualifying exams. This process helps to reveal financial issues relating to contingent labor, as TA Associates end up teaching for the Writing Program precisely because they have used up their departmental funding. Thus the Rutgers Writing Program's use of graduate students to teach composition classes is perfectly situated as an object of analysis.

Our philosophy at Rutgers is hinged on closely mentoring graduate students in their teaching duties via a combination of face-to-face meetings, including an extensive initial orientation, and online resources. After all, as John Shilb (2001) points out, Writing Programs are often the only departments at the university that are actively involved in teacher training of any sort:

> Just in the discipline of English, plenty of faculty have dedicated themselves to helping students develop as teachers. These mentors are especially apt to be found among an English department's composition staff, taking responsibility for turning graduate students into teachers of writing. After all, most English graduate programs feel obliged to prepare their students, including specialists in literature, to become writing instructors. The training ranges in length and quality, but at any rate exists. (p. 508)

[1] In spring 2014, 72% of our courses were taught by contingent faculty, 18% of whom were TAs. Most TAs fulfill their yearly quota of two courses during the fall semester. We compiled these statistics personally.

Such guidance can only be accomplished by a properly triangulated approach involving social media. In accord with this support process, the significance of social media use on various many levels must be impressed upon our graduate students—and this must be accomplished by those with direct experience with the professional use of social media, not by advocates of technology for technology's sake. Since writing programs do have privileged access to teaching assistants during periods of training and mentoring, it is our contention that an increased focus on the transformative power of social media in the curriculum of undergraduate composition courses can aid both our undergraduate and graduate student populations in creating knowledge, skills, and community.

In previous publications, we have examined the role of social media in the undergraduate classroom. We have clearly identified what we term to be the "myth of the digital native," in which instructors' rosy expectations of student digital literacy do not match the realities. This is not to say that today's students are not proficient in the *personal* use of social media but rather that they need guidance as to how to make their relationship with social media into a *professional* one (Magrino and Sorrell, 2014). Edward Freeman and Eileen Lynd-Balta's findings (2010) concur with our emerging ideas about the contemporary undergraduate student. They point out the following in terms of the undergraduate's command of technology: "A student's computer prowess does not equate proficiency in academic research (Jenson 2004). Furthermore, students often have unrealistic expectations about how fast they will acquire new skills (Messineo & DeOllos 2005)" (p. 114). While this state of affairs can be attested to by any instructor who has attempted to introduce a new use of technology into the classroom, it is also important to remember that the capacity for a more productive use of technology is present in today's students—it is the shift in worldview from personal to professional that needs to be effected.

We would now like to examine the role that social media might play in the pedagogy and practice of the graduate assistant. Integration among administration, teaching, and research resources is paramount in the life of such an instructor, who is, by nature, rarely an experienced teacher. This triangulated approach to social media in terms of teacher training and coordination mirrors the approach we advocate in teaching with these online platforms. Since our positions as Writing Program Administrators offer us a unique chance to work closely with graduate students, we will focus on how we encourage the use of social media. To accomplish this, we will evaluate our relationship with graduate student instructors via:

(1) social media workshops
(2) bi-semester individual meetings
(3) the use of social media in our own professional lives (modeling)
(4) online library resources

Our principal argument, as it has been in our previous presentations and publications, is that social media provides an opportunity for students and teachers alike to reexamine the boundaries between the personal and the professional, and to profit from learning how to move from the former to the latter. Social media platforms represent an ideal intermediary across which two types of learners—graduate assistants and undergraduate students—may realize how inextricably bound up in one another are the processes of teaching and research.

Workshops

Having realized the need for further teacher training after the initial week-long orientation required of all new Writing Program instructors at Rutgers, in the spring of 2013, we offered teacher training workshops called "Teaching with Social Media: an Introduction." In these, we addressed how graduate students could begin to incorporate social media into their own teaching by focusing on Facebook, Twitter, and blogs as ways of complementing student research projects. In the group discussions that we led at the start of these workshops, we learned that instructors were familiar with using social media to mimic traditional and discursive forms of classroom interaction but not with actually teaching students to create and compose in a new digital media - skills that not only are pedagogically sound in their own right, but also need to be part of any twenty-first century undergraduate curriculum, especially one that includes a large number of courses that deal with Business and Technical Writing. For this reason, we emphasized the necessity of incorporating social media into the course curriculum in a creative fashion rather than as a replacement for traditional online course delivery systems. Highlighting a true "pedagogy of creation" allows both teachers and students to focus on the symbiotic relationship between technology and ideas rather than on the technology as an end in and of itself.

In these workshops, we stressed that instructors should be wary of "the myth of the digital native." Graduate assistant instructors—because they are relatively close in age to their undergraduate students—often assume a higher level of fluency with digital media than is present among this population, just as we often assume the same thing about our graduate assistant instructors. In these workshops, therefore, we focused upon the importance of differentiating a *personal* use of social media from a *professional* one. The question and answer portion of the workshops confirmed a suspicion that the line between personal and professional was often particularly blurry for all involved. As one could have expected, the "digital natives," whose technological acumen we questioned a few years ago, have now entered graduate programs. We concluded our training sessions by emphasizing the necessity of conceptualizing one's online presence as a kind of professional portfolio that needs continual maintenance. Since so much of what one does online is recorded for posterity by major websites and by sites which index activity on these sites, today's graduate students need to curate this activity so as to create a professional narrative--visible to others--that will be not only benefit their students but also be enormously helpful when they begin their job search.[2]

During these workshops, what was most striking to us was (1) how eager instructors were to learn better how to incorporate social media into their teaching practice (2) how unsure they were of how to do this (beyond using it as a simple adjunct to online discussion). Part of our strategy was also to emphasize the inherently collaborative nature of learning and writing in the digital age. As Weisblat and Sell (2012) point out:

> In the 21st century it is imperative that we shift our learning and teaching paradigm from an individual effort to an inclusive one

[2] For example, early users of Twitter may not realize that the third party services which initially allowed users to post photos are still publicly accessible online by means of a search in Google.

> comprising shared experiences with the collective and with multiple individual contributions to the greater group. This shift requires changing the model of pedagogy and the production of knowledge to alter the way we do things interactively at the university, within the community and with today's learners and workers. (p. 66)

Both students and instructors struggle with implementing collaborative learning practices, as we have found in both designing and teaching upper-level, specialized professional writing courses such as "Collaborative Writing Practices: Social Networking for Business." Working in groups, particularly when said work is graded *as* a group, is difficult. The solution is to create a distinction between the automatic performance of collaboration in one's personal lives and a professional application of this same concept in a team setting. When students grasp that collaboration improves the final product and allows for each team member to contribute according to his particular strengths, they can navigate the interpersonal issues that arrive in the course of all group work with greater ease. As Trask (2009) argues, a true scholarship of teaching and learning necessitates reparadigming on the part of both student and teacher—new courses and assignments must be designed with collaboration in mind, and these types of projects also encourage graduate students to break out of their narrowly defined fields. Workshops are an essential first step in raising consciousness about the possibilities of teaching with social media because they allow interested parties from the university community to engage in professional development in a non-prescriptive manner—and facilitators to determine just what work needs to be done in an open, informal setting.

Folder Review

As Writing Program Directors at Rutgers University, we are responsible for meeting with at least thirty instructors in a Folder Review process twice a semester to discuss student work, grading, and classroom practices. These sessions are meant to aid in professional development after instructors' initial week-long orientation. Since these are intense, face-to-face discussions, they permit us to elaborate on the opportunities afforded by new technologies in a decidedly direct and traditional manner, as well as in a more extensive fashion than the workshops discussed above. Often, veteran instructors are surprised that social media is being used at all in the classroom! Just as often, though, we encounter instructors who are beginning to use social media and who are in need of guidance. These instructors usually make one of two common mistakes-we will stick to the example of Facebook for this discussion. (1) They rely on a Facebook Page solely as an administrative means of communicating with the class (2) They only use a Facebook Page to facilitate class discussions.

Folder Review allows us to highlight the issues with such limited use of social media. Instructors may need to be reminded that social media is a creative and productive tool to be used for a specific purpose, not simply because it is "there." For relying on a Facebook Page as a classroom "command central" simply replicates the existing functionality of course management systems--there is no pedagogical objective to replacing one system with another if they will serve the same function. As we have claimed elsewhere, the belief that technology is a "magic wand" in the instructional process is

inherently self-defeating. In fact, since students are often more comfortable with access to a university's own course management systems, neophyte instructors attempting to replace such systems with social media platforms are more than likely to be disappointed with the results.

Migrating all discussion to a Facebook Page is equally problematic because the instructor has still not taken advantage of social media as a way to create new forms of discourse, which we see as one of the main goals of its use in the classroom. Discussion posts and responses may be easier on Facebook, but in order to have true pedagogical merit, using social media in the classroom should not be about technical improvements. A Facebook Page might work faster than forums in Sakai or Blackboard but is better conceived of as part and parcel of a pedagogy that embraces the back and forth between perception and expression. Folder Review offers a unique chance to discuss these issues in person, as well as the time to discuss successful models of educational social media use with the instructor.

Modeling

The use of models is paramount in guiding social media use in the classroom. In our positions as Writing Program Administrators, we strive to model the professional use of social media. We employ these platforms to guide course administration, participation, and content. The notion of triangulation carries over to the training and support of graduate student instructors. The use of online resources is imperative in the administration of writing courses for the sake of students and instructors. For Business and Technical Writing courses, as well as for the Livingston Writing Center, we offer a dynamic repository of materials that includes more traditional modules on our online course delivery platform (Sakai) as well as Facebook Pages. All students, instructors, tutors, and tutees have access to these materials, and are welcome to contribute.

Since we have begun extensively using Facebook, the level of engagement with the university community and beyond has increased by leaps and bounds. Instructors and students alike benefit from these loosely organized community pages. One of the main assets of using a social media platform like Facebook Pages is access to Facebook Analytics, a detailed statistical breakdown of engagement. This is especially important given that the Business and Technical Writing Program and the Livingston Writing Center have grown at a tremendous clip over the past five years, doubling enrollment at a time of diminishing interest in the humanities—and in a time of diminishing university funds, which makes the use of such free online platforms all the more important. With Facebook Analytics, we can immediately see what works and what doesn't work in terms of sparking community interest: this is also an important lesson to impart to graduate student instructors, especially those in literature, who might not be used to the need for data and quantification. We are therefore repurposing a system—Facebook Analytics—designed to gauge interest on the part of a business clientele for use in what Van Barneveld, Arnold, and Campbell (2012) call "learning analytics" (6). The free nature of such platforms is also important for the fledgling graduate assistant, who must assemble an impressive online portfolio for today's job market, without the necessary financial means to do so. The cases that follow represent instances of social media modeling.

Within the last five years, the Business and Technical Writing division of the Rutgers Writing program has more than doubled the number of sections we offer and has been steadily increasing in enrollment since. We credit this growth to our students' desire to make themselves more marketable. In addition, we began an undergraduate minor in Business and Technical Writing. While at one time in the not so distant past, we offered a select number of specialized courses to a small number of students, we were now seeing a more accurate cross-section of the university population. This situation made it essential to explore new ways of engaging with students. Our proposal writing courses—for which we use textbooks that we developed specifically for our needs—are supplemented by a variety of online instructional resources for online and traditional courses. Our site, called "BTW Resources," (Figure 3) debuted in 2008: it is utilized to provide updated student samples and teacher-created instructional materials to provide support for all Business and Technical Writing courses. Since its inception, traffic on the site has been extremely high. In addition, these resources are dynamic and instructors are encouraged to contribute teacher-made materials. This gives our graduate assistant instructors a sense of ownership and makes them proficient in the pedagogical discourse in which they will be expected to engage upon entering the job market.

The "BTW Resources" Sakai site is paired with a Facebook Page. In this way, graduate assistants gain experience in using traditional online course platforms at the same time that they are exposed to the professional use of a Facebook in an academic setting (Figure 4).

Much like Business and Technical Writing, enrollment at the Livingston Writing Center has increased by 79% in the past three years, and our non-native speaker enrollment has exploded by 304% during the same time frame. We have gone from being the lowest enrolled to the highest enrolled Writing Center on campus, all the while operating from the same fixed budget. This means that we now tutor 1,444 students under the same budget with which we tutored 700 students. Such a state of affairs necessitates unique and low-cost solutions. The director of the Writing Center ran its Facebook Page at first, then turned it over to an intern, who has made it far more popular. Since she is often writing for her peers, her tips, photos, and cartoons strike a chord that the director's more lengthy posts missed, an impression, which is backed up by a careful examination of Facebook Analytics. This Facebook Page is now the main point of communication for the Livingston Campus community. Recently, the page has been opened to all students and instructors, so that even students not enrolled in tutoring may ask questions there. Instructors are beginning to "like" the page and to participate—and it is often our graduate assistants who are the first to do so. Hopefully, this page will serve them well as a professional model of what can be accomplished using social media for pedagogical reasons. During the spring 2014 semester, the student who runs our Facebook page began conducting "Humans of New York" style interviews with tutors and posting them, along with a photograph of that tutor in action, on the Facebook Page (Figure 5). These proved to be very popular.

Concurrently, our interns created a Livingston Writing Center Instagram account, which they encouraged other tutors and tutees to follow (Figure 6). The interns posted photos of the surrounding campus, the building which houses the Writing Center itself, and ongoing tutoring sessions.

All of this activity helps to demonstrate that social media can create a true virtual community of learners and to demonstrate that writing can be visual as well as textual, in a way that traditional course platforms cannot. Online community-building practices like these introduce a welcome element of equality into educational discourse; they allow everyone to express their continually changing selves as reader, writer, and thinker. If we are to convince students of the importance of "process," we must also let our own "process" show; this is an atmosphere that the shared experience of social media helps to build. By multiplying these points of contact with the judicious use of technological resources, especially social media platforms, we lay the groundwork for a space in which student learning flourishes independently of the instructor as authority figure, something which coincides with our tutor- and student-centered philosophy at the Livingston Writing Center. If these lessons are important for the educator in general, they are all the more important for the graduate assistant who is an educator-in-training.

Libraries and Information Literacy

Libraries occupy an important position in regard to graduate assistant instructors teaching research writing courses, as these instructors are both teaching research and doing their own research at the same time. Ideally, a feedback loop of research and revision is created for all populations engaged in research.

As our Business and Technical Writing Program had grown due to a desire on the part of our students to make themselves more marketable to potential employers, we were forced to cut back on our instructional support services. Concurringly, the state of New Jersey was facing a severe budgetary crisis in light of our national recession. Essentially, we were forced to do much more with much less. Complicating matters further, as our program had grown, we were noticing a decline in the research skills of our students. As we opened additional sections to meet the demand, we couldn't help but notice a precipitous decline in the quality of research being produced in these courses. Upon consultation with instructors, it became clear that the majority of students entering our university were not coming to us with the skills that they had only a few years ago. As we analyzed the research, it became apparent that this was not only a mark of decrease in quality of our incoming students. Instead, in our growth, we were now appealing to a population that had not taken our courses before.

The Rutgers Writing Program offers a substantial amount of support to its instructors. In our measures with the libraries, we added information literacy components to these support structures, both in-person and online. In our use of "information literacy," we look to Lisa G. O'Connor (2007), who defines it as "the capacity 'to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to locate, evaluate, and use effectively the needed information'" (p. 106). In fields such as Business and Technical Writing, IL becomes increasingly vital because of the nature of the subject matter and the variety of projects in which these students are engaged, as well as the media used to produce these projects. In the twenty-first century, as they enter professional environments upon graduation, students are expected to be proficient in these skills and to be able to apply these concepts in a real-world context. Ed Nagelhout (1999)

identifies a shift in the teaching of technical writing in which this once-specialized field now has tangible connections to a number of academic areas due to the realities of our contemporary economy. He connects these economic conditions upon our students with an approach to technical writing that facilitates multiple literacies. In his article about the movement of the literature graduate student into the composition classroom, John Shilb (2001) identifies a clear connection between the study of literature and the production of texts taking place among undergraduate students, culminating in what he terms analytic writing. In accord with Shilb's argument, the Rutgers composition classroom offers training in library research that is not available in the conventional literature graduate program. Analytical thinking and writing work in tandem with research, as library resources are directly integrated with course materials.

At Rutgers, we saw the intersection of lack of resources in terms of personnel and space with a growth in the availability of online platforms as an opportunity to assist our students in acquiring the skills they needed to succeed in our courses, as well as and in the professional world upon graduation. At the same time, we were able to move many of our resources to virtual spaces, which is something that we were engaged in even before the budget crisis necessitated it. In order to expand the information and digital literacies of our students, we have reorganized library research student sessions and instructor orientations, created a course-specific Library Research Guide, and a departmental Library Research Guide hosted on Google Drive. As dynamic virtual environments, these guides are constantly evolving to meet the needs of our courses, and our students; they are also accessible from any computer or mobile devices

As we have established throughout, it is imperative to use online and social media platforms in conjunction with one another, as well as to integrate these materials closely into the course curriculum and other university-wide tools. We view creatively incorporating IL into the learning experience as a means to engage all students in research-writing. Rarely have collaborations with university libraries taken place on a programmatic level. In the past, instructors in the Rutgers Writing Program were able to arrange a limited number of instructional orientation sessions with librarians who would provide a general overview of search methods and library resources. Barbara J. D'Angelo and Barry M. Maid (2004) attribute these types of less-than-successful measures across the academy to the relative powerlessness of university librarians in terms of curriculum design and development. They advocate the necessary connection between the academic department and university library: from the outset, the redesign that has taken place in our program has been a mutual effort in which librarian and course coordinator had equal footing. Furthermore, we extend an invitation to the librarian to speak about the library course guides and to schedule library sessions for instructors at the orientations at the start of each semester. However, use of the online library guides necessitates a classroom preparation on the part of instructors in advance of this session.

Business and Technical Writing courses at Rutgers culminate with each student submitting a research proposal, whose plan of action is justified by scholarly research, in line with Thomas Kuhn's view of paradigms (1962). Success is hinged upon the analysis and synthesis of primary and secondary research in a given

field of study and follows a heuristic known as the "6 Ps" (problem, population, paradigm, plan, price, patron). In our development of the online library guides, we followed a model of triangulation in order to integrate the guide seamlessly with our other materials. In this way, the classroom exercises, the course texts, and the instruction received at the libraries all function in support of one common goal. As Linda Heichman Taylor (2008) points out on in a study conducted with subject-specific vocabularies within the teaching of professional writing, one of the drawbacks of library instruction was the lack of a common vocabulary; there was a significant disconnect between the concepts of the course and the language of IL. As you can see, the "6 Ps" serves as a common vocabulary between our course and the libraries (Figure 7). At its inception, this guide was the first on the Rutgers, New Brunswick campus and remains the most frequently accessed.

Before the official library guide existed, we had created a Google Doc guide to doing online research via the Rutgers University's libraries (Figure 8). This was updated each semester between 2008 and 2014 and regular class visits by university librarians helped to develop this resource. The benefit of using a guide hosted on a social media platform is that it is instantly editable—in contrast to an official university website—and it can be honed for the needs of the wide variety of particular courses offered under the Business and Technical Writing umbrella. As we pointed out earlier, social media is most helpful when used in conjunction with officially sanctioned resources.

An examination of library research resources is an integral part of promoting a social media strategy for graduate assistant instructors. Since graduate students are intimately engaged with their own research, they bring something new to the research strategies that they teach in the classroom—and working with undergraduate students then strengthens the research skills of these instructors when working on their own projects.

Conclusion

Graduate students involved in the teaching of composition courses bemoan this status as often as it is bemoaned by those charged with training them. We would like to suggest that this does not have to be the case, that this population, by its very involvement in a continual process of writing, revision, and research, represents a known quantity when it comes to guiding undergraduates through the same process. As we have established throughout, it is imperative to use online and social media platforms in conjunction with one another, as well as to integrate these materials closely into the course curriculum and other university-wide tools. We believe that creatively incorporating social media into the learning experience is not only a specific and dynamic act by which we may engage all students in research-writing, but also a more accurate instantiation of "digital humanities" than the literature-specific projects often associated with the term.

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William Magrino is the co-author of two professional writing textbooks, now in their second editions and has previously published work on American literature, as well as the pedagogical implications of social media.

Peter Sorrell is an Assistant Professor of English, Indiana University of Pennsylvania. Peter Sorrell has previously published on social media, as well as Raymond Queneau.

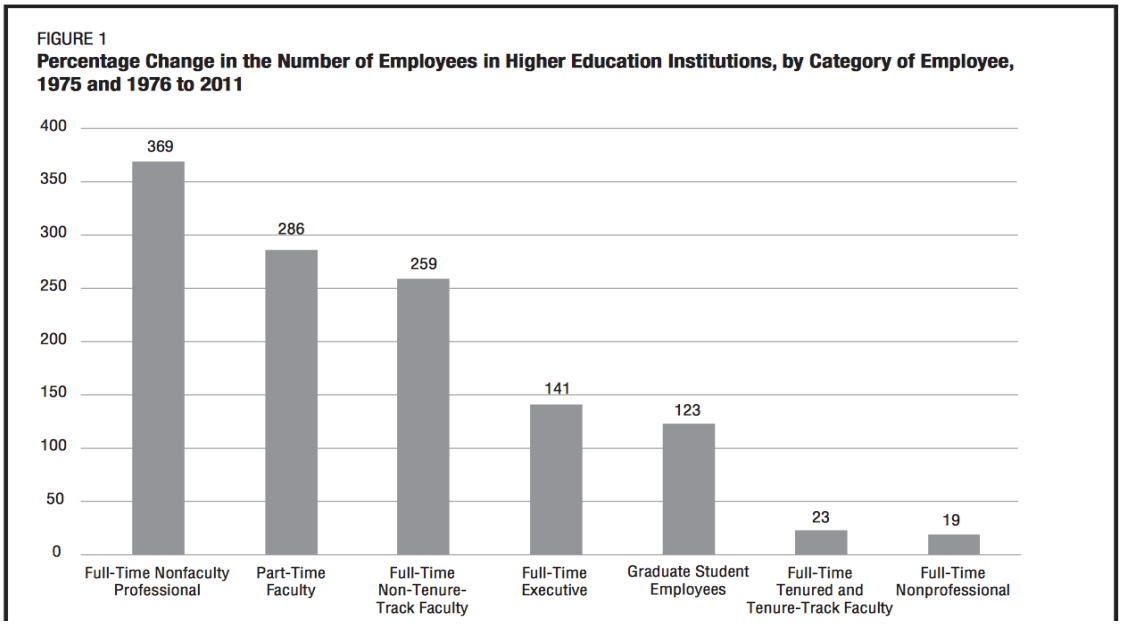


Figure 1. Percentage Change in the Number of Employees in Higher Education Institutions, by Category of Employee, 1975 and 1976 to 2100

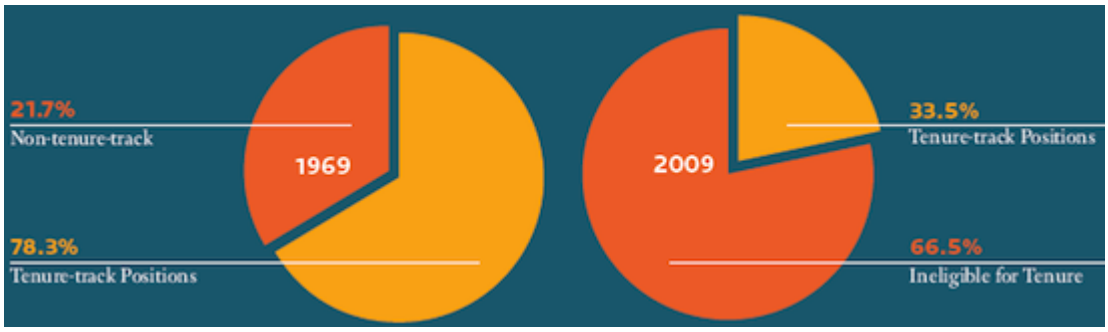


Figure 2. Tenure-track v. Non-tenure-track Positions, 1969-2009

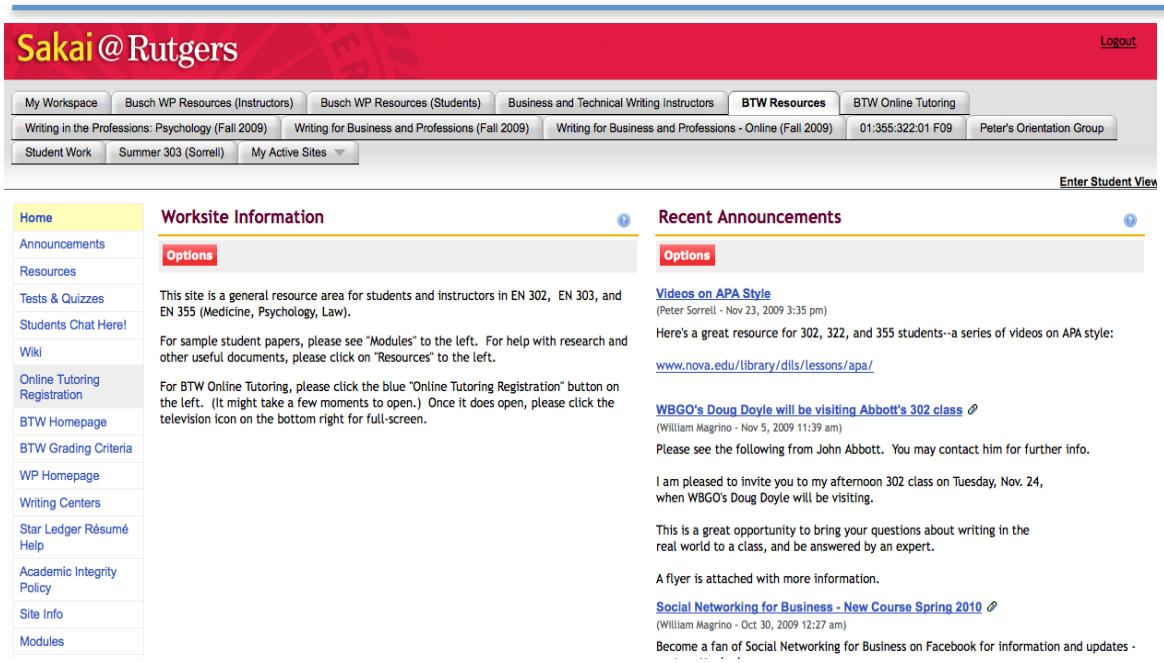


Figure 3. "BTW Resources" Sakai Site

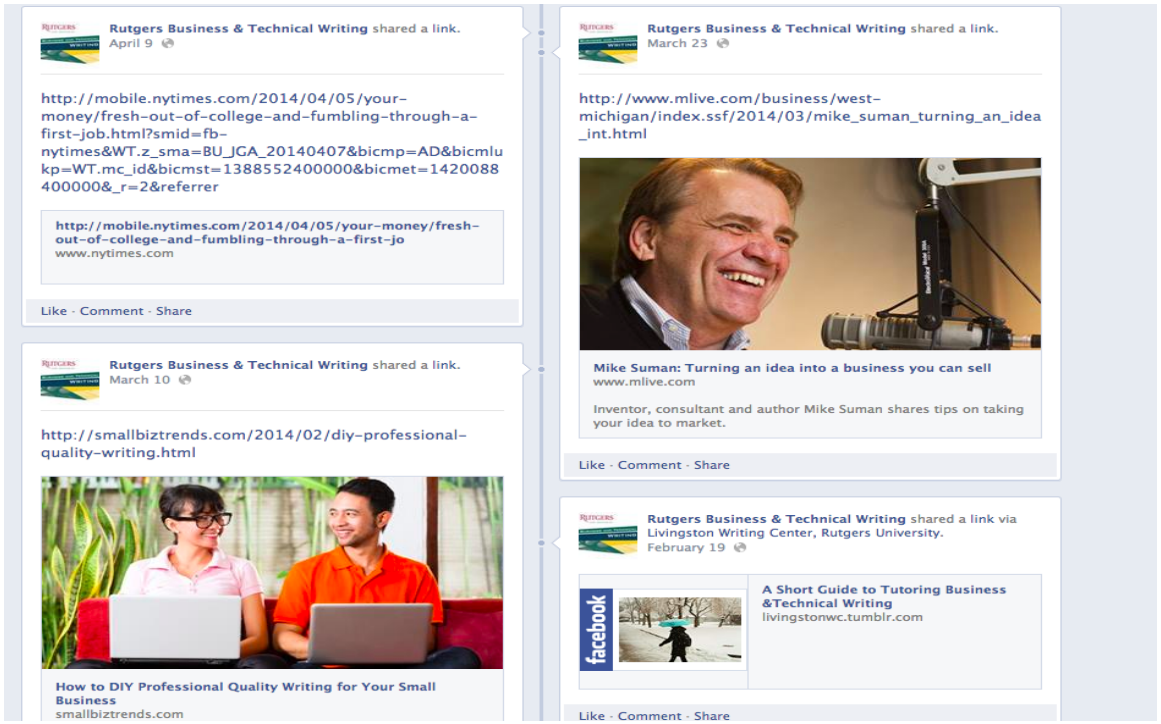


Figure 4. Business and Technical Writing Facebook Page

Figure 5. Livingston Writing Center Facebook Page

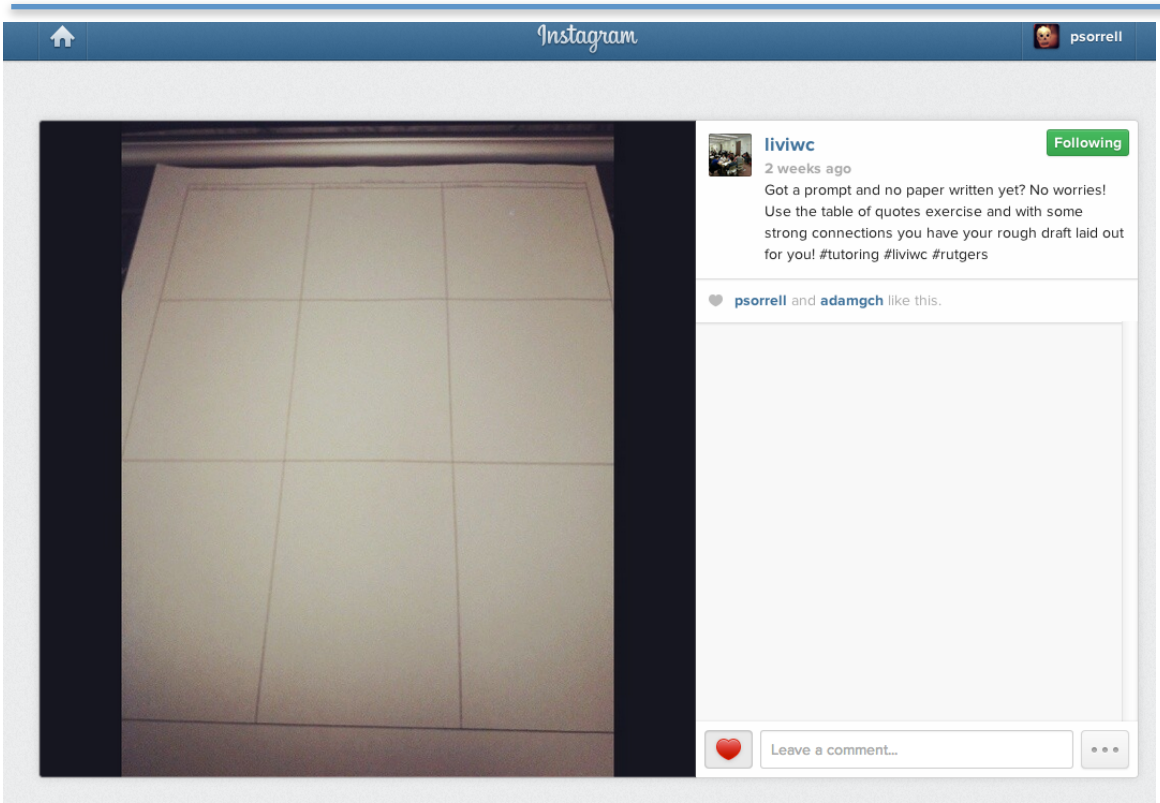


Figure 6. Livingston Writing Center Instagram Feed

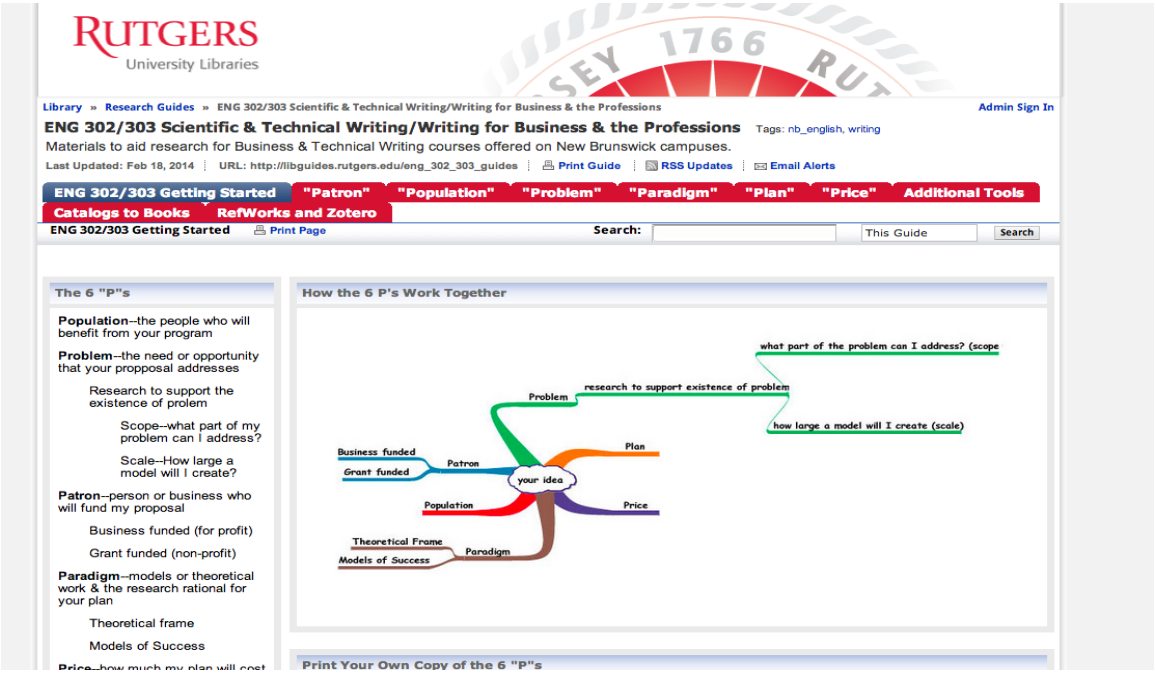
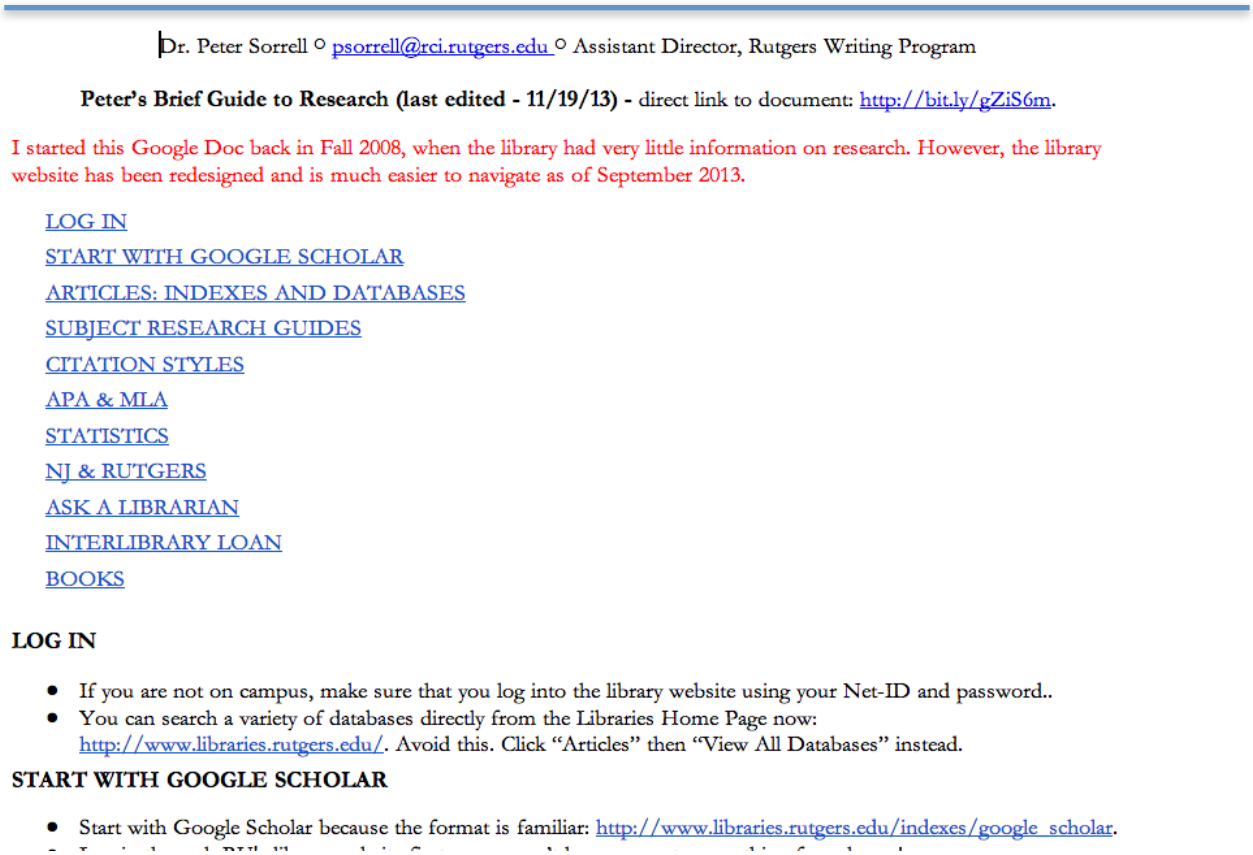


Figure 7. Library Guide for Business and Technical Writing Course



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Peter's Brief Guide to Research (last edited - 11/19/13) - direct link to document: http://bit.ly/gZiS6m.

I started this Google Doc back in Fall 2008, when the library had very little information on research. However, the library website has been redesigned and is much easier to navigate as of September 2013.

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START WITH GOOGLE SCHOLAR

- Start with Google Scholar because the format is familiar: http://www.libraries.rutgers.edu/indexes/google_scholar.

Figure 8. Google Drive Research Writing Guide

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